Next March, the University of South Dakota’s National Music Museum will host *First Folio! The Book That Gave Us Shakespeare*, as part of a national tour from the Folger Shakespeare Library in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare’s death. Chair and Associate Professor of English Darlene Farabee, Ph.D., wrote the proposal to bring the book to USD and serves as the local exhibit’s project director.

The First Folio is the first complete collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays, published in 1623, seven years after his death. Compiled by two of Shakespeare’s fellow actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, the book preserves 36 of Shakespeare’s plays. Without it, we would not have 18 of those plays, including *Macbeth, Julius Caesar, Twelfth Night, The Tempest,* and *Antony and Cleopatra.*

One of the most valuable printed books in the world, a First Folio sold for $6.2 million in 2001 at Christie’s and another for $5.2 million in 2006 in London. It originally sold for one British pound (20 shillings)—about $200 today. There are 233 known copies in the world today, with 82 copies held by the Folger Shakespeare Library. In 2016, multiple copies of the original book will travel to all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

“We’re so excited to announce that the city of Vermillion, the state of South Dakota, and the whole Siouxland region can now plan to experience first-hand the wonder and rarity of the First Folio,” said Farabee. “From Shakespeare fans to students studying his plays for the first time, this exhibit is a rare opportunity for people to experience one of the most influential books in history.”

The First Folio will be on display in the National Music Museum. Farabee said the location is an ideal site for the exhibit. “The Folio as a material object will integrate well with the outstanding sixteenth- and seventeenth-century instruments on display at the National Music Museum,” she added.

Events and programming at USD will focus on three main areas: The Art of Shakespeare, Shakespeare and Performance, and Shakespeare and South Dakota. Farabee said the month-long exhibit will include research presentations, theatrical performances, public discussions, school tours and other educational events. “South Dakota has a rich history engaged with Shakespeare from early white settlements bringing traveling Shakespeare groups to South Dakota, to the significant Native American populations’ engagement with Shakespeare in tribal colleges, to the recent development of the South Dakota Shakespeare Festival,” Farabee said.

USD will host the traveling exhibit from March 7–April 3, 2016.
Notes from the Chair

It has been an exciting year as a new chair of the Department of English. Heartiest congratulations go to Lee Ann Roripaugh for her well-deserved honor in being named by Gov. Daugaard as the South Dakota Poet Laureate. We all look forward to Professor Roripaugh taking up this post and the Department of English will be involved in the celebrations of her appointment at the South Dakota Festival of Books in Rapid City and Deadwood, Sept. 24–27, 2015.

Last fall the English department hosted a very popular lecture series on literature, which began with the question of “Why read and critique literature” and then moved from medieval British literature all the way to twenty-first century poetics. These 12 lectures (many by English department faculty and some by visiting scholars) ran on Monday afternoons at 4 p.m. and were open to the public. We were delighted to find that the lectures were so popular we needed a larger room to accommodate the audience. The undergraduate and graduate student attendance was impressive, but we were pleased to also have members of the general public and faculty from other departments at the university.

We are looking forward to having another similar series of lectures in the fall semester of 2015, also on Monday afternoons, and welcome any alumni to attend. Email me if you would like to have a listing of the lectures planned for the fall, or you can find the listing on the department Facebook page. In other ways to remain digitally connected, the department now has an online system for subscribing to South Dakota Review. You’ll find the link to the Coyote store site on the English department website, or email me and I’ll send a link.

After the departures of Dennis Sjolie (to retire to the west coast) and Emily Haddad (the new dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Maine), we welcomed three new graduate faculty, Christopher Jenks, Duncan Barlow and Prentiss Clark. Jenks is the coordinator of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages specialization in the M.A. program and his work with the Center for Academic and Global Engagement promises to extend the department’s outreach to a wider range of undergraduate and graduate students. Barlow is the managing editor of South Dakota Review and has facilitated the move of Astrophil Press to the English department. Clark, an Emerson scholar interested in the intersections between literature and philosophy, has taken an active role with undergraduate events in the department and has facilitated many workshops for graduate students going on the job market.

This fall the department will be welcoming two new assistant professors. Lisa Ann Robertson (Ph.D., University of Alberta) works on British Romantic literature and will also be teaching eighteenth-century British literature. Heather Love (Ph.D., Indiana University) focuses on American modernism and explores the connections between twentieth-century poetics and the modes of thought that simultaneously developed into the field of cybernetics.

The First Folio exhibition in March of 2016 will be an exciting time for the department, and undergraduate researchers are already working on projects to present during the exhibition. Chelsea Campbell (UDiscover Research Fellowship) and Mackenzie Stone (Summer Research Project) are both working in regional archives to collect information on nineteenth-century productions of Shakespeare plays in South Dakota. The Folio exhibition at USD will allow for many other undergraduate projects, allowing our students hands-on experience with original research.

