CLEMSON
ENGLISH UNBOUND
From my office, I can see Sikes Hall, and the hill across the street from it, topped by Clemson House, with its iconic red neon cursive name lit up all day. My readers might remember the water tower behind Clemson House, which has also been part of the view out of my window. Well, it’s been an interesting year for this particular view. As it turns out, the office of the English Department Chair is unique on campus in being able to see many of the changes that are coming to campus. And it has been all the more interesting to work in this office for the past year as a result.

Last year, the water tower was disassembled and removed from the hill across from Sikes. Its capacity had long ago been absorbed by the newer, cylindrical water tower on top of Kite Hill, and its removal made way for a 1200-bed Clemson University dorm, dining hall and bookstore village that is already beginning to stretch from Clemson House to Highway 76 along Highway 93.
The Douthit Hills area across from the President’s House is now flatter, and a new complex is currently named after the hills that were removed, the Douthit Hills Development. When it opened in 1950, Clemson House was likely the first modernist building in Clemson—rectilinear, tall, and symmetrical, it signals that Clemson knew the latest in contemporary architecture. Le Corbusier would have seen his influences in the building, as might Frank Lloyd Wright in the site’s use of slate paving stones. To look at campus today, it is possible to think it was always modernist, but Clemson House had announced a shift, and many older buildings are no longer on campus. By 1958, the Lee and Lowry complex had been completed, and Clemson was switching to modernist architecture in its new buildings. Cooper Library, Daniel, Martin, and, yes, our very own Strode, would all follow (as would Brackett and Earle Halls), to mention just a few more or less mid-century modernist buildings on campus.

When Clemson’s midcentury modernist buildings were under construction, the style bridged architecture, engineering and the arts (as can be seen in how Lowry and Lee connect the Civil Engineering, Architecture, and Art departments). They were also part of a post-war boom that signaled economic growth for the US, and enrollment growth for the University. Even on a campus that has an ante-bellum plantation, it is easy to forget that Clemson’s modernist buildings went up on a segregated campus, in a legally segregated state, in a nation that abided racial segregation into the 1950s. Clemson’s stylish modernist buildings—and Lee Hall is nothing if not stylish!—presaged a new world (clarity of design and of plate glass), in a setting governed by laws that were about to be swept aside as antiquated at the national level. Of course, Clemson was part of those national changes, desegregating in 1963 with the arrival of an architecture student, Harvey Gantt. It is one of the ironies of Clemson’s built environment that future architect Gantt registered as Clemson’s first African-American student not only in a building renamed sixteen years earlier after “Pitchfork” Ben Tillman but also in Clemson University’s oldest classroom building. He did not simply step first into any of the then-brand new buildings that declared their commitments to the present; he went into the oldest University building, one that had been named for its age, Old Main, before it was renamed in the 1940s for the violent, segregationist Chair of Clemson College’s first Board of Trustees. In short, Harvey Gantt pointed to the future by stepping into and changing the past.
It should come as no surprise, then, to students of literature and history, such as English alums, that the most substantive development this semester occurred after a march from Old Main to Sikes Hall: after walking from one former library to another, students occupied the lobby of the current administrative building, and did not leave for nine days. In that time, other students turned themselves in to the administration for offensively hanging bananas on a banner marking African-American history at Clemson; five protesting students were arrested for refusing to leave Sikes when it was being locked up for the night; many students sympathetic to the sit-in started to camp in tents on the sidewalk near Highway 93 facing the stairs; Sikes’ stairs became an outdoor classroom and ad hoc multicultural center; and the University organized three evening dialogue sessions with the President and Provost. Along the way, one student was arrested for allegedly posting anonymous online proposals for a lynch mob, a drive-by and other forms of violence against the protest outside Sikes, thus proving the main point of all involved in the sit in, that there are awful threats at Clemson aimed at other students within Clemson. In a little more than a week, the President released three public statements, each with increasing levels of detail. The third followed the arrest of that student who apparently had gone online to offer 100 feet of rope for lynching the protestors, i.e., fellow Clemson students. The President’s last email was also the most detailed, featuring a time line for investments in, and administrative responsibility over a series of new University commitments to access, diversity, and multicultural activity.

All in all, in the view from the Chair’s office I see a lot of change, and continued modernizing going on at Clemson University. The University is again planning for growth in student numbers, at Douthit Hills, but achieving a kind of intellectual growth on the steps of Sikes, which looks up at Clemson House and across at the green fencing marking the area of the new dorms. In the classic civil rights traditions of the southeast, a non-violent protest illustrated the problem that needs to be addressed. Along the way, we all learned that Sikes’ steps are a great urban space, conducive to a spontaneous experience of community. We can only hope the same is true for Douthit Hills. Maybe like Clemson House, this new building will also announce a shift on campus. In this issue of English Unbound, you’ll get students’ perspectives on some of the many English Department activities and programs that took place this
year, every event linking past, present and future.

You can follow us at www.facebook.com/ClemsonEnglishDept. We’d love to hear from all of you, too. Send updates to me at lmorris@clemson.edu.

And, as always, if you would like to help the department, we get by with a little help from our friends. You can use your credit card to make a gift to the English Department on this website. Be sure to indicate that you want the contribution to go to the English Department. You can also mail a contribution to the Clemson University Foundation, PO Box 1889, Clemson, SC 29633. Please indicate that your check is for the English Foundation Account.

I know that readers of English Unbound have always been very generous, for which I thank you on behalf of the entire department.

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Before Clemson’s rival schools came to Death Valley for competition last fall, their professors came to campus for discussion and conversation.

Throughout the football season, the Humanities Road Scholars lecture series again brought professors from Clemson’s visiting ACC opponents to campus to present their research through lectures. Hosted by the Clemson University School of Humanities, the five lectures were held on the Fridays before Clemson’s home games against ACC opponents, and each lecture was followed by a response from a Clemson professor, as well as the opportunity for those in attendance to ask questions.

Jonathan Beecher Field, associate professor in the English Department, organized the series in 2013, and the third-annual lineup of professors consisted of Atalia Omer, Jacqueline Royster, Maura Johnston, Katherine Mooney, and Anne Hardcastle.
The series kicked off on Oct. 2 with Omer, associate professor of religion, conflict and peace studies at the University of Notre Dame, and the author of *When Peace is Not Enough: How the Israeli Peace Camp Thinks about Religion, Nationalism and Justice*. Her lecture, titled “Religion, Conflict, and the Practice of Peacebuilding,” included a discussion of the role of cultural and religious identity in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and how thinking about religion and nationalism in the context of peacebuilding can provide resources of conflict analysis.

The series continued the following Friday with Royster, dean of the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Royster delved into the topic of “Speaking Truth to Power: Lessons and Legacies from the Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells.” Wells was a civil-rights activist who, after facing first-hand turmoil in the fight for equality, took to journalism and became the editor of a newspaper in order to expose racial violence and lynching through writing.

Maura Johnston, editor of *Maura* Magazine and a journalism fellow of the Institute for Liberal Arts at Boston College, arrived on campus a week later to deliver her message of “Click Through: How the Economics of Online
Journalism Affect the Web’s Humanity.” A pioneer of digital journalism, Johnston highlighted the different ways people consume information today and the impact of social media in that. Johnston talked about several keys to success in new-age journalism, such as having time, resources, tenacity, the ability to recognize readers’ conflicting interests and the willingness to pursue quirky ideas and visions.

After a two-week hiatus while Clemson was on the road, the series galloped back into action on Nov. 6 with Mooney’s speech of “Race Horse Men: The Origin Stories of Our Debates About Race, Labor, and American Sports.” Mooney, associate professor of history at Florida State University, and author of Race Horse Men: How Slavery and Freedom Were Made at the Racetrack, described the immense popularity of horse racing in the Old South and detailed the critical roles of slaves who served as jockeys, trainers, and grooms. These slaves, called race horse men, gained renowned recognition, became a source of pride for their race and, in some cases, earned freedom.

The series concluded on Nov. 20 when Anne Hardcastle, associate professor and chair of Spanish, and the Director of Film Studies at Wake Forest University, delivered her lecture, “Victims, Martyrs and Heroes in Contemporary Spanish Civil War Films.”

The Humanities Road Scholars series seamlessly connected athletics and academics and has become a hit as big as those on the football field, featuring winning professors whose lectures have started another long-lasting tradition in these hills.
The English major is one of the most diverse majors on Clemson’s campus. English students are active in all areas of campus life and also have the opportunity to enter into a variety of career fields upon graduation. However, this diversity can also seem confusing and overwhelming at times. As a recent transfer into the English major, junior Cierra Townson knows this feeling all too well. “I felt lost when I came into the English major,” Townson stated. “I needed something to help me figure out what I was doing.” That “something” was Clemson’s English Majors Organization (EMO).

As an organization encouraging academic development and collaboration between Clemson English majors, EMO brands itself as an “umbrella” organization that provides professional, academic, and personal resources for English majors of all ages and experiences across Clemson’s campus. To do this, they host events that bring together many different campus programs and organizations, such as Clemson’s Literary Festival, the LGBTQ Task Force, Writer’s Harvest, The Pearce Center for Professional Communication, the Michelin Career Center, and the Writing Center.
Partnering with these organizations, EMO hosts many events throughout the semester including movie screenings, graduate school panels, and career information sessions to help English majors orient themselves within the professional and social atmospheres of college life. One of their most popular events are their monthly trips to the Shakespeare Tavern in Atlanta, Ga., where they go to enjoy Shakespearean plays and a “tavern-esque” atmosphere. They are also very excited to host an upcoming panel with LGBTQ authors. However, EMO is still a growing organization. They are always looking for new events to host and new student resources to promote. In the future, the organization hopes to bring in Clemson English alumni for career talks with current undergraduate and graduate students.

Now serving as its co-chair, Townson is aiming to promote the organization by bringing new awareness to these assets aimed specifically at English majors. By hosting events throughout the semester, she hopes to present the organization as a point of reference for English majors. “We’re trying to compile all of these personal, professional, and academic resources to give students a singular, more accessible, informal, and comprehensive resource,” Townson said. Additionally, she hopes that EMO serves as a community for English majors in which students can feel comfortable expressing their opinions and needs for success. “I want other English majors to know that if they reach out, we will respond because we genuinely want to help,” Townson said.

EMO also provides a genuine support system for Clemson’s English majors. “Having an in-house network that is there for you is the most important thing,” Townson said. First and foremost, EMO is there to help students, whether by hosting career panels or stress-relieving activities. “We just want to be able to help at least one person,” Townson said. “The most rewarding aspect is that whenever I finish an event, someone tells me ‘that really helped me,’ because that was something they really needed.”

