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and Literature

Fall 2019

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Carter Center Transformations

Thanks to several donations, spaces in the Carter Center for Worship and Music have been upgraded and improved this past summer. The Carter Center is home to the Department of Music and the primary location for music classes and lessons, rehearsals and performances for campus musical ensembles, as well as performances by world-renowned musicians through our Lyceum series.

The Stone Chapel on the main floor is one of the renovated spaces. As Music Chair **Christine Carrillo** said, "The Stone Chapel has always been a visually and acoustically beautiful room. Thanks to a generous donation and through a coordinated effort between the Department of Music and Office of Spiritual Life, we were able to renovate the space to provide a better environment for everyone." The renovations included new carpet and the addition of flexible seating, which will allow better use of the space for worship, performances, receptions and guest speakers. This project was supported by a gift from

the **Rev. Clyde Hylton** in memory of his wife, Mona Bross Hylton, and her parents, Edgar and Gwendoline Carter Bross. The Department of Music plans to use the space for small student recitals, receptions after performances and even classes. In addition, the Rev. Wilfred E. and Dr. Joyce A. Nolen Fund for Music Endowment is supporting the purchase of a brand-new baby grand piano for the chapel.

The other major summer transformation took place in the music education classroom (Carter 4), made possible by a gift from **Judy Nolen Henneberger '64**. Music education classes are a significant part of the music curriculum at Bridgewater. The flexible furniture configurations allow for easier transitions between seminar classes and methods classes and allow for better use of the space.

Upgrades to the Concert Hall auditorium and other Carter spaces are on the horizon, and the Department of Music is excited about the possibilities for future enhancements.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIVISION HEAD

Dear Alumni,

As part of our recent branding initiative, Bridgewater College had some research conducted that included interviews with our students, alumni, faculty and staff. A primary theme that surfaced in those discussions was the idea of connections. At BC, connected learning is in our DNA. We foster an environment that builds deep and lasting connections, among students, faculty, alumni, ideas, subjects and disciplines.

I remember once hearing a colleague from another college describing a new initiative at his school to increase interdisciplinary conversations because faculty from various departments were simply not talking with each other. After hearing his story, I said, "At Bridgewater we do that too, but for us it's just lunch." I was just so surprised that connecting faculty and students from various disciplines needed to be formalized. It's something I have taken for granted since I arrived at BC: Our faculty, staff, students and alumni communicate and care about each other. This creates an environment that fosters innovation, creativity and discussion naturally, without it being forced.

I hope you'll continue to stay connected and in touch through the years.

Jeff

Dr. Jeff Pierson
jpierson@bridgewater.edu



First MDMS Cohort Completes Summer Courses

In August, 12 Bridgewater College graduate students completed the summer core course sequence for the Master of Arts in Digital Media Strategy (MDMS) program, which included hands-on projects related to website design and development as well as audio and video production.

For some students, the core sequence was an opportunity to work with new technologies. **Katie LaBranche**, a 2016 graduate with a B.A. in communication, technology and culture, said, "There was definitely a learning curve for me because I knew little to nothing about things like scripting, lighting, filming and editing, but now I feel confident in my ability to complete these kinds of projects."

Jacob Neff, a 2019 graduate with a B.S. in communication, technology and culture, had a similar experience. "It was an intense and rewarding summer. We discussed media theory, fine-tuned audio tracks in Pro Tools, and edited video content in Adobe Premiere. And at the conclusion of it, we've come out better digital media strategists."

For other students, the core sequence built upon skills they developed as undergraduates at BC. For example, **Nick Koger**, another 2019 graduate, said, "As an art major, I was exposed to the production disciplines, such as audio, video and web design, but never thought much about the positioning of my products. After completing the summer classes, I have a better understanding not only of what it takes to produce high-quality artifacts, but also how to craft a meaningful and impactful

message with those artifacts."

This fall, students will start the MDMS program's project sequence under the direction of **Prof. Ben Erickson**. Students will work together to produce digital media marketing plans with organizations such as the United States Center for Coaching Excellence and Sustainable Shenandoah Valley, as well as regional businesses Green Hummingbird and PrePopsterous.

Interested alumni are invited to apply to the MDMS program. The next deadline is Feb. 1, and the program



has two additional deadlines each year: June 1 and Oct. 1. For more information, please contact **Dr. Sam Hamilton**, program director, at shamilton@bridgewater.edu and visit bridgewater.edu/MDMS.

