The Office of Undergraduate Research Presents

4TH ANNUAL
Humanities, Arts, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Education & Business Conference 2017

Saturday, November 18, 2017
Lamar University, Beaumont, Texas
Alisa Hicklin Fryar is an associate professor of political science and director of the programs in public administration, public policy, and nonprofit management at the University of Oklahoma. She graduated from Lamar University in 2002 with a bachelor’s degree in political science and from Texas A&M University in 2006 with a PhD in political science. Her research, teaching, and service activities focus on higher education policy, leadership in public organizations, student success, and issues of race and ethnicity.
REGISTRATION
John Gray Center Lobby (Herman Iles Building)
8:00 AM – 8:30 AM
Registration and Posters Placement
(Continental Breakfast will be served)

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM
POSTER SESSION – I
John Gray Building A (Herman Iles Building)

WELCOME
John Gray Center – Richard Price Auditorium

Joe Nordgren, Ph.D., Interim Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, LU
9:05 AM – 9:25 AM
Kumer Das, Ph.D., Director, Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR)
Catalina Castillón, Ph.D., Asst. Director, OUR

KEYNOTE SPEECH
John Gray Center – Richard Price Auditorium

9:25 AM – 9:35 AM
Introduction of Speaker
Terri Davis, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Chair of Political Science, Lamar University

9:35 AM – 10:20 AM
Keynote Speaker
Alisa Fryar, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Science
University of Oklahoma

10:20 AM – 10:30 AM
BREAK
SESSION 1A–Oral Presentation, Reaud Honors Building – Room # 102
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM  Chair: Dr. Mamta Singh, Associate Professor of Teacher Education, LU

10:30 AM – 10:50 AM  
A Relationship between Spatial Skills and ASL Comprehension among ASL Learners  
Delaney Alexander, Meara McDonald and Brittani Bulgherini | American Sign Language | Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee, Lamar University

10:50 AM – 11:10 AM  
The Importance of Early ASL Exposure for Deaf Children  
Allison Burnett, Deanira Arroyo and Julienn Flowers | American Sign Language | Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee, Lamar University

11:10 AM – 11:30 AM  
The Effects that Early Bilingualism has on a Deaf Child  
Giselle Hernandez, Amber Row and Jazlyn Potier-Jones | American Sign Language | Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee, Lamar University

SESSION 1B – Oral Presentation, Reaud Honors Building – Room #104
10:30 A.M – 11:30 AM  Chair: Dr. Nicki Michalski, Associate Professor of Communication, LU

10:30 AM – 10:50 AM  
Harvey in Kingwood  
Holland Ensminger | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

10:50 AM – 11:10 AM  
Heroes and Victims of Hurricane Harvey  
Quade Hebert | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

11:10 AM – 11:30 AM  
The Men and Women of the Sea  
Taylor Tucker | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

SESSION 1C – Oral Presentation, Reaud Honors Building – Room # 120
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM  Chair: Dr. Catalina Castillón, Associate Professor of Modern Language, LU

10:30 AM – 10:50 AM  
Espónceda’s poetry: A reflection of the 19th century Spain  
Ailed Hernández | English | Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón, Lamar University

10:50 AM – 11:10 AM  
Rosalía de Castro: The Voice of the Silenced  
Laura Fiedler | Spanish | Mentor: Catalina Castillón, Lamar University

11:10 AM – 11:30 AM  
Becquer’s Rima IV: Beyond the Romantic  
Jorge Montero-Vallejo | Mathematics & Chemical Engineering | Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón, Lamar University
Volunteers and Hurricane Harvey
10:30 AM – 10:50 AM  Tanner Driskill | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

American Red Cross
10:50 AM – 11:10 AM  David Greer | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

Woe To The Vanquished: The Gallic War
11:30 AM – 11:30 AM  Billy Whitaker | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

The Published Manipulations of Emily Dickinson’s Poetry
12:24 PM – 12:45 PM  Heather Beans | English and Psychology w/Teacher Certification | Mentor: Dr. Sara Hillin, Lamar University

Devilish Woman Synopsis
12:45 PM – 1:05 PM  Evan Williams | Communication film and Theater Studies | Mentor: Dr. Mahmoud Salimi, Lamar University

Appreciating “Rosarito”: An Analysis of “Rosarito” by Valle-Inclán
1:05 PM – 1:25 PM  Emily Jacobs | Spanish | Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón, Lamar University

The Electoral College: Rethinking Rethinking
12:25 PM – 12:45 PM  Charles Lyons | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University
The Effects of Hurricane Harvey
12:45 PM – 1:05 PM  
**Shelvin Jackson** | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

William the Conqueror’s Effect on History
1:05 PM – 1:25 PM  
**Shawn Blair** | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

SESSION 2C – Oral Presentation – Reaud Honors Building – Room # 120
12:25 PM – 1:25 PM  
Chair: Dr. Timothy Meline, Professor of Speech and Hearing, LU

National Exploration: Unemployment and Poor Health in South Africa
12:25 PM – 12:45 PM  
**Kerrington Powell** | Psychology | Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage, Lamar University

Tuberculosis Screenings in Vietnamese Men by Socioeconomic Group
12:45 PM – 1:05 PM  
**Joseph Scott** | Psychology | Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage, Lamar University

Dementia-Friendly Community in Beaumont
1:05 PM – 1:25 PM  
**Natalie Sfeir** | Speech and Hearing Sciences | Mentor: Dr. Ashley Dockens, Lamar University

