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Division of Communication Studies, Fine Arts
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Fall 2020

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Fall 2020
Newsletter

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES, FINE ARTS, AND LITERATURE

Art
Communication Studies and Theatre
English
Music

Masked Musicians Practice and Perform Safely at BC

The Bridgewater College music faculty have been taking important steps to ensure a safe way to keep choral and instrumental music going this semester. Dr. **Christine Carrillo**, Chair of the Department of Music and Director of Instrumental Music, has been following the guidelines set out by the College Band Directors National Association, which helped to commission a study on the effects of COVID-19 on the return to the rehearsal hall.

Based on the results of this study, all brass and woodwind players at BC were provided with a bell cover and a musician's mask to reduce aerosol emission. **Corey Gloyd '21** commented, "I am overjoyed that I am able to continue re-

hearsing and performing with my fellow musicians. The precautions we are taking make me feel as safe as ever during this pandemic."

To reduce the number of musicians in the band room at a time, the Symphonic Band is focusing on chamber music this semester, including brass ensembles, woodwind ensembles, and percussion ensembles. The Jazz Ensemble is also preparing for a few afternoon outdoor performances, the first of which took place on Thursday, Oct. 1, prior to fall break.

Although there is no large Oratorio Choir this semester, the Chorale and Concert Choir are practicing while masked and distanced in the concert hall with their new director, Dr. **Ryan Keebaugh '02**.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIVISION HEAD

Dear Friends,

I wanted to let you know that while the disruptions related to COVID-19 have had a tremendous impact on our students, faculty and staff, our goal is to still keep as many parts of the Bridgewater experience as social distancing and other safety procedures allow.

In this newsletter you will see updates on many programs at the College, which were just goals on a whiteboard a few years ago. You can read about the improved Writing Center space in the John Kenny Forrer Learning Commons and the impact it has already had on our students, as well as an update on the first graduating class of students from the master of arts in digital media strategy program.

In my own classes, having a chance to teach a hybrid of both online and in-person students has been educational for all of us. It has also reinforced in my own mind the tremendous value of a residential, liberal arts education.

Take care,

Jeff

Dr. Jeff Pierson
jpierson@bridgewater.edu



MDMS Program Graduates First Class and Welcomes Next Cohort

On May 2, 11 students received their Master of Arts in Digital Media Strategy (MDMS) from Bridgewater College. The first cohort has now graduated, and the next is hard at work preparing to graduate in 2021. Through community partnerships, the MDMS program is preparing graduates for today's workforce.

Every student in the MDMS program works with a three-person team to complete a project for a local business or non-profit organization. Students used a combination of web design, audio and video editing, and persuasive message design strategies to enhance the clients' digital communication. The tangible materials that the students created served as key elements of their professional portfolios.

"We are focused on making sure the graduates have a strong portfolio of work that will position them for their career in the field of digital media," said Senior Instructor **Benjamin Erickson**, program coordinator.

The structure of the program gives all students the opportunity to develop their skills and grow in understanding the tools they need. "I was given the space to analyze a live website, coordinate with a professional web designer, and improve user experience using Figma, a design platform," said **Nick Koger** '19, MDMS '20.

In addition to message strategies, students learn about the importance of communication and creating strong relationships with their clients. **Kaley**

Saxton '19, MDMS '20 said, "The relationship you have with your client is everything. Creating a comfortable space to actively listen to each other and share creative ideas is what results in the best outcomes."

The current cohort of MDMS students is working with Kimberly Fine Arts and Central Valley Habitat for Humanity. They will complete client proposals this fall outlining the work they will do in the spring. "The experience that we will gain through working with clients to create real-world content is incredibly valuable, and the commitment that comes with client work will teach us more about how to be professionals and digital media strategists," said **Holden Andrews** '20, MDMS '21.

CLARK RECOGNIZED WITH OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD

Dr. **Michele Strano Clark**, Associate Professor of Communication Studies, has received the 2020 Ben and Janice Wade Outstanding Teaching Award from Bridgewater College. Originally scheduled to be part of the annual Founder's Day celebration in the spring, the award was instead given out during the Opening Convocation, which was broadcast online on Aug. 24. Clark also delivered the opening message to the BC community during the convocation.

"Lifelong learning isn't just a philosophy for me—it's a necessity," said Clark, of her approach to teaching in the field. "Digital media is ever-changing. If I'm going to effectively teach students, I have to go learn new skills, new perspectives in the field of communication in order to prepare them for today's workforce."

