

What is INT?

Volume 1, Fall 2023

Dive into the world of Mercer University's Integrative Curriculum

Showcasing student work from INT 101, 201, and 301

What is INT?

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Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are delighted that INT now has its annual magazine. This first issue will include creative works, essays, original activities, and community service photos. We aim to showcase our students' talent and the dedicated work we all do for the program.

Since the magazine will be digital, we took the opportunity to include hyperlinks that will take the Reader to some of the outstanding events where many of the INT courses have excelled and The Den has published. We (INT teachers) have been contributing to the program from what nourishes and excites us; we want to share with our students our interests.

During our meaningful conversations in the INT classroom, we ask each other whether our opinions are accurate. This type of inquiry is a fundamental part of a liberal arts learning experience. It links us to people past and present who have asked themselves questions about humanity, truth, beauty, good and bad change, and how to live with purpose and meaning.

The cover's design has that purpose: a beautiful collage where science, art, technology, literature, cinema, music, food, games and more come together and enrich the world of our students. This magazine will be our meeting spot for inspiration and growth. And for those still wondering what INT is, they will find the answer in these pages.

Thank you for your submissions, and please send us many more for the next issue!

Clara & Andy

INT 101

Monsters

Kevin Cummings

For Dr. Kevin Cumming's INT 101 course with the theme of "Monsters" during Fall 2022, his students mostly wrote essays instead of creating works based on their own imaginations. Most impressively, he had a team of five learners who went to the Popular Culture Association in the South and American Cultural Association in the South (PCAS/ACAS) Conference on October 13th through 15th in New Orleans, Louisiana. After some editing and feedback, these five pupils created essays that were just as strong as some of those written by graduate students and experienced academics. As Dr. Cummings remarked, "I am very proud of these students for presenting at a significant professional academic conference like Pop Culture Association South."



For the complete story click here.

INT 101

What Does it Mean to be Human?

Andy Digh

In the second week of fall 2022, Dr. Digh taught a lesson on the use of pathos in writing using an informal writing assignment on photography. The goal was to help his students improve their writing through use of emotional language. He chose some of the most historical photos that were nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, each of which conveys such strong and powerful stories.

During Fall 2022, his students got to take a field trip to the Ocmulgee Mounds National Park in Macon where they could see evidence of over ten thousand years of Indigenous culture in the Southeastern Woodlands region. As they stood together from the top of the Great Temple Mound Complex, they pondered a quote from John Muir: "When we try to pick out anything by itself we find it is hitched to everything else in the universe"



INT 101

Dr. Digh used a series of in class evolution debates which explored connections between humans and animals. Students were assigned to one side of the debate, and took on the role of different experts speaking at the debate. The students made integrative connections to many other disciplines throughout the debates. They also learned to argue their point of view with someone who may be in disagreement.





Fandoms

Richard Hawkins

One activity from Spring 2023 that Dr. Hawkins highlighted was finding articles related to a specific topic and having them write abstracts of the articles, which they later presented to the class. It has encouraged them to actively research topics of interest and learn how to distill and concisely relay information. He uses this partially as an ice breaker early in the semester as it is a low-stress activity that allows the class to grow more comfortable with open discussion.

Alyssa Welch

The article interviewed former cult members to see what made them join a cult and why they left it. The researchers found that many participants joined because they felt dissatisfied with their lives and were searching for more. They were in a vulnerable state of mind, and the cult and what it had to offer seemed like the answer to their problems. While in the cult, they bonded with the other cult members. It was a community, and people who might have felt isolated or othered in the past had people they could relate to and who they wanted to stay with. They were a part of something, and the fulfillment that they got from that made them want to stay. They constantly contacted people who would reaffirm the cult's beliefs and messages. Strong emotions were tied to being a part of a cult, which helped tie them down to it. Besides the sense of fulfillment they got, there was also an extreme sense of fear related to their dependence

on the cult that made it difficult to leave. Even though they found a community within the cult, that also meant that they were isolated from those outside of it.

With fandoms, there can also be a similar sense of belonging that fans seek out and find within a particular fandom. They can build strong communities and relationships with other people in that fandom. There can be a lot of strong emotions that fans can have surrounding the fandom they are in. It can also manifest in an "us vs. them" mentality that a small percentage of fans might exhibit where there is a desire to protect it. Other likeminded fandom members could back them up and rally with them. Regardless of how small their percentage may be, their collective voice can be pretty powerful, and that sense of power, when together, could be an enticing part of being in a fandom.