SESSION 2D – Oral Presentation – Reaud Honors Building – Room # 111
12:25 PM – 1:25 PM  
Chair: Dr. Margot Gage, Assistant Professor of Sociology, LU

Association between Low Mood and Smoking in German Men across Different Socioeconomic Groups
12:25 PM – 12:45 PM  
**Hali Frederick** | Sociology | Mentor: Margot Gage, Lamar University

Despite their high-ranking educational system, Finland has a drug problem
12:45 PM – 1:05 PM  
**Jeff Hensley** | Sociology | Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage, Lamar University

How does the consumption of alcohol in Ireland influence personal relationships and community participation?
1:05 PM – 1:25 PM  
**Guadalupe Gomez-Angeles** | Sociology | Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage, Lamar University

SESSION 3A – Oral Presentation – Reaud Honors Building – Room #102
1:35 PM – 2:35 PM  
Chair: Dr. Monica Harn, Chair of Speech and Hearing, LU

Narcissism and Art
1:35 PM – 1:55 PM  
**Marly Smith** | Graphic Design | Mentor: Dr. Sherry Saunders-Freyermuth, Lamar University

Students' Opinions and Experiences of ASL Instruction at the Post-Secondary Level
1:55 pm – 2:15 pm  
**Kelsey Monceaux** | American Sign Language | Mentor: Dr. Laura Maddux, Lamar University
Importance of Interpreters in K-12 School Environment
2:15 PM – 2:35 PM
Brooke White | American Sign Language | Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee, Lamar University

SESSION 3B – Oral Presentation – Reaud Honors Building – Room #104
1:35 PM – 2:35 PM
Chair: Dr. Cristian Bahrim, Professor of Physics, LU

Writing to “Argue”--- A Discussion of the College Argumentative Writing under the Toulmin’s Argument Modal
1:35 PM – 1:55 PM
Ying Luo | Literacy, Culture and Language Education | Mentor: Dr. Walter Raymond Smith, Indiana University Bloomington

1 / 1 Exploring the Relationship between Mental Health and Social Interaction
1:55 PM – 2:15 PM
Breana Walden | Psychology | Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage, Lamar University

The Relationship between Language Proficiency, Language Choice and Cultural Identity of Heritage Language Learners. A Case Study of Chinese Heritage Language Learners in IU Chinese Flagship
2:15 PM – 2:35 PM
Ying Luo | Literacy, Culture and Language Education | Dr. Martha Nyikos, Indiana University Bloomington

SESSION 3C – Oral Presentation – Reaud Honors Building – Room # 120
1:35 PM – 2:35 PM
Chair: Dr. Mary Scheer, Chair & Professor of History, LU

Galveston Hurricane of 1900
1:35 PM – 1:55 PM
Coy Pattison | History | Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

African-Americans and Hurricanes
1:55 PM – 2:15 PM
Kendrick Williams | History | Dr. Mary Scheer, Lamar University

A Study on Self-care in India
2:15 PM – 2:35 PM
Valencia Stewart | Political Science | Dr. Margot Gage, Lamar University

2:45 PM – 3:15 PM
POSTER SESSION – II
John Gray Center LOBBY

AWARD CEREMONY & CLOSING REMARKS
John Gray Center – Richard Price Auditorium
3:25 PM – 4:00 PM
Mary Scheer, PhD., Director, The Center for History and Culture
Catalina Castillon, PhD., Asst. Director, The Office of Undergraduate Research
Cristian Bahrim, PhD., Asst. Director, The Office of Undergraduate Research
Helping-Negating Tendencies of Ethnic and Racial Minority College Students with Depression
Sakurah Fisher
Dr. Edythe Kirk
Department of Psychology

The Impact of Mexico's National Housing Institution on the Country's Working Class
Samuel Rueda
Dr. Terri Davis
Department of Political Science

Women in Technology: Impact of External Perception
Susannah Williams, Raven Morse and Alexus Locke
Dr. Sherry Saunders-Freyermuth
Department of Art
A relationship between spatial skills and ASL comprehension among ASL Learners

Delainey Alexander, Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education
Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee

American Sign Language (ASL) programs in colleges have grown drastically over the past years. ASL has currently become the third most popular foreign language offered by universities. This newfound popularity may owe its credit to ASL’s visual appeal.

ASL is a visual-spatial language with unique grammatical features different from spoken English. Unlike spoken English, ASL has a nonlinear structure that may affect how hearing individuals process visual input. For this reason, novice ASL learners generally struggle with ASL syntax and processing, considering ASL is represented simultaneously using visual spatial movements as well as facial expressions. A study by Emmorey and Thompson (2008) indicated that ASL beginners tend to focus more heavily on the mouth while watching an ASL story. In contrast, ASL natives focus on or near the signer’s eyes. These results suggest that beginner ASL learners are more likely to struggle with processing visual spatial information. The purpose of this study was to examine hearing people’s visual-spatial skills and ASL comprehension. A total of 32 individuals participated in the study, consisting of 11 ASL beginners, 12 ASL intermediate learners, and 9 ASL interpreters. Spatial and ASL story tasks were administered to the participants to examine the differences among the three groups in spatial skills and ASL comprehension skills. The findings of this study indicate that, although the interpreter participant group outperformed both ASL student groups on the spatial task, spatial skills appear not to be related to ASL story comprehension. Based on the results, we will discuss further implications.

