

SENIOR SYMPOSIUM

APRIL 23, 2025

STERN HALL

SHARE YOUR PASSIONS

Sponsored by the
Center for Teaching and Learning



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH
COLLEGES

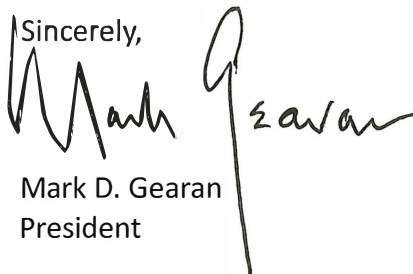
Office of the President

Dear Members of the Hobart and William Smith Community,

I am delighted to welcome you to the annual Senior Symposium – a wonderful tradition that celebrates the sustained and sophisticated work of our seniors and Master's degree students who, under the mentorship of faculty, push the boundaries of their disciplines and enhance the intellectual community at HWS.

This year's program features an impressive 77 presentations delivered by 103 student presenters. Whether in the classroom or studio, the library or laboratories, in the Geneva community or across the globe – the work of HWS students gives voice to new ideas and conversations.

I congratulate all of the participants in this year's Symposium and thank them for their commitment to our community. I am grateful to the many members of the faculty who have engaged our students and encouraged them to pursue this challenging and vital work. And finally, it is with deep appreciation that I commend the Center for Teaching and Learning and Ruth Shields and her staff for the vision and leadership in making the Senior Symposium a highlight of the spring semester and pride point for the Colleges.

Sincerely,

Mark D. Gearan
President



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH
COLLEGES

The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs

Dear HWS Community,

I am excited to participate in HWS Day, a day dedicated to celebrating the accomplishments, progress, and success in the scholarly and creative works of our students here at Hobart and William Smith. Running currently is the sixteenth year of the Senior Symposium which provides an important occasion for us to reflect on the value of a Hobart and William Smith education and to appreciate the learning, insights, talents, and developments of our community as we applaud our seniors on their academic journeys.

I hope you will all join me in attending a variety of student presentations throughout the day. The activities throughout the day highlight what is so special about a liberal arts education at Hobart and William Smith --the achievements of our students, the central involvement of our faculty and staff, the interdisciplinarity and multiple approaches to tackling the pressing issues of the day, and the high standards and expectations for rigorous intellectual engagement and debate. As the Provost and Dean of Faculty, I welcome you to join us in these presentations, discussions, and discoveries and I applaud the student presenters for being excellent examples of a Hobart and William Smith education.

I also want to express my gratitude to my faculty and staff colleagues who have provided invaluable mentorship as they have nurtured these students and their work throughout their time at the Colleges. Without your support, advice, and encouragement, this experience would not have been nearly as successful. Finally, I want to thank those who have dedicated time, energy, and effort by presenting their work, moderating panels, attending panels, and providing a voice of congratulations and support.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kirk

Sarah R. Kirk
Provost and Dean of Faculty



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH
Office of the Hobart and William Smith Deans

Dear Members of the HWS Community:

The *Senior Symposium* is an exciting event that reflects and honors the depth and breadth of engagement among Hobart and William Smith students in a diverse spectrum of academic and creative interests. It makes visible that which is often invisible: the long hours and hard work students dedicate to the intellectual journey during their four years at HWS. Most importantly, it provides an opportunity for students, under the guidance of advisors, to engage each other as teachers and learners.

As your Deans, we join with the Center for Teaching and Learning in applauding those who are participating in the sixteenth annual Senior Symposium as presenters. This is an important academic achievement that you now have as part of your legacy. We applaud the faculty and staff who will serve as panel moderators. The Deans also join in welcoming all members of the HWS community to this wonderful demonstration of student teaching and learning.

Sincerely,

Kelly Payne
Senior Associate Dean
Hobart and William Smith College

Amy Green
Assistant Dean
Hobart and William Smith Colleges

David Mapstone
Associate Dean
Hobart and William Smith College

Joe Mink
Associate Dean
Hobart and William Smith College



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH
COLLEGES

Today is the best day of the year.

For seven exhilarating hours, we will have the privilege of learning about everything from the impact of Florentine silk dyers on global trade in the 15th Century, to the impact of tariffs on the timber trade today; we will learn about ways to mitigate food insecurity in West Africa, and ways to improve food pantries in Geneva; we will learn about exciting new uses for AI in education, about the cognitive impact of dance training, and about how last year's eclipse affected plankton in Seneca Lake.

Today we will experience the liberal arts in action: from the faculty moderator who can find that one question that ties together the presentations on chemistry, creative writing and sociology; to the community member who engages with a student about their work in local schools; to the many friends, family, and members of the HWS community who come together to listen, engage, and connect.

Today we will see our students at their very best: engaged, passionate, articulate, and clearly ready to step into the post-college world and lead lives of consequence.

Thank you, and enjoy the day.

The Staff of the Center for Teaching and Learning

Shanelle France

Susan Hess

Ingrid Keenan

Gretchen Marr

Thom Mascia

Ruth Shields

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The sixteenth annual Senior Symposium was made possible by the vision, leadership, and efforts of many in the Hobart and William Smith community.

Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs

Office of the President

Office of the Hobart and William Smith Deans

Office of Communications

IT Services

Center for Teaching and Learning

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Will Patton, Nicole Pendleton

Presentation Workshop Facilitators

Sarah Gob, Brandon Moblo, Moira O'Neill, Jennifer Schlossberg, Chuck Vesei
Students from Maggie Werner's WRRH 420 class

RESEARCH SUPPORT AND AWARDS

Symposium students have received generous support for their academic projects from the following organizations, programs, and funds:

Adirondack Wild Center

College Art Association's Annual Conference (presenter)

Department of Art and Architecture

Environmental Research Grant

Finger Lakes Institute

HWS Deans' Office

HWS Faculty Research Grants

HWS Student Government

HWS Summer Scholars Program

Jane Street

Klomen Fellowship Fund

National Science Foundation

Northeast Natural History Conference (presenter)

Senior
Symposium
2025
Presenters

SENIOR SYMPOSIUM 2025 PRESENTERS

Presenter	Department/Program	Sponsor	Panel Time	Room
Abebe, Biruk	Physics	Leslie Hebb	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 304
Aguilar, Rafael	International Relations	Stacey Philbrick Yadav	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 203
Anderson, JT	Economics	Thomas Drennen	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 201
Angus, Ariana	International Relations	Stacey Philbrick Yadav	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304
Aracena, Zoe	Educational Studies	Jonathan Berhanu	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 203
Aracena, Zoe	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Baker, Hannah	Gender, Sexuality & Intersectional Justice	Michelle Martin-Baron	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 201
Baker, Zeke	Public Health	Jessica Hayes-Conroy	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 203
Balman, Lindsey	Environmental Studies	Lisa Cleckner	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 303
Barr, Rebecca	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 203
Beatley, Trevor	Psychological Science	Stephanie Anglin	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 304
Bekauri, Giorgi	International Relations	Stacey Philbrick Yadav	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 304
Britton-Lowden, Abigail	Public Health	Jessica Hayes-Conroy	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 203
Burke, Clare	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 303
Capitani, Wesley	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 303
Castelan, Lisbeth	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 203
Catalano, Hailee	Psychological Science	Stephanie Anglin	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 304
Cawley, Neve	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Chunton, Milla	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 201
Clyde, Robert	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 304
Cole, Abigail	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 304
Colvin, Kate	Psychological Science	Elizabeth Belcher	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 303
Croce, Adriana	Art & Architecture	Angelique Szymanek	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 304
Cunningham, Janeciah	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Dagit, Lee	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 203
Dagit, Lee	Sociology	James Sutton	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 201
Dasher, Jayden	Psychological Science	Stephanie Anglin	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 304
De Nes, Isabella	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304

SENIOR SYMPOSIUM 2025 PRESENTERS

Presenter	Department/Program	Sponsor	Panel Time	Room
Del Rosario, Brianna	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 201
Depke, Frances	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 203
Diop, Djeneba	Mathematics & Computer Science	Erika King	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 203
Foley, Finn	Economics	Thomas Drennen	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 201
Foster, Leah	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 304
Foster, Leah	Sociology	Kendralin Freeman	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 304
Gatchell, Anya	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 203
George, Alexandra	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 303
Goldburg, Samantha	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 201
Greiff, Aiden	International Relations	Stacey Philbrick Yadav	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 201
Hayward, Alexandra	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203
Hemingway, Susie	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Herbruck, Sydney	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 304
Howe, Lucy	Politics	Ed Quish	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 304
Howe, Lucy	Psychological Science	Stephanie Anglin	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 304
Hussein, Sadia	English & Creative Writing	Stephen Cope	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 303
Huston, Hannah	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203
Huston, Hannah	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 203
Jones, Kisean	History	Sarah Whitten	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 201
Karpawich, Alex	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 304
Kerwin, Erin	Dance & Movement Studies	Donna Davenport	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 303
Ketchabaw, Kayla	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Kilmer, Madelyn	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 303
Kliesch, Payton	Psychological Science	Elizabeth Belcher	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 303
Lee, Ava	Environmental Studies	Robinson Murphy	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 201
Legler, Lauren	Psychological Science	Elizabeth Belcher	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 304
Leidig, Sophie	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 303
Levy, Al	Computer Science	Chris Fietkiewicz	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 201

SENIOR SYMPOSIUM 2025 PRESENTERS

Presenter	Department/Program	Sponsor	Panel Time	Room
Lowry-Neufeld, Ksenia	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 303
Lundgren, Cassandra	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304
Madden, Sean	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 203
Masters, Santana	Sociology	James Sutton	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 203
Mastracco, Marissa	Sociology	James Sutton	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 201
McCarty, Holly	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 304
McGowan, Quinn	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 303
McKenna, Abigail	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203
McKenna, Emma	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Meshanic, Carter	Psychological Science	Michelle Rizzella	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 201
Meshanic, Hunter	Psychological Science	Michelle Rizzella	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 201
Painton, Andrew	Biology	Meghan Brown	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 203
Palumbo, Elizabeth	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 201
Patel, Jaya	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 201
Patrick, Madeline	Sociology	James Sutton	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 201
Pedone, Ellie	Dance & Movement Studies	Donna Davenport	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 303
Pida, Julia	Environmental Studies and Biology	Meghan Brown	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 303
Prochniak, Brooke	American Studies	Kirin Makker	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 201
Reish, Ella	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Rich, David	Sociology	James Sutton	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 203
Ringbloom, Lindsay	Psychological Science	Jamie Bodenlos	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 203
Rodgers, Aidan	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304
Rosa, Justin	Writing & Rhetoric	Maggie Werner	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 304
Ruffner, Caroline	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 203
Saavedra-Mendez, Kimberly	Psychological Science	Emily Fisher	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 304
Saavedra-Mendez, Kimberly	Spanish & Hispanic Studies	May Farnsworth	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 304
Sandoval, Natalie	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304
Sanford, Charlotte	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304

SENIOR SYMPOSIUM 2025 PRESENTERS

Presenter	Department/Program	Sponsor	Panel Time	Room
Santana, Jamaiqui	Psychological Science	Stephanie Anglin	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 304
Schaeffer, Molly	Sociology	James Sutton	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 203
Shahdanian, Alex	Psychological Science	Stephanie Anglin	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 304
Simon, Jennica	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 303
Smith, Victoria	Biology	Susan Cushman	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 304
Snook, Grace	English & Creative Writing	Anna Creadick	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 201
Spencer, Colin	Sociology	James Sutton	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 201
Starck, Elizabeth	Biology	Kristy Kenyon	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 201
Tetrault, Mia	Media & Society	Harry Gu	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 304
Toussaint, Kiera	Politics	DeWayne Lucas	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 203
Tremblay, Alaina	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 303
van der Putt, Moira	Sociology	James Sutton	8:30 - 9:30	Stern 304
VanGorder, Emma	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 303
VanLare, Jillian	Philosophy	Karen Frost-Arnold	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 201
Vega, Roberto	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203
Villinski, Katherine	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203
Von Heill, Evelyn	Sociology	James Sutton	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 201
Walton, Mackenzie	Dance & Movement Studies	Donna Davenport	10:50 - 11:50	Stern 303
Wanduragala, Anjalee	Environmental Studies	Kristen Brubaker	1:10 - 2:10	Stern 203
Weeks, Katelyn	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 303
Whelan, Liam	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 304
Wiegel, Mercedes	International Relations	Stacey Philbrick Yadav	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 304
Wiegel, Mercedes	Sociology	James Sutton	9:40 - 10:40	Stern 203
Wilkerson, Britta	Educational Studies	Mary Kelly	2:30 - 3:30	Stern 303
York, Lewis	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203
Zeitlin, Emanuel	Environmental Studies	Beth Kinne	12:00 - 1:00	Stern 203

Senior
Symposium
2025
Schedule

Costs and Funds

Moderator: Mark Gearan, President of Hobart and William Smith Colleges

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
8:30 - 9:30	Anderson, JT	The Weight of Words: Tariff Threats on the Timber Trade	Economics
	Foley, Finn	How Do We Finance Climate Action? Key Insights from the Negotiations at the United Nations 29th Conference of the Parties	Economics
	Levy, Al	ChatGPT: The Cost in Energy Consumption	Mathematics & Computer Science
	Starck, Elizabeth	Exploring the Genetics of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: An Argument for Federal Funding	Biology
	Questions & Answers		

Making Meaning

Moderator: Beth Kinne, Associate Professor of Environmental Studies

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
9:40 - 10:40	Chunton, Milla	Viewing SAMO©: Examining the Communicative and Resistant Form of Graffiti Discourse	Writing & Rhetoric
	Palumbo, Elizabeth	Literacy, Identity, and Liberation	Writing & Rhetoric
	Prochniak, Brooke	Doorways to My Past: An Exploration of Storytelling through Watercolor	American Studies
	VanLare, Jillian	A Meaningful Life Regardless of Failure	Philosophy
	Questions & Answers		