Wayne Snell

This article discusses the parallels between radical southern evangelicalism and Donald Trump's persona, practices, messages, and behavior. Additionally to this, it highlights how Trump has amassed a cult following. In this paper, this cult is titled a "Death Cult." At first, this seemed extreme, but when compared and contrasted to a radical version of Christianity and the ideals of white supremacy, it is clear that this is a death cult in many ways. In addition to the Trump ideologies, Southern Evangelicalism(SE) ideologies are discussed. In

many ways, they are identical to the ideals of Conservative Politics. This is not inherently bad, but as seen in the past, it is not progressive in how it should be. In many sad ways, it fosters hate and the desire for unholy reform. Where SE can be considered dangerous is it uses religion as the backbone. Trump's messages parallel greatly with SE in the most negative ways possible: celebrating death, labeling minorities, suppressing women in society, and using religion as a method of furthering personal beliefs.



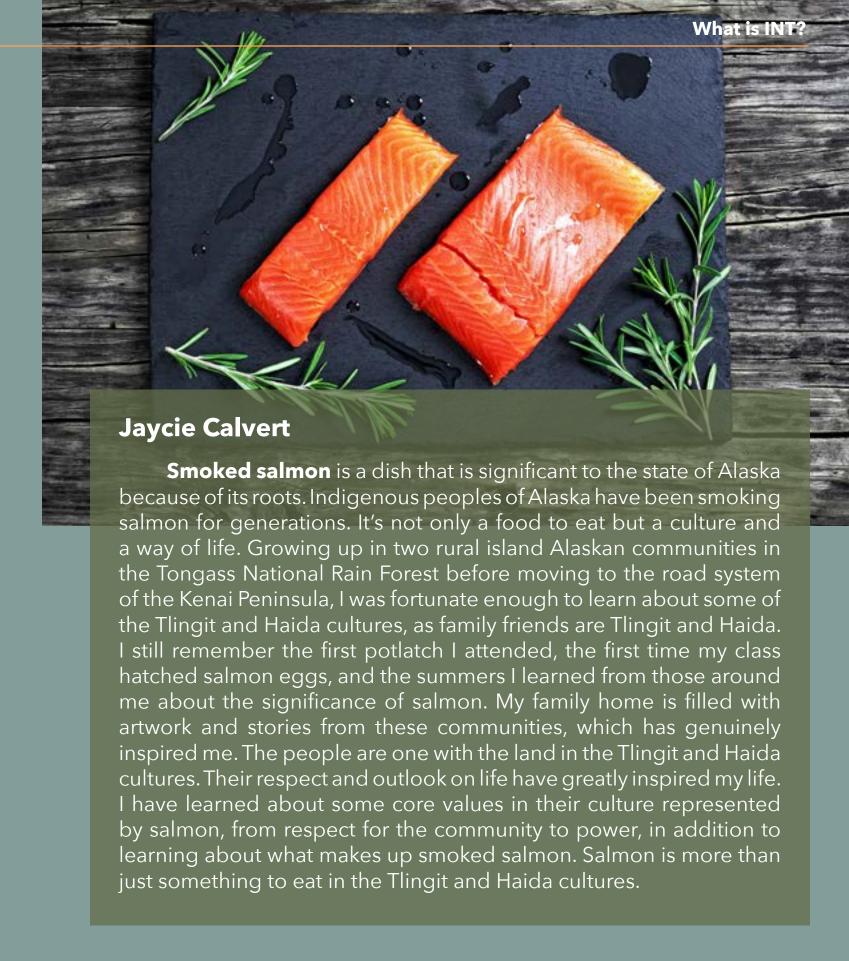
Food & the Community

James May

Dr. James May asks his students to uncover the culinary history of an important meal. They have to describe the chosen dish, explain its significance, and then offer a historical take on how it developed. What are this dish's ancestors? Who else cares about it?

Assignment Goals:

- To practice summarization and quoting skills;
- To engage in wide-ranging scholarly research and distinguish between credible and not credible sources;
- To craft clear, concrete descriptions of dishes;
- To make and then defend an argument about the dish's origin and significance;
- To revise the first draft based on feedback from our peers.



Click here to read more of the essay by Jaycie Calvert.

Building Community

Margaret Symington



At the end of Dr. Symington's course, students get an opportunity to do a <u>multimodal writing assignment</u>, which requires them to connect the different threads of the course. This kind of integrative writing is becoming more and more common in professional settings. Students must keep their project simple and only use pictures and text. However, if someone has an idea for something unique that involves sound or video, those can also be utilized after consultation.



To illustrate the power of precision one of the written verbs. The rest in language, Dr. Symington asks her students to list a variety of verbs that describe walking motions. On the board, the students jot down words such as ambled, sauntered, scurried, strode, marched, pranced, and crept. Then, one by one, the students take turns leaving the room and returning while performing a walk reflecting

of class has to guess which verb accurately expresses the student's movement. Students glean the value of using a precise verb rather than a verb followed by an adverb. For example, using a carefully selected verb in place of "walked quickly" or "walked slowly" can make the writing more meaningful.