The Published Manipulations of Emily Dickinson's Poetry

Heather Beans, Department of English and Modern Languages
Mentor: Dr. Sara Hillin

I evaluated Collected Poems of Emily Dickinson, edited by Mabel Todd and Thomas Higginson; Unpublished Poems of Emily Dickinson, edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi; and Bolts of Melody, edited by Millicent Todd Bingham to identify editorial trends and how those trends modified the original meaning and message of Emily Dickinson's poetry. I compared multiple poems from each of the aforementioned collections to the poems found in The Poems of Emily Dickinson, edited by R. W. Franklin, which is the closest published copy to date of Dickinson's original poems. This served as a baseline for my comparisons and aided my assessment of academic merit regarding earlier editions of Dickinson's poetry.

Mabel Todd made significant changes to the grammar and punctuation of Dickinson's original poems, simplifying their meaning in the process. Although these changes are viewed with disdain by today's academics, I believe they are what kept the literary community in the late 1800's from rejecting Emily Dickinson's poetry. A key editorial trend Martha Dickinson Bianchi exhibited was the changing of vocabulary and complete rewriting/rephrasing of lines. All Bianchi achieved by making such drastic changes was being able to publish her own writing and ideas; her strong editorial opinions removed what made Dickinson's poetry hers. Millicent Todd Bingham contorted the line-to-line rhythm to reconstruct Dickinson's poetry into a four-line stanza format. While this attempt to conventionalize Dickinson’s format may have been useful in earlier publications, this collection came out after the literary community was already aware of Dickinson’s unconventional formatting.

William the Conqueror's Effect on History

Shawn Blair, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

This research will look at the impact William the Conqueror has had on history. Several questions will be answered. Why did Duke William believe he had a claim to the English thrown? Why did Harold think differently? What
happened to the Saxon aristocracy? What about the common people? What changes did Duke William make in the
government? What steps did he take to secure his rule? What architectural changes did Duke William bring to
England. What cultural affects did Williams invasion have on England? The answers will come from church records
and the writings of a few of the leaders at the battle.

The Importance of Early ASL Exposure for Deaf Children
Allison Burnett, Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education
Co-Authors: Deanira Arroyo and Julienne Flowers
Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee

Many deaf children are raised in impoverished language environments because their parents do not know sign
language, and that may result in the children falling victim of language deprivation. Unlike hearing children, these
children do not often have equal access to language for several reasons. Language deprivation is one of the most
affecting things for a deaf child’s development because all learning stems from language. Deaf children need a visual
language, ASL that they can easily access and accompany them in their visual world.
There is a critical period from ages zero to five where children acquire language easily. Once this critical period is
over, language is learned at a much slower pace. If sufficient exposure to language does not occur and children do
not acquire language during this critical period then this will affect their academic success later as well as their
language and cognitive development. Grosjean emphasized the importance of early visual language exposure for
deaf children that allows them to access world knowledge and language, communicate and interact with family
members, and develop strong cognitive skills early on in life. In this presentation, we will discuss the importance of
early ASL language exposure for deaf children during the critical period, and how this impacts their further
development in language, cognition, and social-emotion.

Volunteers and Hurricane Harvey
Tanner Driskill, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

I am working on the topic of Hurricane Harvey because I want to find out exactly how the communities of South,
Central, and Southeast Texas came together in a time of distress so that I can help others understand that in a time
of emergency the people of Texas banded together like America hasn’t seen in a very long time. I will cover the topics
of first responders, many of whom are my teammates on the baseball team here at Lamar. I will discuss how the
flooding and rains were so severe that many people drove their boats along the road to save those in need. Also, I
will go into detail on the percentage of people in the Golden Triangle area that lost their homes and evacuated, I am
among that percentage myself. The organizations that helped out both at the national and local level will also be
covered in detail, for example FEMA, the organization that paid for my roommates and I to live in a hotel after the
flooding took our apartment. Many celebrities shared the wealth and pitched in donations to help the people of Texas
as well. Not just celebrities but many professional athletes did various things to provide aid as well. Matt Carpenter
of the St. Louis Cardinals, Jay Bruce of the Cleveland Indians who is also a Beaumont native, and J.J. Watt of the
Houston Texas to name a few. Carpenter said that he would donate $10,000 for every homerun that he hits the rest
of the 2017 season after the hurricane hit. Beaumont native Jay Bruce and his wife Hannah are donating $100,000
dollars for relief efforts being attempted in their hometown as well. Perhaps the most generous donation comes from
J.J. Watt. He and his organization raised $30 million for Harvey victims. This research essay will shed light on the
people and communities that came together and showed the rest of the world what to do when catastrophe strikes.

Harvey in Kingwood
Holland Ensminger, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

I am a local Houstonian. I was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but moved to Houston at the young age of five. Houston
was greatly impacted by Harvey, and saw one of the nation’s worst floods in 500 years. One of the places that was in
the national spotlight for a day was the town of Kingwood, my hometown. North of downtown by 30 minutes,
Kingwood saw a substantial amount of water. The town is surrounded by not only the San Jacinto River, but is also
directly next to Lake Houston. In my research, I will be asking questions such as “Why did Kingwood flood so harshly?”, “Why are so many neighborhoods built in flood zones”, “What could have been done better?” etc. With this research, I hope to answer these questions and many more.

