HUMANITIES PRELAW PROGRAM HITS NEW LEVEL, ADDS FACULTY

By Kevin Boodoosingh, The Communicator

The School of Arts and Communication has just hired two new law professors in the humanities prelaw program.

In efforts to boost the quality of the program, Renée Nicole “Nikki” Souris Smith, Ph.D., and Kenneth R. Pike, Ph.D., J.D., add a new level of specialization to the already existing prelaw program.

The program began about six years ago.

“For many Florida Tech students, when they finish their Florida Tech degrees, [they] want to go to law school, and there is no such thing as a required major to go to law or graduate school; you can major in anything, agriculture to zoology,” said Robert Taylor, Ph.D., associate dean and head of the School of Arts and Communication (SAC).

He says that it makes a lot of sense for a student to major in something that is going to give them the skills they are going to need to get into their chosen law school and to do well once they are there.

To learn more about prelaw, Taylor studied the American Bar Association and their guidelines for a good program.

“I discovered that it was pretty simple and pretty cool. They want to emphasize reading, writing and critical thinking. Along with that, they want to emphasize a knowledge of history and political science, psychology—a well-rounded person,” he said.

With the guidelines in mind, the courses for the prelaw program were determined.

“When you get to law school, they are going to teach you law, but we want to give students a taste of what they are getting into,” Taylor explained.

There are three main law courses students can take: Introduction to Law, which covers the American legal system, and two consecutive courses of Constitutional Law.

Students interested in prelaw can either major or minor in it.

“You can declare your major as humanities prelaw, or there is a prelaw minor, which people majoring in other things can do, it is kind of a core of the larger degree option. For example, if you want to be a patent attorney, they really prefer if you have an engineering degree or a science degree, you are working on those skills needed for those services,” Taylor said.

He explained that Pike and Smith are both specialists in this field, adding that he is very proud and pleased to have them on the faculty.

Pike taught philosophy for six years and was an attorney in Arizona for nine years.

He was specifically hired as part of, and to help with, the growth of the humanities prelaw program.

Pike sees his role as helping to lay the foundation for a good law program.

“I would like for the program to prepare students to succeed in wherever they are going; that’s our No. 1 priority—to fulfill students’ needs,” he said.

Pike says he is enjoying his experience at Florida Tech and that it is interesting to have students from different majors show interest in law.

“STEM students add a different perspective to the class,” he said.

Smith—who was a professorial lecturer for five years at American University in Washington, D.C., in the Department of Justice, Law and Criminalology—also feels that having students with such different fields adds a wealth of experience to the law.

Smith is currently teaching the Introduction to Law class and is in the process of developing a course on international criminal law, which she hopes to have implemented in the upcoming years.

“I want to provide exposure to students and lead them into the careers that they can have outside of law school. Having students in the science fields, that know about technology, allows them to come to the law and approach it in a fantastic way,” she said.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR NEW HUMANITIES PRELAW PROGRAM

The law, and the course of studies that makes lawyers, is still important far beyond television dramas and the deluge of commercials for personal injury attorneys. The lawyers of the future will have to be well versed in areas like technology, the sciences and, of course, the media. There will be a demand for such individuals and quality prelaw programs to prepare them for the challenges of graduate work in the legal field.

The School of Arts and Communication (SAC) humanities prelaw program is designed to prepare students for those hurdles of getting into the right law school and excelling while there. The curriculum is based on American Bar Association guidelines, as well as input from active judges and attorneys.

The course plan contains classes like Introduction to Law and a two-semester U.S. Constitutional Law survey. There also is a required class in logic to give students an opportunity to hone their analytical skills.

However, the law is much more than a legalistic chess match.

In the words of the great American jurist and Civil War combat veteran Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., “the life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience.”

The prelaw program offers a wide variety of subjects that touch on the life experience.

These include history, literature, philosophy and psychology.

Good law students, and good lawyers, must be good communicators with both the written and spoken word. The program gives these future law graduates plentiful opportunities to grow in their ability to be effective communicators in a multitude of settings.

The high point of being in the prelaw field of study is bringing together all the knowledge and skills to create a significant and original piece of research. In a capstone senior thesis, all the knowledge and skills learned are used in researching and writing a scholarly work under the direct direction of two humanities faculty members.