INT 301

Understanding Russian Life Through Literature

Diana Gratigny

The stylization of the folk magic tale

Dr. Diana Gratigny's Russian Literature class has a variety of assignments, from class discussions to individual presentations, online discussions, and essays in differ-

ent genres. They start the class assignments with a creative one. After exploring methods of literary analysis and Russian folklore (three main folk tale students types), write their magical tales. The goal of this task is to examine the craft of creative writing (many confess

theory of folk tales plots typology

that was constructed in the famous book of a Russian formalist Vladimir Propp Morphology of the Folk Tale. After reading and analyzing different folk tales, students were intro-

> duced to a list of functions essential to any magical tale's plot.

dents develop interesting stories and become more aware of their writing and the complexity of form-content relations. This early assignment helps them to create an engaging digital

As a result, stustory project in

the second part of the semester.

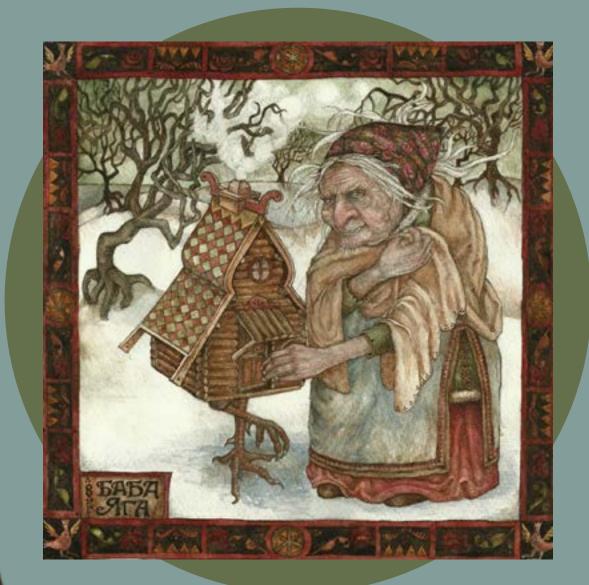
Lucy Roach's work is an example of a stylization of the folk magic

they never wrote creative texts before), better understand the work of the writer and be aware of their writing persona, use imagination, but also to test the

INT 301

Independent Research

Another assignment when students explore the world cultures and their interrelations is the final paper about Russian life and culture based on their independent research. At the end of a course, students are familiar with different genres of written and oral arguments, have more knowledge about Russia, and form an interest in various topics. The final research should highlight all course outcomes. While writing an essay on a topic of their choice, they must follow the MLA style requirements for the paper. They read the texts closely, applying different literary analysis methods, looking for patterns, and examining language, ideas, and cultural background.



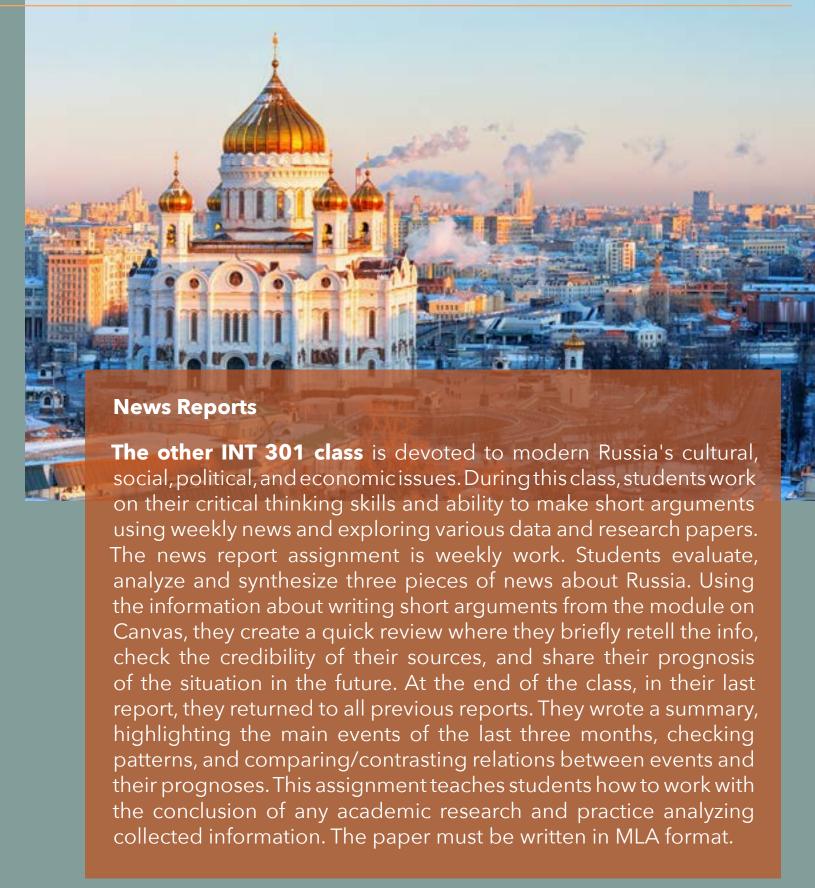
Merin George's work is about a popular figure of Russian folklore, Baba Yaga.



