

English Matters

Working for Student Success

Winter 2015

A Word from the Chair

Merry Christmas from Samford English!

This newsletter attempts to describe the good work of our positive, hopeful and engaged alumni, students, and faculty during the fall semester. We are truly blessed! Once again, our alumni are completing doctorate degrees, working for congress in D.C., and headed into the ministry. Once again, our students are leading clubs, winning debate championships, publishing essays and creative work, and winning leadership and character awards. And once again, our faculty are innovating their teaching, publishing books and articles, and winning teaching awards. It's a great time to be part of the English Department at Samford, with Dr. Baggett teaching a new course on the 1960s, with new faculty member Dr. Tim Sutton leading the curriculum for Communication Arts and teaching Irish Literature, and with incoming Visiting Fulbright Scholar Dr. Anders Holm (from The University of Copenhagen) conducting research.

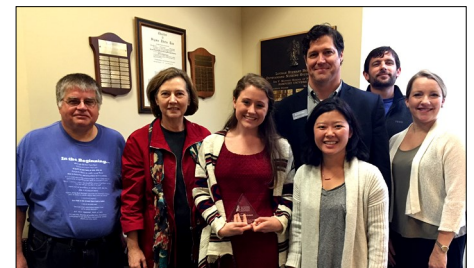
We are grateful for the generous support we receive from alumni and friends of the English Department. This spring we will be maintaining our focus on scholarships for study abroad. We'll also be looking ahead to next fall, when we will be celebrating 175 years of English at Samford! Please keep in touch with us. Drop us a note or come by the department whenever you are in town.

Dr. M. Brad Busbee,

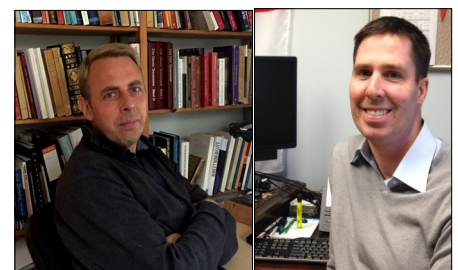
English Department Chair



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We Need Your Support!

Your gift directly impacts the lives of current and future generations of Samford students! To make a donation to the English Dept.-just note it on the memo area of your check.

Alumni in Action

Anna Bedsole Stone ('10) is a Daniel



R. Reedy Fellow doctoral student in her second year in the English Department at the University of Kentucky where she is a graduate instructor of writing, rhetoric, and digital studies. Bedsole

specializes in 19th and 20th century British and American poetry and Irish literature (she currently has article under review for an Ashgate collection on Victorian and Modernist literature.) She presented papers this semester on T.S. Eliot and Thomas Hardy at the Midwest Conference on British Studies (Detroit), and on Roddy Doyle's *A Star Called Henry* at the South Central MLA (Nashville) and Midwest MLA (Columbus, OH).

English can truly take you anywhere—you just can't be passive with it.

Bedsole shared these thoughts about getting her degree: "My time at Samford was infinitely valuable in teaching me how to think - my English professors never let me off with easy, pat answers. They pushed me to think deeply, critically, and reflectively, and at the same time fully supported me in all my academic and professional pursuits. I encourage current Samford English students to take advantage of the amazing opportunities they have being at a smaller liberal arts college - you are surrounded by brilliant scholars, so get to know them! Drop by

their offices to chat. Ask them to mentor you. The mentor/mentee relationships I had at Samford are the reason I'm pursuing academia today. Also, if you're thinking of going to grad school, the Samford English department prepares you amazingly well for it, especially in theory and research."

Matthew Harrison ('15) writes from Washington DC: "Rather unexpectedly, I've found myself working in the center of D.C. in the U.S. House of Representatives for a Florida Congressman. That's a far cry from the master's in copy writing I was talking about



pursuing, but it's turned out to be a great fit for me. Little did I know working in politics would be to my liking! I'm currently an intern, but with 434 other offices (less if I'm strict on parties), there's a lot of potential to be hired in other offices -- most likely for a legislative correspondent position, or, less likely, a legislative assistant position. It's been great though; I'm writing formal letters on various topics on behalf of my congressman, which is putting my English major skills to the test."