Capstone thesis topics span the legal spectrum from international peacekeeping forces and human rights to the impact of drone technology on the law. Students have a real sense of accomplishment when they present their work to the greater faculty and their undergraduate peers at the end of their studies.

The SAC is very pleased to welcome two new professors that specialize in the law and legal studies to our faculty.

Assistant Professors Kenneth Pike and Renée Nicole Souris Smith bring considerable background in legal and philosophical issues, as well as solid records as teachers. They can only add strength and diversity to the program and its course offerings, as well as solid advice about issues like law school applications.

The humanities prelaw program is but one of the many interesting and valuable major/minor options for Florida Tech students.

The path to success begins here!

Robert Taylor, Ph.D., Associate Dean, College of Psychology and Liberal Arts, and Head of the School of Arts and Communication
The Sac Five

Students then look up the telephone number of the public information officer (PIO) for BPS, who confirms the evacuation and says there was a bomb threat called. The PIO (Matt Reed, played by me) declines to answer any questions about the situation being handled by Brevard County Sheriff’s Office (BCSO).

Deadline 2—9:50 a.m.

Reporters write a two-to-three-paragraph story that would run under their original headline.

At 9:50 a.m., students begin to realize what else they need to do. They look up the number to BCSO and contact the PIO (David Jacob, played by me). Jacob reads a prepared statement: “We were alerted to a threatening comment via Twitter. School officials reported a backpack that had been left on a bench outside the cafeteria. The BCSO bomb squad team has been deployed. All students and staff have been evacuated for their safety.”

Reporters have a chance to ask two or three questions before the PIO has to leave.

Deadline 3—10:05 a.m.

Reporters file copy before the 10:45 a.m. deadline. It is a final version of the story to be printed the next day.

They have to wrestle with things like where in the story to place the hoax, what to do with the Ivey reference and the ethics of profanity in journalism or naming a minor as they rewrite the story to place the hoax, what to do with the Ivey reference and the ethics of profanity in journalism or naming a minor as they rewrite the story to place the hoax, what to do with the Ivey reference and the ethics of profanity in journalism or naming a minor as they rewrite the story to place the hoax, what to do with the Ivey reference and the ethics of profanity in journalism or naming a minor as they rewrite the story to place the hoax, what to do with the Ivey reference and the ethics of profanity in journalism or naming a minor as they rewrite the story.

The SAC badscrewed to two illustrated fixtures during the summer. Bill Leach, assistant professor of English and chair of the online liberal arts program, retired in June after 38 years of service to the university. Fontaine Wallace, M.D., a professor emerita who retired from the university in 2012, retired as an adjunct writing instructor in May.

Wallace traveled to Seattle, Washington, and to parts of Alaska in June. In addition, she has written a book, “Superheroes,” a multimedia production based on a play by her daughter, author Michele Wallace Campanelli, make its debut with the Space Coast Symphony Orchestra in early November. “Of course, I edited the play,” Wallace said.

STANFIELD WINS FLORIDA LITERARY AWARD

Congratulations to Andy K. Stanfield, Ph.D., assistant professor of English, who was one of the winners at this year’s Royal Palm Literary Awards sponsored by the Florida Writers Association. Stanfield was recognized for his novel, Global Triba, which placed in the silver category in the Best Science Fiction Published Book division of the awards.

Global Triba, a dystopian sci-fi novel set in the near future, is one of two novels Stanfield released this fall. He also released The Battle of Boot Hill: 2085 Remus, a new edition of his 2011 novel, which is a satire of the Kzar War set in New Mexico 1877.

Andrew Aberdeen published “Eudaimonistic Argumentation” in Argument Schema to Argumentative Wettish in the Wellness, edited by Bart Garssen and Frans van Zeeenem, Cham: Springer Verlag, pp. 97-108 (2020). He also published “Cognitive Arguments and Deep Disagreements” online in Ropes in 4 in October.

Gabriella Baka presented “La Pizana: The Beating Heart of Italian Life” on June 19 at the American Italian Club of Birmingham. She served as a bomb threat called. The Wrath of Abigail of Lyon and Its Cosmetic Implications” on Sept. 20 at the University of Pittsburgh.