**Rosalía de Castro: The Voice of the Silenced**
*Laura Fiedler, Department of English and Modern Languages*
*Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón*

Rosalía de Castro (1837-1885) is an accomplished poet famous for the defense, preservation, and celebration of her Galician heritage despite a period of oppression under the rule of the central Spanish government. Rosalía faced many challenges: an illegitimate birth, the societal expectations of women in 19th-century Spain, and a socio-political disregard for her Galician language and culture. Despite these obstacles, Rosalía successfully published poetry in both Castilian Spanish and Galician languages and is regarded as a champion of Galician culture. An analysis of her poem “IV” in the collection titled En las orillas de Sar reveals Rosalía’s use of Galician nature to depict both melancholy and a search for hope in an attempt to give voice to the silenced.

**Association between Low Mood and Smoking in German Men across Different Socioeconomic Groups**
*Hali Frederick, Department of Sociology*
*Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage*

Background: Germany has one of the highest smoking rates in men as compared to other European countries. This study will explore the association between low mood and smoking across different socioeconomic groups.

Methods: World Health Survey data were analyzed on 200 men aged 20 to 44 in Germany. The main outcome was self-assessed low mood. Logistic regression was used to compare low mood within men across different socioeconomic groups to examine the effects of smoking.

Results: Preliminary results show higher rates of low mood and higher rates of smoking amongst lower-income men as compared to higher income men.

Conclusion: Although our conclusions are tentative, lower-income groups need more interventions to combat higher smoking rates and poorer mental health outcomes.

**How does the consumption of alcohol in Ireland influence personal relationships and community participation?**
*Guadalupe Gomez-Angeles, Department of Sociology*
*Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage*

Ireland is considered one of the heaviest drinking countries in the world. The object of the study is to identify how consumption of alcohol influences student’s personal relationships and participation in the community. Data from the World Health Survey were analyzed on 1,013 women and men aged 18-35 in Ireland. The main outcome was alcohol consumption. We expect to find that students who drink heavier have less personal relationships and community participation as compared to students who drink less.

**American Red Cross**
*David Greer, Department of History*
*Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer*

Hurricane Harvey made landfall late Friday evening on the 25th of August as a category four hurricane. The hurricane which had strengthen very quickly has made landfall and would do a slow two mile-per-hour meandering path from south Texas toward Houston and finally exist Texas near Matagorda. Heading back to the Gulf of Mexico and turning
north toward Louisiana making its last landfall near Camden on August 30th. However, before leaving Texas Hurricane Harvey caused catastrophic, devastating, and historical life-threatening floods across fifty counties affecting nearly thirteen million Texans. This research paper will reveal how a local American Red Cross group responded during Hurricane Harvey in the Golden Triangle. With primary sources from the volunteers and local newspapers.

A local American Red Cross group were not daunted by the task that lied ahead of them, but gathered their follow volunteers from around the area and set to work. Just as every disaster the Red Cross response too, the group called on their network of volunteers from other states to rally to the Beaumont headquarters. Even before the reports of Harvey were expected to make landfall in mid-south Texas, they were preparing to move personal, supplies, and equipment into staging areas. This is not the first disaster for the local American Red Cross, for these volunteer veterans it will not be their last.

Heroes and Victims of Hurricane Harvey
Quade Hebert, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

My topic is about the normal people who were affect by the hurricane and those who sprang into action to help those affected by the flooding and destruction of the hurricane. My topic aims to look at these people and the effect of the hurricane on them. I have some interviews lined up from some of the normal people who lost their homes and with people who volunteered and people who rescued others that were trapped in their homes. Some of these people did something as simple as offering their homes as a place for displaced victims to stay. I also will look at some of the stats about the people during the hurricane and about the actual hurricane itself. I will compare some of these stats to previous hurricane to look and see how the people of this hurricane came out to help compared to previous natural disasters.

Despite their high-ranking educational system, Finland has a drug problem
Jeff Hensley, Department of Sociology
Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage

Background: The theory that higher education leads to better employment outcomes and higher quality of life does not apply to people who are addicted to drugs. This study explores Finland’s elite educational system and the rates of drug addiction using a comparative approach.
Methods: Data were obtained from Statista. Drug prevalence and rates of drug deaths were examined. Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) measures were examined. These rates for men and women were compared between Finland and the rest of the countries in Europe.
Findings: Results shows that regardless of the ranking of a countries school system and educational values drug problems remained high even in a higher educated country. In 2012 PISA ranked Finland at number 8 and Estonia at number 9. Drug related deaths in 2012 were 190.8 per million people in Estonia while Finland had 58.0 deaths per million.
Conclusion: We cannot predict when, where, or what drug will affect our society regardless of our educational status. Clearly, better drug preventions strategies are necessary, even in higher-educated populations.

Espronceda’s poetry: A reflection of the 19th century Spain
Ailed Hernández, Department of English and Modern Languages
Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón

The 19th century is an era of change in Spain and one of the most chaotic in its history, which is often reflected in contemporary literature. During the first half of this period, several liberal movements took place against the absolutist monarchy of Ferdinand VII. It is also in this time that an artistic movement arrives late to Spain: Romanticism. José de Espronceda is considered one of the best examples of the Romantic literary movement in Spain. However, despite being a Romantic writer, his first works belong to Neoclassicism, the movement prior to Romanticism. In his poem titled “A la Patria”, Espronceda laments his country's tragic circumstances, and although he wrote it before his immersion in Romanticism, the poem displays some romantic tendencies. While considering
this, the presentation will analyze the form and content of “A la Patria.” Historical events of Spain are represented in this literary work, as it provides a vision and lament for Spain’s tragic situation at that time.

