

UCCS

English

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
COLORADO SPRINGS**SPOTLIGHT ON
STUDENTS, FACULTY,
& ALUMNI****EVENT
HIGHLIGHTS****ENGLISH MAJORS
ON CAMPUS**

NEWSLETTER



Spotlight on Students: Ava Coorman Discovers the Power of the Written Word

In an interview with *Newsletter* staff, Ava Coorman, a junior English major at UCCS, described the moment that inspired her to pursue an English degree.

After a gap year in which I was preparing to go to another school to study engineering, I discovered my passion for writing through volunteering as a student attorney with Colorado Springs Teen Court. A conversation with my mentor attorney led me to more deeply consider the power of the written word—from word choice, to word order, to where emphasis lies in a sentence.

This revelation led Ava to choose Rhetoric and Writing as her emphasis. As she explains, “I enjoy studying how the workings of written language function to persuade and convey information to an audience.” But, it was not just practical experience which brought Ava to study Rhetoric and Writing, she was also inspired by written work. When asked what written work had impacted her and how, she reminisced, “Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *The Brothers Karamazov* has impacted how I view the power of a well-written work that is carefully taught. We were required to read this text our senior year of high school, and for the first time, I saw virtually the entire grade obsessing over a classic.”

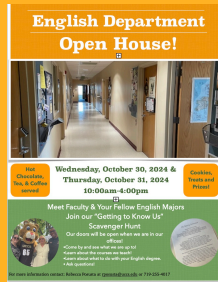
When asked about her most impactful class at UCCS so far, Ava had nothing but praise for “Dr. Amicucci’s 21st Century Public Intellectualism class”. She gushed, “It changed the way I consume media. Her class taught me to read between the lines—to notice what was and what wasn’t being said.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



On Tuesday, September 17, 2024, Dr. Ann Amiccuci and Student Ambassador, T Jones hosted a Career Panel Discussion with English Alum Leaders Ny Moody, Micah Renck, and Melissa Schreiner at the T. Rowe Price Career Center on UCCS's campus. This event was well attended by faculty, staff and students. What a great way to start our Fall Semester English Department events.

The Department of English held its first ever Open House on October 30 and October 31, 2024. Students enjoyed fun and food while meeting English Department faculty and staff. A rousing success, let's hope that this becomes an annual event!



The Creative Writing Program's much anticipated Annual Creative Writing Open Mic was unfortunately cancelled because of a weather related campus closure. This student favorite event has been rescheduled for December 5, 2024 6:00-8:00p.

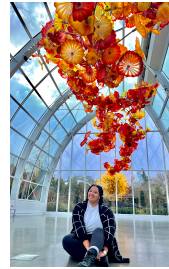
On October 7th, students had a chance to ask questions and learn more about Grad School at our Grad School Q&A. Please let us know if you would like to know more about Grad School.



English Majors on Campus

Welcome to our LAS Student Ambassador: T Jones:

"My name is Tiauna Jones, I am in my senior year of my undergrad, and I am a LAS student ambassador for the English department. As a group we strive to be role models on campus and create a fun and safe place for our students, faculty and staff. We also work on a number of projects that aim to increase the internal and external community engagement for the college. I am currently helping to host different events around campus including panels and an open mic night. I am honored to be able to work with this department in order to continue to create a great environment for our students, staff, and faculty." —T Jones

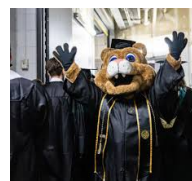


English Students Study Abroad 2024

Summer 2024's "Walking in the Footsteps of Henry V" travel study course to England and France was a great success! Don't just take our word for it, students Tessa Schauer and Kate Marlett are happy to tell you all about it:



- "For 16 days, we spent our time contextualizing and comparing the historical Henry V with Shakespeare's dramatic interpretation, Henry V. As an English major with a concentration in Literature, it was phenomenal to visit so many literary monuments overseas, such as Canterbury and Tintern Abbey. . . The blending of learning with experience was simply unmatched and irreplaceable. 10/10!"* — Tessa Schauer
- "I had an incredible experience in England and France . . . When we left for the trip, I only knew one person among the group, and when we returned, I had made four new friends. The connections I made during our travels and the ability to see the places where so much history had been made, such as Westminster Abbey and the Palace of Versailles, was something I will never forget! It was a fun, informative, and unforgettable experience. I highly recommend studying abroad for students who are curious about visiting the spaces they have learned so much about in a classroom and to be able to see it for themselves."* — Kate Marlett



Summer/Fall 2024 Graduation

Congratulations to our Graduating English Majors! The Summer/Fall Commencement Ceremony will be held on Friday, December 20, 2024 at 2:00pm at the Broadmoor World Arena.

Spotlight on Faculty

This semester, Joe Brucker, English major and former LAS Ambassador, focused the spotlight on Dr. Ann Amicucci, Associate Professor in English.