Farms and Tables

Moderator: Robinson Murphy, Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
10:50 - 11:50	Goldburg, Samantha Patel, Jaya Spencer, Colin	Food for All? Examining Campus Food, Meal Inclusivity, and Accessibility	Sociology
	Greiff, Aiden	Development that Works: Assessing Divergent Approaches to Food Insecurity in West Africa	International Relations
	Lee, Ava	Tackling Food Insecurity by Redesigning Food Production and Distribution	Environmental Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Looking Forward, Looking Back			
Moderator: Chris Annear, Associate Professor of Anthropology			
Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
12:00 - 1:00	Dagit, Lee	Taking Up Space: How Trans* Students Navigate Gendered Experiences at College	Sociology
	Del Rosario, Brianna	"No Sabo" Español: A Lyrical Essay	Writing & Rhetoric
	Jones, Kisean	Living While Dyeing: An Exploratory Analysis of Florentine Silk Dyers' Contributions to Global Trade Systems 1400-1552	History
	Snook, Grace	Theorizing the Establishment of a Queer Literary Past	English & Creative Writing
	Questions & Answers		
About Binaries			
Moderator: Liliana Leopardi, Associate Professor of Art and Architecture			
Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
2:30 - 3:30	Baker, Hannah	Beyond the Binary of Gender in Dance	Gender, Sexuality & Intersectional Justice
	Mastracco, Marissa Patrick, Madeline Von Heill, Evelyn	HWS Students' Experiences and Perceptions of the Coordinate System	Sociology
	Meshanic, Carter Meshanic, Hunter	Can We Take the Perspective of Villains? The Role of Perspective Taking on Reader Preferences for Character Outcomes.	Psychological Science
	Questions & Answers		

Pattern and Variation

Moderator: Joe Rusinko, Associate Professor of Mathematics & Computer Science

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
8:30 - 9:30	Castelan, Lisbeth Depke, Frances Huston, Hannah Madden, Sean	Mandated Campus Experiences: Understanding Student Perspectives on Compulsory Experiences	Sociology
	Diop, Djeneba	Game and Patterns with Stable Tamari Poset	Mathematics & Computer Science
	Painton, Andrew	Plunged into Darkness: The Impact of a Total Solar Eclipse on Plankton Migration in Seneca Lake	Biology
	Questions & Answers		

Navigating HWS

Moderator: Jessica Hayes-Conroy, Associate Professor of Gender, Sexuality & Intersectional Justice

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
9:40 - 10:40	Baker, Zeke	Exploring Transgender Experiences of Beauty Standards	Public Health
	Barr, Rebecca Gatchell, Anya Wiegel, Mercedes	Insights from STEM Students on the HWS Curriculum	Sociology
	Dagit, Lee	HW(ell)S: Transferring, Restarting & Navigating School Closures	Sociology
	Questions & Answers		

Resilience at HWS

Moderator: Peter Budmen, Associate Director of the Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
10:50 - 11:50	Aracena, Zoe Cunningham, Janeciah Reish, Ella Ruffner, Caroline	Redefining Success: Exploring First Generation College Students' Perceptions	Sociology
	Cawley, Neve Hemingway, Susie McKenna, Emma	Ensuring Long-Term Sustainability: Maintenance and Upstream Watershed Mapping for Project Pond Walk	Environmental Studies
	Ketchabaw, Kayla	Is Athletics a Resilience Builder? Insight from Collegiate Athletics	Sociology
	Questions & Answers		

Going Green

Moderator: John Halfman, Professor Emeritus of Environmental Studies

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
12:00 - 1:00	Hayward, Alexandra Vega, Roberto	Carter Road Park: A Sustainable Space for Recreation and Education	Environmental Studies
	Huston, Hannah Villinski, Katherine Zeitlin, Emanuel	Go Green or Go Home: Designing Parks with Community Feedback	Environmental Studies
	McKenna, Abigail York, Lewis	Carter Road Rewilding Plan	Environmental Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Frameworks

Moderator: Sarh Kirk, Provost and Dean of Faculty

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
1:10 - 2:10	Aguilar, Rafael	La Jaula de Oro: Mining, Regulation, and Political Settlements in South America	International Relations
	Aracena, Zoe	Cultural Adaptations of Trauma-Informed Care: Addressing ACEs in Black and Latina Girls	Educational Studies
	Toussaint, Kiera	Teaching Black Lives Matter: The Importance of the Movement and Its Cause	Politics
	Wanduragala, Anjalee	From Awareness to Action: A Comparative Study of Youth-Driven Climate Action Plans across Youth Climate Summits	Environmental Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Thriving Students?

Moderator: Susan Cushman, Associate Professor of Practice of Biology

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
2:30 - 3:30	Britton-Lowden, Abigail	Stress and Sustenance: Exploring the Impact of Stress on College Students' Eating Habits	Public Health
	Masters, Santina Rich, David Schaeffer, Molly	Trust or Tension: Student Perceptions of Police and First Responders at HWS	Sociology
	Ringbloom, Lindsay	The Role of Cognitive Fusion in the Relationship between Mindfulness and Emotional Well-Being in College Students	Psychological Science
	Questions & Answers		

Body and Mind

Moderator: Kristy Kenyon, Professor of Biology

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
9:40 - 10:40	Colvin, Kate Kliesch, Payton	Mental Health Outcomes in Patients Treated with CAR T-Cell Therapy	Psychological Science
	Hussein, Sadia	Exploring Psychogenic Pain within the Philosophy of Mind: A Deep Inquiry Of Suffering Beyond The Physical Realm	English & Creative Writing
	Kerwin, Erin	The Cognitive Impact of Dance Training	Dance & Movement Studies
	Pedone, Ellie	The Intelligent Dancer across Cultures	Dance & Movement Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Water Matters

Moderator: Nick Metz, Professor of Geoscience, Associate Provost

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
10:50 - 11:50	Balman, Lindsey	Assessment of Trace Elements in Surface Water Adjacent to Seneca Meadows Landfill	Environmental Studies
	Lowry-Neufeld, Ksenia	HWS Summer Sailing Letter: An Analysis of the Motivation and Identity between Coaches and Athletes	Writing & Rhetoric
	Pida, Julia	All "Hands-on" Deck: Learning the Ropes of Vessel-Based Education (VBE) in the Freshwaters of the Northeast USA and North American Great Lakes	Environmental Studies and Biology
	Walton, Mackenzie	Land to Water Yoga: Cultivating Balance and Stability through Developmental Movement	Dance & Movement Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Pedagogical Strategies

Moderator: Chrissy Jacobs, Coordinator of Teacher Certification and Accreditation

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
12:00 - 1:00	Capitani, Wesley	Teaching the Future: How Artificial Intelligence Impacts the Modern Classroom	Educational Studies
	George, Alexandra	Enhancing Elementary Classroom Dynamics: A Study of PBIS and SWPBS Impact on Student Social-Emotional Development	Educational Studies
	Kilmer, Madelyn	AI as an Academic Accommodation	Educational Studies
	McGowan, Quinn	Social-Emotional Learning in the Social Studies Classroom	Educational Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Beyond the Curriculum

Moderator: Susan Pliner, Associate Provost

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
1:10 - 2:10	Burke, Clare	The Effects of Stress on Teacher Confidence: Analyzing Confidence of Teacher Candidates During and Post Student Teaching	Educational Studies
	Simon, Jennica	School Safety Perceptions and Security Measures in Upstate New York Schools	Educational Studies
	VanGorder, Emma	Equitable Mindfulness	Educational Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Classroom Explorations

Moderator: Mary Kelly, Associate Professor of Educational Studies

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
2:30 - 3:30	Leidig, Sophia	Teaching Empathy	Educational Studies
	Tremblay, Alaina	Inclusion in the Foreign Language Classroom	Educational Studies
	Weeks, Katelyn	Creating Space for Creative Risks: Expanding the Definition of Poetry for High School Creative Writers	Educational Studies
	Wilkerson, Britta	Teaching Identity: The Inclusion of Identity through Writing Curriculum in First and Second Grade	Educational Studies
	Questions & Answers		

Belong in the Community

Moderator: Beth Belanger, Professor of American Studies

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
8:30 - 9:30	Angus, Ariana	Inconclusive Incorporation: Puerto Rican Belonging and the Legacies of American Imperialism	International Relations
	De Nes, Isabella Rodgers, Aidan Sandoval, Natalie Sanford, Charlotte van der Putt, Moira	The Capital Divide: Navigating Success and Struggle at HWS	Sociology
	Lundgren, Cassandra	Youth Educational Advocacy: Dismantling Systemic Barriers in the School System	Writing & Rhetoric
	Questions & Answers		

How Do They Grow?

Moderator: Katherine Walker, Associate Professor of Music

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
9:40 - 10:40	Cole, Abigail	Beyond Soup: Client-Informed Improvements to Food Pantries in Geneva, NY	Sociology
	Foster, Leah Karpawich, Alex	Ripples of Change: Historical Perceptions of HWS's Social Life	Sociology
	Smith, Victoria	Comparison of Round Goby (<i>Neogobius Melanostomus</i>) Diet in Seneca and Cayuga Lake	Biology
	Tetrault, Mia	The Ghost of Tom Petty	Media & Society
	Questions & Answers		

Attitudes

Moderator: Jennifer Biermann, Associate Professor of Mathematics & Computer Science

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
10:50 - 11:50	Herbruck, Sydney	Celebrity Reinforcement of Stereotypical Beauty Standards	Writing & Rhetoric
	Howe, Lucy	Gender, Rage, and Power: A Look at Women's Anger in American Presidential Politics	Politics
	McCarty, Holly	Federal Sentencing Guidelines and the Media Frenzy of the Crack Epidemic	Writing & Rhetoric
	Saavedra-Mendez, Kimberly	Queer Portrayals in Latin American Literature and Media	Spanish & Hispanic Studies
	Questions & Answers		

For the People?*Moderator: Michael Tinkler, Associate Professor of Art and Architecture*

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
12:00 - 1:00	Bekauri, Giorgi	<i>Kartvelebi Vart</i> : Evaluating the Georgian Nation-Building Project	International Relations
	Catalano, Hailee Howe, Lucy Shahdanian, Alex	Measuring Political Attitudes in College Students	Psychological Science
	Wiegel, Mercedes	Inequality in the City: Revisiting the Social Polarization Debate in Amsterdam	International Relations
	Questions & Answers		

Navigating Space(s)*Moderator: Scott MacPhail, Associate Director of Health Professions Counseling and Fellowship Advising*

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
1:10 - 2:10	Abebe, Biruk	Uncovering the Hidden Layers of Sub-Neptune Planets: Insights from JWST and Interior Modeling	Physics
	Beatley, Trevor Dasher, Jayden Santana, Jamaiqui	Prosocial Risk-Taking Among College Students	Psychological Science
	Rosa, Justin	Amanda Todd & Capping Culture: Rhetorical Situation in Internet Discourse	Writing & Rhetoric
	Saavedra-Mendez, Kimberly	Ethnic-Racial Identity Development and the Role of Online Racial Discrimination	Psychological Science
	Questions & Answers		

Shift 'n' Priority*Moderator: Elizabeth Belcher, Assistant Professor of Psychological Science*

Time	Presenters	Abstract Title	Department/Program
2:30 - 3:30	Clyde, Robert Whelan, Liam	Funding Project Pond Walk: Grant Research and Campus Stability Fund	Environmental Studies
	Croce, Adriana	Desire & the Lesbian Gaze: Shifting Intimacy Narratives in Lesbian Visual Arts	Art & Architectural Studies
	Foster, Leah	Navigating Black Identity and Community at HWS: A Strengths-Based Approach	Sociology
	Legler, Lauren	Effects of Meditation on Resisting Cell Phone Distractions	Psychological Science
	Questions & Answers		

Senior
Symposium
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UNCOVERING THE HIDDEN LAYERS OF SUB-NEPTUNE PLANETS: INSIGHTS FROM JWST AND INTERIOR MODELING

Biruk N. Abebe

Sub-Neptunes are planets that fall between Earth and Neptune in size, and they are among the most common types of planets in our galaxy, yet we don't have any examples of them in our own Solar System. What lies beneath their clouds remains a mystery. To better understand their interior makeup, scientists use computer models that simulate different possible combinations of rock, water, and gas inside these planets.

In this project, I studied the internal structure of TOI-270d, a sub-Neptune planet whose atmosphere was recently observed by the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST). By comparing the planet's mass, size, and atmospheric properties, I found that its structure is likely more complex than previously thought, containing a mixture of hydrogen, helium, and heavier molecules like water vapor. These "mixed" atmospheres allow for a wider range of possible internal compositions and challenge earlier models that assumed simpler, layered structures.

Building on this approach, I expanded my study to a broader population of 20 sub-Neptunes scheduled for JWST observations. By modeling each planet's structure and comparing results across the group, I found trends that link their atmospheres and interiors, shedding light on how these planets form and evolve over time. Together, this work helps us interpret the data coming from next-generation space telescopes and brings us closer to understanding what these mysterious worlds are made from. This research is a collaborative effort between Hobart and William Smith Colleges and the University of Maryland, conducted under the mentorship of Dr. Leslie Hebb (HWS) and Dr. Matthew C. Nixon (UMD). I am contributing to the project as a student researcher at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. This work is funded by the RECONS Fellowship Program, forms a core part of my Honors thesis, and is currently part of an ongoing research paper in preparation for publication.

LA JAULA DE ORO:
MINING, REGULATION, AND POLITICAL SETTLEMENTS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Rafael Aguilar

Political settlement analysis is an emergent approach to the study of political economy that seeks to shed light on the relationship between formal and informal sources of power. Political settlements can be understood as arrangements between powers-holders and institutions that jointly constitute the economic and political stability of a given system. These can include formal agreements, where official action is viewed as legal, and informal practices, where illicit activity is tolerated and even regulated or enforced through separate methods. Political settlements allow for revenue generation and are dynamically re-evaluated, allowing for systemic sustainability.

This project adopts a political settlements approach analysis of the strategic mineral sector in South America, where both public and private sector firms participate in licit and illicit mining activities and countries have different relationships to regional environmental regulatory frameworks. Comparing the cases of Brazil, Bolivia, and Peru, this project uses qualitative case study methods to show that variation in ownership structure and regulatory commitments shape the nature of the political settlement and, in turn, its capacity to stave off activist pressure.