By bringing English majors into contact with the amazing resources available at Clemson, EMO’s ultimate goal is to set students on the path to success, both personally and professionally. As a whole, the organization aims to continue its growth on campus to encourage students to make the best of both their English major and their Clemson experience. For more information and a list of current and upcoming events, visit the group’s Facebook page, “Clemson EMO.”
SUZANNE BUFFAM’S LIVE READING OF “A PILLOW BOOK”
VALERIE SMITH

Approximately one in three people suffer from at least a mild case of insomnia as sleeping pills can only help so much. Suzanne Buffam summarizes an insomniac’s awareness during the night while everyone else is asleep. Her funny poems and prose writing perfectly capture the mind’s sharpness in the middle of the night. Buffam presented this collection of poetry with Clemson University’s 9th Annual Literary Festival to an excited audience at The Alumni Center this April. Her readings were exclusively from her latest books of poetry, *A Pillow Book*, published through House of Anansi Press in 2016. Buffam’s collection of poetry is one that can only be classified as an avant-garde style of writing. The synopsis on the back cover of her book states:

manifest. Not a lullaby. Not a secret letter sent through the silent palace hallways before dawn. Ushering the reader on a private tour through the dim-lit valley of fitful sleep, A Pillow Book offers a twenty-first-century response to a thousand-year-old literary genre which resists, while slyly absorbing, all attempts to define it.

It is difficult to select a favorite poem from the ones she read during the Literary Festival, however, one of her list poems guaranteed the attention of her tentative audience. The poem “Iffy Similes” does a fantastic job of exploiting Buffam’s comical side of writing while also illuminating the type of thoughts an insomniac may have in the wee hours of the morning. Thoughts, like snowflakes, are everything but simple — they contain intricate designs one may only see under a microscope. Coffins are ironically not cozy at all if a person is dead and unconscious to the fact that he/she is about to be buried alive. Her poems give insight into the mind and thoughts that run through the mind of an insomniac. The Literary Festival audience burst into laughter when the phrase, “Sexy as an ankh,” left Buffam’s lips.

Buffam dives deeper into the theme of insomnia in one of her untitled prose poems:

There are two kinds of insomniacs: those who fall asleep easily, only to wake up hours later to toss on their pillows until dawn; and those who toss on their pillows from the start, only to drift off just long enough to be roused at down by the crows. A little game I like to play, when I crawl into bed at the end of a long day of anything, these days, is to guess which kind, tonight, I will be.

This moment highlights the difficulties of being an insomniac: you have no control over how much sleep, if any, will be gained before the start of the next day. I really enjoyed Buffam’s choice of the word “crows,” as most people know what a crow sounds like — it isn’t a pretty sound which portrays the annoyance an insomniac experiences in attempts to gain a little shut-eye.

Suzanne Buffam’s reading of A Pillow Book made the random thoughts from an overtired brain in the middle of the night relatable and hilarious, which forced the audience to become a part of her book. Many people don’t suffer from insomnia, but all of us have experienced trouble sleeping. Her thought-provoking writing style partnered with her hilarity truly was a treat for all of The Literary Festival’s members and audience.
An abundance of charisma and heart is something that will make a live reading stimulating for the audience no matter what is being read. Nate Marshall’s reading of his poetry collection, *Wild Hundreds*, was absolutely unforgettable as his moving words and urban scenes struck many hearts while his high-energy language and rhyme portrayed the emotion behind his use of words. For the 9th Annual Literary Festival this April, Nate Marshall presented his poems to a captivated audience in the Alumni Center. Marshall is a winner of the 2014 Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize, the Hurston/Wright Founding Members Award and the Gwendolyn Brooks Open Mic Award. He is a Cave Canem Fellow with work that has appeared in *Poetry* magazine, *New Republic*, *Indiana Review*, and many other places. Marshall is also the coeditor of *The BreakBeat Poets: New American Poetry in the Age of Hip-Hop*.

Patrick Rosal states, “The Hundreds’ is a place, a people, and one way to define
centuries. If our third millennium lyric ever comes to terms with America, it will have to accommodate symbols and syntax once denigrated and dismissed. With his dynamic debut collection, Nate Marshall is making space. And it’s wild.”

A scattered series of short poems in *Wild Hundreds* are called the “Chicago high school love letters.” Number 226 reads:

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 i’ll stay with you.
 even after
 the streetlights come
 on or don’t.
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Number 333 reads:

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 graduation

 hold me
 before
 i
 disappear.
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A footnote at the bottom of number 333 says, “*Note:* the numbers in ‘Chicago high school love letters’ represent the city’s homicides during the 2007-2008 Chicago Public School academic year.” If that doesn’t bring tears to a reader’s eyes, Marshall dedicates his collection of poetry not only to his grandparents, but “to the victims of state-supported and –sanctioned black death, from Emmitt Till to Damo Franklin to Rekia Boyd. Our lives matter. Y’all still live ‘cause we still live & write & fight.” After reading this, it is obvious that these short poems represents specific people who have been murdered. Number 333 shows the fear the speaker feels as he is scared he may be murdered just because he has survived this long. The charisma Marshall gave off while reading these poems is what made the poems all the more heart breaking. Marshall seemed excited to read his poetry to this audience, while his words and tone of voice portrayed the sadness of the peoples’ deaths.

My favorite poem that Marshall read is called “on being called a nigger in Ann Arbor, MI, on South University Street by a drunk ticket scalper” as it portrays the hatred and anger black people feel for racist white people. However, the speaker of the poem chooses to take the higher road and not inflict damage on this man:
the quick simmer
the immediate
boil under skin
the tighten of
fingers into fist
there is a rush
of blood
i fantasize
about turning back
to meet the
white boy where
he sits on the concrete
& use the wall
behind for leverage
as i mudhole
into his neck.

The poem continues on to show the speaker chooses not to be violent towards the white man, but within this first stanza, the audience clearly understands how difficult it is for the speaker to be the better man in the situation and not fight violence with violence. This is my favorite poem because it presents a situation in which the speaker has every right to become violent, but chooses to act out of love and simply walk away from the scene.

Marshall has a lot of heart to get up in front of an audience and read these poems to us. His poems portray a type of struggle through his life and culture he was raised in; yet show the victory he’s had by having a book published and by receiving his many awards for his poetry. Marshall’s courage, charisma and heart are necessary to ensure the meanings of his poems come across effectively. As a member of the audience, I felt shivers from the awe of his poetry.
From September 24th-27th, the English Department and the College of Architecture, Arts, and Humanities hosted the seventh annual Association for the Study of Arts of the Present Conference (ASAP/7) in the heart of downtown Greenville. Dr. Michael LeMahieu, Director of the Pearce Center for Professional Communication, worked alongside Dr. Angela Naimou, Assistant Professor, Dr. Cameron Bushnell, Associate Professor and Associate Chair of the English Department, and Emily Clarke, the English Department’s Administrative Assistant, to promote, organize and accommodate over 300 guests at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The planning committee executed a conference larger than the previous year as it raised participation by nearly 40 percent.

In previous years, the conference has been held in Detroit and Pittsburgh, cities with numerous art galleries and an urban allure that drew attendees from many disciplines. In Pittsburgh, the Andy Warhol Museum served as a reception spot for the conference’s 185 participants; the conference has also been held in London, Shanghai, and Germany. “We had a tough act to
follow,” LeMaheiu said. While small, Greenville measured up to these previous locations, and the team was able to make use of the city’s centrally located public spaces.

Each ASAP conference has a theme, the theme this year was “arts in the public,” so the planning committee looked to the Greenville cityscape for inspiration. “The bridge is such an important part of Greenville,” LeMahieu said. “It was the mayor’s vision and willingness to take on the entrenched business interest in Greenville. Because it is such a spectacular architectural accomplishment, it really was the catalyst for the downtown revitalization.” The team built upon that framework. With the help of the mayor’s office and the City of Greenville, both of which were very supportive and excited for the city to host the conference, the Clemson team focused on who would be the event’s keynote speakers.

Keynote speakers can make or break a conference. Luckily, the talented architect of the Greenville Liberty Bridge, Miguel Rosales, accepted the invitation to speak. “In our wildest dreams, the mayor would introduce him, and that ended up happening,” LeMahieu said. Dr. Cameron Bushnell worked closely with Miguel Rosales, from Rosales and Partners of Boston, and attended dinner with the Mayor and Rosales. Bushnell says, “It was clear that they were good friends and planning new projects for Greenville.” The Greenville News’ Paul Hyde wrote two stories in preparation of the conference, one of which was focused on the bridge. With the “arts in the public” theme in mind, the team also invited Harvard University’s Doris Sommer, Director of the Cultural Agents Initiative, who teaches scholars how their work can impact schools through workshops that aim to broaden the political and artistic scope. Bushnell says Greenville was the “perfect city for this conference. In fact, Greenville’s Vice Mayor, Lillian Flemming, attended the workshop with keynote Sommer. A lot of people said the hotel itself made the experience.” The Hyatt Regency had recently renovated in modern appeal, so it seems a perfect fit for Arts in the Present. Finally, the team brought in Wangechi Mutu, a renowned artist whose work focuses on the intersection between art and cultural identity. The diverse group of keynote speakers helped to give a narrative arc to the theme of arts in the public, and their unique interests reflected the interdisciplinary nature of ASAP. “We had an architect, a politician, Spanish professor and an artist . . . I think the organization really appreciated that,” says LeMahieu.

The Association for the Study of Arts of the Present Conference, “is a bit unique in that it’s not only very contemporary . . . it’s also committed to
working across disciplines, which is great because a lot of the people who attended the conference attended precisely because of that,” LeMahieu said. The group is made up of a variety of world-renowned artists, art historians, performers, writers, and academics, and thus its varied population of interdisciplinaries had to be accommodated. LeMahieu noted that “from the beginning, the diverse nature of the organization was a challenge. We were organizing it within the English Department, but knew that the organization was committed to being very contemporary, very global, and also cross-disciplinary.” To do this effectively, teamwork was necessary and time was essential. “You want to have people that you know well and that you have worked with before because this was going to be a huge undertaking.” Bushnell said the conference planning took nearly two years—a lengthy process. “Overall the conference was a huge success,” LeMahieu said. “I’m quite convinced that for the vast majority of those 300 people, it was their first time in Greenville and some of their first exposure to Clemson. It’s great publicity for Clemson, which is known as a science and engineering school, to host a gathering of artists and writers and scholars of this stature and on this scale. I think the exposure, not just that the English Department gets, but the entire university, for the seriousness of its commitment to the arts and the humanities
is one of the immediate benefits of the conference.”

