



Office of the Provost Newsletter

September 1, 2021

ARTIS COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

RADFORD UNIVERSITY STREAM TEAM HELPS KEEP WATERWAYS HEALTHY THROUGH RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Water is one of our greatest natural resources, especially in Southwest Virginia. From consumption to recreation, streams and rivers are an essential part of the region and keeping those waterways healthy can be a challenge with man-made activity impacting their condition and biodiversity.

Radford University faculty members Drs. Jamie Lau (Biology), Tara Pelletier (Biology), and Kristina Stefaniak (Chemistry) along with RU and area high school students are studying the impacts on stream health and biodiversity in nearby Roanoke County.

Construction of large infrastructure projects such as the Mountain Valley Natural Gas Pipeline are of major concern as they can have an extreme and immediate effect on area water sources.

Twice a year teams of researchers from the labs of Drs. Lau and Pelletier go into the field to collect environmental data, along with insect collections, and water and soil samples to bring back to the lab for analysis.

Dr. Lau's team studies the changes in the local climate, physical features of the stream, and aquatic insect diversity over time. During the academic year, she and her research students identify insects collected from their sites.

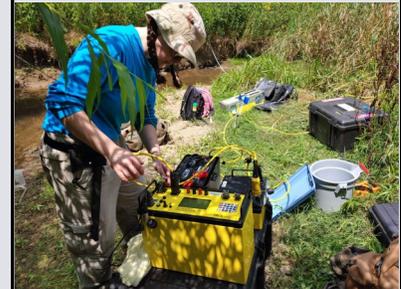
Dr. Stefaniak's team analyzes the water samples collected from the streams in the newly renovated Curie Hall. Information including alkalinity, water hardness, and ion and metal concentrations are determined.

Dr. Pelletier's team sequences DNA from the water and soil samples to estimate the biodiversity of aquatic insects in and around the stream. Information about genetic diversity within species can also inform us about the stability of populations over time.

Recently, Dr. Rhett Herman from Physics and an undergraduate Geology major joined the project in order to use non-invasive geophysical methods to map groundwater routes affecting the streams, and to resolve groundwater changes due to the MVP.



Dr. Jamie Lau (back), Chemistry student Patrick Galyean (front left), and Biology student Tessa Vigilante (front right) measure water depth and pebble size.



Geology student Jenna Petty setting up the resistivity equipment for the groundwater mapping.



Dr. Tara Pelletier and Biology student Camryn Williford (front) work in the lab to amplify a region of the genome used for DNA barcoding.

Data from these different disciplines are used to assess stream health and the biodiversity of the water systems sampled in Roanoke County. This information can also be used to create restoration programs after large scale human impacts to maintain ecosystem function, which in turn, offer many human services, such as game fishing, education, wildlife watching, nutrient retention, floodwater retention, and recreation. Aquatic insects serve as conservation indicators because they are highly sensitive to changes in the water chemistry and physical features of the stream; therefore, aquatic insect biodiversity assessments are essential for evaluating and maintaining functional stream ecosystems.



Dr. Kristina Stefaniak (left) and Chemistry student Makenzie Bennington perform a water hardness titration on a stream water sample.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Humanities Week 2021

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab solicits programming for Humanities Week 2021! October 25-29

You can help us celebrate the humanities at Radford University. If you would like to give a presentation or performance or have other ideas for humanities week programming please contact:

Paul Thomas
pthomas15@radford.edu



Celebrating the Humanities

Introducing the Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab at Radford University



Contact:
Paul Thomas
pthomas15@radford.edu

What Is a Humanities Lab?

Borrowing the lab concept from the sciences, humanities labs provide a gathering place for students to engage in applied humanities and cooperative research. Humanities labs come in many formats. Some are conceptual and do not rely on a dedicated physical space. Others operate a space and function like a center. Some humanities labs foster student/faculty research. Others have a more explicit curriculum.

What Will Our Lab Be Like?

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab at Radford University plans to operate a physical space; have a curriculum component; and sponsor programming, performances, and presentations.

Mission

The mission of the Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab is to engage students and faculty in addressing complex problems through research, course work, programming, presentations, and performances.