Clark graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1990 with a B.A. in advertising and briefly worked in public relations before going to the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School for Communication, where she earned her M.A. in 1993 and her Ph.D. in 2001.

Her first teaching job was at ECPI Technical College (now University)



in Raleigh, N.C., where she was a communication instructor from 1999-2001. After one year teaching as an adjunct and three years as a Mellon Fellow in the Duke University Writing Program, Clark came to Bridgewater College in 2007. She was promoted to Associate Professor in 2013 and currently teaches a variety of classes in the Department of Communication Studies and Theatre, including digital analytics in the Master of Digital Media Strategy (MDMS) program. When the planning for the MDMS program began, Clark decided

to enroll in a course on digital analytics through the University of British Columbia, winning the Jim Novo Award of Academic Excellence for her class-leading GPA.

Clark commented that teaching at Bridgewater College means building a community. "Really strong classroom teaching comes from knowing your students personally—their strengths, their weaknesses—in order to connect and engage

with them in the classroom." As these relationships develop over time, she gets to build on their skillsets as a whole and the students get to know her in turn. She recalled one student telling her she heard Clark's voice in her head all the time, saying, "What's your evidence for that? Do you have a source?" She commented, "I think it's very important that students are not passive—I want them to speak back, to disagree, to engage," which is why she challenges them and encourages evidence-based reasoning.

2020 COLLEGE AWARD WINNERS

ART

Paul M. and Betty Kline Student Art Scholarship

Ashley Williams

COMMUNICATION STUDIES AND THEATRE

Outstanding Senior Award in Communication, Technology and Culture

Emilee Brasseur

Outstanding Theatre Artist Award

MaryBeth Killian

ENGLISH

Outstanding Senior in English Award

Katie Downing

Outstanding Senior in Professional Writing Award

Max Weidman

MUSIC

Nelson T. Huffman Award for Musical Excellence

Christopher DeFreeuw

Stephen Tayman Memorial Music Scholarship

Cayla Riddick

Keebaugh Joins Bridgewater Music Faculty

A leading music educator, guest conductor, and clinician to choral and instrumental ensembles throughout the United States, Dr. **Ryan Keebaugh** '02 has returned to his alma mater as Director of Choral Music and Assistant Professor.

Keebaugh has presented workshops and master classes both nationally and internationally. His choral ensembles have been invited to perform at international and national festivals, conventions, conferences, and historic locations, including Radio City Music Hall, the Washington National Cathedral, St. John the Divine, New York University Steinhardt, the Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, Bruton Parish Church and the Edinburgh Cathedral. In 2019, he was appointed Artistic Director and Conductor of the Valley Chorale of Front Royal.

He has also worked with several championship high school band programs in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Texas as a music arranger, brass technician and marching instructor. His compositions have received awards and recognition from the Society of Composers, the American Choral Society, Analog Arts, ASCAP, the American Prize, the Raabe Music Prize and the Virginia Music Educators Association.

Keebaugh has previously served on the faculty of Eastern



Mennonite University, Mary Baldwin University and Lord Fairfax Community College. Originally from Martinsburg, Pa., he earned a D.M.A. from the Catholic University of America (DMA) and an M.M. from Shenandoah Conservatory, in addition to his B.A. from Bridgewater College.

Faculty Promotions and Appointments

- Dr. **Larry Taylor** has been promoted to the rank of Professor.
- Professors **Jen Babcock** and **Ben Erickson** have been promoted to the rank of Senior Instructor.

Writing Center Welcomes New Space in Forrer Learning Commons

The opening of the John Kenny Forrer Learning Commons in February has provided the Writing Center with its own dedicated space in the Academic Resource Center.

Multiple tutors are on staff to help student writers with organization, wording, grammar, citations and more. The relocation to the Forrer Learning Commons means writing tutors are available in the same space as the other student services, offering greater accessibility.

The Writing Center tutors are proud of this new space. Junior **Brittany Utley** commented, "It gives us much better availability to students." Junior **Ashley Sell** agreed, noting that the Writing Center's increased visibility makes it "more open than before" and that "we have the option to move around for sessions if we want to go somewhere quieter than our designated space." The new Forrer Learning Commons has provided tutors and students alike with new options for tutorials in a space that is comfortable and quiet.



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