Dr. Bushnell said she was most proud of the fact that “the academics and colleagues were really happy to be there. Not only to see old friends, but really excited about the key note speakers lined up.” She says the effect on Clemson humanities is tremendous. “The CAAH—it was a perfect match for what the college does because we had the interest in architecture through Rosales, the arts, the dancers, artists, people working with film. We showed the film Old South by Beverly Daniel—just a nice mapping of the conference onto the college or the college onto the conference.”

LeMahieu and Bushnell are convinced that the planning committee could not have executed the conference without the assistance of the staff and interns at the Pearce Center for Professional Communication. Assistant Director, Ashley Cowden Fisk, Graduate Assistants Lea Anna Cardwell and Laurie Epps, and the undergraduate student interns were instrumental in seeing ASAP/7 through from the early planning stages to the final moments of the conference. “Lea Anna was completely wonderful in terms of organizing,” says Bushnell. Teamwork was definitely essential to the success of the conference. “We strongly felt we each had each other’s backs—we could count on each
other to pick up and do what needed to be done,” stressed Bushnell.

Dr. LeMahieu beamed with pride when talking about what the Clemson team accomplished. “We did a good job of picking the theme and then presenting it across the three keynote sessions,” he said. “When was the last time that Greenville had 300 scholars, artists, writers, of that caliber all in one place, all at the same time?”
In February, a group of MAE students held the first conference from English graduate students appealing to many digital humanists, Margins: Rhetoric and Place in the Digital Now. Or Jason Crider, one of its main organizers would agree with calling it “digital rhetoric.” “DH is a good buzz word,” Crider says, who will be graduating this spring. He got the idea after attending a conference at University of Florida last year where he presented a paper. Crider described it as a great experience; “I thoroughly enjoyed it, just meeting people and talking to people and going to panels. All of it.” After returning, Dr. Sean Morey was his first supporter in his inquiry to do something similar at Clemson, along with fellow classmates Charlotte Powell, Becca Shaver, and Kristi Hixon. A University of Florida professor, Dr. Sidney Dobrin, whom Crider had met earlier and friendly colleague of Morey, was an ideal candidate for the students’ keynote speaker. Classmate MAPC Jack
Butts agreed to build a website for the project and the idea started becoming a reality.

Dobrin, a professor and Chair in the Department of English at the University of Florida and co-author of *Big Data and the Humanities*, agreed to be the keynote speaker for the Margins conference and the pieces of organizing a student-led conference began coming together. Crider and team designed a variety of panels, many including Clemson faculty (A.D. Carson and Drew Stowe) to take place on Thursday and Friday, February 25 and 26, in the Pearce Center for Communication Studio, and the workshop, featuring Dr. Dobrin. Dr. Dobrin’s workshop focused on his Trace Innovative Initiative, where he is director. TRACE is a research endeavor developed and maintained by the University of Florida’s Department of English that works at the intersection of ecology, posthumanism, and writing studies. Please visit trace.english.ufl.edu for more information on Dr. Dobrin and the TRACE initiative. Dobrin’s keynote address took place in the Watt Center Auditorium and drew quite a crowd to his presentation of “IRL: Space, Augmentation, and the Digital Now.”
So the question we all wrestle with is how is Digital Rhetoric most useful to those in the English disciplines? Crider says it’s more of progressive open-mindedness with the future. He says we are already “reading differently and we are thinking differently, narratives are different, and we interact with media differently.” Practicality in English disciplines is not always what’s at stake, sometimes, “it’s just good to think this way.” Crider reiterates, “The University is like the one place where you get paid to just think about big ideas—sometimes that turns into something. Sometimes not having a goal, a road map, or practicality lends itself to bigger things.”

Crider says that where the digital “here and now” is going is exciting. For Crider and classmates, they hope the Margins conference will continue at Clemson. A first-year MAE graduate student Matthew Duncan is on the track to organizing a conference for next year through the guidance of Crider. The unknown is often the most exciting part. Crider simplifies it with the idea of intelligent, campus individuals—students and faculty—he continues, “there’s usually a guy with a liberal arts degree that had an idea and that thinks out of the box. The journey brings something you didn’t know would happen. That’s very Daoist—trying to get somewhere—just go on that journey, but you didn’t know you were going there.”

Margins conference is seeking to explore the ways in which humanistic inquiry is being reimagined . . . by the ideas that have fallen through the cracks. The DH community provides a space “where a skeptical reverence for traditional media combines with an approach to digital studies that risks the eclectic for a chance to reconfigure the way we approach humanities research.” Margins represents the possibilities. You can learn more at the website digitalmargins.com where there is information about the conference, the future conference, and some live video of panels videoed right here at Clemson. There is also contact information and calls for papers. Jason Crider is always up for inquiries. He hopes to make it to University of Florida where he can teach and enroll in the PhD program.
When Dr. Adrian Paterson first met English Chair Dr. Lee Morrissey in the small rainy city of Galway, Ireland, he hadn’t really heard of Clemson, South Carolina. He had a sister who lived in Washington, DC, and had visited some major cities on the east coast, but hadn’t really given living in the States much thought. After all, he had moved from his native London to Galway to research his favorite Irish poet W.B. Yeats, and had never dreamed of carrying that research further—to a different continent even.

Morrissey, who was spending a year at the National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway, studying poet John Milton and his Irish influences, met Paterson and his colleagues a couple of years ago and got an idea. What if both Clemson English students and faculty had the possibility to study at NUI Galway, and professors like Paterson and English NUI Galway students had
the opportunity to study at Clemson?

Paterson was definitely interested, and since January he has been living in someone else’s home, working at someone else’s desk, and couldn’t be happier.

The differences between Galway and Clemson are certainly quite noticeable, but Paterson thinks it’s funny and makes the experience more exciting.

“I’d definitely take back the weather with me. Happily. While I’ve been here it’s been really nice. I’d also take back the trees,” he said. “The amount of forests that are around here is fantastic. A lot of trees got cut down in the west of Ireland, and the wind is so strong there’s not that many.”

There’s also the things that drive him crazy.

“It’s a love-hate thing I suppose, but I don’t enjoy the reliance on the car. Everyone drives too much. They’ve got legs and they can walk.”

Paterson also wonders how people are supposed to drink at all if they can’t walk home—a feat that’s not really difficult in the Irish pub and bar atmosphere of Galway. But there are some things that Paterson jokes are exactly the same.

“Well the obvious one is that the departments are housed in exactly the same type of building—a kind of brutal modernist 1970’s style concrete tower,” he said.

But when asked if he minds living in the small town of Clemson he hadn’t heard of before, Paterson says that it doesn’t feel too different from Galway.

“I know that it’s easy to feel stranded sometimes in Clemson, which is only two hours from Atlanta, but it’s also kind of stranded like Galway, which is a small city on an island.”

This is why Paterson thinks the exchange-program is so successful. Both Clemson and NUI Galway have a lot in common after all—they both have similar student populations, were institutions founded on tradition and history, and have a growing English department.
Paterson, who has been teaching at NUI Galway for five years, says that the university was a paternalist British attempt at repairing and localizing education for the many disenfranchised Irish who were in economic turmoil after the potato famine in the mid-19th century.

NUI Galway was born out of conflict, and Paterson sees many similarities to Clemson surrounding its own history. Clemson’s agricultural roots and attachment to southern principles is something that Paterson finds educational in his own understanding of American politics.

“There is a kind of generalized awareness of the close relationships between politics and literature which is probably to do with the shape of the academy here. It’s very publicly concerned about being inclusive and diverse and all those other things, which has helped change some of my understanding of the way literature works. Studying someone like Yeats, who was a politician himself, there’s no doubt about the politics in literature,” he said.

“It’s important to maintain that essential interest and love for the aesthetics of literature, but at the moment here and frankly for the last 100 years onward, it’s been quite a tense situation. Therefore, people perhaps feel the need to express in their literary studies something of their own political feeling, and not all of that I think is helpful interestingly enough, but I think I’m influenced more than I expected.”

Paterson definitely agrees that living and working in Clemson has helped him to better understand the significance of southern writers that he’s read before such as Flannery O’Connor and William Faulkner, and opened his eyes to new work. It has also given him an interesting new perspective on the importance of history and tradition—especially within arguments highlighted in debates, such as the most recent one involving the renaming of Tillman Hall.

“As a visitor from Europe, I don’t like the idea of taking sides publicly on this, although attending the debates, I do have my own view. Certainly given the urgent need to attract a diverse student population, and recent events in the state such as the shooting in North Charleston, these questions do reflect vital current concerns,” Paterson said. “One thing I’ve discovered is that it’s perhaps too easy to get a very polarized view of America from the other side
of the water. I think that there’s sometimes this simple perception of good and bad—that one side of the political divide, say, fits into European stereotypes of American ignorance, but I think that by living here and being here, I get a fuller understanding of the relevance of history to this place.”

Paterson says it strikes him as a profoundly important discussion whether the name of Tillman Hall changes or not, and he’s happy to see students discussing their opinions—especially by using literature.

“Talking about history matters more than ever, and if it makes you uncomfortable, it’s all the more reason to do it,” Paterson said.

More recently, in Paterson’s two English courses at Clemson: Modern Poetry and British Literature, he has been working on getting his students to talk more about the things that make them uncomfortable, and poetry in particular, has always been his favorite form of writing to do that.

“For the students, and I think this is universal, there’s a feeling that poetry is difficult and that poetry is something like a crossword puzzle that they haven’t been taught how to put together. So people are nervous of it,” Paterson said. “One of my great joys and also challenges is to say that poetry isn’t scary. Poetry is something we all have an instinct for if we can listen to a song or have heard a nursery rhyme: all of this involves rhythm and sound and language.”

Paterson says that the experiences of getting Clemson and NUI students to talk about poetry have actually been very different from one other.

“Irish students are kind of waiting for you to tell them the right answer because they think that there’s one answer to the poem, and they’re nervous to say something for fear of getting it wrong. But American students have come closer to the idea that poetry might matter to them personally, although sometimes that means that the poem they’re reading reminds them of something else that they then talk about quite articulately,” he said.

Paterson says that American students tend to be very competent and organized in their writing, and it’s easier to get them to talk in class than it is for his Irish students, but he also wants them to realize that a good essay isn’t only
organized.

“Irish students in comparison are more eccentric and erratic. What I mean by that is that students in the south are very polite, and they always attend class. They address you very respectfully, but they’re almost too polite,” Paterson said. “They need to start questioning my authority and the authority of the classes and the literature they’re doing a little more. It’s great fun helping them to do that. Irish students can, on occasion, be more surprising.”

Paterson has been helping his students at Clemson ask these questions and has developed new ideas for teaching in the classroom that he plans to take back to Galway.

“You want them to start believing they have a voice that matters. In South Carolina, people need to talk more about the things that make them feel uncomfortable. Clemson is in a good position in that it can address these changes. It sometimes doesn’t know what a good position it has to do this,” he said. “I think both our universities could learn much about how important the study of literature is and how well it’s thriving in both institutions.”