Values

- The humanities can be integrated into applied approaches to problem solving.
- The methods and theories employed by the humanities provide underutilized tools for addressing complex problems.
- The complex problems facing society require interdisciplinary approaches.
- Creative problem solving requires a diversity of insights, experiences, backgrounds, and cultures.

The Space

Space identification and planning is underway. The Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab will feature a working space for students with an equipment and software load out that will help facilitate interdisciplinary humanities research.

The Curriculum

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab plans to sponsor multi- and interdisciplinary team-taught, cross-listed courses focused on tackling wicked problems. These courses will feature the humanities in conversation with other disciplines emphasizing the applied potential of the humanities.

Events, Programing, and Performances

The Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Lab plans to host and sponsor engagements ranging from speakers to performances. We look forward to a slate of activities during National Humanities Month.

COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

RU Art Alum Jonathon Murrill is presenting his exhibition, *“Portraits to Call Our Own: A Diverse Look into the Faces of our Nation”*



in the Andrew W. Ross Student Gallery located in the McConnell Library. He states “This collection of portraits is a celebration of the diversity of our region and abroad. Many of the faces seen in this exhibit are from entirely different cultures and backgrounds, yet all live under the same flag of our nation. Through my experiences in both the traditionally rural and extremely urban areas of our country I have formed relationships with a variety of people ranging from farmers and fishermen to inner city ministers and recent immigrants. As a portrait artist I find excitement in capturing the personalities of each of these individuals through expression. By focusing exclusively on the face in each of my portraits I am able to leave the story of the individual up to interpretation. This provides the viewer with the unique ability to come up with their own narrative relating to someone specifically from our area or further abroad.”



MCCONNELL LIBRARY

APA 7 Library Workshops

We have scheduled the APA 7 workshops for the following dates in the library’s Information Literacy Center B:

Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 12:30 pm
Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 3:00pm
Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 10:00am

Sign up at McConnell Library’s Research Help Desk beginning **one hour before workshop start time**. In this session, students will get hands-on practice using our color-coded APA 7 guide to create references and in-text citations.

If you cannot attend, please consider enrolling in our APA 7 D2L module: <https://libguides.radford.edu/mcconnell/libraryworkshops>. Questions? Contact Jennifer Resor-Whicker at jrwhicker@radford.edu.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Harvey Knowledge Center

Meet Our Academic Coaches!

The HKC has 22 academic coaches and counting. They can support learning strategies, time management, note taking, and subject-specific content!



Montasia Braxton, a Tartan Journalist, makes instant connections with the students she supports, making them feel like partners on the same learning journey. [Montasia can help students with English, Communications, and writing, as well as general learning strategies, time management, and study skills.](#)



Kayla Croner has a firm grasp on statistics and psychology that she shares with others in a supportive and encouraging way. One student said that “Kayla was such a great person to work with. She is patient and does not talk down to me. She is all around outstanding!” [Kayla is offering distance appointments on Zoom this semester.](#)



Anith Muthalaly is driven by a passion for learning that spills out into his work with other students. Anith never questions a student’s abilities or struggles and approaches every session by looking to work together to learn their way to somewhere new. [Anith can help students in physics and math.](#)

Small changes: Big results

Staff in the HKC spent last year making small changes to reduce barriers to student help-seeking designed to:

- increase awareness of services
- reduce bureaucratic barriers
- reduce stereotype threat
- increase cultural congruence

Changes included updated marketing with student testimonials, [a webpage for finding an academic coach](#), increased visibility in Starfish, and more inclusive social media posts. After implementing these changes, the HKC doubled the number of students served who had expressed a desire for help on the College Student Inventory (CSI) taken at Quest.

Seeking Faculty Mentor Applicants

The HKC is seeking faculty applicants to serve as mentors for small groups of undergraduate academic coaches for the 2021-2022 academic year. Faculty Mentors serve for one academic year and contribute approximately 25 hours each semester to the Harvey Knowledge Center. Mentors receive an annual stipend of \$1,000 for their participation as mentors in the Academic Coach Training and Professional Development Program.

Criteria

- At least 2 years of full-time teaching experience or equivalent experience
- Demonstrated commitment to student success and student learning
- Ability to connect with and support students in groups and one-on-one settings
- Willingness to foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment
- Demonstrated knowledge or expertise within a stated discipline or subject area
- Ability to generalize or adapt specialized knowledge to the needs of undergraduate students taking a variety of courses within the department or discipline

More information and the application process can be found on our website at <https://www.radford.edu/content/harvey-knowledge-center/home/Involved/apply-to-become-a-faculty-mentor.html>.

