

A Warm Welcome

Greetings on behalf of the Association of College English Teachers of Alabama and its Steering Committee! 2018-2019 marked a revitalized vision by ACETA to stimulate the field of English Studies in the state of Alabama by offering unparalleled opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to present their scholarly work alongside esteemed and recognized English faculty from our beloved state and beyond. In doing so, ACETA brings together a vibrant community of established and novice scholars interested in advancing English composition, literature, film studies, drama, creative writing, and pop culture in the 21st century.

Last year, ACETA and Troy University co-sponsored the first ever Conference on the Sympathetic Imagination, inviting scholarship from around the state and beyond that explores empathy and sympathy in literature, film, and composition. Students from Alabama's universities and community colleges sat side by side with distinguished professors and recognized scholars to engage in cross-generational dialogue about the significance of cultivating compassion through English studies.

For 2019, the University of Montevallo joins ACETA as host of this year's Conference on the Sympathetic Imagination, where college English teachers and English students in the state of Alabama will come together to advance English studies in the state of Alabama with a focus on building an empathetic community among English faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students with an interest in English studies.

As part of its mission, ACETA recognizes and awards outstanding English faculty, literary

scholars, and rising graduate and undergraduate students in the state of Alabama. We will be hearing from the 2019 award winners on Friday. You won't want to miss it!

We are also honored to have as our Saturday speaker Dr. David Cowart, Professor Emeritus at the University of South Carolina and the 2018 recipient of the Eugene Current-Garcia Award. Considered one of the most distinguished scholars on contemporary fiction, Dr. Cowart is known particularly for his work on Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo and has been called the "greatest living specialist in American fiction."

Finally, consider becoming a part of ACETA's Steering Committee. Committee members meet once a year, usually in the summer, to start planning the conference. Then from November to December, we vote on conference proposals and decide on award recipients. This year, nominations for faculty from four year and two-year institutions, both public and private, to sit on the Steering Committee will be received and voted upon at the annual Business Meeting, held at the end of the conference. Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

Rebecca M. Duncan, ACETA President 2018-2020



ACETA

Association of College English Teachers of Alabama

Est. 1948

Want to be on our mailing list? Send an email to our Executive Secretary, Anissa Graham, at alcollegeenglish@gmail.com.

Inside-Out Program at UNA

The Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, which recently celebrated its 20th anniversary, is based on the belief that our society is strengthened when higher education is made widely accessible and allows participants to encounter each other as equals, often across profound social barriers. The practice of bringing incarcerated (“inside”) and non-incarcerated (“outside”) people together for engaged and informed dialogue allows for transformative learning experiences that invite participants to take leadership in addressing crime, justice, and other issues of social concern. In Spring 2018, this program entered Alabama for the first time through a partnership between UNA and Limestone Correctional Facility. Together, “inside” and “outside” students take a course that is delivered by Dr. Katie Owens-Murphy at Limestone Correctional Facility in Harvest, Alabama. This interdisciplinary course, titled “Restorative Justice in American Literature,” is cross-listed with political science and criminal justice. Students discuss readings in a seminar-style environment and work on capstone group projects that apply principles of restorative justice to individual case studies.

Submitted by Katie Owens-Murphy, University of North Alabama

Sigma Kappa Delta Comes to Southern Union

Southern Union State Community College is proud to announce the establishment of the Theta Zeta chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta, the national two-year English honorary operating under the umbrella of Sigma Tau Delta.

The chapter enrolled the charter members of our first class in the spring of 2017 with just over 100 members. Our second recruiting class was inducted in February with over 50 students attending the initiation ceremony.

The Southern Union chapter of Sigma Kappa Delta has worked to promote literacy as our members go each month into local primary schools to read books to first graders. In April, our chapter will also sponsor a campus-wide Open Mic, complete with poetry reading, recitations, music, lawn games and food trucks. Student community is fostered among our membership with regular Dutch-treat dinners held at area restaurants.

Submitted by Betty McClendon, Southern Union Community College

Blinding You with Science (Fiction) and Fantasy, too: Pioneer Con at Jefferson State

The Third Annual Pioneer Con 2018 saw the largest crowd Jefferson State Community College’s Sigma Kappa Delta (SKD) chapter for this event, proving that offering such a fun, academic, and worthwhile conference will see growth!

The panels offered this year were just one of the many features that drew crowds this year. SKD sponsors and officers were excited to see the variety of proposals and the variety of presenters for the sessions. Proposals included sci-fi and fantasy in not only English and literature, but also in biology, theater, mass media, and game or role play. Presenters included an array (continued on page 3)

of students from Jefferson State Community College and other colleges like the University of Montevallo, and the University of Alabama at Huntsville. Instructors at Jefferson State, including English instructors Eugene Cuevas, Ashley Kitchens, and Jacob Melvin; theater instructor Leslie Warren; and biology instructor Erin Arnold presented or worked with students to present panel discussions or lead RPG sessions.