The Effects that Early Bilingualism has on a Deaf Child

Giselle Hernandez, Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education
Co-Authors: Amber Row and Jazlyn Potter-Jones
Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee

We are supporting early bilingualism for deaf children and its positive affect towards language acquisition and literacy. We pick this topic because we believe in a strong American Sign Language foundation as well as English for deaf children to give them the means of equal education. We hope to negate the opposing view that American Sign Language inhibits an English education. Bilingualism should not be feared by the parents as a life different than the one dreamed because of its positive effects on language acquisition and emotional development. In this research, we will delve into these positive effects of bilingualism, especially ASL/English bilingualism for a deaf child. The important topics that are discussed is the importance of early and visual language and the how not having language can affect a child’s social-emotional development. Exposing a child to language to help them understand a concept will only benefit them in the future. Signing with a deaf child constantly will help improve their visual attention and reading skills. If a deaf child is not exposed to early and visual language they will feel frustrated and disconnected from the world. This will affect their social and emotional development as they grow older. A deaf child who has a strong L1 in American Sign Language will only be stronger when learning their L2 which is English giving them a higher success rate in becoming bilingual.

The Effects of Hurricane Harvey

Shelvin Jackson, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

Hurricane Harvey's path through the southeast Texas region left a trail of disasters upon the people and their property. It has created havoc in the lives of the citizens throughout the area. Since the storm has passed, the aftermath has been severe, but the citizens, from near and far, have banded together to aid one another in the rebuilding process.

There have been previous storms, such as Hurricane Katrina, that we can compare and contrast to the events of Hurricane Harvey. After making the comparisons, the intent of this project is to share the experience of people who endured the storm and understand how communities came together to rescue one another. The Jefferson County Sheriff will be interviewed along with various members of the community. Overall, the effects of the storm in regards to economy and society shall be examined.

Appreciating "Rosarito": an analysis of "Rosarito" by Valle-Inclán

Emily Jacobs, Department of English and Modern Language
Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón

In his short story titled “Rosarito”, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán (1866-1936) presents some of the the main views of the intellectual group known as “Generation of 98.” This group of writers and philosophers contemplated the socio-political circumstances and the state of mind of many Spaniards after the war with the United States, which is known as the "disaster of 98." A literary analysis of Valle-Inclán’s story reveals that the two main characters, Rosarito and Don Miguel, are clear depictions of the lingering societal views and emotions of that time. Furthermore, the story's mysterious ending allows different interpretations, creating uncertainty. After a brief recount of Valle-Inclán’s biography and work, this presentation will study "Rosarito" focusing on character analysis and reader-response to appreciate contextualization.
Writing to “Argue”--- A Discussion of the College Argumentative Writing under the Toulmin’s Argument Modal

Ying Luo, Department of Literacy Culture and Language Education
Mentor: Dr. Walter Raymond Smith

Academic argumentative writing is an important part of the broader academic writing setting, which currently attracts much attention at the university level in all academic disciplines, including the thorough explanations of experimental observations for science and engineering laboratory activities using appropriate theories and relevant literature. Because the academic communication is always able to identify and address messages to interested audiences as in the academic writing setting there is no monologue. Therefore, offering a solid and convincing academic argumentation is very important. In any argumentative writing it is important to raise the awareness in the following aspects: (1) How to defend and support your stance clearly? (2) How to support your opinions with strong logic arguments? (3) How to evaluate and accommodate other opinions using critical thinking in an organized manner? (4) How to emphasize the important factors for a high-quality argumentative writing? (5) How to convey a clearer, more concise, logical and organized argumentative writing? Based on the Toulmin’s Argument Modal, interlinks and connections among evidences and opinions will be observed, and specific argumentation patterns can be concluded and followed.

The Relationship Between Language Proficiency, Language choice and cultural identity of Heritage Language Learners_ A Case Study of Chinese Heritage Language Learners in IU Chinese Flagship

Ying Luo, Department of Literacy Culture and Language Education
Mentor: Dr. Martha Nyikos

Heritage language learners (HLL) are those who grow up in families where English is not primarily spoken at home and their heritage language proficiency begins to be weakened when receiving education immersed in English language environment.

In recent years individuals from this HLL special group are receiving more and more attention from researchers for their linguistic cognitive development and multi-cultural identity. Besides, the officials see this HLL group as a resource for diplomatic, political and national security considerations. For example, Texas is known for having a large population of HLL Spanish group. In Texas universities there are several on-going research projects about these special group learners.

From cultural and language perspectives, one of the biggest problems is that most of HLL have basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), but unfortunately without enough cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), and therefore, they develop a relatively poor writing and reading proficiency in their own heritage languages. But what if some of them could have more CALP as they receive formal heritage language literacy education in formal schooling setting, such as the language flagship program? Would there be differences in their attitudes towards language and cultural identity?

Under the framework of biculturality, language proficiency and language choice, two questions can be addressed: (1) What is the relationship between CALP and language identity, i.e., will people having more CALP be more affiliated to Chinese language? (2) What is the relationship between CALP and cultural identity, i.e., will people having more CALP be able to recognize more of their Chinese cultural identity?