INT 301

Understanding Russian Life through Politics, Social Life & Culture

Diana Gratigny



Click to read **Valeria Romero** and **Jason Hickman's** news reports.

Gallery Class

Despite a strong focus on social and economic issues, this class also has a chance to explore Russian culture: its poetry, music, cinematography, and visual arts. One of the creative assignments is a "gallery" class when students present their posters about Russian artists and act like museum guides hosting groups of visitors and introducing them to Russian art. Each student creates a poster about the artist of their choice, highlighting major life events, artistic methods, and artworks. They present this poster and answer questions. This way, students learn how to deliver the same information to different groups of people over a short time, expanding their knowledge about Russian painters and sculptors and practicing combining visual and oral content in their presentations effectively. The class is dynamic due to constant movement and simultaneous displays in different corners of the classroom. The poster of **Isabella Rhone** (23-24) can be an example of such a poster for the Gallery class.

Final Paper

In the end, students also write their final paper on contemporary social issues. Whitney Ray has researched Russian and American health care. In this comparative essay, she lists differences and similarities between these two systems, indicates problems both healthcare systems meet, and comes up with possible solutions.



Life

She was born in Kharkiv, present day Ukraine in 1884 into the artistic Benois family. Her mother was a painter, and her father was a sculptor. Her grandfather was a well-known architect. During her summers she stayed in her maternal grandfather's estate, The Neskuchnoye. This where most of the inspiration came from for here scenic painting of nature and peasant life. She began painting under a realist painter called Osip Braz for two years. She and her husband and children lived in St. Petersburg for a while as Screbriakovas career flourished until her husband's death, and her move to live in France. She traveled more and was commissioned by wealth people in France to go to other countries and paint what she saw there.



1928 Trip to Morocco. Sketch with Oil Pastels of Moroccan Women.

Zinaida Serebryakova

Symbolism was an avant-garde art movement, that combined reality with dreamlike elements, visions and mythology.

1909 At The Dressing Table

Orientalism was the Western interpretation of the East, specifically places like Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco. This art also had a dreamlike element to it, but focused on traditional dress, religion, and day to day scenes.

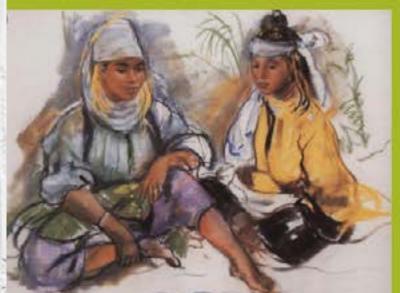
Expressionism is characterized with flowing, exaggerated brush strokes, but also abstract views. distortion, and bright colors., this movement flourished between 1905-1920

Style of painting

Zinaida Serebryakova's work was largely inspired by her younger life and travels, leading her to create landscapes, portraits, and scenes of everyday life. She used vibrant, rich colors, and a realistic style with a touch of dream/fantasy element to it. She also mainly was a realist painter but can be seen in works of orientalism, expressionism and symbolism. She liked to use oil pastels, watercolor, oil paints, and some sketch materials for her work.



Savoie Alps Above Annecy. 1933





Ethics & the Global Art Trade

Bradley Lenz

Markets in the global art trade are ultimately controlled by individuals reacting to the behavior of other individuals. The complex relationship between markets, objects, and value is a business that generates billions of US dollars every year. The significant financial rewards associated with the global art trade can solicit unscrupulous behavior. Forgery, money laundering, and cultural appropriation represent only a few issues concerning conspicuous commodification that pose ethical problems. Bradley's INT course examines art objects as simple objects of value within the markets that establish and maintain value. Codes of professional ethics provide a starting point for solving issues that continue to create problems in the global art trade.



The signature assignment of the class is a formal presentation ten minutes in length. Guidelines: The history of a specific art market or object had to be placed in context within an ethical problem. A proposed solution to ethical issues was also essential.



- · IS IT THE (ON(EPT?
- · IS IT THE DRAWING?
- IS IT THE FINISHED WORK?

 ORIGINAL VS EXHIBITION (OPY

 ARE THEY THE SAME?