THE WEIGHT OF WORDS: TARIFF THREATS ON THE TIMBER TRADE

J.T. Anderson

The timber trade, one of humanity's oldest industries, has evolved the product from a basic heating source to a versatile, renewable resource underpinning global construction.¹ This project explores the North American wood/timber/lumber market's vast scale—part of a trillion-dollar global industry—where supply and demand are the pricing mechanism: as an eventual lumber trader, I am driven to unpack how current rhetoric on the U.S.-Canada trade war will shape market behavior amid escalating tensions.

During COVID-19, lumber supply dwindled due to mill closures, production missteps, and wildfires that choked timber availability, severely cutting capacity. Meanwhile, an unexpected boom in homebuilding and renovations fueled demand, resulting in lumber futures rocketing to record highs in 2021, and exposing the market's fragility. By March 2025, President Trump's tariff rhetoric—initiating then removing duties on Canadian lumber—has worsened supply outlooks. He touts tariffs to protect U.S. mills while also tapping national parks for timber, yet constant delays and reversals of legislation leave Canadian imports, a supply lifeline, in limbo. Stronger housing demand persists, amplifying price pressure on this constrained commodity. This uncertainty fuels a volatile market, with prices swinging daily as mills sit on inventory and builders scramble to find reliable and cheap flows.² Some see domestic gains; others dread cost surges and the general instability of the market. This study reveals how supply-demand imbalances and trade policy ripple through prices and perceptions.

Peck, T. (2001). *The International Timber Trade*. Woodhead Publishing.
Trading Economics. *Lumber*. <https://tradingeconomics.com/commodity/lumber>

INCONCLUSIVE INCORPORATION: PUERTO RICAN BELONGING AND THE LEGACIES OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

Ariana Angus

Puerto Rico's ambiguous status as a U.S. territory provokes contradictions in Puerto Rican citizens' sense of belonging. Despite U.S. citizenship, Puerto Ricans on the island lack full political representation, reinforcing a second-class status. This study examines how Puerto Rico's liminal status shapes Puerto Ricans' notions of belonging through a mixed-methods approach, incorporating demographic data, existing literature, participant observation, and qualitative interviews.

Findings indicate that Puerto Ricans define U.S. citizenship as a formal status that grants rights but does not guarantee full inclusion in the American national community. Political exclusion, economic marginalization, and racialization all shape Puerto Ricans' limited incorporation into U.S. society. The study highlights how American imperialism and the colonial governance of the island historically positioned Puerto Ricans as outsiders, restricting political participation and economic autonomy. By examining these factors, the study points to the consequences of Puerto Rico's territorial status and the legacies of imperialism for citizenship and inequality.

REDEFINING SUCCESS: EXPLORING FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

Caroline Ruffner, Zoe Aracena, Ella Reish, Janeciah Cunningham

First-generation college students (FGCS) face unique challenges in higher education, often navigating academic and social environments with minimal intergenerational knowledge and support networks available to their continuing-generation peers. While existing research highlights how FGCS may “struggle to navigate the middle-class culture of higher education, learn the ‘rules of the game,’ and take advantage of college resources,”¹ it often overlooks how these students define success on their own terms.

This study explores first-generation students' perceptions of success and their experiences with institutional support at Hobart and William Smith Colleges through in-depth interviews. Key areas of focus include pre-college experiences, personal definitions of success, effectiveness of campus support services, and barriers FGCS may encounter.

By amplifying first-generation student voices, our research contributes to ongoing discussions about equity in higher education and the importance of tailored institutional interventions. We aim to highlight the ways in which the Colleges support FGCS while identifying areas for improvement to better serve an integral part of our community.

CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE: ADDRESSING ACES IN BLACK AND LATINA GIRLS

Zoe Renee Aracena

Black and Latina girls face unique adversities shaped by the intersection of racial and gendered trauma, yet Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) frameworks largely fail to address these overlapping identities. This is problematic because multiple systems of oppression compound the experiences of those impacted groups.¹ This study applies an intersectional lens to examine how mainstream TIC models neglect the cultural and gender-specific needs of Black and Latina girls navigating Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

I conducted literature reviews and case study analysis to explore culturally adapted TIC models, highlighting the need for gendered approaches in addressing racial trauma. The study will investigate the importance of integrating safe community spaces, culturally relevant mentorship, and holistic healing practices to enhance the effectiveness of TIC for Black and Latina girls.

By challenging the current one-size-fits-all approach to TIC, this research advocates for the formal recognition of racial trauma, the expansion of gender-specific trauma interventions, and the integration of cultural humility in clinical training. These insights aim to contribute to more equitable, healing-centered trauma care for marginalized youth.

BEYOND THE BINARY OF GENDER IN DANCE

Hannah Baker

As a student whose interest lies in Women Studies and Performance Studies, I wanted to combine the two in my research. For my project, I will be hoping to focus on gender in dance, and how it can go beyond the binary of societal norms. I will be analyzing the history and the gender roles of certain dance styles, specifically Ballet and Jamaican dance which both have similarities.

I'm currently in intro to Jamaican Dance with Professor Kelly Johnson which I am learning a lot about the history as well as the culture. Dance has always been a part of my life. I see it as a form of extension of expressing myself, especially as a queer person. As I grew up, there was the lack of queerness in schools, books, movies etc. So, since I am queer, I try to incorporate that into every paper and project I write. As someone who has interest in both dance and women studies, it helped inspire this collaboration. The key takeaway from this research is I hope to help people understand that even though people may think certain styles of dance can or are gendered. Dance is not gendered, it is expression.

EXPLORING TRANSGENDER EXPERIENCES OF BEAUTY STANDARDS

Zeke Baker

Research on body image and beauty standards has largely focused on cisgender women, leaving transgender experiences underexplored. This study centers the voices of transgender students at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, examining how they navigate body image, appearance, and societal beauty norms, particularly in relation to food choices, exercise, and self-care practices. Using participatory research methods, this study takes an open-ended, qualitative approach to understanding these dynamics.

Through Photovoice journaling and individual interviews, participants document and reflect on their experiences with societal expectations around appearance, embodiment, and discourse. Optional group activities foster community-building in an environment where transgender students often remain less visible due to social stigma, institutional restraints, and imminent danger from the minimally accepting community. Their data will be analyzed using qualitative coding and thematic analysis to identify key patterns in how gendered norms shape daily bodily habits.

Preliminary findings suggest emerging themes related to beauty standards have an impact on self-perception, body image, and daily practices. This research aims to fill gaps in the literature, providing a more nuanced understanding of transgender embodiment and the influence of gendered expectations on self-presentation and bodily practices.

ASSESSMENT OF TRACE ELEMENTS IN SURFACE WATER ADJACENT TO SENECA MEADOWS LANDFILL

Lindsey Balman

Seneca Meadows Landfill is one of the largest waste disposal sites in New York State, located in the heart of the Finger Lakes. The landfill's current operating permit will expire at the end of 2025, with a corporate push to extend it to 2040 left within the hands of the Town Board. Lung cancer cases in the area were shown to be 31% above state and 34% above national averages, and the residents of Seneca Falls have complained about decreased air and water quality. Could the Seneca Meadows Landfill be having an impact on local surface waters in nearby streams? How can we better understand how risk is perceived and communicated on this topic?

Over the course of this semester, I seek to have a better understanding of trace element concentrations in surface waters of Black Brook, Sucker Brook, Silver Creek, and Gem Creek. Water samples were collected from 15 sites at these water bodies on March 6th, to be later analyzed using ICP at the Finger Lakes to better understand contaminant concentrations within these surface waters. Understanding the potential impact of the Seneca Meadows Landfill on local water quality is critical for assessing environmental and public health concerns in Seneca Falls. I hope to contribute valuable data to ongoing discussions about environmental health in the Finger Lakes region.

INSIGHTS FROM STEM STUDENTS ON THE HWS CURRICULUM

Anya Gatchell, Mercedes Wiegel, and Rebecca Barr

This research project explores sophomore and senior STEM students' insights on the Hobart and William Smith Colleges (HWS) curriculum, particularly related to the major and the goal requirements on campus. STEM students must balance demanding lab schedules within the college's broader curriculum requirements. This leads to STEM students at HWS having to manage a challenging academic path requiring both depth in their major and a wide range of coursework. This qualitative project uses semi-structured in-depth interviews to gather insights from STEM majors at different stages of their academic journey (from the beginning to the end). The interview structure provides a space for students to share their perspectives on their experiences with the curriculum.

The findings from this research will highlight students' experiences and perspectives navigating the HWS curriculum, including challenges in fulfilling requirements and perceptions of their academic trajectory. Through thematic coding of interview transcripts, we analyzed how STEM students engage with curricular structures and whether these requirements align with their educational and professional aspirations. This research provides valuable insights that can inform potential refinements to the HWS curriculum, ensuring it better supports STEM students in balancing major requirements with broader institutional goals.

PROSOCIAL RISK-TAKING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

Jayden Dasher, Jamaqui Santana, and Trevor Beatley

Prosocial risk-taking is the action of helping others even when doing so involves a personal risk. This is an important and understudied behavior in college students. While existing measures like the Prosocial Risk-Taking Scale exist, they are primarily designed for adolescents and focus mainly on social and physical risks, they do not fully reflect the academic and emotional challenges college students face when deciding whether to help others. Our study aimed to develop a more relevant measure of prosocial risk-taking in a college context.

We created a 10-item scenario-based questionnaire that involved real college experiences, such as defending someone in a heated classroom discussion or reporting academic dishonesty despite potential social consequences. The items present three dimensions of prosocial risk-taking: social, academic, and emotional. To test the validity of our scale, we included three additional measures: the Helping Attitudes Scale (HAS) to test concurrent validity, the Self-Interest scale to test discriminant validity, and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) to test for convergent validity. We also included gender to test for known-groups validity. Participants were recruited from the Hobart and William Smith Colleges student body. To increase participation, students had the opportunity to enter a raffle for a \$50 Amazon gift card. Our hypothesis was that higher empathy scores were associated with greater prosocial risk-taking, while self-interest was negatively correlated.

Our findings can help find specific risk scenarios where students are most likely to act pro-socially, which can help inform future campus programs that are aimed at fostering courage, empathy, and social responsibility.

KARTVELEBI VART:
EVALUATING THE GEORGIAN NATION-BUILDING PROJECT

Giorgi Bekauri

I aim to identify why some subethnic groups in Georgia were successfully integrated into the larger Georgian national identity, while other subethnic groups were not. Beginning with a qualitative examination of how different identities have been positioned discursively across pre-Soviet, Soviet, and post-Soviet Georgia, I then examine how varying levels of institutionalization have impacted integration into the Georgian nation.

Research on the determinants of ethnic violence predict that decisions by regime elites regarding the extent and nature of institutionalization matter for the propensity of ethnic groups to see themselves as distinct – and as distinct enough to fight. My findings suggest that decisions made by various governing bodies over Georgian history regarding whether to assimilate or accommodate different subethnic differences have had a profound impact on whether and how those subethnicities have been integrated into the broader Georgian national identity. This project highlights the lasting negative consequences of ethnic institutionalization, while presenting comparatively positive outcomes for assimilation within a national identity broad enough to encompass plural subgroups.

STRESS AND SUSTENANCE:
EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS EATING HABITS

Abigail Britton-Lowden

In the fast-paced environment of college life, food can play a critical role in how students manage time, stress, and energy. This study explores how a small group of students at Hobart and William Smith Colleges make everyday food choices in response to the many demands of student life.

Instead of trying to identify fixed causes or broad patterns, the project focuses on the day-to-day experiences and pressures—like academic workloads, social commitments, structural constraints, and emotional stress—that shape how students decide what, when, and how to eat. Through individual interviews and a photo journaling activity, this research looks at the everyday strategies students use to get through their days—sometimes grabbing food quickly between classes, skipping meals, or choosing foods that help them stay alert or feel better emotionally. The goal is to better understand how food choices are tied to the realities of student life, especially the pressures to keep up, stay productive, and push through exhaustion. Food, in this context, becomes more than just fuel: it is also a way of coping, managing time, and responding to stress.

THE EFFECTS OF STRESS ON TEACHER CONFIDENCE: ANALYZING CONFIDENCE OF TEACHER CANDIDATES DURING AND POST STUDENT TEACHING

Clare Burke

Educators today deal with a myriad of stressors with the growing number of demands and expectations placed on them (Wiltshire, 2024). This accumulation of demands suggests the need to build self-esteem and confidence in our educators to counteract the effects of stress and to identify supports and resources for these teachers who lack confidence. My research focused on how to support new teachers and considered what supports and resources should be implemented to counteract the stressors and demands associated with the educational field.

I examined how students in our Master of Arts in Teaching program approach or feel about these stressors, and asked what resources would best support them in building their confidence and self-esteem as educators. This research was conducted in two stages: interviewing MAT students during student teaching and after they have completed student teaching. Through these interviews, I identified the common stressors and concerns pre-service teachers experience and developed strategies and possible resources. My findings and research were also shared with the Teacher Education Program to contribute to the support of students as they are student teaching.

TEACHING THE FUTURE: HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IMPACTS THE MODERN CLASSROOM

Wesley Capitani

Generative AI has a foothold in almost every industry and profession, and education is certainly not an exception. As AI continues to become more prevalent in our 21st century reality, the need for concrete solutions and effective literacy has become more apparent. We are already past the point of stopping the advance of AI into schools; therefore, it is critical for both teachers and students to understand how and when to incorporate these generative tools into their educational lives.

This Master of Art in Teaching research project sought to discover the attitudes current teachers have towards implementing and using generative AI in their classrooms. Educators were interviewed to determine their level of comfort and competence with the tools. The interviews were then compared to my own experience working in the classroom. I anticipate hesitancy from current educators toward implementing these different generative AI tools into their classroom practices. I also anticipate that those who have been teaching for longer periods of time will feel less comfortable using and navigating generative technologies.

The viewpoints collected from the interviews will provide not only a theoretical approach to the implementation of AI technologies in classrooms, but the actual relationship teachers have as well. Access to and ability of generative AI tools continue to grow, and so should the research into how these tools are received and implemented.