Honors College

The Honors College welcomed 109 new students to campus with its fifth annual Honors First-Year Retreat on Saturday, August 21st. In the 2021 version co-developed by Jason Davis and Boyoung Park, students participated in multiple small-group sessions to spark their exploration and curiosity. Example experiences included a trip through the galaxy in the planetarium, learning to dance in the Health & Wellness Center, and a virtual reality tour in the Geospatial Sciences department. Sessions were led by faculty and staff from across campus, including Kristan Morrison, Stockton Maxwell, Laura Gruss, Rhett Herman, and Pat Shoemaker. Students enjoyed lunch while listening to the bluegrass sounds of Johnny Cake & The Lunch Truck.

Applications Requested: Honors Faculty Fellows

The Honors College seeks [applications](#) for faculty to serve as Honors Faculty Fellows. These faculty will be designated to serve a 3-year term during which they will become especially involved in honors education at Radford University. Honors Faculty Fellows will be expected to contribute by:

- * Teaching at least one honors course per year
- * Advising honors students on professionalism and the pursuit of high-impact experiences
- * Participating in (and leading one) co-curricular activities with honors students each year
- * Guiding the development of new honors policies on the Honors Advisory Committee

In recognition of these contributions, honors faculty fellows will receive a \$2500 summer stipend and departmental funds to support one-course reassigned time each academic year. Fellows will be appointed to three-year terms with the possibility of renewal. Although honors faculty fellows will still remain members of their academic departments and be evaluated by their chairs, the honors director will provide written documentation of the faculty member's contributions to the Honors College.

Honors faculty fellows should represent the diversity of the Honors College and Radford University. Candidates who enhance this diversity are especially encouraged to apply. All candidates for the Honors Faculty Fellow appointments are expected to have the following qualifications:

- * Tenured or tenure-track faculty status
- * Potential to teach highly-engaging honors courses that meet requirements in the honors curriculum
- * Documented ability to mentor students on scholarly or creative work
- * Willingness to interact with people from the broad spectrum of the honors community (students, faculty, administration, staff, prospective students and their families, and alumni)

Those interested in applying to be an honors faculty fellow are encouraged to review the [honors website](#). Any questions about the position should be directed to Niels Christensen, Director (pchristen@radford.edu). Application materials should include the following information:

- A cover letter that addresses the applicant's:
 - Experience with or interest in honors education
 - Goals for contributing to the honors curriculum (i.e., which honors course or courses would the applicant be interested in teaching)
 - Evidence for excellence in undergraduate education (e.g., classroom instruction, mentorship of students' creative and scholarly projects)
- Most recent Faculty Annual Report
- Curriculum vitae
- Brief memos from one's department chair and one's dean that indicate the faculty member would be permitted to serve as a fellow if selected

Applications should be submitted to the [application portal](#) by December 3rd, 2021.

Appointments to begin May 16th, 2022.

Faculty Development

Faculty Development/CITL is hosting two cultural competency reading groups this semester:

1. *Caste: The Origins of our Discontent* by Isabel Wilkerson (facilitated by Dr. Allison Wise-cup, aimed at faculty who have made their way through previous DEI reading groups)
2. *Waking up White* by Debby Irving (facilitated by Dr. Allison Wisecup and Dr. Michele Ren)

Information and registration can be found here: <https://rucitl.com/registration/>

Elevate Research

The Elevate Research Program kicked off on August 20 with a joint faculty-student workshop featuring a welcome from Interim Provost Rogers and key sessions lead by Ms. Ashley Offutt and Mr. Jason Clayton.

Our 10 Elevate Research Faculty Fellows and 12 Elevate Research Student Mentors spent the day planning their course-based undergraduate research projects from an inclusive, equity-minded perspective and considering how their work together will build career readiness competencies for our students.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Event	Location	Date	Time	Sponsor
APA 7 Workshops	ILC B, McConnell Library	Sept 7, 2021	12:30 PM	Research Services, McConnell Library
		Oct 20, 2021	3:00 PM	
		Nov 10, 2021	10:00 AM	