Burke also delivered the paper, “Genesis Does What Nintendon’t: Sound Chips and Composer Culture in the 16-bit Era,” on Nov. 7 at the annual meeting of the Society for Music Theory in Columbus, Ohio.

Melissa Crofton delivered the paper, “Nasty Woman or Medieval Mystic? The Perplexing Case of Margery Kempe of Lyon, Medieval Rebel Extraordinary,” at the International Congress on Medieval Studies on November 8, 2019, in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Natalie M. Dorfeld presented “Thirty-Four Game of Thrones: Multiple Games to American Writing Skills” at the Midwest Modern Language Association (MMLA) Curriculum Conference in Chicago in November. She also presented “Professional Responsibility and Disciplinary Authority: A Call for NFTY Faculty Initiation” at the Council of Writing Program Administrators Conference in Baltimore in July.

Michael Finnegan, one of the founding members of the Florida Hemingway Society, delivered his paper, “Hemingway: A Terrible Thing to Waste” at the annual meeting of the Florida Hemingway Society in May at the annual meeting of the American Literature Association in Boston. He also delivered another Hemingway paper at the Florida College English Association annual conference in Boca Raton in October.

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In addition, Finnegan published “Another Look at Sherwood Anderson’s Craftsmanship in Winesap,” the annual journal for the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature. This original monograph was published again by the Ohio State University Press.

Jacob Ivery presented his paper, “Thirty-Poetic Crimes But Not Finding Employment Among Two Hundred Thousand Small Town Polices and a Crisis of Confidence in the Battle of the Cats” at the Arkansas Journalism Historical Workshop at Queens College in Cambridge, England. He also traveled to the Republic of South Africa for six weeks to complete field research related to a book project on the history of the Natal commando in the mid-20th century KwaZulu-Natal. While in South Africa in June, he presented “Rapists and ‘Storks’/Police Power and African Agency in Nineteenth Century Colonial Natal” at the Southern African Historical Society’s 27th biennial conference at Rhodes University.

Joseph Montelione released the album “Eros: A Concert with Words.” The album presents a diverse body of repertoire that includes original transcriptions, newly commissioned works and well-known classics. The CD can be found anywhere music is streamed, including Amazon, Apple, TuneIn, Spotify, YouTube, etc. It also can be purchased via eros.cdbaby.com or montelioneservices.com.


Robert A. Taylor published book reviews in both the Journal of Military History and Florida. His piece “Swimming Goose to War” was posted on the U.S. Naval Institute blog, Additionally, Taylor gave the lecture, “D-Day Plus 75 Years: Revisiting the Invasion of France,” at Florida Tech’s Liturgical Scholar Society in May.

Taylor also served as an on-camera historian and consultant for Richard Kingdon Wheatley production company filming a documentary on George’s first sixonings in Florida waters during World War II.

Zhang examines Communist China in New Book

ALUMNUS GIVES TO MUSIC PROGRAM

By David Thompson, for The Communicator

Milton Stafford, ’16 B.S. Computer Science, was fully entrenched in the music program while studying here. Currently a master’s degree candidate, he joined the concert choir during the fall of 2012, and after missing a few practices and feeling out of place, he found his love for it during the first concert. “I was immediately struck by the joy I felt from hearing and feeling my voice join harmoniously oth- ers’ voices,” Stafford said. Concert choir is just one of many large ensemble groups offered in the music program. There are also beginner piano and guitar classes, humanities elective courses, and now a music minor option.

“The music program, rather unpredictably, gave me the chance to explore and develop a side to myself I had not yet explored.” —Milton Stafford, ’16 B.S.

The 12-year-old program at Florida Tech has had steady growth over the years, according to the director of music pro- grams, Kevin Burke. “Our mission really is to try to cause as much of the campus as we can and provide that outlet for people who want either to continue doing music or to experience it for the first time,” Burke said.

According to Burke, they have many international students join the classes because some didn’t have the opportunity to study music in their home countries due to their school systems not offering it.

On Sept. 16, three students in Keturah Mazo’s Scientific and Technical Communication class presented their video about the animals available at the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office South Animal Care Center.

With the rising popularity of emotional support animals among college students, and personal experience with a rescue from the facility, the group—Gianna Petrazzulo, Ballard Barker, and Alicia Maldanado—began their journey of spreading awareness about their closest local shelter.