 IS ONE BETTER?
- · ANSWER: IT DEPENDS ON THE WORK AND ARTIST

(LI(K TO VIEW MAGGIE WENDT'S PRESENTATION

Ethical Global Development

Paul Lewis

For Dr. Paul Lewis' section of INT 301, three major assignments are organized to encourage students to formulate an ethical response to a problem in another country. To start, students write a 1-2 page paper reflecting on ethics and how the readings they have encountered compare with their own views on ethics. This paper serves as a foundation for the final assignment.



dimension of "the problem." The final assignment is called a "solution paper," and consists of two distinct parts. For the first part, students need to prepare a 6-8 minute speech in which they take on the role of someone pitching their solution • "Incentivizing Initiative: to a problem (mentioned in the second paper) to a collection

and update the information from

class readings. They also have

to focus tightly on a particular

of investors. The second part must be a commentary on the final speech, which should cover how their proposals are ethically

What is INT?

Paul Lewis was privileged to teach the student who eventually achieved the distinction of winning the 2023 Integrative Inquiry Award. That student was Arden Latham. Here is a copy of each of her three outstanding writing assignments from INT 301.

- "Training in Ethics"
- <u>"Accessibility of Roma</u> Education"
- Solving the Roma Education Crisis in Sofia, Bulgaria"

August 2023

What is INT?

INT 301

Politics & Ideology in World Children's Literature

Clara Mengolini

Dr. Clara Mengolini asks her students to write, illustrate, and design a children's picture book as a final creative project. The topic should be controversial, just like the ones they have studied during the semester.



Assignment Guidelines

Length: 28 pages

Words: 150 words minimum, 1000 words maximum.

A cover and a title.

Illustrations or some visuals.

Some tips:

- · Make the writing as lively as you can.
- · Keep the language simple, playful, and fun.
- · Memorable images.
- · Keep in mind the child's view of the world.
- ·Refrain from explaining or elaborating; the story action is essential.
- · Start the story immediately.
- · Grab the child's interest.
- · Keep the action going.
- · Think visually, like a short film.
- · Don't preach; tell a good story.
- ·Build the plot carefully.
- · Show, don't tell.
- · Use sensory details (see, hear, taste, touch).

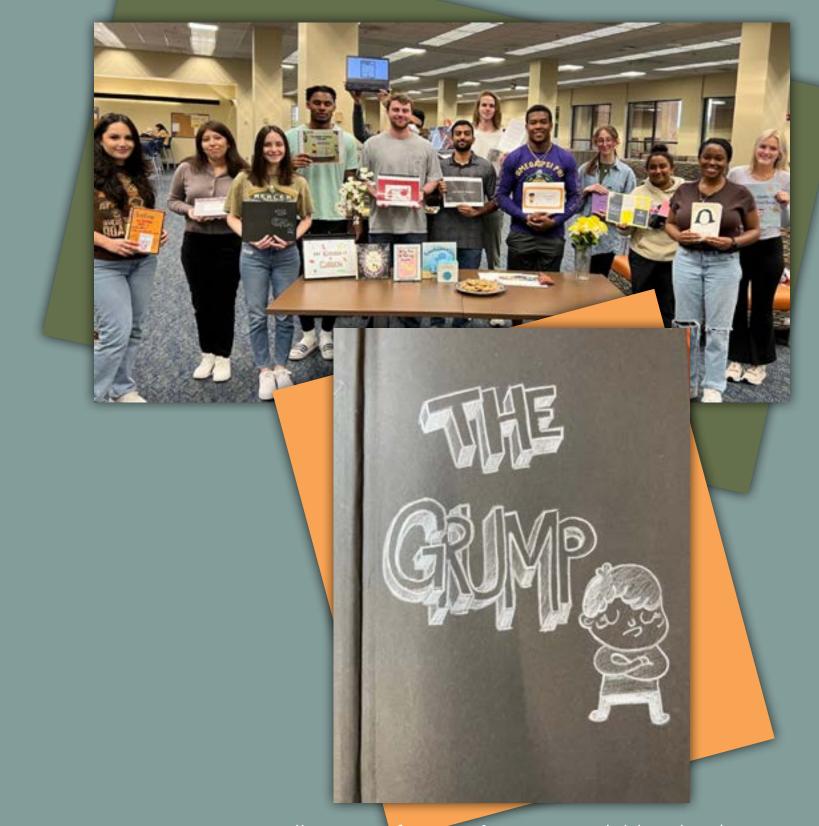


Illustration from **Katie Brown's** children book.

INT 301

Middle Eastern Affairs: Iraq & Syria

Lody Odeh

For Professor Odeh's final research paper and presentation, students were required to come up with their own topic centered around Middle Eastern Affairs. They had to analyze recent regional events, do independent research on the topic, and incorporate one or more concepts from the course. Students were encouraged to look for connections between the United States and other countries in the region, identifying similarities and differences in beliefs, global perspectives, socio-economic values, political aims, historical backgrounds and identities.