Caroline Burkhardt ('13), spent the last two years in Nanchang at Jjiang XI University of Technology teaching with the English Language Institute. She has returned to the US and is in the process of deciding which graduate school to



attend. She plans to study Intercultural Communications.

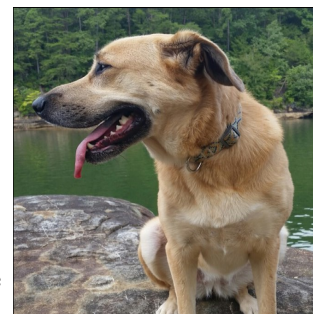
Hunter Van Wagenen ('12)



Completed a Master's of Divinity from the Beeson School of Divinity. He heads to Greensboro, NC where he will serve at an Anglican church while he pursues ordination as a Deacon in the Anglican church. His ultimate goal is to do evangelistic work in Spain.

Did you cast a vote for Sadie?

Sadie, Virginia Harris ('12) canine was an entry in Samford's Homecoming Pet Contest. While she didn't win, Sadie (and Virginia) still raised money to support the English Department Fund. Many thanks!



Special thanks to the following donors for their generous gifts:

Rev. Sharon K. Brown, Dean and Mrs. David W. Chapman, Mr. Steven Dunlap, Michael and Elizabeth Fleenor Fund; Mr. and Mrs. Larry Guffey, Ms. Elizabeth Harris, Ms. Valerie Harris, Ms. Virginia Harris, Dr. Christopher Hill (via the Razoo Foundation), Ms. Jodi R. Hughes, Mr. Jamie L. McDaniel, Mrs. Caroline M. Wright, Ms. Joi S. Tribble, Mr. Nathaniel C. Sherrer

These faithful donors continue to support the department's efforts to nurture articulate, insightful, and successful graduates. We appreciate their ongoing contributions to this cause.

To make a donation, simply note "English Department Fund" on the memo area of your check.

THANK YOU!

Student Activities

Fall Welcome Picnic—Long ago and far away, or so it seems, we just started the semester. Over 30 majors attended this year's welcome picnic on the balcony with trivia and treats. It was the perfect kick off for a busy and successful semester.



Sigma Tau Delta at Work

Elizabeth Mullins, this year's Sigma Tau Delta president, headed up the book sale held in October. Thanks to the exceptionally generous donation of retired dean and professor emeritus, **Dr. Rod Davis**, the book sale was a success—raising over \$300! Those funds will be used to help defray costs of members who will present papers at the national Sigma Tau Delta conference to be held in Minneapolis, MN, in February of 2016.



Bioethics Bowl Team Repeats Success

We are proud of Samford University's Ethics Bowl team as they captured first place in the Southeastern Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl championship this year to qualify for the national championship competition. In the rounds leading to the championship match, Samford defeated teams representing Central Florida, South Florida and Auburn. They tied Georgia State before meeting the previously undefeated Navy team. The national competition will be Feb. 18–21, 2016, in Reston, Virginia.

Twenty schools from seven Southeastern states were represented at the



regional event. Four of the six members are English majors: sophomore Bailey Bridgeman from Colleyville, Texas; junior Stone Hendrickson from Edmond, Oklahoma; senior Laura Ann Prickett from Decatur, Alabama; and junior Caleb Punt from Tavares, Florida.

CREATIVE WRITING Annual Event

Creative Writing concentration students collaborated with Sigma Tau Delta to celebrate creative writing. Over



35 students and faculty attended the first-ever English Department Creative Writing event. Juried works of poetry, short fiction, and creative non-fiction were shared with the audience. Dr. Julie Steward, director of Samford's Creative Writing Concentration, noted, "In preparation for our spring BACHE writers, students on campus wanted to celebrate our own creativity with the



written word. We look forward to making this an annual event to showcase our own talent and to set the stage for the visiting BACHE writers."

To keep up with other Sigma Tau Delta events follow @samfordsigmatau on Instagram.