Paterson also says it’s not only the students and faculty in the Clemson English Department who have shaped his opinions on literature and higher education, but the act of studying abroad itself. Paterson’s time has been devoted to teaching and studying Yeats in Ireland, the poet’s home country, and Paterson believes that it’s important to gain that perspective—something a book can’t teach. Literature can take you places, but traveling helps you to better understand the world, its inhabitants and the ideas that shape them.

“I would encourage any students who are thinking about taking a semester abroad to do it,” he said. “It’s the best thing you’ll ever do.”
The exchange of professors between Galway and Clemson runs parallel to the start of a British and Irish studies minor here at Clemson, an opportunity that Dr. Lee Morrissey, Chair of the English Department, has been working on, alongside several other faculty members from English and History. Morrissey has also initiated a faculty-led student exchange program with the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)—a program which is currently in its first year.

While Clemson has the pleasure of hosting NUIG English professor, Dr. Adrian Paterson throughout the Spring 2015 semester, NUIG has gained a new presence as well—Assistant Professor of World Literature, Dr. Walt Hunter.

In Galway, Hunter is currently teaching parts of two lecture courses: one on W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, and After, and another on pre-1900s Irish Literature,
as well as two seminars on Modernist Fiction and Contemporary Irish Poetry. Although he’s enjoying Ireland, Hunter is keeping busy.

“I have two or three new articles that will see publication next fall and spring,” Hunter said. “I’m finishing a book manuscript; I’m working on the final chapter of that right now and also revising earlier parts of it. I’m just back from Seattle, where I co-organized a seminar at the American Comparative Literature Association with two collaborators in Slavic Studies at Yale and the University of Pennsylvania. And I’m writing a twice-weekly series of commentaries for a magazine from the University of Pennsylvania called Jacket2 about the contemporary literary scene here in Galway and in Ireland in general.”

Teaching in Ireland also means adjusting to a new department and a new teaching style.

“It’s been a pleasure to be here,” Hunter said. “To live by the ocean, and to be included so warmly by a group of faculty members who are not from my own institution, and to find so many things in common with what they’re working on. One of the not entirely expected benefits of being here has been a lot of
research collaboration with many of the faculty members here.”

Many of Hunter’s students in Ireland are studying literature, and the English major population is about five times larger than at Clemson. For Hunter, teaching about a poet like Yeats, such an important one for Ireland, has been challenging as well.

“Yeats never fails to be a very divisive figure as he was in his life. Today, we have slightly less of a sense of that in the United States than we do in the West of Ireland— a region very much populated by an Irish speaking population—with a history of making Irish language learning compulsory, and education [fit] to a kind of indigenous Irish culture—to republicanism and nationalism in various forms. Yeats doesn’t fit very well into the standard picture of a nationalist—he’s a very bad nationalist in various ways, by which I mean he rejected, at times, what he perceived as the parochialism of Irish politics.”

Teaching about Yeats in such a different context has led Hunter to think critically about his research and pedagogy.

“I’ve been learning to do the kinds of slightly more risky and experimental thinking that I have about a very canonical figure such as Yeats, and at the same time, attempt to make a kind of more formally sound [class] structure,” he said.

Hunter believes it is important “to think about the class as this a kind of narrative and to lead the class through a certain set of events—just like a plot—on the way to a development of the theme or of the idea or whatever kind of content we’re working through on a particular day.”

“I’m pushing against some of my own tendencies and seeing what results,” Hunter said. “That’s always a good thing for people, or pedagogues or thinkers or writers, to do. Yeats would think that too—the struggle between contraries is at the core of all of Yeats’s writing and thinking.”
In a way, Clemson resembles an island. While it is not fully surrounded by water, a similar nature of seclusion can sometimes be felt, and by regularly roaming an attractive campus with high appeal, students can become a part of a world within the real one and whirl into a satisfying and comfortable routine without any dramatic changes.

But many students choose a different path—participation in Clemson Study Abroad programs. Senior English major Nicole Adams is one such student, and she now finds herself on an actual island.

Adams is studying abroad in Galway, Ireland during the 2015 spring semester—a place that makes Clemson’s rain-prone weather seem trivial in comparison, and for Adams, this was only the beginning of the culture shock.
“It took me weeks to get adjusted to the rainy weather, and I was really homesick for a while,” Adams said. “I got over it, and now it’s great; it just takes time.” However, Adams admits that the culture shock isn’t what one might first expect.

“The biggest culture shock experiences are actually the little things, like stores not having salsa and tortilla chips or living with a water heater that only heats a certain amount of water per day—never ever as much as my three roommates and I need,” she said.

Adams has noticed parallels in student life at Clemson and at one of Ireland’s most prominent universities, the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG). Students go to the College Bar on campus and are involved in hundreds of clubs, from baking to Harry Potter, and organizations—one of which is centered on women’s rights. People of Ireland also share a close state of mind to Clemson students, who are perennially mentioned in publications as among the happiest college students.

“The Irish people are so friendly and laid-back,” Adams said, “I definitely hope to continue to adopt that from them once I return home.”
A daily view of Ireland’s sites has also reinforced and enhanced the knowledge Adams has acquired through readings in her area of study, literature and poetry, from Anglo-Irish writer Jonathan Swift and Irish poet W.B. Yeats, as well as the Book of Kells that was founded in a monastery off the west coast of Scotland and contains the four gospels in Latin.

“Since Irish poetry and literature are so influenced by place and landscape, seeing these landscapes and Irish cities has brought meaning and depth to my study of the work,” Adams said. “For example, I don’t think I would have the same understanding of Ulysses if I had never been to Dublin. It has been eye-opening to study Irish literature from an Irish perspective, particularly in my Post-colonial Studies seminar.”

Adams said her favorite experience in Ireland thus far came during Valentine’s Day weekend when she spent a day in Dublin with a train trip to Belfast in Northern Ireland. There, she took a black cab tour of the city and saw murals of the Northern Ireland conflict, commonly referred to as The Troubles, a 30-year span characterized by violence and loss of life over Ireland’s constitutional status.

“It was so thought-provoking and impactful,” Adams said.

Literature and poetry pertaining to events of heightened historical importance are works most intriguing to Adams.

“To me, the most interesting thing about Irish literature is that it tells a unique history of the island,” Adams said. “From pre-colonization to the fight for independence to trying to figure out how to establish and govern themselves post-independence, the landscape consistently plays a role in the literature during all of these phases. Poets and writers come back to the landscape as a way of defining and describing Ireland.”

As for her overall stay in Ireland, Adams sums it up concisely.

“It’s a life-changing experience.”
Brian Adam Smith, a recognized independent producer and videographer, brings a new set of artistic skills and approaches to Clemson: music. Smith, a new hire in the Department of English, is interested in Media Studies, Digital Humanities, and the relationships between image, sound, and text in digital media. Smith has recently won the Idol-South Award in the Department of English, and has been chosen as one of ten Clemson University professors for the Digital Creativity Faculty for 2016 by the Center of Excellence and will subsequently showcase his students’ work at Adobe eduMax in San Diego in the fall.

Smith grew up in Asheville, NC, and received a B.A. in English from Appalachian State University in Boone, NC, and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Emory University in Atlanta, GA. As a professional and independent producer in the music industry, Smith works primarily in video production,
promotions, creative content, and social media. Several of his clients are Grammy Award winning and internationally renowned artists.

Smith primarily works in Americana and American Roots music, having recently filmed with internationally acclaimed actor, comedian, novelist, and multi-Grammy Award winning musician Steve Martin, Grammy Award winning Steep Canyon Rangers, 19 time IBMA Award winner Del McCoury, as well as 14-time Grammy Award winning Jerry Douglas (Alison Krauss and Union Station, O’Brother Where Art Thou) and his new group The Earls of Leicester; they won a Grammy Award for Best Bluegrass Album in 2015. One of Smith’s recent video productions features Jerry Douglas and Steep Canyon Rangers performing “The Boxer” by Simon and Garfunkel, and was premiered by Rolling Stone.

This January, Smith invited two of his students from the fall semester, Haley Blair Jones and Bett Dominick, to join the film crew for a high profile performance after Jones and Dominick reached out to him for opportunities to gain experience and develop content for their portfolios. That performance was Steep Canyon Rangers with special guest Steve Martin at The Orange Peel in Asheville, NC.

Currently, Smith is working with Jones assisting a non-profit organization in Rwanda called Boundless Peace with digital graphic design. According to Boundless Peace, the non-profit organization “helps to create sustainable community programs that promote peace and unity through education, rainwater collection programs, preschools, community gardens, and training and literacy programs for adults.”

Smith is currently working on three feature length documentary films, one co-produced by Jerry Douglas, another co-produced with Steep Canyon Rangers. The third documentary is about an African-American clogger named Arthur Grimes, who has performed with the likes of Doc Watson, Carolina Chocolate Drops, Abigail Washburn, Steve Martin, Steep Canyon Rangers, and most frequently Old Crow Medicine Show.

Despite having filmed with dozens of artists, Smith’s all-time favorite project
in the music industry so far was actually one of his first, when he was teaching himself digital video production and editing. He produced a documentary short/tribute called “Doc Watson Sitting Beside Himself.” It was a short video of Doc Watson, a blind musician, who “won as many Grammy’s as the Beatles, but was very humble and a very amazing and awesome person,” said Smith. Of the vast majority of people that Smith has worked with, Doc Watson was one of his biggest heroes. The video is of the first time Doc Watson sat next to a life-size bronze statue of himself erected in Boone, NC, near Doc’s hometown of Deep Gap in 2011. “Of course he can’t see it, but he’s touching it and making jokes about it and it’s very cool,” said Smith. It was released on the first day of MerleFest in 2013, the first MerleFest after Doc Watson’s passing. Recently, Smith filmed a historic performance including Jerry Douglas and his band The Earls of Leicester with special guests Del McCoury and Eddie Stubbs (Grand Ole Opry) as M.C. in Shelby, NC; the show was a benefit for The Earl Scruggs Center and Museum that showcases, among other media, archival video footage and digital interactive exhibits. This project was the im-
petus for one of his three documentaries.

Smith is particularly interested in 21st-century communication. “We are in what some would call the 21st-century video boom; it would take 50 years to watch all of the videos that were uploaded to YouTube yesterday,” Smith said. He asserts that it’s growing in both “cool” and “alarming” ways.

Smith describes the Department of English as “progressive” because he feels he is “highly encouraged to utilize the multimedia resources that Clemson offers” and that it looks to the future and reflects on how it serves the university as a whole, “offering courses and hiring creatives, like myself, that cater to English majors as well as all majors,” says Smith. “It just makes my life all the more wonderful because that is where I am coming from. I am coming from audio-visual production, and I’m coming from a creative multimedia background.”