As a part of their project, the students’ assignment was to show an online video about their chosen topic and to create and distribute a sur- vey to their chosen audience as a focus group for the rest of their study. Petrazzulo and Barker didn’t find any available videos in their search and decided to visit the shelter themselves to create what their class would view for the project.

“As an instructor, I was so moved by the video they made for us, that I shared it to my per- sonal web page,” Mazo said.

“Within six hours, the video had over 1,000 views and 45 shares. Within 48 hours, I had confirmation that at least one cat had been adopted as a direct result of this viewing.” To date, the video has over 9,300 views and over 240 shares.

Petrazzulo, a junior biomedical sciences major who is also in the Army ROTC program, said she never expected the video to gain so much publicity online. “Making this video was one of my favorite experiences of college so far,” she said.

“I hope the project continues to raise aware- ness for how many shelter pets are looking for loving homes and families, resulting in multiple adoptions, helping the shelter keep their no-kill status,” Petrazzulo said.

Mazo said the video was instrumental in con- necting shelter pets with their forever homes. “We know of at least three adoptions due to the viewing, with others possible,” Mazo said. In addition, in the month of September, adop- tions were free. Consequently, five adoptions were extended into October.

Mazo has been contacted by an additional local shelter requesting a video be made for them as well. “Overall, the final project’s goal of raising awareness was a success,” she said.

Barker, a junior aerospace engineering major, said the project was a truly humbling experience. “Going forward, I just hope we help get more animals adopted from the shelter and that we help get more people to adopt from shelters instead of breeders,” he said.

For more information, contact edwardsh@fit.edu or tpetersen@fit.edu.
NEW CLUB AIMS TO CARE FOR BOTANICAL GARDEN

Special to The Communicator

A group of Florida Tech students have organized the Keuper Palm Botanical Society in support of the Joy and Gordon Patterson Botanical Garden.

The society, named after the founder and first president of Florida Tech, aims to preserve, cultivate, and share the university’s rich botanical heritage while fostering a personal connection with the garden.

Gordon Patterson stated that the “jungle,” the university’s botanical garden, was a key element in making Florida Tech’s home in Melbourne.

He referred to a quote from Keuper reflecting on how he secured the Melbourne campus: “I believe the critical factor in our favor was my pledge to maintain the natural hammock that threaded through the property and not to disturb any of the trees unnecessarily,” Keuper stated.

Officers for the new club are Karla Medina, president; Connor Cadeddu, vice president; Joshua Weissman, treasurer; and Patrick Futch, secretary.

The society meets on Monday evenings, twice a month. All Florida Tech students are invited to join the organization.

ALUMNUS GIVES TO MUSIC PROGRAM

Continued from page 7

Milton Stafford said the music program helped to differentiate himself. Currently a soft resources we have, the resources we always in their office, even beyond college. We work very hard to maintain contact with various law schools, and our program was once reviewed by a dean of the University of Miami Law School, and she liked it very much,” Taylor said.

He adds that they have had students do very well, many have gone on to a variety of top-ranked law schools and continue to do well.

“That’s really the ultimate final grade for the law program, how well do our students go on and how well do they do when they get there.”

Both Smith and Pike want to develop and explore all options for students in the prelaw program.

Smith wants to make a bigger name for the program as well as make it as inviting as possible.

“We are trying to grow the program, in terms of numbers of students who enter the prelaw program and to also put out quality prelaw students into the world.”

LEARNING THE AIRWAYS

Dmitry Yanura’s Introduction to Communication course engaged iHeartMedia Melbourne with Ken Holiday on Oct. 23, Holiday, a radio broadcasting veteran with nearly 40 years of experience, is a senior vice president of programming.

HELPING THE INDIAN RIVER LAGOON

Heidi Hatfield Edwards holds the oyster shell that she made Oct. 25 during a community service activity with the Florida Tech chapter of the honor society Phi Kappa Phi. Society members made oyster mats to help the Indian River Lagoon Research Institute’s Littoring Docks program. The mats will be attached to dock pilings as a way to help the lagoon repopulate certain areas of the waterway with oysters and other animals that can filter water.