The Role of Culture and Stigma

- Stigma plays a large role in the hindrance of seeking mental health treatment, especially for women
- Women suffer a worse social outcome if they are perceived of having mental illness'
- Social effects include lowering marriage prospects for other women in their families
- Pressures from community and family to marry
- Combination of these factors lowers female self-esteem, worsening their mental well-being



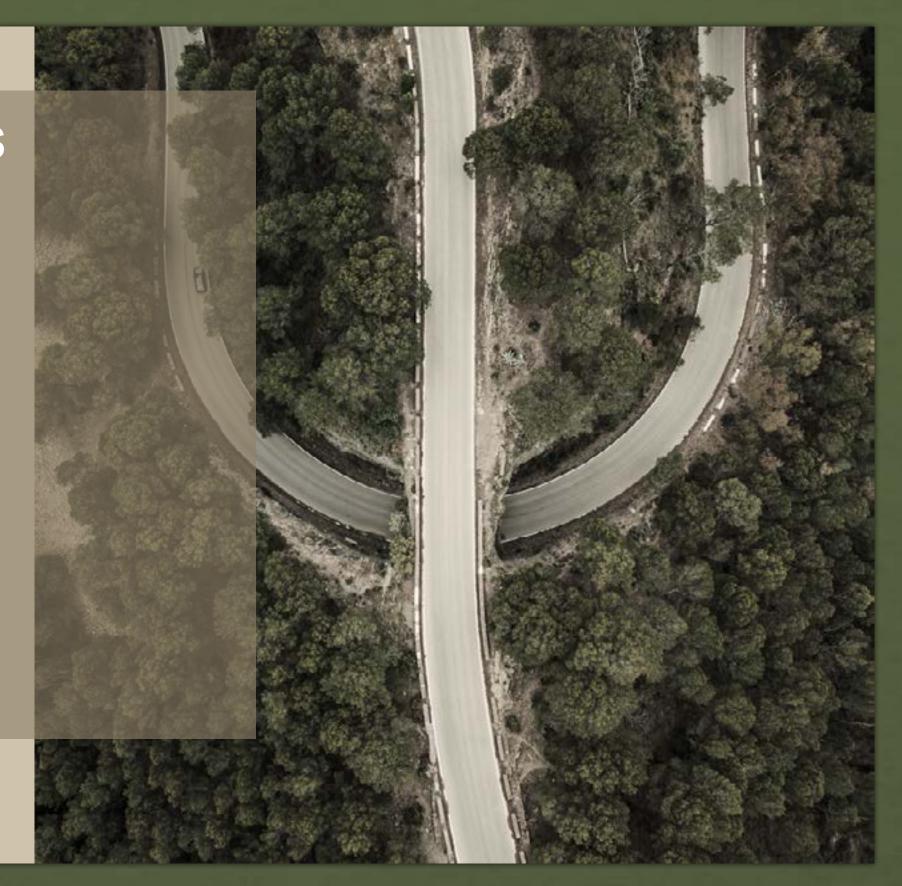
Some of the outstanding presentations included:

- "Effects of Violence on the Mental Health of Syrian Refugees" by Sumer Bhurgri
- "How did Social Media Influence the Arab Spring and BLM movements?" by **Parker Vidmar**
- "The Arab Spring and Hamilton" by **Joseph Garcia-Carreras**
- The United States' and Middle East's Gender Roles by Mary Kate Allen
- Future State of Health in Yemen by Kalli Jones

FUTURE CHALLENGES OF YEMEN'S HEALTH SECTOR

Kalli Jones

- Major human development setbacks
- Need for Implementing sustainable health policies to rebuild infrastructure and improve health outcomes
- Significant existing inequalities in health access in delivery
 - Health sector corrupt prior to war
- Future challenge of reincorporating diaspora to promote health
 - Great need for health workers



Sources: (Lebbos & Duran, 2021) (Lussier & Fakher, 2017)

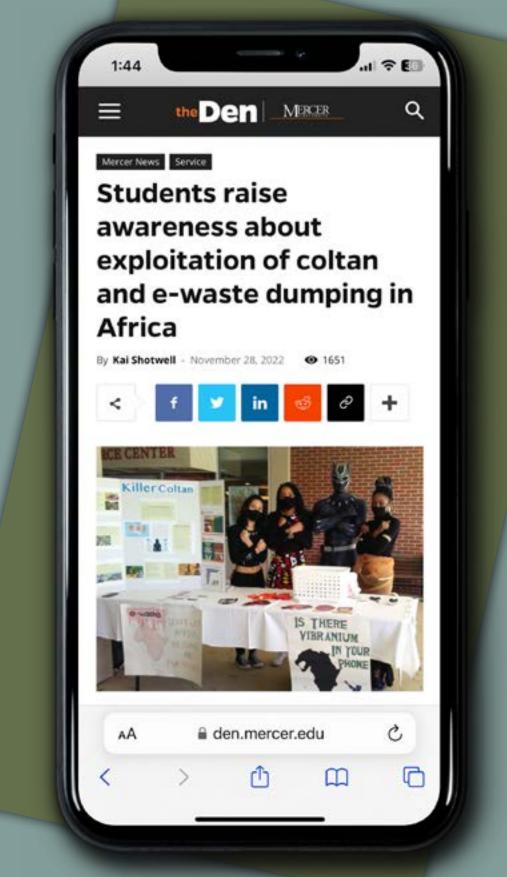
Click to view **Kalli Jones**' full presentation.