In the fall semester, Smith and his students made Clemson University history by becoming the first group to record in the Adobe Digital Studio’s voice-over room.

Smith has an undeniable appreciation for hard work and creative prowess. When asked if he had any advice for people aspiring to have a career in the
music industry or a creative field, he says the most important thing is that it changes a lot and very quickly. “It depends on what they want to do. Being a musician is very different than being on a social media team, or a publicity team, or working for a label,” says Smith, but he insists that it is worth keeping up with the pace and working hard to achieve your creative goals.

In the music industry, for instance, “It’s not just a perpetual party like the stereotype a lot of people have for it. It requires a lot of hard work, a lot of waking up early, and a lot of staying up late. Every night is different...it changes every day,” says Smith. “You have to treat it like a 9 to 5, even if your day really ends at 4:00 am.”

He advises anyone looking for a career in a creative field to “stay positive and pick out the groups, the people, the outfits, etc. that you really like, and watch what they do. Pay close attention to their social media presence and who they are working with,” says Smith. “If you find someone that shares your creative perspective, bounce ideas off each other and collaborate.”

Whether Smith is attending the International Bluegrass Music Association or the Americana Music Festival, filming live performances, directing music videos, working with non-profit organizations, editing his own documentaries, or integrating the Adobe Digital Studio into his curriculum, one thing is certain: he will be using his creative talents and experiences to better the overall Clemson experiences for all of his students.

For more information and videos, go to www.brianadamsmith.com
Candace Wiley, one of Clemson’s new English lecturers, has a unique background that enables her to think and write about race from a distinct point of view. Originally from South Carolina, she received a BA in English Language and Literature from Bowie State, a historically black university, in addition to an MA in American Literature from Clemson and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of South Carolina. She was then awarded a Fulbright grant to conduct research in Colombia, an experience she says revealed the connection between education, class, and race that members of academia are not able to recognize.

“Because I have had the privilege of accessing spaces like USC and Clemson, it’s clear to me when these spaces are absent,” Wiley said. “When I was in Colombia, they have their local universities, but the access I had to the library was not at all the same as in the U.S. They don’t have the kind of resources that we take for granted. The thing about the library, especially a university library,
is that it creates an equal playing field. It’s democracy at its best. You can go in and read and you don’t have to purchase the book. Without that, access to books becomes a class issue rather than a time issue.”

Wiley grew up in a home that valued education as a means of self-improvement, whether that education came through a university or other means. “My grandparents were not able to access the full range of education, but in many ways they were self-taught,” Wiley said. “My grandmother on my dad’s side was incredibly intelligent just because she was a voracious reader, and on the other side, my grandpa reads every night out of the Bible. He is really a force when it comes to the knowledge that he’s gained on his own.” Wiley’s parents were first-generation college students and encouraged her to pursue an education as a way to support herself through her art, a path she has wanted to follow since the third grade.

All the hard work and encouragement from her family paid off. Wiley is featured in the 2015 edition of The Best American Poetry for her piece “Dear Black Barbie.” The poem questions society’s perception of the conventional standards of beauty typically associated with Barbie dolls, and the possibility of a post-racial America—a topic that informs both her reasons for writing and her finished work. As Wiley sat on a campus surrounded by testaments to the South’s history of slavery, she said, “We cannot continue pretending that we are post-racial.”

Wiley believes her South Carolina roots and the experiences she’s had at various universities—north and south, domestic and international—have helped her understand what needs are universal and what are unique to the setting. She quoted James Baldwin when she said, “Leaving home helps you see home more clearly.”

The idea that one must travel in order to fully understand the self informs Wiley’s current project, a collection of poems focused on Afrofuturism. “Afrofuturism imagines people of color in fantastical and science fiction spaces,” she explained. “So, these are places where you don’t typically see them. Think about mythology, think about mermaids, and think about monsters even.” Wiley’s hope is that by travelling outside the bounds of spaces where people of color traditionally inhabit, and into the area of traditionally white-
dominated science fiction, she will be able to reimagine and better realize their identity. In this collection, Wiley writes about African mermaid zombies, Klingons, and, of course, black Barbie’s.

However, perhaps more important to Wiley is The Watering Hole, her online blog dedicated to “creating spaces for poetry education for poets of color in the South.” The project originally began while Wiley was in Colombia, and it has since grown into yearly retreats, a series of online master classes, festival workshops, interviews, and online forums.

“The Watering Hole is an organization that I truly believe in because it confronts the isolation that poets of color often feel in spaces that are predominantly Caucasian American, and it helps them connect in a space of people who share similar experiences,” Wiley said. “We teach craft, we build better poets, we build tribe, and we do so in a way that is revolutionary.”

The Watering Hole reinforces Wiley’s belief that educating poets of color is important to the literary legacy of South Carolina, and it relies on donations from people who are equally passionate about their cause. Wiley’s devotion to the project is unmistakable; she was quick to explain that this is a space she
would have loved to take advantage of as a young writer, and one she hopes young writers will access regardless of their location or personal situation.

As Wiley begins her time at Clemson, she hopes to make her students question the world around them. Regardless of the background knowledge her students bring, she strives to create an environment that allows students to access, communicate intelligently about, and enjoy a variety of subjects. Yes, some of those subjects have to do with African mermaid zombies, but “some of them are just essays that make students think,” says Wiley.

Wiley noted that “making students think” is a critical step Clemson must take to address the perceptions of race that mar its history. The conversation can, and should, begin in the classroom, and she believes Clemson is making huge strides by bringing in lecturers to teach faculty members how to discuss these difficult questions in their classes because it ensures that students are exposed to varied perspectives in a community setting.

“We are striving to be very responsible and diligent about how we understand that people experience life differently solely based on race and how we can probe our own responsibility within that historical trajectory. As far as I can determine,” said Wiley, “Clemson has been awakened.”
Austin Gorman is excited to see writers of all ages coming in and out of the doors of the Writing Center where he recently took over as Director.

Born in Dearborn, Michigan, a suburb on the southwest edge of Detroit in 1982, Gorman’s early life certainly wasn’t a picnic; and if it was, someone definitely forgot to bring the Sun Chips. With gang violence being as bad it is today in Detroit, many were forced to join a gang for their safety, but luckily Gorman pursued a much more pleasurable option through singing and dancing.

While he found doo-wopping on the street corners to be fun, Gorman’s passion for reading naturally led him to pursue English as a major at the University of Michigan, much to the disdain of those closest to him. While he admits that the years after his graduation are a bit of a blur, Gorman eventually
wound up with a PhD from Brown University and at the doorstep of Clemson University with “a mind full of facts, [his] body at the peak of physical performance, and with a sincere desire to be the best writing center director in the history of writing center directors.”

In addition to his new position as Writing Center Director here at Clemson, Gorman teaches Professional Development for English majors as well as the Writing Fellows practicum, which has twelve new fellows that he is currently instructing in writing pedagogy. Gorman taught a sophomore literature class previously, which allowed him to use his interest in 20th Century American novels, specifically postwar novels. He included James Dickey’s The Deliverance, which he thought was a hook into the class for his students because of the local connection. Dickey actually completed a semester at Clemson, and the river where Deliverance is set is located close by, sparking much intrigue from his students.

Outside of scholarly work, Gorman is a music enthusiast and a sports fan. “I was in a band in graduate school . . . our name kept changing, we were Guitars and Cadillacs first—after the Dwight Yokem song.” Gorman is a big fan of country music and would love to learn to play the banjo as well, but he is quick to say that his wife might not appreciate that. His other interests include “everything to do with pop culture, advanced baseball statistics and scouting reports.” He says the Clemson baseball team is fun to watch, but he is ultimately a Detroit sports fan. “The Tigers, The Lions—they’re arguably the worst franchise in all sports, but I’m fan of them,” Gorman laughed.

At Clemson, he hopes to build on the Writing Fellows Program and encourage faculty collaboration to teach student writing across the disciplines. Gorman says he is excited to be here and to work with a community that focuses on the success of both its students and its faculty.
Crystal Stephens’ interest in English began when she was little with her love of fairy tales. Stephens never had a desire to teach, but admitted that her daydream of getting paid to read books all day in a hammock seemed slightly unrealistic.

Deciding to go back to school and get a master’s degree, Stephens started looking at different programs. Stephens received her MS in Technical Communication and an MA in Folklore from Utah State University after learning that she could get a degree in the fairytales that she has loved since she was a child. “I grew up reading Grimm’s fairy tales, Hans Christian Andersen, and stories from other countries, including Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology,” she said. “I especially love reading and watching new takes on fairy tales and seeing how they are still in constant use.”
In her thesis, Stephens focused on incorporating a favorite childhood tale, “The Six Swan Brothers,” with the idea of the rhetoric of silence. According to Stephens, we don’t typically think of silence as a means of communication even though it is.

The female character in “The Six Swan Brothers” is cursed to silence, yet she manages to continue living a normal, full life. Stephens elaborates, “I analyzed the variations of the story—in stories, being silent, particularly for females, is regarded as weakness or the women have no voices; they are voiceless. It’s interesting to think of silence—whether it is a sign of weakness or one of power.” Stephens was quick to add that she would love the opportunity to teach a class on fairy tales. “We are obsessed with fairy tales and adapting them and reimagining them,” she states.

Stephens keeps things interesting outside the classroom as well. Her two year old daughter, Claire, always manages to keep her busy and is already becoming quite fond of reading. Whenever she finds time between paperwork and being a mother, Stephen and her husband, who’s finishing up his second year in the RCID program at Clemson, love to take Claire around the area, always for new places to explore around Clemson.

Stephens believes that Clemson’s English program will continue to grow through the expansion of technology and students’ critical thinking skills. Stephens offers advice to students saying, “If you want to have a successful career, you need to learn how to research. Whether it’s researching the field you want to go into, the kind of experience you’ll need to find a job, the company where you want to work, or how to do something that you don’t know how to do—we live in a world where we have access to nearly limitless information. Learn how to use that to your advantage.” In other words, Stephens might say, create and reimagine your own version of a fairy tale.
Melissa Dugan, a new English lecturer, remembers fighting her way against the cliché that English teachers are nothing more than awkward, nerdy bookworms. Dugan has a background in philosophy, history, and literature with an MA in Education from Holy Family University and an MA in Liberal Studies from Villanova University. Upon entering the educational system as a high school English teacher in Philadelphia, PA, she was surprised by the negative connotations that some people had about English teachers. “Whenever I told people I was an English teacher, the inevitable response is a nervous shudder,” Dugan said. “Sometimes I’d even get a statement like, ‘If I’d known that, I’d have made sure I used better grammar.’”