This research will include a set of semi-structured interviews and scales and content analysis as well as theme analysis will be adapted. This research project is expected to contribute more to knowledge about the relationship between language proficiency, especially CALP, language choice, and cultural identity, and thus, will enable us to better know about heritage language learners.
The Electoral College: Rethinking Rethinking
Charles Lyons, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

This is an analysis of the genesis, function, and efficacy of the Electoral College in United States history. I will attempt to quantify the delegates of the National Convention in terms of their political capital and their conviction. This will allow a way of mapping the room with respect to where centers of gravity would establish themselves in terms of consensus and dissention regarding the method of electing the National Executive. The shifts in debate and parliamentary procedure will be explored via a small but pertinent subset of the convention. This will discuss in great detail the instances in which this system allowed a popular vote candidate defeat, and what reactions, what measures resulted from this controversial anomaly. Finally, I will discuss the possibility of solutions that would factor out electoral tallies preferring candidates receiving less popular votes.

Students' Opinions and Experiences of ASL Instruction at the Post-Secondary Level
Kelsey Monceaux, Department of American Sign Language
Mentor: Dr. Laura Maddux

Currently there are more than 100,000 college students taking American Sign Language (ASL) across the United States. However, there are few formalized curricula, teaching methods, and instructional approaches available for instructors to use. For this reason, there is a great need for a more standardized instructional approach to teaching ASL. To date, there has been little research conducted that takes into account ASL students' opinions and experiences in their language learning. By enhancing the learning opportunities for these ASL students, we will be opening the door for future interpreters and teachers. As the Deaf studies field grows and improves, the Deaf community would see a direct benefit in professionals who can interact with them and advocate for them. This study used survey tools to ask ASL students at several universities about their learning experiences and opinions. The presentation will cover information about the survey, results discovered, and provide ideas for how the research can be applied in the educational arena.

Becquer’s Rima IV: Beyond the Romantic
Jorge Montero-Vallejo, Department of English and Modern Languages
Mentor: Dr. Catalina Castillón

Gustavo Adolfo Becquer has been immortalized in the Hispanic world as a true Romantic, both in the literary and colloquial senses of the word Romantic. However, when analyzing the works and life of this author, one can encounter a different Becquer, more humane and imperfect, whose poetry reaches beyond the traditional categorization of Romanticism. In the following presentation we will make a brief recount of Becquer’s life, and a deep analysis of his Rima IV, one of the most representative poems of the “Becquerian phenomenon”. This literary analysis will go from a formal meter counting, passing through a listing of the treated topics, to a series of reflections and criticisms about the piece itself, for which we made use of additional academic articles and studies on the subject. Thus, one can finally free Becquer from the Cupidic paradise in which he has been popularly confined to this day, to discover a more mature Becquer that asks philosophical questions about life, human existence, and the meaning of art.

Galveston Hurricane of 1900
Coy Pattison, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

In 1900, the Texas city of Galveston experienced one of the worst recorded natural disasters ever. The hurricane wreaked havoc upon Galveston, claiming many lives and bringing destruction upon Galveston’s infrastructure. The significance of this natural disaster will always be remembered as a tragedy and as a warning of the damage that hurricanes can pose. Using Lamar University’s catalog and database, as well as Galveston’s Rosenberg Library, I will conduct my research to answer a series of ideas. Of the ensuing research, the question of what was Galveston like prior to the storm will be posed. Was life the same after the storm both socially and or economically? Another question to be asked, will be if Galveston had any
evacuation routes in place, or any sort of preparation for disaster. Did officials of Galveston structure the city on the island to withstand storms? The encompassing research will also pursue the question of relief efforts and aid. How quick was the response from the state and federal government (if there was any at all)? The hurricane also had to displace people. An investigation into displacement will also take place. The last part of the research will lead into the damage done and how it led to future innovations for the prevention of mass hurricane damage.

A National Exploration: Unemployment and Poor Health in South Africa

Kerrington Powell, Department of Psychology
Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage

Background: Poor health in South Africa is a problem, especially amongst the unemployed. Prior research shows that people who report having poor health are less likely to be employed, remain in employment, or transition from unemployment to employment. In unemployment and health studies reverse causality is an issue. As such, our aim is to simply identify the number of unemployed people who report poor health status in South Africa as compared to their employed counterparts.

Methods: Data were collected from the 2002-2003 World Health Survey from 2,344 men and women, ages 18-65 years. There were 1,279 unemployed people in the dataset. In a descriptive analysis, we will explore the number of people reporting poor health who are unemployed as compared to the employed group. Sex differentials will be accounted for as well.

Results: Preliminary results show that people who report poor health are less likely to be employed.

Conclusion: Although findings are tentative, it appears that for better health outcomes unemployed South Africans need more assistance as compared to the employed.

Tuberculosis Screenings in Vietnamese Men by Socioeconomic Group

Joseph Scott, Department of Sociology
Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage

Vietnam is ranked 12th among countries with high rates of tuberculosis among men, with a prevalence of 89 per 100,000 population. This study will explore the association between tuberculosis and health screenings within different socioeconomic groups. World Health Survey data were analyzed on men aged 15 and up in Vietnam. The prevalence of tuberculosis screening was examined between low-middle and high educational and occupational groups. Preliminary results show that lower-educated unemployed men have lower rates of tuberculosis screening, compared to higher-educated employed men.

