



**Idaho State
University**

**College of
Arts and Letters**



Arts and Letters Updates | November 2022



Blackhawk Helicopter Landing on Davis Field



Above: Students and community members on campus wait for the Blackhawk helicopter to take off. The helicopter was taking ROTC cadets to field training.



Above: Maya Peters Greno

ISU Student Wins Prize for British Studies Essay

Idaho State University Senior, Maya Peters Greno won the North American Conference on British Studies (NACBS) Undergraduate Essay Prize for her essay "Colonized Garments as Colonizer Trends: The Case of Asian Conical Hats in Western Fashions 1840-1960."

Graduating this semester, Maya is a history major minoring in philosophy. The award was presented on November 12th in Chicago. The award is for [CONTINUE READING...](#)

3 Minute Thesis CAL Competitors

Congratulations to the eleven competitors representing numerous CAL programs who competed in the 3MT competition on November 10. Way to go Bengals!

CAL Participants:

Sarah Menish-Geryk, Political Science, DA

Najmeh Dehghani Tafti, English and the
Teaching of English, PhD

Pamela Pascall, Anthropology, MS

Bailey Dann, Anthropology, MA

Christen Cogdell, Communications, MA

Jacob Harris, Sociology, MA

Jethro Smith, Communications, MA

Gabriela Perez, Clinical Psychology, PhD

Megan Schmid, English, MA

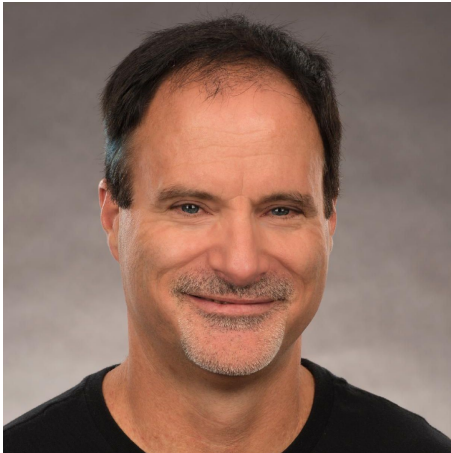
Cailee Cunningham, Communications, MA

Jacob Hubers, Experimental Psychology,
PhD

[Special congratulations to Jacob Harris,
who took third place in the competition.](#)



We have great faculty!



ISU Professor's Research in Criminology Gains International Interest

This fall, Dr. DJ Williams, Professor of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminology at Idaho State University, was invited to present research at a prestigious international security conference represented by 32 countries. The conference was attended by leading intelligence and medical officers.

Williams was invited to present at the conference based on his team's research findings: "Wanting sex and willing to kill: Examining demographic and cognitive characteristics of violent involuntary celibates" and "Extreme Sex-Negativity: An Examination of Helplessness, Hopelessness, and Misattribution of Blame Among "Incel" Multiple Homicide Offenders," which were published in the journals *Behavioral Sciences & the Law* and the *Journal of Positive Sexuality*, respectively.

Williams' research...[Read More...](#)



Three CAL faculty members recognized as 2022 Textbook Heroes

"These are members of the ISU community who have promoted or adopted low-cost or free course materials including OER, showing an outstanding commitment to student success."

-Open and Affordable Educational Resources Committee

Samantha Blatt, Anthropology

"For about 5 years now, I have committed to lowering the cost of course materials and textbooks in ways that do not lower the quality of the course.

I have not seen any decrease in student performance when using OER materials as compared, in fact, if anything students gain research skills in searching for and identifying primary resources that further enhance projects in the class and makes resources more available for distance learning."

Darci Graves, Social Work

"In collaboration with multiple members of our faculty, and some of our graduate teaching assistants, we recently accomplished a full course redesign of SOC 2201: Introduction to Gender and Sexuality. This redesign accomplished two major goals.

First we wanted to update the curriculum in response to student feedback that the course needed to include more contemporary content on both gender and sexuality. Second, we sought to eliminate the use of a textbook to save students money. The redesigned course has been implemented across sections to maximize impact on the student experience."