MANDATED CAMPUS EXPERIENCES: UNDERSTANDING STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON COMPULSORY EXPERIENCES

Lisbeth Castelan, Frances Depke, Hannah Huston, Sean Madden

Our project focuses on understanding the compulsory experiences that Hobart and William Smith students partake in and how those experiences impact their self-perceived social and academic success and satisfaction. We identify compulsory experiences as experiences required by the educational institution, such as mandatory meal plans, on-campus housing, or declaring a major no later than the second semester of sophomore year. As these are mandated experiences, students must engage with them over the course of their time at the Colleges. In nature, they have the potential to influence the personal lives of students in several ways. Given their depth of experience at the Colleges, we utilized a survey targeting HWS seniors to gather opinions on housing, dining, and academic experiences. Based on our findings, we hope to provide insight to key administrative decision-makers regarding the impacts of compulsory experiences on student satisfaction.

After almost four years of being on campus, we have heard and participated in a great deal of discourse surrounding students' hardships, barriers, and general challenges concerning compulsory experiences. These discussions and discourses are not confined to one specific group of students or a given setting, but they occur across a multitude of shared and private spaces, both consciously and subconsciously. Thus, we aim to understand more broadly whether or not such discourse and experience are commonly shared amongst the senior class. Given our analysis, we hope that those making major decisions regarding the new campus curriculum might consider our results.

MEASURING POLITICAL ATTITUDES IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Hailee Catalano, Lucy Howe, and Alex Shahdanian

This study examines college students' voting behavior by analyzing their policy preferences and candidate selection in simulated elections. Conducted in the Spring 2025 semester, the research includes approximately 40-50 HWS participants who complete a survey assessing their voting decisions across multiple political issues, including foreign affairs, immigration, social welfare, and the economy. Participants are presented with policy stances from two hypothetical candidates and are asked to indicate their preferred candidate based on individual policies and overall electability. The study employs an anonymous survey format to encourage honest responses, with data securely stored and analyzed collectively.

Findings from this research aim to contribute to a broader understanding of how college students navigate political decision-making and the factors influencing their candidate choices. Results will offer insights into the alignment between political attitudes and electoral behaviors among young voters, informing future discussions on political engagement and decision-making processes.

ENSURING LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY: MAINTENANCE AND UPSTREAM WATERSHED MAPPING FOR PROJECT POND WALK

Emma McKenna, Susan Hemingway, Neve Cawley

This presentation provides a follow-up to last year's EPA RainWorks Proposal "Project Pond Walk," focusing on the development of a long-term maintenance plan to ensure the project's success in reducing the effects of stormwater runoff in Odell's Pond. Through research on best practices for green infrastructure (GI), upkeep, and discussions with City of Geneva officials and HWS members, this plan outlines strategies for maintaining key infrastructure.

In addition to these discussions, we consulted companies specializing in GI to assess the maintenance requirements of their products. This includes, but is not limited to, permeable pavement, rain gardens, bioswales, and the reinforcement of Odell's Pond banks. Certain proposed aspects of Project Pond Walk were reevaluated due to budget constraints as reflected in the final maintenance plan. Additionally, Geographic Information System (GIS) technology was used to map the upstream watershed of Odell's Pond into the Staples parking lot to understand the composition and origin of excess water in Odell's Pond.

Findings emphasize the importance of division of labor, community engagement, and financial planning to sustain the project over time. Through the combination of maintenance strategies with watershed information, this project works to create a framework for preserving Project Pond Walk's ecological, education, and aesthetic value for future members of the HWS and Geneva community.

VIEWING SAMO©: EXAMINING THE COMMUNICATIVE AND RESISTANT FORM OF GRAFFITI DISCOURSE

Milla Chunton

I show the value of discourse analysis in examining the lexical features and meaning-making process of public graffiti. Because both artist and viewer of graffiti lack a co-presence when participants interact with the text, the following study relies on relevant scholarship such as corpus-based linguistic studies to answer this question: to what extent is graffiti dialogic? I argue that graffiti has the potential to act as a form of resistance, which a discourse analysis of the graffiti of SAMO© reveals.

To analyze the selected SAMO© graffiti, I applied dialogue tools of inquiry to research how the graffiti of SAMO© positions itself among the cultural movements that populated 1970s New York, and analyze the dialogical interaction between SAMO© and its viewers as it exemplifies social capacities of discourse: the enacting of identity, subject positions situated within context, and the building of significance. I suggest that SAMO© worked to position itself at the periphery and indifference to the socio-cultural communities that populated 1970s Lower Manhattan, while simultaneously critiquing their dominant positions. In turn, analyzing SAMO© suggests the dialogic features of graffiti allow: 1) graffiti to become a form of resistance, and 2) graffiti to serve as a catalog of being-in-the-world, capturing details of life and the values of society easily seen from the periphery looking in. Ultimately, this study furthers consideration of graffiti discourse as a site of linguistic and cultural interaction that values experimentation with language's form and context.

FUNDING PROJECT POND WALK: GRANT RESEARCH AND CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY FUND

Robert Clyde and Liam Whelan

Project Pond Walk is a proposed system of permeable pedestrian and bike paths that follows a central drainage route on the HWS campus, linking 4 existing retention ponds and connecting the main and arts campuses through a recently acquired woodland, Cooper's Woods. Project Pond Walk would deploy green infrastructure elements such as permeable paving solutions, bioswales, rain gardens, and native plants to increase stormwater infiltration and reduce flooding. A substantial obstacle of the project is securing funding to bring these benefits from a concept to a reality.

The purpose of our work is to research and pursue effective funding strategies for Project Pond Walk. Our primary focus is to research, locate, and prepare for numerous grant opportunities that will fund portions of the project's substantial costs. By preparing a database of the details of grant opportunities, future environmental studies students will have the necessary materials to apply for grants when the application windows open. By thoroughly researching green infrastructure funding structures at similar private institutions in Upstate New York, we found that many of HWS' peers have Campus Sustainability funds that have been utilized to develop projects similar to Pond Walk. As HWS states that sustainability is a core value of the colleges, this research motivated us to pitch a HWS Campus Sustainability Fund, which can be used to support Project Pond Walk as well as future sustainable initiatives.

BEYOND SOUP:
CLIENT-INFORMED IMPROVEMENTS TO FOOD PANTRIES IN GENEVA, NY

Abigail Cole

Emergency food services take place within a culture of stigma and surveillance regarding food insecurity and poverty¹. These cultural forces shape the organizational structure and behavior of staff and volunteers². Given the siloed nature of this field, fostering inter-organizational conversations is essential to ensuring that services effectively support both vulnerable populations and the labor force that sustains them.

This project explores the mechanisms by which food pantries and soup kitchens provide services to patrons in Geneva, NY, given the critical impact of these organizations and the fragility of the labor required to run them. This research uses applied sociological methods of interviews and focus groups to unveil existing knowledge about services and their impacts. I explore how volunteers and staff describe the populations they serve and their personal experiences at these sites.

Interviews provide participants the opportunity to reflect on their work, the emotional toll of their labor, and the impact of the organization(s) they serve. Focus groups, in turn, facilitate dialogue between individuals and organizations. The outcomes of these discussions may reveal pathways to creating more transformative and intentional spaces in the emergency food sector.

MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES IN PATIENTS TREATED WITH CAR T-CELL THERAPY

Payton Kliesch and Kate Colvin

Through a systematic literature review this study for our independent study under Professor Elizabeth Belcher investigates mental health outcomes in cancer patients treated with chimeric antigen receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy. This newly approved treatment for hematological cancers involves removing T-cells from a patient, engineering them to target specific harmful cells such as cancer, and reinfusing the cells into the patient (National Cancer Institute). Considered very promising for cancer treatment, the method has been approved in the US for hematological cancer patients with relapsing or unsuccessfully treated conditions.

However, CAR-T has some concerning possible side effects such as cytokine release syndrome (CRS) and immune effector cell-associated neurotoxicity syndrome (ICANS), which can occur at varying degrees, impacting physical and mental functioning with symptoms like fatigue, fever, low blood pressure, and organ failure in CRS and confusion, cognitive difficulties, coma, and blood-brain barrier disruption in ICANS, respectively (National Cancer Institute, Grant et al. 2022). Because of these resulting conditions in addition to extensive hospitalization, previous cancer treatments or diagnoses, and other related experiences, this population may be at an elevated risk of developing mental health disorders and should be further investigated to establish appropriate support recovery (Mitchell et al. 2011, Die Trill 2013).

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DESIRE & THE LESBIAN GAZE:
SHIFTING INTIMACY NARRATIVES IN LESBIAN VISUAL ARTS

Adriana Croce

My project examines the development of a distinctly lesbian gaze in American visual arts post-1970s and argues that this gaze involves subverting hegemonic power structures and traditional notions of the gaze. An exploration of the role of queer theory, shifting intimacy narratives over time, the history of portraiture, and gaze theory in relation to artists Catherine Opie and Mickalene Thomas reveals how this distinctly lesbian gaze has developed. Not only do the oeuvres of these artists exemplify the lesbian gaze, but they also depict embodied desire with representations of the physical body.

Lesbians, in theory, fall outside of power systems such as the patriarchy and gender binary. Depictions of them are primed to resist appropriation and reconstruct lesbian subjectivity in visual art; however, lesbians have experienced difficulty evading the male gaze. The lesbian identity is set at odds with presumed heterosexuality, systemic homophobia, and the patriarchy, and an insistence upon recognition and representation becomes an act of revolt, revealing that these oppressive systems do not have to be accepted. This project serves as an important form of representation for a community that has faced significant erasure and positions me to offer a contribution to the discipline of art history that is often understudied.

TAKING UP SPACE: HOW TRANS* STUDENTS NAVIGATE GENDERED EXPERIENCES AT COLLEGE

Lee Dagit

In an ever-growing gender diverse world, how do we best support students of all gender identities? This is a question many institutions, including HWS, have been struggling with. Traditionally established Hobart College for Men and William Smith College for Women, HWS is unique with its coordinate system and navigation of gendered space. In the past year yet another HWS structure, the separate deans' offices, have combined. This one-school mindset has been adopted in part to make sure the processes across William Smith and Hobart College are the same. In addition, it has been to make more space for gender-diverse students outside the coordinate system.

This project explores how the Trans* college experience is related to gendered spaces, and how language and categorization as single gender vs co-ed impacts this. Using HWS as a case study for other institutions, this project aims to show the importance of the language we use regarding binary single-gender space as well as co-ed spaces. Finally, this project explores how we can best support both gender diverse students and all students within the binary. Including diverse students does not need to, nor should it, mean the removal of gendered spaces.

HW(ELL)S: TRANSFERRING, RESTARTING, AND NAVIGATING SCHOOL CLOSURES

Lee Dagit

It has been predicted that over 90 small colleges and universities will close in the next four years as a result of this gap.¹ As a result, we can expect to see smaller institutions closing and looking for schools to transfer to.

HWS has taken in transfer students from several small schools that have closed in the last couple of years, including Wells College which unexpectedly shut down last spring. Nearly a fifth of their student body transferred to HWS. Coming from a much smaller and closer-knit school with strong traditions and a different learning environment, some students have had difficulty adjusting to HWS, while others have thrived in the new environment.

This project looks at the experiences of Wells transfer students on campus through in-depth interviews to determine their sense of belonging and integration over the course of this last year to the greater HWS community.

This project aims to show how well HWS has done at integrating and including Wells students and what the institution could do better for other school closure transfers in the future. To meet these goals a final deliverable will be offered to relevant offices regarding what has worked and for what has not, including potential solutions.

THE CAPITAL DIVIDE: NAVIGATING SUCCESS AND STRUGGLE AT HWS

Moira van der Putt, Isabella De Nes, Natalie Sandoval,
Charlotte Sanford, and Aidan Rodgers

Research shows that institutional support fosters a sense of belonging, with access to resources significantly impacting student experiences (Means & Pyne, 2017; Terenzini et al., 1994). Using survey data from 300 undergraduates at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, we analyze how financial stability, social networks, and academic resources shape well-being through descriptive and inferential statistics.

We hypothesize that students with greater financial security, supportive networks, and academic resources will report higher well-being. By examining these factors, this study highlights how institutional support can reduce disparities and promote equitable student experiences. Findings will contribute to discussions on equity in higher education and inform targeted interventions, such as financial aid, mentorship, and academic support services. This research provides insights for HWS and other institutions seeking to enhance student support systems and foster a more inclusive campus environment.

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- Terenzini, Patrick T., et al. "The transition to college: Diverse students, diverse stories." *Research in higher education* 35 (1994): 57-73 "NO SABO" ESPAÑOL: A LYRICAL ESSAY

Brianna Del Rosario

“No Sabo” is a phrase created for Hispanics who cannot speak Spanish. For too long I have struggled embracing my native tongue and ethnicity. Due to not being taught Spanish in my childhood, I felt as if I did not deserve to be called Dominican; this felt like a title reserved only for those who could speak Spanish, not for a Dominican American like me. As a result, I began to run away from my background, feeling as if I was unworthy of it. How could I be if I can barely hold a conversation with my own grandmother?

In this lyric essay, I explore ideas of identity, motherhood, beauty, and self. I describe how I began to look past minor imperfections and embrace the positives. Although I did not speak Spanish fluently, I knew enough about my culture and language to accept who I am. My mother, who loves me dearly, still struggles to embrace her beauty, whether that be the inside or out. We both learned to be scared of embracing who we are in our own ways. With this lyrical essay, I hope to challenge myself to explore different writing styles, showcase my creativity, and prove to me, my mother, and other fellow Dominicans that we deserve to love ourselves instead of comparing our individuality to others.

GAME AND PATTERNS WITH STABLE TAMARI POSET

Djeneba Diop

One of the aspects of mathematics I enjoy the most is discovering patterns and connecting them to larger mathematical ideas. Last summer, I had the opportunity to participate in a Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) at the NYC Discrete Math program. My partner and I worked on a topic called the Tamari Poset, a concept within combinatorics, the branch of mathematics that deals with counting and arranging objects. The Tamari Poset, introduced by Dov Tamari in the 1960s, is an important structure in combinatorics, particularly for its connection to binary trees and its role in algebraic and geometric contexts.