Dementia-Friendly Community in Beaumont

Natalie Sfeir, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences
Mentor: Dr. Ashley Dockens

Method/Approach: After investigation of overall development, challenges in, and changes created in dementia-friendly communities in Europe and the United States, my approach has been to create a service-based project known as a pilot dementia café for those affected by the dementia and its various forms (e.g., Alzheimer's Disease, Vascular dementia, Parkinson's Disease Dementia, etc.) in Southeast Texas. The primary purpose of dementia friendly communities is to dispel the stigma and allow those living with this to continue having quality of everyday life. The memory café at Lamar follows the UK model which incorporates a social and educational component for those living with dementia, and allows individuals the opportunity for growth by creating a network of support and knowledge. This network acts as a support system by utilizing resources and professionals that can assist participants.

Data collection: Utilizing questionnaires and interviews helps identify logistical challenges in creating a memory café as well as helping understand the benefits of such projects for persons with dementia, their caregivers, and the community. Conclusion: A successful memory café could lead to a crucial transformation of Beaumont and the greater Southeast Texas area. Ultimately, this café would become a sustainable project for the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences and would expose other students at the University to dementia and dementia care.
Narcissism and Art
Marly Smith, Department of Art
Mentor: Dr. Sherry Saunders-Freyermuth

Forty-six subjects took what was called an “Art Personality/Identity” test that measured their level of narcissism, and presented some questions on demographics. Each subject submitted their email in the survey to continue correspondence about their art specifically. Via email, each participant was asked to select what they considered to be their best piece as well as to select in general what they considered to be the best artwork in the artistic community that was executed in the same medium/media as their own art. After all the data from the personality tests were put together, both pieces that the artists submitted were reviewed by considering the principles of design. After evaluating both the questionnaire and artwork, they were compared with one another to find a correlation.

A study on self-care in India
Valencia Stewart, Department of Sociology
Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage

Objective: This study examines self-care amongst men and women from different socioeconomic groups.

Methods: Data from the World Health Survey were examined. Participants were women and men aged 18 to 60 in India. Self-care within low-middle and high-educational and occupational groups were explored.

Results: Findings tentatively show differences in self-care by socioeconomic group and age.

Conclusion: It is anticipated that priority will need to be placed in providing more assistance with self-care to low-income older aged people.

The Men and Women of the Sea
Taylor Tucker, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

My purpose of my presentation is to share my results about the Coast Guard and their impact on the community. The problem is that many people have not supported and do not count them as a branch in the military. I will support my research with interviews, books, and other documents. I have lined up interviews with a chief in the Coast Guard and some others who are in different stations around the coastlines. So far in my research I have already heard stories of what these brave men and women have gone through, for example, in February of 1952 Coast Guard station Chatham, Massachusetts. Another example I will share is about Hurricane Harvey and how the Coast Guard helps the community. The Coast Guard does not get the same respect as the other branches because people do not know what they do. In my research I will show the stats about how many enlist and graduate boot camp and compare it to other branches of the military. My purpose is to inform the community and hope to inspire the next generation about the Coast Guard.

1 / 1 Exploring the relationship between mental health and social interaction
Breana Walden, Department of Sociology
Mentor: Dr. Margot Gage

This study will test the sociological theory that people who are less active in the community have poorer mental health outcomes. In this study the relationship between i) self-reported mental health and ii) social interaction in Ireland are examined. Data were assessed using the World Health Survey. Participants were men aged 24 to 34 (n=459). Main-outcome was self-reported mental health. We examined the association between self-reported mental health and social interaction, while also accounting for the role of sex and socioeconomic status. Preliminary results show a relationship between mental health and social interaction. We anticipate that further investigation is needed to explore the relationship between social interaction and mental health.
Woe To The Vanquished: The Gallic War  
Billy Whitaker, Department of History  
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer  

Woe To The Vanquished will discuss the political and cultural background to the Gallic War fought between Rome and Gaul between 58 BC and 50 BC. This presentation will be based largely off Caesar’s Commentaries on the Gallic War but will also make use of scholarly secondary sources. The relations between the Roman and Gallic people will make up the first third. The second third will describe the actual military campaigns of the war separated roughly into the early, middle and late portions of the conflict. Lastly, the consequences of the war for both the Romans and the Gauls will be discussed, including Caesar’s role as the primary historian of the war and the eventual collapse of Rome to the Germanic people.

Importance of Interpreters in K-12 School Environment  
Brooke White, Department of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education  
Mentor: Dr. ChongMin Lee  

It is extremely important to recognize that 95% of Deaf individuals are born to hearing parents. Out of that 95% of Deaf individuals, only 20% of them know sign language. That means that there is no relationship being made between caregiver and their deaf child. If Deaf children do not have a shared language with their parents and peers, they are then more likely to be delayed in language development, which negatively impacts their cognitive development.

After passing Public Law 94-142, approximately 80% of deaf children are in mainstreamed schools. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters play a significant role in the mainstreaming of deaf children in public schools. The discrepancy with k-12 language and content access is that deaf children do not have full and equal access to communication with their teachers and peers and content curriculum. This discrepancy affects deaf children’s social and emotional development, as well as their academic success. Providing interpreters in k-12 schools is important because they positively impact deaf children’s cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic skills. It is immeasurable how much access to language can impact and alter the life of an individual. ASL interpreters not only facilitate effective communication with their clients, but also enable deaf children to have equal access, like their hearing peers.

Besides providing access, interpreters can also be the language model for deaf children who do not have access to language at home. This makes the interpreter a significant role model in the life of a Deaf child.