INT 301

Globalization: Africa's Experiences

Chinekwu Obidoa

Dr. Chinekwu Obidoa asked her students to pair with a fellow student(s) to design and execute an education/awareness and activism project which had to respond to the E-waste Dumping Crises in Africa.



For the complete story click here.

INT 301



Engage Action Project/Presentation

This is an engaged action project because the students were expected to involve real people. The students created a <u>website</u> for this project; the purpose of the website was to design and educate the public on their chosen issue. They were also required to include facts about African extractive minerals and their contribution to globalization. The site had to contain accurate and relevant information on the issue and be attractive and accessible to

the general public. The websites had at least five different pages containing textual material. They also created a Facebook or Instagram page to go along with the website and provide similar information on the Facebook/Instagram page. The students were also expected to invite friends within their inner and outer networks to be part of the page and engage their online Facebook/Instagram community in education and dialogue regarding the issue.





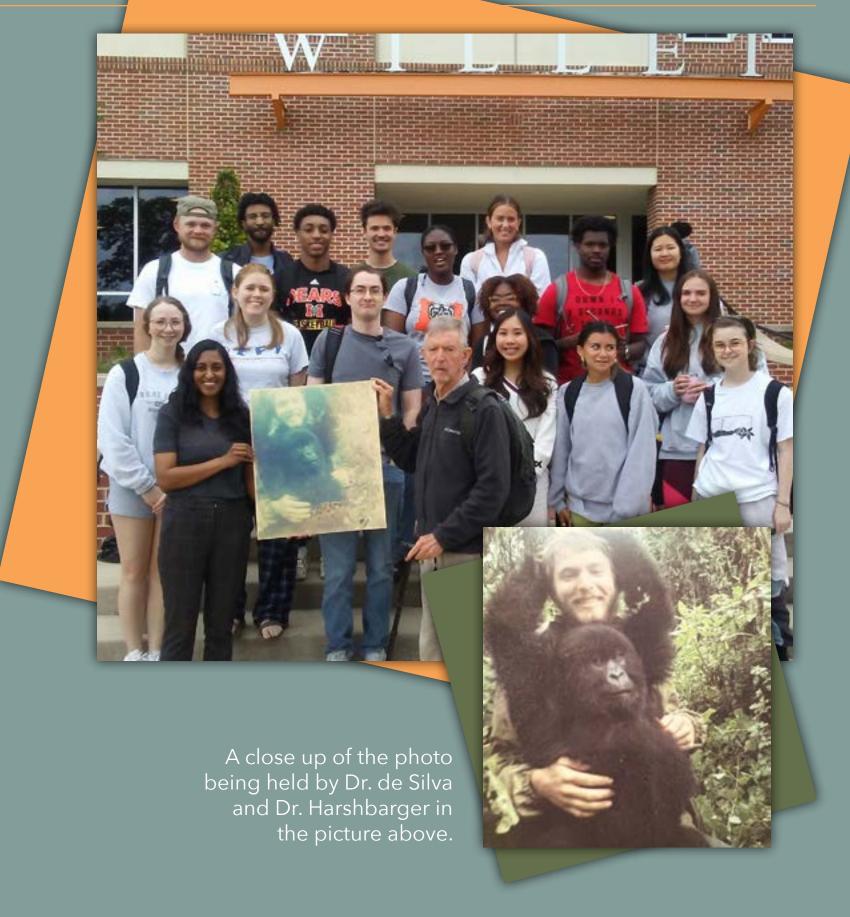
The activism component of their project had to involve some action as far as addressing the issue. They mustcollectoraskforoldcellphones and electronic waste donations and donate to the Habitat for Humanity Organization in Macon that recycles E-waste. Additionally, they must ask their online community to boycott firms linked to exploiting African mineral resources. They were also required to give their project a catchy title and advertise it around campus. They hold "Wakandathemed" cell phone drives around campus and thought of other ways to get people involved in electronic sharing or recycling. Her students were expected to set targets for their project, including the number of likes on Facebook/Instagram, friends, and people joining them in acting on the issue.