Gesine Hearn, Sociology

"The course now utilizes only free resources. For each weekly section, I have assigned one or two readings in the form of scholarly articles authored by leading scholars in the field of family sociology or family demography. For each week, I also added articles from news outlets or magazines on current issues and on international perspectives on the topic.

Apart from being a cost saving for the students, the course is now also even more on the cutting edge of scholarly work as well as current developments."

ISU's 'Spitfire Grill' is a tonic for a frozen November



Above: Performers sing during a performance of the *Spitfire Grill*

ROAR 1199: Helping ISU Students Find Purpose and Support in College

As young adults go to college and experience new environments, relationship challenges, class schedules, and perhaps living away from home for the first time, navigating college can seem overwhelming.

College students face pressure to achieve success, rising costs, and busy schedules. Along with these challenges, many students experience depression and anxiety.

According to Reese Druckenmiller, LICSW, rates of anxiety and depression among college students have increased substantially over the last couple years. Druckenmiller says that “a recent study found that 1 in 3 college students experiences significant depression and anxiety.” These challenges can make college even more difficult to navigate.

ISU offers many avenues of support to students, including excellent academic advisors, clubs and student activities, campus recreation, career help, health services, and counseling. But navigating all of the new aspects of college can be challenging for students.

ROAR 1199 is a class that’s been very helpful for students. The College of Arts and Letters chaperoned ROAR 1199 and this spring it was approved from an experimental course to a permanent course. Elisa Johnson, Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Communications, Media, and Persuasion, has been involved with the course from its inception.

When the college decided to put ideas out there about what kind of course would benefit students she was part of the focus group while in her masters program. She taught it in its first semester as an experimental course three years ago.

Course units include six modules which are *Information Literacy, Your Purpose, Motivation & Career, Persistence in Learning, Your Money & College Costs, Your Story, & Your Well-being* Specifically students learn about campus resources such as the Career Center and the Counseling Center and how to access them.

Johnson explains that since its beginning as an experimental course, the class has been modified to meet student needs better.

“One of the things that we focused lightly on the first semester and realized we needed to focus more on was financial literacy: student loans, personal budget, and smart choices with money in college.”

She also says that the wellness section needed more focus.

“We’ve updated the wellness section to add happiness,” Elisa says. “This is the first semester and it’s been exciting.”

Department Chair, Dr. Jim DiSanza was responsible for the majority of the content changes. He did the research and enriched the unit on wellness to include happiness.

Students also learn *how* they learn and strategies for studying. The class focuses on a growth mindset.

“In ROAR we spend a whole unit learning about how to learn, using knowledge of neuroplasticity to help us understand why certain learning/reading/note taking strategies work better than others,” says Dr. Elise Barker, Adjunct Instructor in Department of English and Philosophy and a ROAR 1199 instructor. “That is so helpful.”

Johnson says that one of her main goals is to get students to consider how they can advocate for themselves and do the things they want to do.

Importantly, students receive guidance about how they are in charge of their own stories. The course helps them identify why they are at ISU and what their purpose is. Barker says that ROAR 1199 is an opportunity for students to explore their identity.

“Freshman year is such a huge year for the growth and development of the self for college students; their values, beliefs, and assumptions are challenged as they meet people from different communities and attend classes that expose them to new ideas,” Barker says. “Understanding themselves -- their skills, values, aptitudes, personalities etc. is key to making good choices throughout college.”

Barker says that the first unit of ROAR emphasizes having a clear sense of purpose, which can get students through the tough times in college. Her students go through a process of writing purpose statements from the first week of class. She has them revise their statements, which she says helps them establish clarity of vision. She then encourages them to write or print it and display it where they can see it so they have that reminder.

“College is hard and when it gets hard we have to push through it,” Johnson says. She says the course helps students learn that struggling is part of the process, but that with the right tools and mindset, students can have the

skills they need to succeed.

Sarah Liftawi, Visiting Criminology Lecturer and Field Director in the Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Criminology teaches the synchronous online section of ROAR 1199.