Despite the negative responses, Dugan continued teaching but it wasn’t until a few years ago that she first thought about a job in higher education. Visiting
a friend that happened to work here at Clemson University, Dugan fell in love with all of the lakes and beautiful scenery in the Clemson area, which helped push her to apply for a job here.

Now Dugan spends a lot of time in the rolling hills when she isn’t working. She loves to take her dog on walks around the Botanical Gardens and further explore the Clemson area. On a lazier day, though, she certainly wouldn’t mind to read more of her favorite author, Margaret Atwood, and practice her cooking while watching Netflix. In her classroom, Dugan hopes to bring in her interdisciplinary background and experiences with early German romanticism to encourage students to read texts that are more foreign and complex.

Dugan is excited to join and work with the countless bright minds in the English Department. She admits that while she might be a little too talkative at times, that is probably why she decided to fully embrace the clichés and become an English professor. “I’m full of allusions, illusions, and tangents,” Dugan said. “That, and I happen to look wicked sharp in a pair of glasses, too.”
One of Kristen Aldebol-Hazle’s favorite days in her classes is Middle English Pronunciation Day, a day in which her students learn how to accurately pronounce Middle English words. Aldebol-Hazle grew up in Mauldin with a father who is a huge Clemson fan. She attended Duke for her BA and then went to UC Davis for her MA. Aldebol-Hazle wrote her dissertation on a religious allegory, which she initially found to be very boring until she realized that there was actually a social commentary buried within it on the struggle of the lower class. For this reason, Aldebol-Hazle says she motivates her students to stick with the things that confuse them, or the things that they don’t understand at first, “because they can eventually uncover something really interesting.”

Aldebol-Hazle said Clemson was high on her list of potential teaching opportunities from the start. One of the things she finds special about Clemson is the sense of community. She said it is easy for students to connect
and build relationships with each other because they share classes and dorms, but once you are out of school and starting a new job, there is nothing that forces people to be friends with their co-workers. However, Aldebol-Hazle says that Clemson is unique in this regard because everyone she works with is amazing and friendly, always willing to help out, and offer words of encouragement. She is also impressed by the students who are “so open and earnest and willing to try anything.”

When she isn’t working, Aldebol-Hazle enjoys knitting, cooking, and baking. “I really enjoy making things with my hands … because so much of my working life is in my head. I like having the tactile aspect as well,” she said. Aldebol-Hazle also loves writing fiction, something she thinks may surprise many of her colleagues since she is a medievalist who deals mostly with nonfiction works. She has actually written two novels, each over a span of only 30 days. She did this through National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), a competition which asks writers to write over 1000 words each day for a span of a month in order to have a completed novel by the end. Aldebol-Hazle says with this, as with her dissertation, and when she ran a marathon, she thought of the larger task as smaller chunks in order to accomplish it.

While she is here at Clemson, Aldebol-Hazle hopes to convince more students who are not English majors that English is “actually really fun and useful for them.” She said, “My goal is that by the end of the semester they think about literature in a totally different way.”

Middle English Pronunciation Day is only one of the many ways Aldebol-Hazle allows her students to uniquely engage with literature, and she looks forward to continuing this type of tradition in the years to come.
Stephanie Stripling is a lecturer here at Clemson, specializing in 18th-century literature. Stripling’s accomplishments include earning a BA from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Canada; an MA from the University of Limerick in Limerick, Ireland; and an EdD from the University of North Carolina Wilmington in Wilmington, North Carolina. Known as an “experimental” instructor, Stripling hopes to help her students grow to not only gain the skills and values necessary to be great employees, but also help them change the world by helping them take risks and find their passions. A fan of oxymorons and being an “open book,” the lecturer truly loves Tigertown, believing that she “could not ask for a better place to work.”
The Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition is located on Yale University campus. It contains thousands of letters, diaries, maps, pamphlets, books, newspapers, photographs, and paintings that display history of the United States during the early war periods. The center is known for its collaboration with professors, public schools, museums, parks, and historical societies.

With its multiple programs and exhibitions, the Gilder Lehrman Center inspires both the love of scholarly research and American history. It is also home to the Frederick Douglass Book Prize, an annual award for the most outstanding nonfiction book in English on the subject of slavery, abolition, and antislavery movements. In a unique format, the Gilder Lehrman Center
welcomes the public to the influence of slavery on an international level with its state-of-the-art facilities and educational programs.

The Gilder Lehrman Center provides short-term research fellows for doctoral candidates, college and university faculty, and independent scholars through a rigorous application process. Out of a nationally competitive applicant pool, Dr. Michael LeMahieu and Dr. Susanna Ashton, associate professors in the English Department at Clemson University, were both awarded semester-long fellowships in back-to-back semesters—quite an educational accomplishment.

LeMahieu, an Associate Professor of American Literature and Literary Theory, spent the beginning of 2015 in residency at the Gilder Lehrman Center, a place where week-long seminars, online, museum, and traveling exhibitions, online courses, internships, and Saturday morning programs for primary and secondary education students take place. “Yale’s Beinecke Library, which is where I spent most of my time, is just incredible,” LeMahieu said. His initial visits to the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, were just the beginnings of a long-term book project.
LeMahieu’s new book project considers civil war challenges and obstacles showcased in civil rights literature. “It’s how the memory of the Civil War and the fight for civil rights intersect in the literature that I’m looking at,” said LeMahieu. Yale’s special collections library had information from the manuscripts of authors Robert Penn Warren and Richard Wright, which was extremely helpful for LeMahieu. “I was inspired by this type of project because I kept asking myself, ‘What was it like during the time the Civil Rights Movement was unmasking while there were ceremonies taking place celebrating the 100th year anniversary of the Civil War at the same time?’”

Dr. Susanna Ashton, who also teaches American Literature at Clemson, spent her fellowship preparing to complete her book, A Plausible Man. Ashton’s book will depict the life of John Andrew Jackson, a fugitive slave and transatlantic agitator. He fled from his South Carolina plantation to Massachusetts and lectured on abolition in England and Scotland only to return to the United States after the war, settling in New Haven, CT. He worked as a laborer and philanthropist for the destitute of South Carolina freedmen. A Plausible Man will describe Jackson’s complex life and introduce
readers to the raw pieces of history that allow us to understand a way to see American history beyond the history books.

Ashton said one of the greatest pleasures about the fellowship program was having unlimited access to the Yale’s library collections and working with the talented reference staff. “I’ve also benefited greatly from intensive archival work at the New Haven Historical Society and at archives throughout New England that I’ve been visiting,” Ashton said. “The opportunity to learn about the most current scholarship in my field has also been both inspiring and a bit terrifying as I regularly attend lectures and workshops with scholars in slavery studies from around the world. I look forward to having big chunks of my research completed, but I also look forward to redesigning and reshaping different ways I can teach my Clemson English classes from here on out.”

The Gilder Lehrman Center fellowships are full of rich experiences and scholarly enthusiasm. With its ability to reach out to thousands of professors, the Gilder Lehrman Center by design creates a better education in American history for more than a million students.
The discussion titled “How Black Lives Matter to Evangelicals: Progressive Evangelicals and the Problem of Race – 1965-2015” was part of the Race and the University series, led in part by Dr. Rhondda Thomas, which seeks to bring more racial inclusion and history to Clemson’s campus. The presentation was led by Dr. Brantley Gasaway, an associate professor of religious studies at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania and author of the book Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice. Gasaway’s book details how the history of the progressive evangelicals began and has developed over the past five decades.

In his lecture, Gasaway hoped to emphasize the fact that “evangelicals themselves, as well as others can be advocates for racial justice, but it requires them to address structural racism and not just personal racism.”

Gasaway began with a summary of the progressive evangelical movement, which split from its modern conservative counterpart because of differences in
opinion concerning the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War. While the movement officially started after George Zimmerman’s acquittal of the death of Trayvon Martin, the fight for true racial equality has been around since the 18th century. Among the allies of the African American freedom activists during the Civil Rights Era was the Kennedy family and a large number of Jewish-Americans. Gasaway made the argument that the liberal religious sect was empathetic towards the Black Lives Matter movement because it interprets sin as both a personal and social concept.

The lecture brought up the group’s leaders, such as Jim Wallis and Jim Rice—both Christian writers and activists who were involved in the racial equality movement. Their work can be found in the literature magazines The Other Side and Sojourners, two publications founded to end an American society described by a member of one of the publications as “cancerous with racism.” Other topics of discussion included the Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern, that said Christians must demonstrate love to “those suffering social abuses,” as well their views on how the administrations of presidents Reagan, Clinton and Obama have handled race issues in America. Reagan’s administration was criticized for its hyper-focus on individualism and the cutting of programs designed to help Black Americans. While the evangelicals found the Clinton and Obama administrations to be slow but hopeful movements to a more racially equal America.

Gasaway offered his thoughts on the small but growing number of contemporary evangelicals joining the Black Lives Matter movement. Among them is Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, who has been very adamant about what he feels is a large problem of police brutality against African Americans. The lecture ended with a forum, through which Gasaway answered questions about the racial and denominational makeup of the progressive evangelical community and minorities’ reactions to the sect’s support.

Dr. Elizabeth Jemison, an assistant professor in Clemson’s Department of Philosophy and Religion, explained her optimism about the event. She said, “I think that part of the reason as to why this event is important is the way that it shows us that there’s a long history of white evangelicals that are not seen as advocates for social justice or progressive causes … it’s not just something
that started with the Black Lives Matter movement, but hopefully the lecture has given the audience a sense of this minority of white evangelicals voicing that racism is a systemic problem and that evangelical theology should have a response to it.”

As the university continues to have these discussions, Doug Herlong, a junior religious studies major, had an expression of satisfaction, saying, “I think that this lecture is one of a lot of events that are cool and interesting as far as getting the conversation going in our culture in relation to racial diversity and tensions that have arisen. It helps to answer questions such as, ‘What about race or racial tensions?’ or ‘How can we objectively deal with this?’ It helps to give me perspective on what to do should these events arise again.”