What's the most rewarding aspect of being an English professor?

I truly love to write, so I feel lucky that so much of my job as an English professor involves writing. What I love most is helping students gain confidence as writers. I love the moment when a student has resisted writing in academic spaces then comes to see how the writing they love outside of college can inform their writing here. Making those connections feels magical.

In your opinion, why is studying English so valuable in today's world?

Studying English gets us to slow down and pay close attention to how words work to bring people together. We're so inundated with information in digital spaces, but an English degree teaches you to read carefully and write carefully—to recognize the impact of how language shapes our world and our relationships.

What writing projects/publications are you working on or working on soon?

Currently on my plate: a study of faculty's use of Universal Design for Learning in creating instructional videos for online courses, a study of how writing about one's subject position engages future English teachers in meaningful reflection on identity, and a study of how a video exploration project dismantles monolingual assumptions about language education for future English teachers. Shout out to English major McKenna Argo, my fantastic student research assistant!

What is one fact about yourself that would surprise your students?

When I needed to focus on math homework in college, I listened to "Air on the G String" by J.S. Bach on repeat. Twenty-six years later, I still listen to this song to get focused and calm.

If you could have lunch with any writer or prominent in your discipline, who would it be and why?

Can I make this a group lunch? Charmaine Wilkerson, Ghassan Zeineddine, Angie Kim, Elaine Hsieh Chou, Nina McConigley, Jess Walter, Yōko Ogawa, Aravind Adiga, Claire Fuller, Yaa Gyasi. I devour contemporary fiction and would want to pick these authors' brains on how they write people's experiences with such rich detail.

Upcoming Events

Virtual Senior
Assessment
Social
Thursday,
November 21,
2024
10:00am—
11:30am
On Microsoft
Teams



Submit your
creative work
to *riverrun*
the UCCS
Student
Literary and
Arts Journal.



Virtual
Alumni
Panel
February
2025



2025
English
Majors Fair
April 2025



Spotlight on Alumni

Want to know what you can do with your English Degree? Melissa Schreiner, 2023 Graduate shares her thoughts on making the best of your degree:



Many English majors end up in unexpected careers. Can you describe how your English degree prepared you for your current field, even if it's unrelated to literature or writing?

Prior to attending UCCS, I worked in hospitality. I held event planning positions and worked in a hotel for a couple years organizing multi-day events and overnight stays for corporations, non-profit organizations, government entities, and social gatherings. The job was fun but ultimately not fulfilling, so I began looking for new work and found that my search was limited because I did not have a degree. Then Covid...It was a pivotal moment in my life, and I decided that I needed to earn a degree, not just for career advancement, but to learn and improve myself. Through serendipitous timing, I managed to land a job at UCCS in Event Services after graduation. While I am doing similar work to my previous

hospitality job, the current position I hold requires a lot of responsibility and collaboration. My outlook on the work I do, the people I serve, and the people I collaborate with has fundamentally shifted after earning a degree. Majoring in English improved my communication skills, and my ability to parse complex information and prepare it for distribution to several audiences. It enabled me to understand the value of connection and empathy with my coworkers, my clients, and my team. My confidence has grown tremendously, and I know that despite any difficulty I may encounter, I can work through it with tenacity.

What advice would you give current UCCS students interested in pursuing a degree in English?

Pursue your passion! An English degree provides remarkable skills that can be applied to so many different job markets. The opportunities ahead are not limited, they are expansive. Get out of your comfort zone and take classes that interest you or just seem cool.

Looking back, what is an example of an English class that impacted you at UCCS? Why?

I had so many impactful classes at UCCS. The most enjoyable classes for me were ones I did not know much about beforehand—such as Beyond Bollywood; Critical Theory: Marxism; Gender, Writing, and the Environment; and Hip-Hop Poetics. I also fell in love with Shakespeare during my senior year, thanks to our study of Romeo and Juliet and the impact of the Plague; with relevance to Covid, the class explored disease, tragedy, love, and their power and influence in creative and cultural work. Before this class, I was considered a hater of Shakespeare! I know, nearly profane for an English major!

Open a Good Book

Here are some of the books Faculty and Staff in the English Department are reading: Professor Posusta just finished Ruth Ware's *The It Girl* — a fun old-school Christie-esque mystery; former LAS Ambassador, Joe Brucker recommends *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver — never has Charles Dickens seemed more relevant than when adapted for our modern world.

What books have you read recently? Let us know at rposusta@uccs.edu.

This Newsletter is produced by the English Department Outreach Committee.

2024 Editors: Joe Brucker & Rebecca Posusta, Consulting Committee Members: Suhaan Mehta & Kirsten Ortega
For more information contact us at rposusta@uccs.edu or visit the Department website @ <https://english.uccs.edu/>