COPLA ACES HOMECOMING 5K FUN RUN/WALK

Congratulations to our SAC faculty on the Homecoming 5k Fun Run/Walk on Oct. 24 in Downtown Melbourne. The College of Psychology and Liberal Arts took first place in college ranking for participation, with 54 faculty and staff participating. Here are some of the results:

Rachel Yuran finished in first in her age group with an impressive time of 20.43.

Jacob Ivey finished fourth in his age group with a time of 23.07.

Renée Nicole “Nikki” Bourgeois Smith finished first in her age group with a time of 24.40.

Natalie Delriff finished third in her age group with a time of 28.24.

Annie Casa finished first in her age group with a time of 29.14.

Cordelia Cutler finished with a time of 38.96.

Heidi Hatfield Edwards finished with a time of 42:05.

Anushka Boyd finished with a time of 52:19.

Joy Patterson finished with a time of 56:36.

Raven Champion finished with a time of 56:36.

1st: Those participating in the Homecoming 5k Fun Run/Walk included Army ROTC coach Saleem Shehata, Brianna Spong, Joy Patterson, Arnie Casas, Dusty Voss, and Erin Smith. With scoring (front, l-r) are Amanda Utter and Heidi Hatfield Edwards.

10th: Amanda Casas Atom shocked the field with her time in the 10k run.

The Florida Tech Wind Ensemble performs under the direction of Nicholas Gindi—student in a Live in Concert that featured music from Star Trek, directed by Daniel Kolkeville, head of the Department of Aerospace, Physics, and Space Sciences. Florida Tech students, Alphonso Elbert and the music program helped further his goals as a scientist.

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He adds that they have had students do very well, many have gone on to a variety of top-ranked law schools and continue to do well.

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I’m Kevin Boodoosingh, a senior multiplatform journalism major. Here are five things I would like to highlight about myself:

The person I am today is because of all the plethora of individuals I have met in my short life thus far. With each person I interact with, I try to learn and gauge perspectives from that person and try to figure out ways I can better myself from what I have learned from individuals.

The most inspirational people in life have always been my parents; not only have they given me the opportunity that not many people have, but they also have taught me what hard work and dedication truly are. I admire their support of me.

I am part of The Crimson staff, and I cherish every single experience I get from it; it has been an amazing experience thus far. And not only The Crimson, but I along with my good friend David Thompson have created a new branch of FTCR called Panther Podcasts. On Panther Podcasts, David and I have multiple shows ranging from random unscripted conversations.

The Crimson to random unscripted conversations about anything under the sun. It’s awesome.

My dream in life is to eventually become a motorcycle racer. Over this past summer I got the opportunity from my uncle to take part in motorcycle racing. I had an absolute blast and would love to make it my profession.

More appropriately, my goal is to become an automotive journalist. I have a passion for cars and motorcycles and would love to be a part of the automotive journalism world. I have huge respect for musicians. I cannot comprehend how they put together sounds to make me feel emotion, but they do. I completely admire music and would consider it a major part of my life, to the point that I have music playing 24/7 in my room; even when I am not home, I leave it playing, just to know when I get home I would enter hearing music.

Several students from Bolinda Gallico’s Business and Professional Writing classes volunteered at Walk on Water Equine Ranch in Merritt Island on Nov. 9. They cleaned the shed, fed the horses and cleared debris from around the barn. The ranch, a nonprofit organization offering equine therapy to those with special needs, is the focus of a class service-learning team project. A few students from Jeff Gallaggio’s Scientific and Technical Communication course also joined in on the fun.

Several business communication students spent a half day at ranch hands for Walk on Water Equine Ranch to gain insight for a class project.
BIG BAND HEADS OUT ON TOUR IN SPRING 2020

The Florida Tech Big Band, under the direction of Joseph Montelione, will go on a three-day performance tour for the first time in university history.

They were invited to perform by the Outdoor Resorts of America in Melbourne Beach and the West Melbourne Parks and Recreation Department.

In addition, the Peabody Auditorium in Daytona Beach has invited the band to perform as one of their featured guest artists for the 2019–2020 season.

The dates for the tour are March 26 in Melbourne Beach, March 27 in West Melbourne and March 28 in Daytona Beach.

Adam Louenstein, Florida Tech's director of media communication, contributed to this report.

School of Arts and Communication
Florida Institute of Technology
150 W. University Blvd.
Melbourne, FL 32901-6975