All the panels had something different to offer in the way of academic discussion or presentation. Session one held a choice of panels that, one, illustrated a dramatic reading of *She Kills Monsters* by Qui Nguyen, and two, examined the complex relationship between humans and machines in literature and movies. Session two saw lots of opportunity for conference goers as it added a Dungeons & Dragons mini-campaign and aerial silk presentations along with the academic choices “Anatomy of a Dragon” or “The Predictive Elements of Black Mirror.”

After the keynote address featuring fantasy author Phoebe North and lunch, session three offered attendees another chance at a D&D campaign, and two discussions: one session gave practical advice and planning and spending tips for cosplay, and the other session looked at gaming in a liberal arts university. The last session of the day continued a look into game play with a panel on using gaming to facilitate social discussions and a panel on law and order in games like *Persona 5*.

Overall, survey results show students and other attendees enjoyed the sessions they attended. SKD hopes to continue this wonderful tradition called Pioneer Con in order to give students, faculty, and the academic community a chance to be a part of something fun and engaging. SKD sponsors also hope to continue to reach students and faculty in colleges around the state, giving them presentation opportunity and experience. To view information on the past years’ Pioneer Con event and to stay up-to-date with the upcoming October 2019 event, visit <https://jsceppioneercon.wixsite.com/home>.

Submitted by Ashley Harlan-Kitchens,
Jefferson State Community College

Has your department hosted an interesting event? Have you started a new course or a new program?

Share your successes in *The Light* to let your colleagues in on your great work!

Submit your articles (350 words max. please) and photos to Executive Secretary, Anissa Graham, at alcollegeenglish@gmail.com.

Want to serve on the Steering Committee?

We are accepting nominations for 4-year institution member-at-large and Vice-President. Contact Anissa Graham at amgraham@una.edu for more information.

ACETA and the University of Montevallo Partner to Host Conference

For this 71st annual conference, ACETA has partnered with the University of Montevallo. Our conference theme remains focused on the ways English studies explores the Sympathetic Imagination. The conference will be held on March 1st and 2nd. Below is a brief conference schedule for planning purposes.

Friday, March 1st

12:45-1:50 – Registration (Comer Commons)

2:00 - 3:20 Welcome and Award-Winning Papers Reading (Comer Auditorium)

3:30 Author John Padgett Reading and Q&A (Carmichael Library)

4:30-5:30 Registration and Reception (Comer Commons)

5:30 - 6:45 First Set of Sessions

Session 1 – Our Worlds, Our Sympathies (Comer 206)

Session 2 – Feeling and Describing Gender (Comer 208)

7:00-9:00 Dinner (Location TBD)

Saturday, March 2nd

8:00-8:50 – Registration and Breakfast (Registration will be open in between sessions) (Comer Commons)

9:00 – 10:15 – Second Set of Concurrent Sessions

Session 3 – Empathy for the Forgotten or Unseen (Comer 206)

Session 4 – Imagining and Implementing Diversity (Comer 208)

10:25 – 11:25 – 2018 Eugene Current-Garcia Address by Dr. David Cowart (Comer Auditorium)

11:35 -12:50 – Third Set of Concurrent Sessions

Session 5 – Breaking with Tradition (Comer 206)

Session 6 – Defining Worthy Objects of Empathy (Comer 208)

1:00 – 2:15 – Lunch, Business Meeting, and Concluding Remarks (Location TBD)

Need to make reservations for the conference?

Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Alabaster, \$105 a night.

1000 Balmoral Drive
Alabaster, Alabama 35007
205-624-6488

Mention the University of Montevallo rate when booking.

Alternative Lodging —

Hampton Inn, Calera
93 Metro Drive
Calera, Alabama 35040
205-688-6565

The Light

Official Newsletter of the

Winter Issue

Association of College English Teachers of Alabama

February 2019

ACETA's 71st Annual Conference

University of Montevallo

Montevallo, Alabama

March 1-2, 2019

Conference on the Sympathetic Imagination: Literature, Film, and Writing of Sympathy and Empathy

Name _____

Department _____

College or university _____

College or university address _____

Office phone _____ Office e-mail _____

Home address & phone (optional) _____

Are you a member of NCTE? Yes _____ No _____

Registration and membership options (choose one)

\$55 Early conference registration & ACETA membership _____

60 On-site registration & ACETA membership _____

20 ACETA membership only (if not attending conference) _____

10 Graduate student / part-time faculty registration & ACETA membership _____

5 Graduate student / part-time faculty ACETA membership (if not attending the conference) _____

Free Undergraduate student _____

Meals (Need Vegetarian? Check here _____)

\$55 Friday evening and Saturday _____

\$35 Friday meals ONLY (reception/afternoon snack dinner) _____

\$20 Saturday meals ONLY (continental breakfast and box lunch) _____

TOTAL SUBMITTED _____

Please mail this form, with your check made payable to ACETA, to Anissa Graham, Executive Secretary, ACETA, University of North Alabama, 1 Harrison Plaza, Box 5050, Florence, Alabama, 35632.

Alternatively, you may email the registration form to amgraham@una.edu and pay at the conference.

Deadline for registration is February 25, 2019.