In my research, I extended this concept by exploring non-negative integer sequences of the form (a, b, a) , where $a < b$, with specific properties: we can consider this as a kind of game where we examine a sequence and, following certain rules, determine how many other sequences are "comparable" to it. Along the way, I uncovered interesting patterns that led to sequences found in the Online Encyclopedia of Integer Sequences (OEIS), suggesting deeper connections to other combinatorial objects.

This REU experience has made me realize how much I enjoy research in the combinatorics field, and I look forward to continuing to explore this field in my future endeavors.

HOW DO WE FINANCE CLIMATE ACTION?
KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE UNITED
NATIONS 29TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

Finn Foley

In the United States and other developed countries, private and public sector investment has driven renewable energy and electric vehicles to make huge advancements and capture higher market shares. While energy transition is happening in developed countries, they remain the largest per capita emitters in the world. Meanwhile, many developing nations, despite contributing little to climate change, face the most severe climate-driven disasters and lack the financial resources for a clean energy transition. How does one expect a developing country to think about cleaner sources of energy when its basic infrastructure is far behind that of developed countries?

This topic took the main stage at the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP 29) in Baku, Azerbaijan, which I was fortunate to attend. The debates and disagreements that I listened to raised certain questions: Who should pay for developing nations to adapt and transition? What mechanisms ensure fair and effective funding? And why is there so much disagreement in general? If this sounds like a complex issue at stake, that's because it is. In this presentation, I will explore why this issue remains so contentious, highlight key takeaways from COP 29, and reflect on this critical global debate.

RIPPLES OF CHANGE: HISTORICAL PERCEPTIONS OF HWS'S SOCIAL LIFE

Leah Foster, Alex Karpawich

Our project examines the evolution of social life at Hobart and William Smith Colleges (HWS). We employ qualitative research methods, conducting in-depth interviews with a sample of both alumni and current students with membership to an on campus social organization. By analyzing these organizations, we explore how membership shapes students' sense of belonging, community-building, and social interactions.

The purpose of this project stems from a desire to understand how HWS's social fabric has shifted over time and how these changes affect students today. As institutions of higher education increasingly pursue initiatives to support social organizations and student wellness, it is vital to produce studies that rely on student voices that can illuminate both good and bad experiences with membership in social organizations. These insights can inform both the members of these organizations and the administration on how to improve student experiences. This research emphasizes student experiences rather than institutional programs explicitly, but it underscores how institutional decisions regarding these initiatives may directly influence students' lived realities.

NAVIGATING BLACK IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY AT HWS: A STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACH

Leah Foster

The purpose of my research project is to explore how students' backgrounds prior to HWS shape their sense of Black identity, their connection to the Black student community at HWS, and how that community can be improved or changed. I will explore the role of the high school environment, extracurricular involvement, and social networks to help to better understand the barriers that affect integration at HWS and efforts to build a stronger sense of community.

This project was motivated by a recognizable divide within the Black community at HWS. This made me want to investigate why this divide exists, examining the distinct, separate, and shared experiences of Black men and women, and ultimately, how the community can be improved. By taking a strengths-based approach, I shifted the focus from what is lacking in our HWS experiences to how we can build upon the cultural wealth we already possess. Instead of centering deficits, my research highlights opportunities for growth, resilience, and collective empowerment within the Black student community. This project contributes to the advancement of knowledge by providing insight into how pre-college experiences influence the way Black students navigate social life, community, and identity at a predominantly white institution.

ENHANCING ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM DYNAMICS: A STUDY OF PBIS AND SWPBS IMPACT ON STUDENT SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Alex George

This research investigates the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) in a 6:1:2 special education classroom within a BOCES school, focusing on 4th-6th grade students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and multiple disabilities. The study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine how these behavioral frameworks impact students' social-emotional development, particularly for those utilizing diverse communication methods including speech-generating devices and Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS).

Utilizing an existing "star" point system, the research aims to assess students' sense of agency, conflict resolution skills, and empathetic understanding. Classroom observations will track behavioral changes, communication strategies, and student interactions through detailed field notes and behavioral checklists. By adapting PBIS and SWPBS to accommodate students with varied communication abilities, the study seeks to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Motivated by the critical need for tailored social-emotional learning in special education, this research aspires to contribute meaningful insights into developing positive behavior supports that enhance student potential and classroom dynamics.

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FOOD FOR ALL? EXAMINING CAMPUS FOOD, MEAL INCLUSIVITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY

Samantha Goldberg, Jaya Patel, Colin Spencer

Access to inclusive and accommodating campus dining is essential for student well-being, yet many college dining programs struggle to meet the diverse dietary needs of their student populations¹. This study explores the experiences of Hobart and William Smith students who face dietary restrictions due to religious, cultural, or health-related reasons, with a focus on the accessibility and inclusivity of campus food services. By conducting in-depth interviews with affected students, we aim to identify the specific challenges they encounter when seeking meals that align with their dietary needs. Additionally, we will evaluate the extent to which institutional food policies and dining services address these challenges and whether students feel adequately supported in their dietary needs.

We consider key areas of concern, including the availability of halal, kosher, vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and allergen-free meal options, as well as the transparency of ingredient labeling and the flexibility of meal plans². Furthermore, we examine students' perceptions of dining hall staff awareness and responsiveness to their dietary restrictions.

By amplifying the voices of students who struggle with the current dining system, we aim to shed light on the broader implications of food accessibility in higher education. The findings will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of current food policies, show gaps in inclusivity, and offer recommendations for enhancing meal accessibility for all students. We ultimately seek to encourage institutional changes that promote a more equitable and accommodating dining experience for students with diverse dietary needs.

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DEVELOPMENT THAT WORKS: ASSESSING DIVERGENT APPROACHES TO FOOD INSECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

Aiden Greiff

As development work has expanded, conflicting methodologies have emerged to streamline food production and manage negative consequences. A core tension exists between proponents of productivist strategies that prioritize the expansion of the food supply and conservationist strategies that prioritize medium and longer-term sustainable food systems. This project assumes that proponents of each approach seek to maximize a social good and reduce hunger. It builds a typology reflecting the core features of each approach and identifies an organization that serves as an exemplar of “success” in advancing this approach in West Africa.

By comparing the hunger-reducing strategies of these two organizations, I seek to elaborate the benefits and disadvantages to each and considers the barriers to scaling each approach more widely in pursuit of long-term food security in the region.

CARTER ROAD PARK: A SUSTAINABLE SPACE FOR RECREATION AND EDUCATION

Alexandrea Hayward and Roberto Vega

A parcel on Carter Road, surrounded by agricultural land has been left to erode, and an increase in flooding and phosphorus loading has impacted the site. Because it is located conveniently close to the Geneva community school systems as well as housing developments, there is an untouched opportunity to provide a recreational and educational outdoor space for the surrounding community. By coming aspects of green infrastructure with outdoor paths, seating areas, signage, and playgrounds, both the health of the ecosystem and the health of the people can be improved simultaneously in this space.

Our park designs for our ENV capstone project are based on research about green infrastructural cost and design, psychological benefits of parks, and spatial and recreational preferences in parks, specifically around water spaces. We are developing designs that we intend to receive feedback on from the community. As we collect their feedback, we will continue to adapt and develop these plans to better meet the needs of the Geneva community.

CELEBRITY REINFORCEMENT OF STEREOTYPICAL BEAUTY STANDARDS

Sydney Herbruck

My presentation aims to show how celebrities are given an immense amount of power in terms of making an impression on and influencing their audience, more specifically how female celebrities have an impression on their female audience. I examine through various discourse analysis tools how Kim Kardashian reinforces the stereotypical beauty standards placed on women in the media in her interview with *time*.

It is crucial that analysts understand the ways that public figures like Kim Kardashian can use language in a way to both support their own discourse as well as create discourse for other people that wasn't originally there. Understanding more about how female celebrities reinforce these standards allows critics a glimpse into the bigger movement of beauty standards as a whole. This analysis uses context and the theory of masquerade to explore how female celebrities who appear to be in support of female agency can actually work against it through their discourse. Finally, I discuss the implications of analysis of stereotypical beauty standards reinforced by celebrities.

GENDER, RAGE, AND POWER: A LOOK AT WOMEN'S ANGER IN AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS

Lucy Howe

There is a power that comes from women's anger, and we have seen it happen with instances like the Women's March and the #metoo movement, but is this anger accepted in women looking to be President? My research project looks at the double standard that exists for women in politics in regards to expressing anger. With a specific focus on presidential politics, I look at the experiences of the two women who have been a major party's nominee- Hillary Clinton in 2016 and Kamala Harris in 2024-- and the role that anger played in their campaigns. Inspired by the book *Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger*¹, I lay out a brief history of the role of anger in American politics and the ways in which women are forced to rein in their anger in order to be successful.

I look at the Clinton and Harris campaigns to find moments where their anger damaged the public perception of them, and moments where we should have seen anger but did not because of this double standard. To truly get women represented in national politics, especially at the presidential level, it may be necessary to allow them to represent all of the emotions women around the country feel, including, and perhaps most importantly, anger.

EXPLORING PSYCHOGENIC PAIN WITHIN THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND: A DEEP INQUIRY OF SUFFERING BEYOND THE PSYCHICAL REALM

Sadia Hussein

The word “psychogenic” is derived from two Greek words: *psichogenis*, “created in the mind,” and *ponos*, or pain. While physical pain is typically connected to tangible injuries, psychogenic pain blurs the difference between the physical and the mental, raising fundamental philosophical questions.

Pain is categorized into three main types. The first is physical pain, which refers to the objective experience. The second is mental pain, which encompasses the subjective experience. Lastly, there is a combination of physical and psychological pain, which includes elements of both subjectivity and objectivity, or psychogenic pain. This presents a challenge for both medicine and philosophy. Psychogenic pain is complicated since it arises from mental and emotional states rather than any identifiable physical damage. How does psychogenic pain confuse the binary of mind and body? Can a pain without a tangible physical cause still be “real”?

This study examines psychogenic pain through an interdisciplinary lens that draws from philosophy, psychology, and personal experience to explore the philosophical of psychogenic pain, particularly how it exposes the limitations of human rationality and evokes deep questions about the roles of faith and meaning in the context of suffering. By centering on lived experience and image, this research contributes to a broader understanding of suffering, expanding the discourse on pain beyond its physical manifestations. How does psychogenic pain challenge the rational mind, and what insights might this offer regarding the interplay between reason, faith, and the experience of physical suffering? Why is it different from physical pain? And why can’t psychogenic pain just be diagnosed in the literal physical sense?

GO GREEN OR GO HOME: DESIGNING PARKS WITH COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Hannah Huston, Katherine Villinski, and Emanuel Zeitlin

A recently acquired 22-acre land parcel beside Carter Road has been sanctioned by the City and Town of Geneva for public park development. The two primary focuses of the Carter Road Park Project, in order of importance, are as follows 1) protect the Marsh Creek headwaters (situated within the land parcel) and 2) serve the Geneva community via green infrastructure. To understand how the space can best serve community members, the Community Engagement and Input team have been tasked with gathering and interpreting resident feedback, which will be factored into the final engineering and planning of the space.

For this project, postcard solicitations were mailed to Geneva residents within a 1-mile radius of the land parcel; the postcards contained two individual QR codes redirecting residents to one of two data collection points: first, a voluntary and confidential digital survey questionnaire (15 ‘check all that apply’ questions); second, a voluntary, in-person focus group session led by project members, in which participants discussed survey responses. Expected results will demonstrate residents’ opinions on safety, expected park use frequency, signage, as well as rankings of specific park features.

LIVING WHILE DYEING: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF FLORENTINE SILK DYERS AND TO GLOBAL TRADE SYSTEMS, 1400-1552

Kisean Jones

Who derives economic benefits from the process of colonization? Monarchs? Bureaucrats? Merchants? In many ways, not just the Spanish but also the Italians contributed to the financing of European colonization of the Americas, an important yet under-discussed fact of Early Modern European economic history. Through their close business relationships with Italian merchants based in Spain, and with Spanish merchants who dealt in foreign luxury goods, interested Early Modern Florentines were able to acquire necessary raw materials for commercial purposes, including that which became a Spanish monopoly and which was New Spain's most valuable export after silver: American cochineal.

A scale insect domesticated by Indigenous Mexicans for at least several centuries before Columbus or Cortés, the female *Dactylopius coccus* Costa's carminic acid, or cochineal, provided Early Modern Europe with an expensive, brilliant shade of red prized by textile dyers, painters and ecclesiastical elite alike. Unlike the more traditional kermes which came from the Eastern Mediterranean, American cochineal and the Indigenous knowledge and labour contained therein was a notably potent dyestuff that captivated Europe's rich and generated comparatively large amounts of money on average for textile dyers working in Florence's export-oriented silk industry.

This paper examines the development of the silk industry in Florence in the years 1400-1560 and how it contributed to studies of wealth inequality in pre-modern Europe, making use of the *Catasto* of 1427 to analyze wealth hierarchy by occupation amongst Florentines. As consumers of American cochineal, Florentines were explicit economic beneficiaries of European colonization of the Americas. This exploratory study points out that much like Spanish monarchs, bureaucrats and merchants, Florentine silk dyers and their families, too, interacted with New World commodities markets to make a living off of the labour and cultural knowledge of Indigenous Mexicans who themselves lived and worked thousands of miles away from Europe.

THE COGNITIVE IMPACT OF DANCE TRAINING

Erin Kerwin

Throughout my studies at HWS, I have developed an interest in the cognitive impact of dance training, which fosters a uniquely dynamic environment for enhancing attentional abilities, particularly selective, sustained, and divided attention.

As dancers focus on elements like choreography and musical cues while filtering out extraneous distractions, selective attention, which refers to the act of choosing which stimuli to tune into when multiple are present, is strengthened. Current research suggests that this heightened ability to concentrate can enhance performance in academic and professional settings where focus is essential.