Film Club Notes-

Film Club hosted several special events this past semester including a screen writing workshop, a panel discussion (partnered with Sigma Tau Delta) of the new Harper Lee novel, *Go Set A Watchman*, at which Dr. Baggett and Dr. Metress participated as guest panelists. Fall semester screenings included: *To Kill A Mockingbird*, *28 Days Later*, and *Snowpiercer*. The annual Halloween screening and costume contest were especially fun—see the photo (right) for all the whacky costumes.



Above: Film Club Halloween costume contestants.



With this issue (5.1) *Wide Angle* is now 5 years old! Featured are: 17 contributors, comprised of both students and faculty, who produced 20 items consisting of essays, reviews, commentaries, poems, and short stories. You can delve into the issue here: <https://www.samford.edu/arts-and-sciences/english/wide-angle>.

The issue includes pieces commenting on the special topic of Harper Lee and her legacy, essays cover authors ranging from Edgar Allan Poe to James Joyce to Kate Chopin to Stephen Crane, and book reviews introducing readers to new scholarship on topics such as graphic narratives, the history of screenwriting in America, and the politics of forming affective bonds with literary works. Also included are evocative poetry and flash fiction by our students.

Earlier issues are also available to read on the *Wide Angle* webpage.

Wide Angle Staff (L-R)

Caleb Punt, Managing Editor; Bekah Ray, Assistant Managing Editor; Laura Bone, Creative Writing Editor; Mack Sexton, Film Editor; Rae Patterson, Literature Editor



Baggett Discusses the Civil Rights Movement for Homecoming Visitors

A psychedelic sign notified everyone what to expect with the words: "And the Beat Goes On." A special session given on Homecoming Day by Dr. Mark Baggett and Dr. Delane Tew.



The professors gave an overview of the 1960s with an emphasis on the Civil Rights Movement. The talk explored the literature and culture of the Civil Rights era in the context of larger, global human rights movements, Birmingham and its significant role in civil rights history, and, of course, the great music from that era. Baggett and Tew are teaching the course, American Literary Movements this spring.



Prickett Receives Mann Award

On Homecoming Saturday, Laura Ann Prickett, senior English and Political Science major, was one of eleven recipients of the Frances Marlin Mann Awards for Leadership and Character. The awards were presented on Saturday, November 5th at a special ceremony. Prickett was the honoree for the Howard College of Arts and Sciences.

Prickett is SGA president and also a member of the champion Samford Ethics Bowl team.

Prickett with English Faculty at ceremony (L-R): Dr. Steven Epley, Dr. Rosemary Fisk, Laura Ann Prickett, Dr. Brad Busbee, Dr. Keya Craft, Dr. Geoffrey Wright, Dr. Julie Steward.

We Want To Hear From YOU!

Please let us know what you're up to. You can also send us your updated email address. Call us at (205)726-2946, write us at English@samford.edu, or just drop by.

Visiting Danish Fulbright Scholar

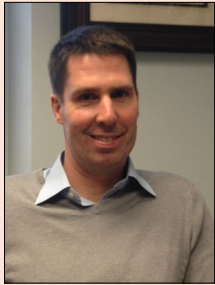
This spring, the English Department will host Fulbright Scholar [Dr. Anders Holm](#). Dr. Holm is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Copenhagen, where he teaches courses on topics ranging from Church History to Luther and the Reformation to Modern Hymns and the Old Testament to Kierkegaard and Grundtvig (two of Denmark's most famous modern thinkers). He is the author of three books and over twenty-five articles about nineteenth century church and intellectual history. He also edits *Grundtvig-Studier*, an annual journal devoted to the life and writings of the famous Dane N.F.S. Grundtvig. While at Samford, his title will be "Visiting Humanities Scholar"; he will be studying the unique relations between Church and State in the US and, particularly, in the South. Dr. Holm's connection with the English department is through Dr. Busbee who works with him as a co-editor of *Grundtvig-Studier*. While here, he will also be carrying out editorial duties with Dr. Busbee and giving guest and formal lectures on a variety of topics to various communities at Samford and in the Birmingham area. The department is very fortunate to be hosting such a fine international scholar. We are grateful to the [Fulbright Program](#) for its support of important scholarly experiences such as this one.