“The majority of the students in my section of the course are remote students, completing their college courses exclusively online,” Liftawi says. “ROAR discusses many of the opportunities ISU provides for students, like assistance from the Career Center, Career Path Internship positions, and CALM - which are all university resources that students not living in Pocatello are still able to utilize.”

Liftawi says that one of her favorite parts about teaching the online ROAR section is hearing how students are glad they chose to take the course because it gives them information and resources they likely would miss out on by not being physically on campus.

“The students who are not remote, but chose the online section discuss how taking this course has allowed them to gain background knowledge of strategies to be successful in college, while being able to maintain their role as a primary caretaker or their position in a full-time job,” she says.

Liftawi, Johnson, and Barker all say that the course is about building relationships and having fun. It’s a low-stress way for students to discover more about themselves as college students and the resources available to them, while experiencing an accepting and welcoming community and being guided by a faculty mentor.

“One of the things that is often reported over and over again from students is this idea of community and being able to go somewhere and being completely comfortable and making friends,” Johnson says.

Barker appreciates that ROAR allows her to focus as much on building relationships and having fun as it does on communicating the materials. Two students in her ROAR class last fall became best buddies and moved in as roommates this year.

“I’ve found that ROAR is especially helpful for remote students as it has given them the opportunity to interact with peers that they otherwise do not have the chance to do,” says Liftawi.

Another important relationship is that which is established between the instructor and the students.

“I’ve had lots of students share personal things with me like considering dropping out of school,” Johnson says. “I get them the resources to really help them find their way so they can continue.”

“The class works,” Johnson says. “We’ve seen that students are coming back in the spring and continuing to go to school.”

ROAR 1199 is taught by instructors from the College of Arts and Letters and the College of Education, with the goal that other colleges will join in the future. It is a 3-credit course designed to help first-year college students adapt to their new learning and living environment. Idaho State students and faculty teamed up to design this course, which helps students save time and money and succeed in their classes.

Roar 1199 courses will be offered on the Pocatello campus, with one online section for Spring 2023. Course sections are MWF 10-10:50 a.m.(online), 12-12:50 p.m., or 1-1:50 p.m. or TR 9:30-10:45 a.m.

To register for ROAR 1199, contact your assigned academic advisor. If you are unsure who your assigned advisor is, contact roar@isu.edu. More information can be found at isu.edu/roar-1199.



Tessa Anderson
Assistant Lecturer
Psychology



Sarah Liftawi
Sociology, Social Work, and
Criminology



Payton Gibbs
Communication, Media and
Persuasion

"I like to ride my bicycle and play volleyball. Fresh baked cookies are the reason I need to ride my bicycle, though I am willing to eat the dough uncooked as well."

Visiting Lecturer and Field Director

"Lately I've had a blast getting into Dutch oven cooking and creating new and delicious plant-based recipes!"

Visiting Lecturer

"I am a huge hobbyist. My favorite hobbies right now are writing, painting and playing the harmonica."

Nominate OSA

OSA and PAA Nominations are Open for one more day!

Nominate PAA

Nominations for the 2023 Outstanding Student Achievement Award and the Professional Achievement Award will be accepted **until December 1**.

Pinyon Jay Press



Above: Students enjoy a tour of the Pinyon Jay Press and get a chance to use the printing press at the November 10th open house event.

Joy to the World Holiday Concert

December 2nd and 3rd, 7:30 p.m.

The ISCS musicians will be joined by approximately 150 vocalists from the Camerata Singers and ISU Concert Choir, under the direction of Conductor, Nell Flanders, and Guest Conductor, Scott Anderson. It will be a joyful and moving holiday event with traditional favorites and the ability to gather together again in Jensen Grand Concert Hall to celebrate the spirit of the season in a way we haven't been able to do

Creative Writing Game Night

December 7, 5:30 to 7 p.m. in the Bengal Cafe (PSUB).

Pizza and prizes! Need a study break? Want to learn more about how the creative writing minor can work for you? Join us for low-stress, high-silly writing and word games. Spelling never counts. For more information, email brs@isu.edu or visit blackrockandsage.org.



DECEMBER WALLPAPERS

Courtesy of
Kaylee McKay!



GIVE

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