Sustained attention, necessary for maintaining focus over extended rehearsal periods and performances, is another key benefit of dance training. Studies conducted in sports psychology indicate that both athletes and performers often demonstrate superior attentional endurance, thus contributing to improved productivity and task management in everyday life. Additionally, dance promotes divided attention as dancers work to simultaneously coordinate movements, respond to music, and engage with other partners or ensemble members in the space. This ability to effectively manage multiple streams of information is closely linked to enhanced multitasking skills in everyday life.

Through an exploration of existing research on the cognitive benefits of dance, my project seeks to foster a deeper understanding of how the attentional demands of dance contribute to improved cognitive functioning, specifically refined attentional control, in the lives of trained dancers.

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IS ATHLETICS A RESILIENCE BUILDER? INSIGHT FROM COLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

Kayla Ketchabaw

Resilience is the ability to respond adequately to adversity by overcoming difficult or challenging life experiences. For individuals who have faced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), resilience is crucial to develop in order to mitigate both long and short-term effects such as mental health disorders, chronic physical disorders, and maladaptive behaviors. According to the CDC, the majority of adults in the US report having endured at least four or more types of ACEs. Existing research that highlights the dynamic relationship and mutual influence between ACEs and resilience, but little existing literature exploring the connection between specific activities that encapsulate and promote a resilient mindset.

This study employs an online survey to examine ACEs and resilience in collegiate athletes at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. Key areas of focus include childhood experiences, current behaviors or habits, and self-perception. By gaining deeper insight into the role of athletics as a protective factor against ACEs, this study will contribute to building effective strategies to support individuals who have experienced adversity at a young age.

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<https://www.apa.org/topics/resilience>

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AI AS AN ACADEMIC ACCOMODATION

Madelyn Kilmer

How can AI tools enhance learning for all students, including those with disabilities? Can AI-driven applications serve as effective academic accommodations? With the rise of AI-powered tools like Speechify, ChatGPT, and Google Notebook LM, educators have new opportunities to support diverse learning needs in the classroom.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) holds promise for addressing the needs of students with print-based learning disabilities within and outside learning environments. AI technologies and other reading programs can mitigate resource limitations by enabling highly individualized support for students with disabilities. For example, students with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, ADHD, and processing disorders, have benefited from using technology to enhance their learning experience (Johnston et al., 2015). Tools such as those that summarize text can be tailored interventions that cater to specific learning requirements, fostering inclusivity in education.

In this project, I ask the following: How does a college student with a print-related disability use AI-assisted tools as an accommodation to accomplish academic tasks? Additionally, how do these tools help prepare a future special education teacher to work with students with disabilities who might benefit from these tools.

I will use an auto-ethnographic approach to analyzing this question. I will examine the use of three AI-assisted applications that are approved accommodations through my post-secondary institution: Speechify, Notability, and Notebook LM. Through my analysis, I will describe how much I use each tool, the tasks I accomplish, and an assessment of their strengths and limitations. Lastly, I will generate a list of recommendations for how students and teachers can incorporate these tools to support academic tasks.

Incorporating AI in education represents a transformative shift toward more personalized and inclusive learning experiences. By embracing AI tools, future teachers can foster a classroom environment that adapts to the unique needs of every student, ensuring that education remains equitable and engaging in the age of technology.

Note: ChatGPT was used as a tool to help construct this abstract

TACKLING FOOD INSECURITY BY REDSIGNING FOOD PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Ava Lee

Food insecurity is rising rapidly across the globe. Due to climate change and economic challenges, it is difficult for people to find healthy food in their community that they enjoy and that can be sustained by their environment. Sustainably planting and sourcing food has positive impacts on a community as well as ecosystems, which is why it is beneficial to find food practices that work best in different environments.

In this paper, I elaborate on the social implications of a project that I conducted with the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Station in Geneva, New York that tested the effectiveness of three different pollinators on three varieties of winter squash in Upstate New York. The information from the experiment can be used to effectively grow more food in rural areas of Upstate New York, helping the environment by eliminating fossil fuels and the energy used to transport food and helping socially connect people and their environment.

EFFECTS OF MEDITATION ON RESISTING CELL PHONE DISTRACTIONS

Lauren Legler

Mindfulness meditation enhances attention by reducing distractions.¹ In today's digital age, cell phones significantly impair cognitive performance, even when not actively used.² Mindfulness meditation, which promotes focused attention through breath awareness, may help manage these distractions.¹ While previous research has linked mindfulness to improved attention, fewer studies examine its immediate effects in the presence of digital distractions. This study investigates whether a single mindfulness session can improve sustained attention and reduce the disruptive impact of cell phone notifications in college students.

Thirty-two PSY 100 students at Hobart and William Smith were randomly assigned to a mindfulness or control condition. The mindfulness group completed a 10-minute guided meditation, while the control group sat quietly. Participants then completed the Sustained Attention to Response Task (SART), which measures attentional control and response inhibition. The task included two conditions: one with a visible cell phone, receiving notifications, and one without. Physiological measures — heart rate, electrodermal activity and saccadic eye movements were also recorded.

Analyses are currently ongoing. It is expected that the meditation group will perform better on SART, with higher accuracy and faster reaction times. While phone presence is expected to impair performance across groups, a smaller effect is predicted in the meditation group. Physiological data are also expected to show lower stress responses and fewer attention shifts, suggesting that mindfulness may help mitigate digital distractions.

¹ Ford, S. D., & Nagamatsu, L. S. (2024). Four weeks of meditation training improves sustained attention in community-dwelling older adults: A proof-of-concept randomized controlled trial. *Frontiers in Aging*, 5, 1322705. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fragi.2024.1322705>

² Stothart, C., Mitchum, A., & Yehnert, C. (2015). The attentional cost of receiving a cell phone notification. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 41(4), 893–897. <https://doi.org/10.1037/xhp0000100>

TEACHING EMPATHY

Sophie Leidig

Over the past several years, researchers have noted a lack of empathy and perspective-taking skills in children. Empathy is an extremely important trait for children to have because it encourages the acceptance of others, helps build stronger relationships, and promotes higher emotional intelligence. For my research, I explored this question: how can teachers implement daily practices to teach empathy and perspective taking within the framework of social emotional learning?

During my time as a substitute teacher in the spring semester of 2025, I implemented a social emotional learning activity that has been shown to help foster empathy and perspective taking skills. I have been facilitating this activity in each classroom that I have substitute taught in, across different age groups and ability levels. In order to explore the impact of these methods, I recorded my observations and took field notes throughout my time as a substitute teacher. This intervention provided an opportunity for students to better understand the feelings and perspectives of others. Additionally, my study found that guided peer interaction allowed students to build their empathy skills.

CHATGPT: THE COST IN ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Al Levy

With the rise of models such as ChatGPT, Gemini and Copilot as well as the development of increasingly realistic AI images and videos, concerns over its usage have begun to dominate discourse. An important concern worth investigating is the impact on energy consumption and how prepared we are to meet this demand.

This study researches energy consumption by the major generative AI model ChatGPT, taking both data storage and internal computations into account. This is a particularly pressing issue because even a single query requires parsing, a search for relevant data, and finally a computation of a response that the model believes has the highest probability of satisfying the user. Models like ChatGPT draw on data from the entire internet to accomplish this, and when the millions of users are factored into the equation, the scale of computation increases, as does energy consumption. I aim to detail how these inquiries impact our power grid and natural resources both now and if usage continues to grow, as it has since 2023.

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Leffer, Lauren. "Power Hungry." Science News, vol. 206, no. 10, Dec. 2024, pp. 23–25. EBSCOhost, research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=20ba7068-075a-33f6-b739-ee7261d2d561.

HWS SUMMER SAILING LETTER: AN ANALYSIS OF THE MOTIVATION AND IDENTITY BETWEEN COACHES AND ATHLETES

Ksenia Lowry-Neufeld

Relationships between coaches and athletes heavily determine how well a sports team does in competitions and within their conference. The coaches not only need to be supportive, but they need to promote motivation for the student-athletes to put in the work to succeed. But how do they do this?

My project delves into the question of how coaches produce motivation and identity using discourse tools that break down and analyze a letter written by the HWS Sailing Coach that has been sent out to the sailors over past summers. As someone who used to be on the HWS Sailing Team for almost three years, motivation was very important in my time on the team, I wanted to use what I have learned in my WRRH classes to illuminate the different ways in which motivation was produced by the coach and place this analysis in the context of similar and related scholarship.

YOUTH EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY: DISMANTLING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Cassandra Lundgren

Educational opportunities are not distributed to all students equally. My experience in the public school system was marked early-on with a move from an underserved urban school to a more well-resourced rural one. Arrival at my new school meant my early, previously unchallenged education was met with tears and feelings of resentment and unworthiness. Learning firsthand about the stark disparities in educational quality prompted my passion for advocacy. I remain committed to the ideals of community and inclusivity, working with students in local schools across Geneva to influence literacy initiatives and promote equitable education.

The trajectory of my education led me to my place at Hobart and William Smith – a privilege I do not take for granted. By understanding the way the education system operates, and more importantly its weaknesses, we are better equipped to dismantle systemic barriers and work towards a more equitable and inclusive future for our children.

We need systemic reforms, such as increased funding for urban schools, improved teacher salaries, and comprehensive support services. Through a combination of personal narrative, critical analysis, and theoretical concepts, I advocate for the importance of challenging educational norms and striving for equitable access to quality education.

TRUST OR TENSION: STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE AND FIRST RESPONDERS AT HWS

Santina Masters, David Rich, and Molly Schaeffer

We live in an age where people are increasingly being encouraged to ask for help, from seeking therapeutic services to crisis helplines and other emergency services. There is a large cultural movement to eliminate the stigma surrounding seeking help and to promote healthy relationships among community members. In light of this cultural shift, many institutions have sought to make people aware of the many resources at their disposal, from workplaces to universities. But awareness of resources does not necessarily translate into using them. How do college students utilize (or not utilize) the resources at their disposal? What factors shape their attitudes and behaviors on matters of seeking help?

Our research project investigates the help-seeking behaviors of HWS students who would not utilize first responders—law enforcement, firefighters, public health professionals, and other medical personnel. By conducting a series of in-depth interviews with HWS students, we seek to uncover reasons students decide against using first responders, whether students are motivated by fear, distrust, or preferences for an alternative.

HWS STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE COORDINATE SYSTEM

Evelyn Von Heill, Marissa Mastracco, Madeline Patrick

This study aims to examine current student experiences and perceptions of the Hobart and William Smith (HWS) Coordinate System. We collected quantitative survey data to assess how students navigate and engage with this unique structure, evaluating its impact on their academic, social, and extracurricular lives. This study was conducted using an online survey. The survey employed quantitative research methods to capture statistical trends as well as nuanced personal perspectives. The data collected provides insight into students' awareness of the system, and its perceived benefits and challenges. The representative themes we inquired about were students' past education, whether or not they went to a school with a coordinate system, measuring their experience and perception with the coordinate system, and measuring their opinion about the Colleges operating together but also operating separately.

This study contributes to the broader understanding of gender-based collegiate structures and their impact on students' experiences. This information will be valuable for the administration in enhancing publicity and marketing efforts for the colleges. This project will be carried out in conjunction with the Sociology Senior Capstone course which focuses on applied projects. This year's emphasis was on generating a body of findings on HWS student insights and experiences that can help campus stakeholders better understand students when making decisions that potentially impact them.

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FEDERAL SENTENCING GUIDELINES AND THE MEDIA FRENZY OF THE CRACK EPIDEMIC

Holly McCarty

The introduction of crack cocaine produced a period of hysteria about the drug and its effects on Americans. This hysteria ultimately led to harsh federal sentencing guidelines that disproportionately affected minority communities.

The epidemic is contextualized through the explanation of the differences between crack and powder cocaine, as well as the differences among federal sentencing guidelines for possession and sale of each substance. The guidelines' disproportionate effects are then analyzed to illustrate the true harm caused to minority communities. With all of this context as the foundation, I then assess the intertwined relationships between public opinion, the media, and legislation. The false narratives created by the media are a key point of my research and play a crucial role in the construction of my final argument. My work suggests that the media's portrayal of crack cocaine heightened this hysteria and played a role in the creation of legislation regarding crack possession and sale.

As the final paper for my class, "History of the Mexican Drug Trade," it is my hope that this work will begin to deconstruct the harmful narratives of the crack epidemic and encourage a recognition of the media's impact on the creation of legislation.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

Quinn McGowan

Social-emotional learning (SEL) plays a critical role in fostering a supportive and engaging classroom environment. This research examines the role SEL plays specifically in middle social studies classrooms by exploring how it enhances student engagement, critical thinking, and empathy.

For this study, I reviewed three lessons that I taught during student teaching. I analyzed the content of the lessons, my self-reflections about the lessons, and the feedback I received from supervisor and cooperating teacher observations. I also explored realistic strategies for embedding SEL into social studies instruction, including discussion-based learning, group work, and project-based assessments.

My motivation for this project comes from my desire to protect and foster the social-emotional well-being of my students within my social studies classroom, as I recognize that social studies topics can bring out big emotions in students. Helping students to understand these emotions and respectfully navigate them is a large part of my teaching philosophy, and I believe this can be done by creating a safe classroom environment backed by SEL. By integrating SEL principles such as self-awareness, social awareness, and responsible decision-making, teachers can create a more inclusive space where students feel safe to explore diverse perspectives on history.

CARTER ROAD REWILDING PLAN

Abigail McKenna and Lewis York

The Town of Geneva recently acquired a 22-acre land parcel on Carter Road that will be transformed into a park accessible to the community. The land parcel encompasses the headwaters of Marsh Creek, where there is a major concern about excessive phosphorus pollution. Through outreach and research, we discovered that this issue can be addressed by rewilding native plant species, with a focus on riparian buffer zones. Our goal in this Environmental studies capstone project is to support the sustainability of the watershed through the process of rewilding native plant species, which will improve water quality and soil erosion while creating natural habitat.

CAN WE TAKE THE PERSPECTIVE OF VILLAINS? THE ROLE OF PERSPECTIVE TAKING ON READER PREFERENCES FOR CHARACTER OUTCOMES

Carter Meshanic and Hunter Meshanic

When readers take the perspective of a character that they are reading about, they are sensitized to perspective-relevant information including a character's goals, thoughts and feelings. For example, readers often prefer positive outcomes for characters when they read from the point of view of the character, regardless of whether the character is heroic or villainous. The purpose of the current set of experiments is to expand upon previous research by examining whether readers can adopt the perspective of an extreme, historical villain: Adolf Hitler.