BABCOCK APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF ENDOWED LECTURES

Prof. Jennifer Babcock, Instructor of Communication Studies at Bridgewater College, has been appointed as the Director of Endowed Lectures. The Endowed Lectures program brings speakers, ideas and opinions to campus that challenge students and community members to become more informed, responsible and engaged citizens. Babcock, who has been on the faculty since 2010, said she is looking forward to working with faculty, students and staff to bring an engaging and diverse slate of speakers to Bridgewater. Speakers for the 2019-2020 year include author and JMU alum Matt Bondurant, social activist Monica Lewinsky, *New Yorker* writer and journalism professor Jelani Cobb, and EPA Administrator (2001-2003) and former New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman.

TAYLOR COMPOSES OPERA

Dr. Larry Taylor was on sabbatical during the spring semester of 2019. His primary project was composing an operatic score based on Tom Noe's libretto *The Dickinsons of Amherst*. Noe and Taylor collaborated previously on two operas, *Marie Curie* and *Eros and Psyche*, both of which received performances in the Carter Center and in venues off-campus. Taylor reached a milestone with the current project, completing a piano/vocal score comprising 255 pages of music—a musical work lasting two-and-a-half hours. The story takes place in

Amherst, Mass., in the 1880s and 1890s.

When Austin Dickinson, the brother of poet Emily Dickinson, begins an extramarital affair with Mabel Todd, a young social climber half his age, everyone in the family is forced to take sides. His sister Emily, the poet, is torn between her loyalty to her brother and her devoted friendship with his scorned wife Susan, who has been Emily's confidante since childhood. Austin and Susan's son Ned is also torn, but for a different reason—like his father, he is passionately in love with Mabel! Sister

Lavinia actually welcomes the lovers into the old Dickinson family home. In an era when private sins were veiled behind a curtain of public morality, who wielded more power, the women or the men? Here, both father and son are caught in the iron grip of the much more powerful struggles taking place among the Dickinson women.

Taylor is currently arranging local performances of excerpted arias and scenes from *The Dickinsons of Amherst*. He and Noe are applying to opera workshops specializing in new operas.

Student News Now Online

BC Voice, the student media organization that includes the student newspaper, *Veritas*, and Spark Radio, is launching a new web presence this fall semester at bcvoice.org. With the intent of developing a multimodal news organization, students are gearing up to publish new content—stories, photography, podcasts and audio, video and artwork—at least weekly.

Leading BC Voice this year are five seniors and one junior. All students can be involved in BC Voice by taking a one-credit class in Communication Studies or in Professional Writing. They can also participate as club members or submit work or commentary as a guest contributor.

Following the departure of Dr. Jessica Brophy, Prof. Ady Dewey, who joined Bridgewater in fall 2015, is taking over as advisor. She brings experience from a 30-year career in writing, planning and implementing strategic communication and working with leaders.



Pictured from left, back row; senior Danielle Brooks, senior Holden Andrews and senior Emilee Brasseur; front row: junior Tristan Supples, senior Justin Rogers, senior Brandon Wells and advisor Ady Dewey. Photo by junior Mary Monaco.

NEW FACULTY



Prof. Ron Alabanza



Prof. Em Kohl

Prof. Ron Alabanza grew up in Virginia and attended George Mason University, where he received his bachelor of arts in English in 1995. He received his master of fine arts in graphic design from the Savannah College of Art and Design in 2004. His career as a creative professional included working in the print industry, owning a screenprinting company, and freelance visual and product design. He eventually became the Director of Communications for Bluemont Research and Technology in Luray, Va.

He is excited to serve the Bridgewater College community as a Practitioner in Residence in Visual Design in the Department of Art.

The Department of Communication Studies and Theatre is pleased

to bring aboard **Prof. Em Kohl** as its newest full time Instructor of Communication Studies. Kohl is teaching Oral Communication (COMM-100) and the College's first-year seminar, FILA-150.

Kohl recently graduated with her M.A. in communication and advocacy studies from James Madison University, where she also received her B.A. in English in 2016. Her research interests are primarily in climate change communication and education, as well as contemporary environmental and social justice movements. She is a Graduate Student Representative for the environmental division of the National Communication Association and a local community organizer in the Shenandoah Valley.

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