At the end of the lecture, I left feeling perplexed. I am not a religious man, and originally I had skepticism toward the success of this event. Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Gentleness, self-sacrifice, and generosity are the exclusive possession of no one race or religion.” As a black man from the South, the idea of saviors seemed ludicrous to me—simply a way to depict those of that defined group as “saviors,” a word used overzealously. Yet, as time went on, I began to truly understand the group’s impact on the racial equality movements. I found that gentleness, self-sacrifice, and generosity characterize the valiant progressive evangelicals. This group holds Gandhi’s words true and has and hopefully will continue to help move the Black community to a better place.
Effortless writing is a technique most poets use to express themselves easily and articulately. Margot Douaihy, a hilarious and unforgettable poet, has a memorable and specific writing style as it is witty and fluent. Clemson University had the opportunity to host Margot Douaihy’s poetry reading. Douaihy shared her collections of poetry with a captivated audience in the 1941 Studio for Student Communication. Most of these readings were from her recently released book, *Girls Like You*, published through the Clemson University Press 2015. As Amy Lemmon, author of *Saint Nobody* states, “With technical virtuosity, Douaihy deftly moves from crystalline free verse, to densely wrought prose poems, to tight forms like the triolet and villanelle. Her speakers are plaintive, seductive, and strident in turn, bearing witness to a young woman’s coming of age on the cusp of the twenty-first century.”

Douaihy’s poetry is hard to classify as either funny or dark—her reading of “I Said The Bruises Were From Dancing” is about a bone-shattering accident she got into with a shopping cart. The poem states:
I said the bruises were from dancing because it’s hard to explain that I shattered my knee & sprained my wrist falling from the shopping cart we needed to surf while rolling on Ecstasy at 4 a.m.

Although her writing provided enough imagery to see her brilliant description of riding on the front of a grocery cart, the poem leaves a bad taste in your mouth as you discover that, in contrast to the title, the grocery cart left her with a completely shattered leg— not from dancing. Although the poem has a dark twist to it because the poet shatters her leg in the accident, it has a comical note in the title that misdirects the audience.

My favorite poem that she read was one called “V” as it emphasized the interconnectedness of separate things throughout the multiple observations of a flock of geese that form a V in the sky. An old woman, a young woman, and a man all notice the V in the sky, connecting them together in one shared moment. However, the three characters lead different lives from one another:

A man walks to the subway, past the park.
He notices a V of geese glowing overhead, a young woman catching her breath against the fence, an old woman knitting with ghosts, & remembers a lake he found during a hike.
This moment joins all three characters together. It leaves the audience with an overall peaceful feeling. One of the most important aspects of learning to write poetry is learning to read and listen to spoken poetry separately as it could supply different interpretations. After several years of writing, I like to call myself a poet–in–training and as a part of that process, it is necessary to develop my own poetic “voice.” Whether the poems were dark, funny, or peaceful, Douaihy’s spoken reading really made the poetry all the more exciting as it provided a clarified meaning behind the written words. Douaihy’s voice made it obvious when one should laugh or find oneself in an internal sort of disturbance from the troubling images. This is a really important aspect of poetry for me. It helps to know how the poet wants the audience to interpret her words. Her dark, yet witty, and comical writing style combined with her spoken reading made this all the more exciting for the audience who were restless to receive autographs at the end of the reading.
The phrase “Their Bearing is Noble and Proud” was projected on the wall greeting attendees as they walked in for the “Cherokees in Upstate South Carolina” talk. The event is one of many featured in Clemson’s Race and the University lecture series that aims to instill a racially diverse convention to further the Clemson community’s cultural awareness.

The presenter was Luther Lyle, director and curator of the Museum of the Cherokee in South Carolina, located in Walhalla. Lyle was a service member in the military and designed a historically accurate flag for Oconee County. Now working at the Native American museum, Lyle devotes his career to educating the public and raising awareness about the history and culture of the First Nations peoples.

The lecture started with a discussion of the Cherokees’ relationship with the English colonizers that began with their first encounter in 1740. Soon after,
the Cherokees’ style of dress, languages, housing and the more equal roles of women and men compared to English society were addressed. Lyle elaborated that there are still important populations of Cherokees in South Carolina today, as many of their ancestral roots can be traced to the western and upper parts of South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

The lecture concluded with a question and answer forum, and the audience asked Lyle a variety of questions relating to the Cherokees’ language, lifestyle, and artifacts that could be found around the area. Lyle was quick to inform the attendees that there are particular places that cannot be excavated by the lay public. When asked about how far in time the public should look to truly understand the Natives’ cultivation and development, Lyle said that one could go back 500 years to study the Cherokees and over 1,000 years to study the aboriginals in general.

Members of the audience had strong reactions to the lecture and series. Cierra Townson, an English literature major pondered after the talk with me about the “cultures that are to this day ignored, oppressed or appropriated within our American ‘melting pot’ and are fighting against ignorance, intolerance and flippant attitudes to gain their equal rights; and of these fights for rights, the Native American cause is arguably the most overlooked. What should we do to heighten our awareness?”

Although I knew some information in regards to the Native American people, it was only a cursory, superficial view. I think that the answer to Townson’s question is education. Through the use of these lectures and Lyle’s teachings, I was able to learn more about the Cherokee Nation and their history in this area and how they interacted with colonial people. As psychotherapist Amy Bloom put it: “People tend to forget that in our country, [we’re] pretty much all immigrants, except the Native Americans.”

For more information on the Cherokees, or the Museum of the Cherokee in South Carolina, you can visit cherokeemuseumsc.org or attend the museum located at 70 Short Street in Walhalla, South Carolina. The museum seeks to encourage education about the indigenous people through the use of art works, cultural entities, and artifacts made or found around the area.
A MESSAGE RESONATING THROUGH A ‘FRAMEWORK’ OF LANGUAGE

GAVIN OLIVER

To “See the Stripes,” one must listen.

For the second consecutive year, a crowd gathered on Lever Beach behind the Hendrix Student Center to do just that, as they took in the second-annual See the Stripes festival that is part of Clemson University’s “Race and the University: A Continuing Campus Conversation” series.

Among the performances was the Clemson University Gospel Choir performing their rendition of Donald Lawrence’s song “There Remaineth a Rest” and the Clemson Jazz Ensemble’s instrumental of “Blue Bossa.” Sigma Iota Alpha, a Latina-based sorority, also performed several strolls—a type of synchronized dance movement—before several gifted writers took the stage to recite poems they had penned.
The message of the See the Stripes campaign intends to initiate a conversation about race that isn’t easy to start—one that poetry, spoken word, music and dance helped express during the festival held in mid-September.

Per its website, seestripescu.org, the organization founded by current graduate teaching assistant A.D. Carson is dedicated to raising awareness of “particularly the histories of laborers who contributed significantly to [Clemson University’s] development: slaves, sharecroppers and convict laborers.”

See the Stripes uses the tiger, Clemson’s mascot, to illustrate that a solid orange tiger could not survive without its black stripes. The tiger is represented by the university’s “Solid Orange” campaign and the logo acknowledges the dark parts of Clemson’s past—including the stripes on the uniforms of convict laborers, the strips of land worked by the sharecroppers, and the slaves who were subject to cruelty that tore stripes into their backs.

“I think it’s extremely important to have the opportunity [to hold the festival], and it’s a great thing,” Carson said. “Last year we did it, and we didn’t know how it was going to turn out, and I think that they believed it to be a success,
so we’re doing it again. People came out, and people seemed to be enjoying it. We had representation from the administration who’s [at Clemson] now, so we know at least that they definitely hear us.”

Carson said the language that was demonstrated during the festivities guides See the Stripes towards its ultimate goal of reaching people who can together help the full extent of Clemson’s past become further recognized. Events like “See the Stripes” and other Race and the University events allow students to engage in conversation regarding race and the history of Clemson University in order to generate creativity and educate students and faculty what it truly means to be a diverse campus.

English lecturer Candace Wiley, Biochemistry major Patrice Warren, and Carson himself took the stage and mesmerized the audience with the words they wielded for a purpose.

“I think that the arts, the poetry, the ‘See the Stripes’ poems have intervened and provided us some language to be able to have this really difficult conversation that we’ve not been able to have for a really long time,” Carson
said. “And so it’s not just the poems, but I think it’s that the poems help to provide a framework for us to kind of operate inside of.”

At the end, Real Talk, a poet and MC who was featured on “All Def Poetry” he is tagged as “Unsigned Hype” by The Source Magazine and he is dubbed a “lyrical scientist” by rapper, singer-songwriter and record producer Andre 3000, took the stage. Real Talk met Carson in Illinois when the two were doing shows.

Real Talk asked people who enjoyed his raps to snap their fingers. After hearing his smooth, flowing raps full of puns and sophisticated language, snapping could be heard through the crowd.

“Not only is he a gifted wordsmith, but he also has a positive message,” Carson said. “I think that it’s extremely important for us to use those talents that we have to be able to inspire, and to really be able to speak into existence the world that we want to live in. The great things that we want to see happen in the world, we can kind of interact with the world to make sure that they do happen, or at least to facilitate a way that they can happen.”

The campaign had the opportunity to make a difference linguistically, lyrically and through movement. Now, Carson hopes the festival moves people as he continues to open their eyes to the racial issues of the past while celebrating and reinforcing commitment to inclusion and diversity going into the future.

“We’ll see whether the things that we’re talking about actually happen,” Carson said, “but the fact that we are talking and having interactions, and they’re out here, people are present and people feel like we are having the discussion or moving toward having the discussion—I think that’s a great thing.”
Mother Nature plays tricks on everyone and Meredith Land, NBC News 5 anchor, was certainly no exception. At the end of that summer, Hurricane Floyd, a Category 5 hurricane, was making its way to Charleston. It was considered a deadly hurricane that would leave the local news station without a stable staff, as most of the reporters told the general manager they were not staying to report because the hurricane was so terrifying. And that’s when Land spoke up. “I know I’m just an intern,” she said, “but I’m from the Charleston area and I’m happy to stay and help with anything you need me to help with.” The general manager put his faith in Land and put her on the schedule to report live traffic on Interstate 26 for traffic evacuation.

During this time, the governor decided not to reverse the lanes out of Charleston. Thousands of Charleston locals waited to get out of town and sat in traffic on I-26, where Land was posted in her live truck waiting for answers.
The hurricane suddenly decided to detour from Charleston, and thankfully, it wasn’t as horrific as predicted. However, this storm showed the station’s general manager that when times get tough, Land would persevere. As the summer came to an end, the general manager gave Land some news that any graduating senior would want to hear: “We have a reporting job for you once you graduate college.”

Before the NBC internship, Land had never considered television or broadcasting as a future career. Reflecting back, she laughed about her younger personality, giving all of her credit to her sorority sisters. “I was painfully shy in my younger years — so shy,” Land said. “Honestly I only came out of my shell when I got to Clemson because my Tri-Delta sisters brought me out of it. Even now they say, ‘I can’t believe you of all people became a TV personality. You were the quietest in the group!’” Despite her shyness, Land found that she was falling in love with a career path she’d never considered before. “I absolutely loved it,” she recalled. “It was such an exciting internship and something new was always happening every day. I wrote packages, VOSOT’s (voice-over, sound-on-tape), and stories for the newscasts. I didn’t know if I wanted to be on camera, but I knew producing was certainly an option.”