INT 301

Conservation of Natural Resources & Animals

Chamaree de Silva

Students in Dr. de Silva's course read Dian Fossey's Gorillas in the Mist book about her work on mountain gorillas. Dr. Randy Harshbarger briefly worked with Fossey, and even saw her a few days prior to her murder in the 1980s. Here, he is holding a young gorilla named Pablo which was discussed in the book. Randy came to speak to the class about his experiences in Rwanda, and meeting Fossey.



End of the Year INT Awards

Integrative Inquiry Award

Arden Latham

Paul Lewis writes that "Arden is someone I think deserving of the highest INT award. She was the top student in my INT 301 class and demonstrated the most careful and sophisticated analysis of and proposal for addressing issues facing the Roma in Europe. Her comments in class were insightful and drew from knowledge in other classes as well as relevant personal experiences. Her understanding of assigned readings was impeccable. I do not know how she did in INT 101 or 201, but she nailed it in 301."

Arden received A's in every INT course (101 - Sherry Meeks; 201 - Andy Silver; 301 - Paul Lewis). Her current GPA is a 3.755.



Arden Latham receiving the Integrative Inquiry Award from Dr. Paul Lewis at the 2023 Honors Convocation.

Spirit of INT Awards

Nominations for the Spirit of INT Award Include:

- 15 awards for INT 101 students
- 12 awards for INT 201 students
- 7 awards for INT 301 students

Fall 2023 Happenings of Interest to INT Students & Faculty



Fine Art Exhibit entitled <u>"PROOF: From the Archive of ABSOLUTE COLOR"</u> by Gretchen Wagner Now - October 21 McEachern Art Center

NOW

Tyler Perry Exhibit
Now - February 2025
Tubman Museum

'The Inspirational Exhibition of the Life and Accomplishments of Entertainment Mogul, Tyler Perry' is an interactive showcase that offers a glimpse into the extraordinary life and work of Tyler Perry. From a young, struggling artist to a globally recognized figure, Tyler overcame a life of abuse and poverty that plagued his youth. The highly anticipated exhibition is a testament of faith. On Display now through February 2025.



Ocmulgee Indigenous Celebration
September 16-17 from 10AM-5PM
Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park in Macon

A celebration of the cultures of Native Americans that features traditional cultural crafts, storytelling, educational programs, live demonstrations, music, and dance. Native American arts and crafts vendors will be selling their crafts as well as food. Rediscover the mounds and Earth Lodge, artifacts, trails, and nature within the park.

21 SEPT

Mercer Theatre's Production of *Alice in Wonderland*September 21-23 & November 11 at 10AM
Tattnall Square Park

Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland reimagined, adapted, and directed by Mercer Theatre's Scot Mann, the familiar plot is set in a steampunk world where the Victorian era meets science fiction in design and through special effects.

2 oct A Divine Kerfuffle, by H. Russ Brown October 2-5 & October 9-11 at 10AM Tattnall Square Center for the Arts

The year is 1895 and Sarah Bernhardt is the greatest actress to ever grace the Victorian stage - just ask her! In this high-energy, physical comedy the stage is set for the ultimate showdown as the two dueling divas cross wits and blades in this frantically funny farce!



Mercer University's Gothic Festival, 3rd Edition with Round Table, Movies, and Art Contest and Exhibition October 25-28



37th Annual Gala Festival of Trees November 9 - December 31 <u>Museum of Arts and Sciences</u>



INT 101

JESSI IS A PART-TIME FACULTY MEMBER JESSI KNIPPEL-AND NEW TO THE AREA.

DOROTHY USED TO TEACH INT 101 IN 20151 DOROTHY PETERSON-BUT IS BACK NOW.

ANNA IS A NEW FACULTY MEMBER IN ANNA FLEMING-POLITICAL SCIENCE.

INT 201

ANDREW MANIS-

ANDREW IS A RETIRED HISTORY PROFESSOR FROM MIDDLE GEORGIA.

JOHNA WRIGHT-

JOHNA IS MOVING FROM THE STUDY ABROAD OFFICE TO FELLOWSHIPS.

INT 301

PHOEBE MOON-PHOEBE STARTED IN 2021 IN POLITICAL SCIENCE.

RA(HEL GVO-RA(HEL STARTED IN 2021 IN SO(10L0GY.

Thanks to Our Contributors



Kevin Cummings



Andy Digh



Diana Gratigny



Richard Hawkins



Bradley Lenz



Paul Lewis



James May



Clara Mengolini



Lody Odeh



Chinekwu Obidoa



Chamaree de Silva



Margaret Symington

Please send your submissions for our next issue, 2024 to mengolini_c@mercer.edu or digh_ad@mercer.edu

Acknowledgments

We want to thank Chair Janell Johnson for her support and encouragement throughout this project. Our gratitude also goes to all the students who enthusiastically sent us their work Finally, we want to thank Ashley Lynn Curtis for the beautiful design.

Clara Mengolini and Andy Digh What is INT? visionaries and founders



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