In two experiments, participants will read narrative stories that contain either positive or negative outcomes for Hitler. In Experiment 1a, participants will be instructed to read for comprehension. We predict that participants will prefer negative outcomes for Hitler compared to positive outcomes. In Experiment 1b, participants will be instructed to read from the perspective of Adolf Hitler. If readers can adopt the perspective of an extreme villain, then they will prefer positive outcomes over negative outcomes for Hitler. If, however, perspective-taking is limited, readers will not take the perspective of Hitler, and they should still prefer negative outcomes for him. Because this is a work in progress, we expect to have collected preliminary data to discuss by the time of the Symposium.

PLUNGED INTO DARKNESS: THE IMPACT OF A TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE ON PLANKTON MIGRATION IN SENECA LAKE

Andrew Painton

A total solar eclipse occurred over the Finger Lakes region (New York, USA) on April 8th, 2024 (15:21 totality, 2:21-minute duration). I studied the effect of this phenomenon on the behavior of microscopic aquatic animals in Seneca Lake. The migration of these small animals (plankton) in response to daily light levels changes are well documented, typically migrating upwards in the water column at night to feed and downwards during the day to avoid predation. I hypothesized that some species of plankton would vertically migrate in response to the mid-day darkening caused by the total solar eclipse.

Depth-specific plankton collections and abiotic data were recorded at 20-minute intervals before, during, and after totality the day of the eclipse and again the following week. Samples were analyzed for changes in abundance relative to taxonomic groups. During totality, light levels dropped below measurable values. I detected increases in plankton abundance and mass in surface water post-totality. One specific taxa, cladocerans, demonstrated the greatest percent increase in abundance from mid-depth to surface water during the eclipse. The most common taxa, copepods, appeared to only slightly change in the proportions of adults and juveniles at each depth.

Plankton's response to acute, rapid changes in light level, independent of time of day, suggests that solar eclipses influence organism behaviors that may impact interactions among organisms such as predator-prey overlap.

LITERACY, IDENTITY, & LIBERATION

Elizabeth Palumbo

For the 2025 Senior Symposium, I will be presenting a final paper written in my Writing and Rhetoric 240 class, *Writing and the Culture of Reading*, which examines three individuals from different marginalized groups and their unique experiences, arguing that literacy helps people overcome oppression because it can be used to claim one's identity. I show how each individual uses literacy to empower themselves while not giving up their unique differences. I analyze the written work from Frederick Douglass, a once enslaved man, Alison Bechdel, a lesbian woman, and Jesse Saperstein, an HWS alum with Asperger's Syndrome, and use other class readings and theory to support my claims.

This analysis revealed that writing and literacy can be liberatory, but it can also be a tool for oppression. Now, as a senior, I have plans to attend graduate school and continue my education in writing and explore the social justice intertwined within it.

THE INTELLIGENT DANCER ACROSS CULTURES

Ellie Pedone

Dancers around the world practice for years to hone their skills. With all of these hours spent rehearsing, what mind-body intelligences do dancers possess that they may take for granted?

Through my lived experience, words from others in the dance field, and scholarly sources, I examine four of the aptitudes that dance cultivates: (1) Meaning making when watching dance (Jola, 2020), which consists of recognizing narrative meaning as well as abstract meaning in time and space(2); utilizing remembered sequences like the ability to flip things around, repeat them on the other side and offload the physical exertion of movement practice through the process of “marking” (Fernandes et al, 2022)(3); recognition of familiar people from afar, which occurs with knowledge of their movement qualities and bodily demeanor(4); awareness of negative space when in public, as when dancers possess the spatial intelligence to maneuver through large groups of people. Through interviews with experienced dancers of various ages, I will analyze patterns of self-reports.

These intelligences are learned globally through dance practice. There is no one rehearsal environment that properly shapes these knowledges in comparison to another. Whether it be through a street, club, outdoors, community, or studio space, dancers learn simultaneously from their own bodies and the bodies of movers around them, resulting in various intelligences that will support them lifelong.

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ALL “HANDS-ON” DECK: LEARNING THE ROPES OF VESSEL-BASED EDUCATION
(VBE) IN THE FRESHWATERS OF THE NORTHEAST
USA AND NORTH AMERICAN GREAT LAKES

Julia Pida

Freshwater ecosystems are essential because they provide drinking and irrigation water, recreational and economic value, and support biodiversity, yet they are under substantial stress. Vessel-based education (VBE) is the hands-on acquisition of knowledge about lakes, oceans, and rivers, which can focus on aquatic science, maritime history, and/or seamanship. Despite its widespread occurrence in the United States, a collective catalog and understanding of VBE as a vehicle for interdisciplinary environmental education is lacking.

In my survey of 22 vessels operating freshwater education programs in the Northeast USA and North American Great Lakes, I document that most offer science-focused programs for high school students and often rely, in part, on university affiliation and support from private foundations. My case study covering 13 years' demographic data on *Science on Seneca (SOS)* (New York, USA) suggests that the life and environmental sciences are key audiences for VBE, particularly as field trips for advanced high school courses, but also that students from high-needs urban and rural school districts are well served. Teachers' experiences with VBE (evaluated through interviews with *SOS* participants) demonstrated VBE's importance in improving students' environmental stewardship and exposing students to interdisciplinary learning and citizen science. Teachers also articulated logical challenges that should be addressed to improve accessibility and sustain widespread impact.

DOORWAYS TO MY PAST:
AN EXPLORATION OF STORYTELLING THROUGH WATERCOLOR

Brooke Prochniak

In my independent study, I explored how watercolor painting can function as a storytelling medium. Inspired by my *Drawing for Storytelling* course, I developed a self-guided syllabus that focused on technique, artistic expression, and thematic cohesion. My final project, *Doorways to My Past*, captures meaningful places at Hobart and William Smith Colleges that shaped my academic, social, and personal journey. I photographed, sketched, inked and water colored ten different buildings in Geneva. By blending artistic creation with personal memory, I demonstrated how visual storytelling can preserve experiences and emotions in a unique and meaningful way.

As a Media and Society major, I wanted to merge my passion for visual storytelling with personal reflection. I pursued this project to combine creativity with self-reflection. Watercolor became both an artistic and therapeutic practice, helping me slow down and engage deeply with my surroundings. Under the mentorship of Professor Kirin Makker, I structured my study with weekly assignments, critiques, and research into watercolor techniques. This experience strengthened my ability to take initiative, manage my time, and explore creative expression. It also laid the foundation for my commission-based art practice, which I continue through Instagram (@brookepaintswatercolors).

Course materials from *Drawing for Storytelling*, HWS.

THE ROLE OF COGNITIVE FUSION IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINDFULNESS AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Lindsay Ringbloom

College students face significant mental health challenges, with approximately 40% reporting persistent feelings of depression or hopelessness (CDC, 2024). Practicing mindfulness--maintaining present-moment awareness with acceptance reduces psychological distress and improves emotional regulation (Gonzalez-Martin et al., 2023). However, researchers have yet to fully understand the mechanisms underlying this relationship. This study explores whether cognitive fusion, the tendency to become entangled in one's thoughts, mediates the relationship between mindfulness and emotional well-being.

For my independent study in Psychology, I analyzed previously collected data on undergraduate students' health behaviors under the guidance of Professor Bodenlos. I examined multiple online assessments and identified a relationship among three key surveys: the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), the Cognitive Fusion Questionnaire (CFQ), and the Medical Outcomes Study Short Form Survey (SF-36), specifically focusing on emotional well-being.

As mental health challenges among college students continue to rise, researchers must explore the factors that contribute to emotional well-being and identify effective interventions to improve psychological resilience. This study's findings suggest that cognitive fusion plays a key role in linking mindfulness to emotional well-being, as excessive entanglement in one's thoughts amplifies emotional distress. By investigating how mindfulness reduces cognitive fusion, these results highlight the potential for mindfulness-based interventions to enhance mental health outcomes in college students.

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AMANDA TODD AND CAPPING CULTURE:
RHETORIC SITUATION IN INTERNET DISCOURSE

Justin Rosa

With the introduction of the internet, personal responsibility became harder to account for. This led to an uptick in behaviors of all kinds but most importantly degenerate behavior towards minors. This research project will examine the role of an internet subgroup called “cappers” in perpetuating the blackmailing and exploitation of children, as told through the lens of a YouTube commentary.

This analysis will reveal how nested rhetorics can reveal details about a rhetorical situation and expose underlying issues. This research will also define “Silent Rhetoric” as essential to understanding the rhetorical situation: how the silence of victims is perpetuated through the discussion of a situation with their absence. This study is important as it reveals harm inflicted on children, leaving them often as victims to horrible crimes. I call for a more nuanced approach to the rhetorical situation so that discussions of victims of child violence can be more robust.

ETHNIC-RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE ROLE OF ONLINE RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Kimberly Saavedra-Mendez

Children from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds navigate in settings that are not often able to cater to them, have disproportionate access to culturally competent mental health care, and often struggle with low rates of self-esteem (Reid Chassiakos et al., 2016) and academic outcomes (Tynes et al., 2012). Recognizing these differences has led to the adaptation and reconceptualization of traditional psychological developmental models to better reflect these children's identities and lived experiences. This project was sparked by noticing a key modern influence has been neglected: access to the internet. I discovered a gap in existing frameworks regarding how online racial discrimination (ORD) impacts the development of an ethnic-racial identity (ERI), and how parents can use this knowledge to navigate these new challenges.

Studies have shown that children of ethnic-racial groups spend more time on social media than white children and are thus more likely to experience forms of racial-ethnic discrimination online (V. J. Rideout et al., 2010). While there are models conceptualizing the development of ethnic-racial identity, and some addressing the role of online racial discrimination (ORD), I found none that take both aspects into consideration. My study seeks to address that gap.

QUEER PORTRAYALS IN LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE AND MEDIA

Kimberly Saavedra-Mendez

Representation of queerness in Latin American literature and media has often been paired with the context of rebellion and revolution. My Latin American Studies independent study allowed me to explore this concept further, by focusing on how authors and directors chose to portray queer characters within the context of Latin America: novels such as *Tengo miedo torero* by Pedro Lemebel, *Cantoras* by Carolina de Robertis and *El beso de la mujer araña* by Manuel Puig, as well as movies as series like *El Baile de los 41* and *El secreto del río* pair queerness and revolution in the same context to highlight the innate rebellion of these identities in cis-heteronormative and actively suppressing society.

The selected movies and literature shine a light of beauty on historically marginalized individuals, evoking understanding and compassion towards their experiences of love and life in societies that are not aimed to accommodate them. Barriers such as political repression, familial shame, and socialization towards binary systems are some obstacles characters face across these media. Nonetheless, finding solace in their communities and opening up about their experiences. Whether it be expressing gender authentically, sharing stories, or forming communities with individuals whose experiences are similar, queerness persists as a form of defiance in Latin America and the United States today.

SCHOOL SAFETY PERCEPTIONS AND SECURITY MEASURES IN UPSTATE NEW YORK SCHOOLS

Jennica Simon

School safety in the U.S. remains a critical issue. This research explores students' and School Resource Officers (SROs) Perceptions of safety protocols and the emotional impact of school violence. The role of SROs was analyzed to determine whether their presence enhances a sense of security or fosters intimidation, especially among marginalized communities, noting their emerging role in schools and assessing their impact on students' overall understanding of safety. In addition, I also investigated the availability of mental health services and their role in addressing potential threats while offering emotional support.

A central concern of this study is the disparity between heightened physical security measures and students' perceptions of safety. Findings illustrate how biases among teachers and structural inequalities shape students' feelings of security within their schools. By examining restorative justice initiatives, trust-building programs, and teacher-student relationships, this research aims to contribute to improved safety practices. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of incorporating student voices into policy decisions to implement more effective and less distressing security measures.

COMPARISON OF ROUND GOBY (*NEOGOBIOUS MELANOSTOMUS*) DIET IN SENECA AND CAYUGA LAKE

Victoria Smith

Round Goby are an invasive species that entered the Great Lakes via ballast water in cargo ships in the 1990s. Since then, they have rapidly expanded into the Finger Lakes through the Seneca River. Their alarming spread and diverse diet make them a difficult species to control in their non-native regions.

This field study for my independent study with Professor Susan Cushman examined the diet and abundance of the invasive Round Goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) in Seneca Lake, New York. Round Gobies were collected in Seneca Lake using a 10' x 100' pocket seine net at six different locations. Once returned to the lab, the Round Goby was cut from the center of the operculum to the urogenital opening. Stomach contents were identified to the lowest taxonomic order. One-way ANOVA indicated there is a strong correlation between length (mm) and weight (g) in the gobies. eDNA analysis performed by Jonah Ventures environmental DNA laboratory confirmed the presence of Round Goby in Wilson Creek and Reeder Creek stream sites. Round Goby were found at all sites except upstream Keuka Outlet. The most common prey of Round Goby in Seneca Lake were benthic macroinvertebrates. The most frequent invertebrates were chironomids which can be used as indicators to inform the type of habitat the Round Goby frequent.

THEORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUEER LITERARY PAST

Grace Snook

What role does story play in representing, preserving, and establishing identity? What does it mean to represent “queerness” before queerness is historically named? What does it mean for a story to truly represent anyone? Incorporating examples from a broad range of literary and cultural texts from early Medieval to modern media, I aim to explore the tension between historicism and the ever-evolving field of Queer theory. In particular, I examine the reasons *why* we crave a queer archival past, and how literature can function as a living thing in the creation and understanding of history.

With the modern push for “queer recovery work” to be a focus of analysis, the literary world seeks to establish an archival understanding of queer identity, making the process of how we analyze queer representation increasingly relevant. However, this endeavor raises questions about what it means for literary analysis to be considered accurate if the texts we are examining take place in a time with a fundamentally different understanding of language and identity. By critically examining existing approaches to queer literary criticism, and testing lenses of analysis that engage with stories of a queer history, I aim to understand how literary scholarship can engage with and name “queer” identity without disregarding—or being constrained by—the context of the past.