Land decided to prepare herself for the real world and become more involved in news if this was the career path she wanted to pursue. During her last year, she interned with the local WYFF news station in the Upstate South
Carolina area, traveling back and forth to Anderson and Greenville to gain more experience in the news industry. She knew she would have to make tapes and video footage so she could have sample pieces to show future employers and stand out from other candidates. While she spent numerous hours a week working on her internship, the responsibilities of being a college student were also on her plate. How could she fit all of that in her schedule? “I had so many professors that were so good to me,” Land said. “They believed in me and gave me that individual attention I needed. Eddie Smith was so great and always helped me with anything I needed. I did have an English professor, Keith Morris, that knew from the start I would go into the news industry, and he helped me so much. He knew my dreams and allowed me to use the time I was supposed to be in class to go to my internship. He took his off time to work individually with me so I could get caught up in class and complete my class work.”

After graduation, Land spent the next six months in Charleston working as a reporter, eventually becoming the news anchor of the morning show when a fellow anchor decided to leave. During the next four years, she would get up at 3 a.m. and work, then go report after the morning show. As crazy as those hours were, she loved her job so much, and the fact that her family and friends got to watch her on air every night.

In the meantime, an agent out of Los Angeles was keeping up with Land and
decided to reach out to her. He offered her a position with the NBC morning show in Dallas, Texas, and Land didn’t hold back. “I’ll go,” she responded. Thirteen years later, she worked her way up in Texas and is now a main anchor for the weekday 5, 6, and 10 p.m. news shows.

When discussing the news industry, Land doesn’t hold back that it’s changed tremendously. Land recalls wearing her mom’s suits and curling and teasing her hair every day in order to look more professional. Now, Land has started to see a more “conversational” anchor style emerging in the industry. Land has been extremely successful in her career, but she doesn’t hesitate to give credit where credit is due. “I know it’s cheesy but I really give all my credit to Clemson,” Land said. “If it weren’t for my professors and friends, I wouldn’t have gotten where I am today. It was my girlfriends that brought me out of my shell and my professors that believed in me. Clemson really does have something to offer its students.”

These days when she’s not at work, Land keeps herself busy with her husband of 10 years and their 6-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son. And while she believes there was a lot of luck and timing in her success, you can bet it was that shy, hard-working intern just a few years earlier that fueled the success of her career.
Ashley Hall, a recent Clemson English graduate, is currently the Communications Coordinator for Student Affairs Publications, which entails writing and editing anything having to do with Clemson students outside of the classroom, including information on housing, dining, health, and recreation. She oversees writing and editing with interns and managing the division’s social media accounts. Ashley’s journey at Clemson, unlike many traditional students, began through a non-profit program—WAC (Women and Children Succeeding) through Anderson Interfaith Ministries that helps meet the needs of struggling individuals and families. Ashley feels especially grateful to be part of such a program and to find her place through education and full-time employment at Clemson University.

Ashley Hall has overcome many obstacles along the way, including poverty. Being married and a mother of two, Hall says, “We were almost homeless. If I had not taken a step and not done something, change would not have
been possible.” With the help of WAC, providing Hall with a car, childcare, and a support system, Hall was able to see a life change ahead. In addition to helping working mothers and students, WAC provides a mentor for their participants to ensure success. Hall requested “someone who [could] teach me how to be a better wife and a better mother and teach my kids not to have that [poverty] mindset. I also wanted someone who had been to Clemson.” That person ended up being Martha Burriss, who has since become Hall’s greatest motivator. Burriss gave Hall a piece of advice she gathered from experience in being a mother and accomplishing so much at the same time:

“Take things one contraction at a time.”

This piece of advice has helped Hall tremendously, so not to get overwhelmed with all the tasks that come with being a mother, a student, and a full-time Clemson employee. It has helped her narrow her focus at Clemson to one semester, one class, and even one paper (or exam) at a time.

Looking back at a life before Clemson, Hall worked in jobs delivering auto parts or laboring in factories. Hall saw herself as no one important because she did not have an education. Hall did not know her potential, not only in her education but in her self worth as well. “I know the difference between having a job and having a career. I didn’t then,” she says. Her husband’s income was essential to their well-being, and in order to help pull her family out of poverty, give herself and her family a better life, Hall knew she had to further her education.

Hall is achieving her goals “one contraction at a time.” She and her husband purchased their first home and she bought her first brand new car, something she is very proud of. Throughout her journey at Clemson, she says so many surreal experiences have come her way. “I got to take my first plane ride for my first professional conference (CASE District III Annual Conference), which was paid for through Clemson’s UPIC’s scholarship and donations—it was just amazing the way it all came together.” Hall says she performed a derivative work for Harry Potter on the amphitheater stage, where she played a song she wrote for the class on her guitar. She has gone to ring the carillon bells in Tillman in order to complete the traditional Clemson student bucket list her senior year, “I love Clemson. It’s gotten in my blood,” she says. Hall made the
President’s List for straight A’s in her last spring semester at Clemson. She loves creative writing, especially poetry, music and songwriting. She says with her professors’ support and guidance along the way, she was able to make the most out of her college experience.

Hall is grateful and eager to share her story with others. She encourages students to “be as serious as possible, enjoy college for what it is, but embrace what you are learning—there are life lessons here and new perspectives to see.” She says to parents working toward their degrees that it is “the hardest thing you’ll ever do, but it’s so worth it.” Hall continues working at Clemson in her current position full-time but she says there is a chance she might acquire an MA sometime in the future. “You never know what might happen,” she says with a confident smile. It’s all in taking things “one contraction at a time.”
Clemson Graduate student and father of two, Christopher Rico, is graduating in May 2016 with an MA in Professional Communication, but words aren’t all Rico communicates with. He also communicates through painting.

Rico started his artistic expression as a sculptor and “wanted to work with metals.” He began creating compositions that were three-dimensional. “When I lived in Memphis, there was this sheet metal worker that I started hanging out with,” he said. “I became enamored with copper, with its surface and just the way that it’s an oddly rich and luminescent surface.” Rico’s art is large, wall-sized, and has to be moved by trucks because of the enormity of the final pieces to be displayed. The sculptures he creates are usually hanging and are supposed to be experienced from a frontal view instead of “in the round” or
free-standing.

What’s striking about Rico’s creative life is his incredible focus on his work. Inspiration is not something he necessarily believes in. “I believe in working and going to work every day, and then when you have these ideas, then you can actually do something about them. I think work comes from work. I just keep trying to explore an idea with authenticity and see where it goes.”

He finds much inspiration for his art from his daughters’ paintings. “Their freedom and abandon [is] so liberating. I stopped using brushes and I haven’t ever gone back because there was this immediate sense that they weren’t infusive, they weren’t being careful, they were just getting it down.” Both Rico and his wife, a professional dancer, acknowledge the importance of creating and experiencing many art forms in order to develop an appreciation for creativity and art.

Rico’s real gratification comes from seeing people experience his art. He says that it creates its own energy. “The interaction with visual art is so . . . it’s just this moment, it’s stasis, so people are responding to something that is a locked image that they are interpreting dynamically through that experience and that’s what is fascinating. The arts are getting the cold shoulder. It’s dangerous to develop culture without an appreciation and understanding of the arts.”

Rico’s work has been displayed in various galleries, and he continues to work in his studio in the summer. As a professional communications major, words are still important. He presently practices writing fifteen minutes a day as routine. “It is no hyperbole—it changed my life. I always have fifteen minutes, but I never have an hour. [I] appreciate time and what I can accomplish in little stolen moments throughout the day in a very different way.” He hopes after graduation to find work in Crisis Communication, but his artwork is obviously close to his heart and will always be a priority.
Coming into Clemson University his freshman year, Gregory Kheznejat didn’t have much of a plan for his college career. However, after an impromptu move to Japan after graduation, his life unexpectedly changed for the better. Falling in love with reading and the Japanese language, Khenznejat had no idea that in a few years he would end up writing his own book instead of reading others.

Initially focusing on computer sciences, Kheznejat eventually added two minors in English and Japanese. “I’ve always written, journaled, and blogged, but I really didn’t consider anything in the English department until later in college,” he said, with his interest in the Japanese language happening shortly after. “I started writing in Japanese around 2010, mostly because I thought it would be an interesting way to study the language. At first it was
just short sketches, maybe a page at most, but eventually some of those sketches started to come together into short stories.”

Paying his way through graduate school by freelancing as an IT manual translator, a “convenient utilization” of his three fields, Kheznejat decided that he was going to move across the ocean to Japan. Describing his time there, he said that “for the first couple of years, I was very conscious of the fact that I was living in a foreign country; everything, the sounds, the smells, the rhythm, it was all fresh and exciting.” Citing Clemson University professors Dr. Lee Morrissey, Dr. Toshiko Kishimoto, and the late Dr. Leslie Williams as being big supporters of his move and giving him much advice along the way, he gradually acclimated to the region. The best piece of advice he would have to give would be to strike the balance between “that initial phase, where you want to interpret everything through totalizing differences in culture and language,” while still keeping a hold of “the sort of sense of difference and uncertainty” that makes living abroad so intriguing in the first place.

Despite his love for writing, it wasn’t until just recently when Kheznejat considered writing his novel. “I didn’t really think I had the stamina it takes
to generate an entire novel,” he said with a laugh. After he became interested about Japan’s unusual love of western marriage ceremonies, Khenzejat took it as an opportunity to improve his understanding of the native language, deciding to write it completely in Japanese. “The vows, typically stilted translations from English, delivered in intentionally heavily accented Japanese for a more authentic effect, gave me a chance to write about translation, language, and speech acts, which were already issues I was wrestling with on a daily basis just by speaking a non-native language.”

Taking inspiration from his own experiences in Japan, Kheznejat’s budding novel focuses on an immigrant, part-time wedding priest that prides himself in top quality “Christian-style” ceremonies. Discovering that these kinds of weddings are surprisingly popular in Japan, Kheznejat began to look further into this strange need. “There’s a cottage industry of expats and immigrants, typically middle-aged white guys, who dress up in frocks and perform these ceremonies on the weekends for a bit of extra cash,” he said. “It seemed like a useful framework to explore the roles [that] some types of foreigners play in society here.”
Although not having been published yet, Khenzejat is incredibly proud of what he has accomplished, including a nomination for a literature competition in Japan. While not winning, Zhenzejat takes pride in being the only native English speaker to have been nominated in the competition’s history. Being one of those people who was on the fence previously, he heavily encourages anyone who has considered going into writing to try their hand at some short stories or even a novel. “I will say that the adages about reading and writing as much as possible are true, at least for me; read as widely as you can, write as often as you can, and find good readers who will give you tough, honest feedback.”