Dr. Brad Busbee Receives Excellence in Teaching Award

Dr. Brad Busbee won the 2015 [Southeastern Medieval Association](#) (SEMA) Excellence in Teaching Award at 41st Annual Meeting of SEMA, which was held in Little Rock, Arkansas, in October. Each year, the association, which is composed of professors and graduate students from Universities and Colleges around the Southeast and representing all fields related to the study of the Middle Ages, selects an award winner from a pool of nominated professors. Considerations include a record of outstanding teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as written support from students, peers, and supervisors at the candidate's institutions.

Dr. Timothy Sutton Joins Faculty



Native Chicagoan Dr. Timothy Sutton is the new Director of Communication Arts program. Hired this fall, he comes to Samford from Florida Gulf Coast University, where he was the coordinator of the MA in English. Sutton also taught at Auburn University and before that at the University of Miami. Professor Sutton's first book, *Catholic Modernists, English Nationalists* (University of Delaware Press, 2010), discusses the influence of Catholic thought on English modernism and examines the work of Catholic converts who shaped the aesthetics and politics of the modernist period. Dr. Sutton is now working on a project that analyzes the Aristotelian foundations of modernist approaches to and depictions of leisure.

Dr. Sutton received his BA from DePauw University where he was also captain of the Track and Field team. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Miami in 2007. While at Miami, Dr. Sutton was the Managing Editor of the *James Joyce Literary Supplement*. He also helped coordinate two International Miami James Joyce Birthday Conferences. He has a keen interest in Irish history and literature. In February, Dr. Sutton will give a public lecture in Naples, FL, on the Easter, 1916 revolt in Dublin to commemorate the 100th anniversary of that fateful day.

In his spare time, Dr. Sutton likes to cycle, play tennis, and discuss Catholic theology. He also has 5 nieces and 1 nephew in Chicago that occupy his time when visiting there, in addition to 8 godchildren scattered across the U.S. If you visit his office, you should also extend your greetings to Ezra, a Lego tennis player with spiked blonde hair that makes him a dead ringer for Ezra Pound (ca. 1911, London.).



Faculty Matters

Dr. Brad Busbee reports a very busy semester of scholarship. In October, he travelled to Denmark, where he was invited to be the keynote speaker for the annual conference of the Society for Philology at the University of Copenhagen. His talk was "Grundtvig's Living Words for *Beowulf*." Two weeks later, he presented a paper titled "The first (mostly) accurate modern essay on *Beowulf*" for the 41st annual meeting of the Southeastern Medieval Association in Little Rock, Arkansas. In November, Dr. Busbee's article titled "Performative Cannibalism in *Richard Coeur de Lion*" was published in the journal [Medieval Perspectives](#) (2015, vol. 30). And this month, his translation from Danish of "Et Par Ord om det nye udkomne angel-saxiske Diget," one of the first modern essays about *Beowulf*, was published in *Grundtvig-Studier*. He also published book reviews of two recently released translations from Danish by Edward Broadbridge: *School for Life: N.F.S. Grundtvig on Education for the People* (2011) and *Living Wellsprings: the Hymns, Songs, and Poetry of N.F.S. Grundtvig* (2015). Along with these publications, Busbee continues his appointments as co-editor of [Grundtvig-Studier](#), recently publishing volume 65, and as editorial board member for [LATCH: Literary Artifact in Theory, Culture and History](#), which recently published its 8th volume.

Julie Steward participated in a 10 day conference in Postignano, Italy, where scholars from around the U.S. engaged in workshops and discussions devoted to the power of poetry, critical thinking, and cultural discovery. She read poetry from her manuscript and brought home a variety of new ways to teach poetry to our students in the Creative Writing concentration.

Timothy Sutton presented "Vertical Communion in T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*" at the Midwest MLA convention, where he also chaired the 20th century literature panel.