EXPLORING THE GENETICS OF POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME: AN ARGUMENT FOR FEDERAL FUNDING

Elizabeth Starck

Infertility affects 6-20% of women of reproductive age (Siddiqui et al., 2022); because of the broad range of causes, effective cures remain elusive.

This study is a literature analysis into the genetics of polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a common cause of infertility. Genetic factors of PCOS can be placed under one of three realms: genes involved in the biosynthesis and metabolism of androgens, genes involved in the secretion and action of insulin, and genes involved in folliculogenesis (Franks et al., 2001). This project aims to analyze the research and assess its implications. It will culminate in a scientific grant proposal focused on the molecular mechanisms of PCOS and how this research could inform future treatment of infertility. The broader impacts of this research will be addressed, with a focus on how the emerging science intersects with polarizing politics of reproductive health.

My initial motivation for this project was based on a bi-disciplinary class I took with Professors Monson (Sociology) and Kenyon (Biology) in my senior fall, called “The Politics of Reproduction.” The course outlined the biology of reproduction, the history of reproductive care in the U.S., and the changes in access to care over time. It taught me to think critically about the biological perspective on health.

Franks, Stephen, Neda Gharani, and Mark McCarthy. “Candidate Genes in Polycystic Ovary Syndrome.” *Human Reproduction Update* 7, no. 4 (August 1, 2001): 405–10. <https://doi.org/10.1093/humupd/7.4.405>.
Siddiqui, Sana, Somaiya Mateen, Rizwan Ahmad, and Shagufta Moin. “A Brief Insight into the Etiology, Genetics, and Immunology of Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS).” *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics* 39, no. 11 (November 2022): 2439–73. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10815-022-02625-7>.

HONORS SCREENWRITING PROJECT: THE GHOST OF TOM PETTY

Mia Tetrault

In this honors project, I wrote a feature-length screenplay for the film *The Ghost of Tom Petty*. The premise of the story is two sisters, Violet and Esme, coming across family secrets during a road trip from New York to Los Angeles. Music from their radio brings magic to this journey of friendship, love, and heartbreak.

This road trip film is intended to be a coming-of-age story as Violet, the main character, and her older sister Esme navigate adulthood and their complicated familial past. Violet is determined to pursue her dreams, and with her sister's help, they embark on the road trip of a lifetime. To their surprise, Tom Petty's ghost joins them and offers wisdom and guidance along the way.

By studying scholarship classic road trip films, such as *Thelma and Louise* and *Crossroads*, I have learned to convey the fundamentals of storytelling through plotlines, dialogue, and character development. To authentically represent Tom Petty's character and Southern roots, I researched his career and watched the documentaries *Running Down a Dream* and *Somewhere You Feel Free: The Making of Wildflowers*. Additionally, I explored music videos and live performances from his popular album, *Full Moon Fever*, to highlight his contributions and legacy in American music.

Cohan, S., & Hark, I.R. (Eds.). (1997). *The Road Movie Book* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Dargis, Manohla. "Thelma and Louise on the Road to Freedom." British Film Institute, 2023.

Field, Syd. *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting*. 3rd ed., expanded ed. Dell Pub. Co, 1994.

TEACHING BLACK LIVES MATTER: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MOVEMENT AND ITS CAUSE

Kiera Toussaint

Understanding the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement is essential to understanding the current relationship between black people and the rest of American society. The Black Lives Matter Movement, while relatively modern, adds to the work of the Civil Rights Movement and its activists in the fight for equal treatment, socioeconomic opportunities, and especially, non-racialized policing.

For my independent study in the Politics department, I have chosen to create a syllabus whose elements could be used in their entirety, or whose elements could be incorporated into other courses and political lectures. The syllabus uses personal narratives, journal articles, research statistics, and the platforms of multiple Black Lives Matter organizations to showcase the success of this movement, and why the fight for the equal treatment of the black community still continues.

INCLUSION IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Alaina Tremblay

My research project aims to investigate how teachers can make foreign language classrooms more inclusive for students with reading difficulties and related disabilities.

I have examined three related topics: (1) Identification of and understanding of reading difficulties in students, (2) Systemic processes and misconceptions that lead to student exclusion from the foreign language classroom, and (3) Implementation of inclusive practices and creating inclusive environments.

Through an analysis of educator interviews, I identified educators' perceptions, attitudes, instructional strategies, and overall experiences with inclusion in the language classroom.

Preliminary findings highlight that while educators desire inclusion in the foreign language classroom, they believe they lack the necessary knowledge to fully support students with reading difficulties. However, I speculate that teachers are often already implementing inclusive practices in their classrooms and need more training to plan instruction with intentionality for students with reading difficulties.

EQUITABLE MINDFULNESS

Emma VanGorder

Peace is not the absence of struggle but the ability to navigate it with awareness and compassion: this research explores the integration of mindfulness into daily instruction to enhance student engagement, classroom culture, and the ability to navigate critical conversations on systemic inequalities.

Over four weeks, I implemented eight mindfulness lessons, including Loving-Kindness Meditation (METTA) and reflective practices, with a second-grade classroom to cultivate empathy, self-awareness, and a stronger sense of community. Data collection included student responses, contemporaneous observations, and discussions with my co-teacher. While measurable outcomes varied, students demonstrated increased peer acceptance, improved coping strategies, and a deeper understanding of empathy and diverse needs in the classroom. These findings suggest that mindfulness can be a valuable tool in fostering equitable and culturally responsive learning environments.

MEANINGFULNESS IN LIFE REGARDLESS OF FAILURE

Jillian VanLare

The inquiry into the meaningfulness of one's life is often determined by social norms of success, where those deemed to be "failures" are considered to have lived meaningless lives. This talk challenges the analysis of Susan Wolf in her book *Meaning in Life*, and presents an alternative proposal based on John Koethe's critique of her work. Although Wolf asserts that meaning arises from engaging with pursuits that are objectively valuable, her emphasis on external validation in assigning this value risks excluding a dissatisfying number of individuals. Koethe's criteria of objective value, with a particular focus on the idea of sustaining an intellectual or artistic project, provides a more inclusive framework.

Through the examination of specific cases, such as Vincent van Gogh's post-mortem success and the oral storytelling traditions of enslaved African Americans, this talk argues that meaning is not contingent on the success or societal acknowledgement one receives, but rather, is based on one's passionate dedication and lasting impact. By reorienting one's focus from external recognition and approval to the intrinsic value of positive contribution to an existing enterprise, we can more effectively discern how even those who were deemed unsuccessful by some during their lifetimes could have lived exceedingly meaningful lives.

Dos Reis Dos Santos, Jennifer. "How African American Folklore Saved the Cultural Memory and History of Slaves." *How African America Folklore Saved the Cultural Memory and History of Slaves*. – Aberystwyth University, Aberystwyth University, 30 Oct. 2018, www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2018 "Vincent's Life", 1853-1890." *Van Gogh Museum*, www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en/artand-stories/vincent-lift-1853-1890. Accessed 18 Feb. 2025.

Wolf, Susan R. and John Koethe, *Meaning in Life and Why it Matters*. Princeton University Press, 2010.

LAND TO WATER YOGA: CULTIVATING BALANCE AND STABILITY THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL MOVEMENT

Mackenzie Walton

In this presentation I aim to show how Land to Water Yoga, a somatic movement practice within Eastwest Somatics Institute, enhances balance and stability. Specifically, I explore the question: To what extent does a single session of Land to Water Yoga influence self-reported and observable improvements in balance and stability?

Rooted in guided imagery and gentle movement, this practice encourages participants to engage with yoga in a playful and intuitive way, rather than striving for perfect form. Inspired by infant developmental processes, Land to Water Yoga follows a circular model, allowing practitioners to transition between standing, walking, and floor-based movements in a way that mirrors natural human growth movement patterns. Sessions incorporate traditional yoga asanas like Tree and Child's Pose, but also introduce unique sequences developed by Dr. Sonda Fraleigh, such as the Stork Dance, Bear Walk, and Lazy Lizard Spiral. These movements are designed to foster ease and enjoyment while reinforcing a deep relationship with nature. Practitioners are encouraged to listen to their bodies, embrace asymmetry, and experiment with different movement qualities.

Earlier this spring semester, I taught my teaching practicum for Senior Seminar Adv. Topics in Dance. I moved the participants through a Land to Water Yoga class, which aimed to improve their balance and stability. This presentation will explore the theoretical framework of Land to Water Yoga and analyze the qualitative feedback, highlighting the potential of this practice to cultivate embodied presence and enhance movement awareness.

Fraleigh, S. (2009). *Land to Water Yoga*. iUniverse.

Iklé, Michelle (2025) HWS Interview with Co-Director: Eastwest Somatics Institute.

FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF YOUTH-DRIVEN CLIMATE ACTION PLANS ACROSS YOUTH CLIMATE SUMMITS

Anjalee Wanduragala

Young adults could potentially play a critical role in addressing climate change, yet their ability to translate climate awareness into concrete action plans varies depending on their environment, resources, and support systems. The Youth Climate Summit (YCS) model was founded by The Wild Center in the Adirondacks region in 2008. The idea for a youth-focused summit emerged after a young person who participated in a broader climate summit provided feedback that a space specifically designed for youth voices and leadership was needed. The summit provides a structured framework for youth to develop Climate Action Plans (CAPs) that outline steps for addressing climate challenges within their schools and communities. The summits serve as a bridge, transforming climate concern into tangible action by providing youth with the guidance needed to implement thoughtful solutions. This study conducts a comparative content analysis of CAPs over a couple years developed at three summits: the South Asia Youth Climate Summit (SEAYCS) in Malaysia, the Adirondack Youth Climate Summit (ADKYCS) in New York, and the Finger Lakes Youth Climate Summit (FLYCS) in New York.

The first step of this research was to determine what the CAPs focus areas were (mitigation, adaptation, or policy advocacy). These were then compared based on their integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), timelines (short-term vs. long-term goals), and collaborative efforts with schools, organizations, or government agencies. The CAPs were compared both within the same summit to identify trends and variations among participants, as well as across different summits to assess broader differences in climate action planning approaches. Findings will provide insights into how young people conceptualize climate action, what factors shape their planning, and the effectiveness of the YCS model in fostering strategic, action-oriented climate solutions. This research contributes to understanding youth-led climate initiatives and how structured summit frameworks influence the development of climate action strategies. By equipping young people with the tools to take initiative, this model fosters a sense of agency and empowers the next generation to drive meaningful change in their communities.

CREATING SPACE FOR CREATIVE RISKS: EXPANDING THE DEFINITION OF POETRY FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREATIVE WRITERS

Katelyn Weeks

In middle and high school writing classrooms, we encourage our students to take creative risks, requiring that students to have the confidence to “play” on the page, fully embracing the freedom to let their imagination run wild. However, for young people, engaging in productive risk taking is especially challenging, as it requires an element of vulnerability. The purpose of my study is to understand how secondary educators can facilitate and encourage “play” on the page and empower their high school creative writers to take creative risks.

I designed a week-long poetry unit as part of a creative writing elective at a summer enrichment program. I focused on a theme I called “found forms” or poetry created out of specified other parameters, such relation to a piece of art, or another source text. Using Liz Lerman’s Critical Response Process, students were given the autonomy to lead the workshop, and ask questions about their creative work, allowing them to make direct connections between the creative risk they took and the reward of the risk on behalf of the audience. By using a workshop model that values student autonomy, and through testing the boundaries of student’s already established notions of genre and form, I found it was possible to create a space that facilitates and encourages young people to take creative risks in their own work.

The ability to take creative risks is an important skill for young people, particular in writing, as it diversifies individual self-expression, giving students multiple avenues of expressing themselves, understanding themselves better as both writers and people.

INEQUALITY IN THE CITY: REVISITING THE SOCIAL POLARIZATION DEBATE IN AMSTERDAM

Mercedes Wiegel

Saskia Sassen's (1991) global cities thesis lays the foundation for understanding social polarization in major urban centers. Global economic restructuring has concentrated finance and business services in select cities, replacing manufacturing and expanding high-income sectors, which drive demand for low-wage, often migrant, service labor, creating occupational polarization.

I explore whether Chris Hamnett's (1994) critique of Saskia Sassen's social polarization thesis remains valid in contemporary Amsterdam, given the past three decades of deepening integration into the global economy. By reassessing Hamnett's model with updated data, I reveal the alignments and disjunctures between Hamnett's professionalization thesis and Amsterdam's contemporary social and economic reality. I used data on employment and unemployment rates, occupational structures, educational attainment, and immigrant labor patterns, including their occupational and educational backgrounds. Persistent wage disparities and precarious employment validate elements of Sassen's polarization argument, challenging assumptions about economic upgrading in global cities.

TEACHING IDENTITY: THE INCLUSION OF IDENTITY THROUGH WRITING CURRICULUM IN FIRST AND SECOND GRADE

Britta Wilkerson

Recently, pedagogies such as Culturally Responsive Teaching and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) have become more prevalent in schools throughout New York in order to address students' mental and emotional well-being. Part of this work is helping students to understand and articulate their own identities as well as the identities of others. In 2018, the New York State Department of Education created the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework (CRSEF) to help educators “create student-centered learning environments that: affirm racial, linguistic and cultural identities; prepare students for rigor and independent learning, develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower students as agents of social change.”

After completing my student teaching and creating my own lesson on identity in a second-grade classroom, I was curious whether the identity framework embedded in the NY “Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework” (CRSEF) was being put into practice through writing curriculums taught in 1st and 2nd-grade classrooms in NY? To answer this inquiry, I examined whether or not the teaching of identity is embedded in writing curriculums currently being taught in first and second grade in New York. I also compared the curriculum plans to the lesson I designed during student teaching.

Through this research, I found that the emphasis placed on identity in the CRSEF is not being transferred uniformly across curriculums, with some lessons falling below the CRSEF standards on identity. The good news is that schools are regularly updating and changing their curriculum to meet the needs of their teachers and students. However, my research suggests that the Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education Framework is not being strongly considered when choosing writing curriculums and therefore is not having the impact it could on the students in the New York Public Schools.