Devilish Woman Synopsis  
Evan Williams, Department of Film  
Mentor: Dr. Mahmoud Salimi  

Peter, who’s a mild-mannered man, who’s in an unfulfilling relationship with his wife and wants to receive the love and affection that he feels is missing. He falls in love with his lover, Katelyn, and she murders his wife to end his misery to his wife, Darla. Peter is an extremely hardworking, mild-mannered man who goes home to his wife each time and it seems like there’s lots of friction between the two of some sort. He complains to himself that his marriage sucks and how he wants to receive love that he once felt earlier in his marriage.

He crosses paths with his lover Katelyn and they have an affair. He risks his marriage to get the love he wanted. Katelyn initiates the cheating because her ex died, and she wants the same thing he want. She travels to Peter’s house and assassinates the wife by pumping five bullets in her.

I wanted to make this movie is because I want to help shine light on the most common reasons why people cheat in relationships and show the multidimensionality expressed in human beings. It relates to society in general because everyone has a need and craving for love and affection. The idea for this film was inspired by being raised by strong women. The difference it can make in people’s lives is that it can help them think deeply about how well their relationships are going and communicate with their partners about boundaries.
African-Americans And Hurricanes
Kendrick Williams, Department of History
Mentor: Dr. Mary Scheer

The nature of inclement weather during hurricane season in the United States is exacerbated by the frequency and enormity of powerful hurricanes that occur each year as a result of global warming. The strength and size of hurricanes are, potentially, a major cause of concern since the seriously, and costly, consequences occur following the storm's landfall. The results of major storms are flooding. Particularly, coastal flooding can leave many susceptible to homelessness, loss of property, and even loss of life. For reference purposes, this study will analyze local news media, editorials, books, videos, and census data, to correlate how impactful hurricanes are, and its effects, on the African-American community, particularly those who live along the coastal regions of the country. An extensive assessment reveals that past financial, political, and social burdens have disproportionately affected the African-American community, and these findings reveal that natural disasters, like major hurricanes, only compound the problems occurring with African Americans. Low-income levels, lack of generational or sustainable wealth, and lack of social upward mobility are results of systemic discrimination. In order to positively affect a desired outcome, transformative policies are necessary to build a stable and functional African-American community who can rebuild their lives following natural disasters. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the significant affect hurricanes, including immense flooding, have on the most vulnerable. Effectively, the proper course of action in helping the most marginalized group is to prioritize economic resources and support systems that can build sustainable wealth for African Americans.

Helping-Negating Tendencies of Ethnic and Racial Minority College Students with Depression
Sakurah Fisher, Department of Psychology
Mentor: Dr. Edythe Kirk

The purpose of this research was to explore whether racial and minority college students encounter more barriers when seeking psychological assistance when experiencing depression. Participants in the study completed questionnaires designed to evaluate their cultural identity and views regarding barriers to seeking and receiving psychological treatment for psychological disorders. I hypothesized that minority students would be more likely to experience barriers that impact help-seeking behaviors than White/Caucasian students. Based on the review of existing literature, I believed that minority students may have more difficulty expressing their depressive symptoms because of stronger barriers toward seeking psychological treatment that exist in their cultures. I anticipated that stronger identification with their ethnic culture would be related to a greater frequency of perceived barriers toward seeking psychological treatment. Results revealed that the strength of ethnic identification was not correlated with reported barriers to seeking treatment. Results also revealed that, although not statistically significant, mean differences in scores on the barriers measure were in the predicted direction. Students identifying with minority ethnicities generally had higher scores (i.e., reported more barriers to seeking help) than students identifying as White/Caucasian. Replication is recommended with a larger, more diverse sample.
The Impact of Mexico's National Housing Institution on the Country's Working Class
Samuel Rueda, Department of Political Science
Mentor: Dr. Terri Davis

The National Institution for Workers’ Housing, better known as INFONAVIT, is the federal institution in Mexico that provides housing for the country’s working class. The institution finances seven out of every ten homes sold in Mexico. Although the institution is effective in building homes, various issues of fairness and equity emerge particularly with respect to the imposition of adjustable interest rates by the Mexican government on low income workers who assume housing loans through the INFONAVIT housing project. My research will provide a descriptive study of the history and current programs administered through INFONAVIT; the use of interest rates and other disincentives to prevent low-income Mexican workers from paying off INFONAVIT financed homes; and a normative analysis of equality and due process in housing for low-income Mexican workers by the government housing system.

Women in Technology: Impact of External Perception
Susannah Williams, Department of Art
Co-Authors: Raven Morse and Alexus Locke
Mentor: Dr. Sherry Saunders-Freyermuth

It is a fact that women in the United States often do not receive the same opportunities in the workforce as men. The percentage of women working in major technology companies is around 30 percent, with significantly fewer women in positions that may allow them to influence a company's' product development or strategic direction. This project is focused specifically on key reasons why there is such an extreme underrepresentation of women in technology-based careers. To better understand why the presence of women in technology fields is so few and far between, we gathered the findings of several studies. Focusing our efforts specifically on the computer science and web design fields, we determined that external perception impacts career performance and plays a role in this issue. We conclude that external perception is prevalent throughout a young female's early development. This perception directly affects a woman's path to careers in technological fields. We suggest broadening young girls' interests and aspirations by providing them with information to shape their self-perception and ensure they do not dismiss the idea of technology-based careers because of misinformation or negative stereotypes. We can achieve this by providing a collective online resource that provides access to academic, learning, and multimedia entertainment programs. The collective will allow these young leaders access to tools that aid in the knowledge of these possible fields. This project will be lead and executed by women who are in the aspired career paths these young girls may pursue.