Our undergraduate and graduate students continue to do outstanding work and impress us with their excitement, dedication, and hard work. As you will see from this newsletter, we have a great deal to be proud of with our students’ activities, award-winning scholarship, community outreach, publications and even a Fulbright winner.

I look forward to the next year as chair, because we have exciting opportunities as a department. We have many ways for alumni to be involved with the department and welcome our alumni to join us at the colloquium lectures in the fall, attend the programming around the Folio exhibition in March 2016, or even help with the maintenance of the Shakespeare Garden here on campus. If you are interested, please email me, telephone, or stop by Dakota Hall. I look forward to seeing you.

Darlene Farabee, Associate Professor and Chair
Darlene.Farabee@usd.edu
605-677-5229
Dakota Hall 211
A small literary press started by Lecturer Duncan Barlow six years ago is now part of USD’s English department. Beginning this fall, procuring and publishing the works of Astrophil Press will become the jobs of undergraduate and graduate students who enroll in workshop classes offered each semester.

Since its inception, Astrophil Press has published a total of six works of fiction, poetry, and non-fiction by award-winning authors Brian Evenson, Ellen Welcker, Keith Abbott, David Gruber, Eric E. Olsen and Mark Tursi. Barlow said the initial plans for the workshop course involve reprinting the press’s current titles and notifying the publishing and writing community of Astrophil’s new home at USD. Students in the spring semester class will begin soliciting manuscripts and choosing new works to publish.

Barlow said he’s excited about bringing the press to USD, especially since his busy schedule has left little time to run the enterprise over the past few years. “It’s been given a new life and a new dimension,” he said. “I think that it’s going to be a great opportunity for students to diversify their specialization and learn some skills.” The press will continue to seek out submissions of innovative writing that major and independent presses often overlook, he added.

While working with Barlow and other English faculty members on Astrophil Press, students will take part in all aspects of the publishing process from selecting manuscripts to designing book covers. Students will also work with printers and distributors, secure reviews for the books in different venues and devise social media marketing campaigns.

Barlow and Darlene Farabee, chair of the Department of English, are inviting well-known writers and scholars from across the country to serve on an editorial board for the press. The board members will help guide the vision of the publishing enterprise.

Fairly few English departments house a student-run literary press that solicits and publishes outside work, Barlow said. “This is an excellent opportunity for University of South Dakota students to seek careers in the exciting and rewarding world of publishing.”

Farabee said Astrophil Press is an ideal addition to the publications already produced in the department. “South Dakota Review is a very well respected journal, and the Vermillion Literary Project Journal allows undergraduate students a chance to work on a creative writing journal,” she said. “Now we will have an independent press that publishes some great works.”

The department plans to hold a party over Dakota Days weekend in celebration of the re-launch of Astrophil Press as part of USD. Writer Brian Evenson will be visiting USD and giving a reading.
Writing Center Assists Scholars Across Disciplines

When hiring undergraduate and graduate students to work as writing consultants in the University Writing Center, director Michelle Rogge Gannon, ’83 B.A., ’94 M.A., compiles the standard information: resumes, writing samples and faculty references. A passion for helping others, however, is the trait Rogge Gannon prizes in the more than 20 individuals she hires to staff the center each year.

“One of the most important aspects of the job is a genuine desire to help improve someone’s writing,” said Rogge Gannon, who is also an instructor in the Department of English, which serves as the home department for the Writing Center.

These consultants had more than 4,000 visits during the 2013–14 academic year, working one-on-one with student peers on writing assignments that can range from a biology lab report to a philosophy paper. Rogge Gannon recruits consultants with various majors, stressing her belief that skillful writing is expected from college graduates in any field.

“I am a firm believer that good writing matters in all disciplines,” Rogge Gannon said. The list of majors of the consultants in the Writing Center includes not only English, but accounting, medical biology, Spanish, health sciences and theater, among others. Rogge Gannon also works to expand the diversity of the consultants by hiring international students whose first language is not English. “As long as they can write well and communicate well, I am interested. Diversity is important,” she added. About 30 percent of the students who visit the center do not speak English as their first language.

At an hour-long session, consultant and writer work together to discuss the piece, addressing higher order concerns such as organization and voice, as well as grammar, word choice and punctuation. The peer-to-peer interaction at the center is a central part of its success, Rogge Gannon said. “Peers can accomplish things that teachers cannot. With a one-on-one conversation with a peer, a writer is likely to feel free to ask questions like, ‘Is this plagiarism?’ They may feel intimidated asking a teacher.”

Rogge Gannon has directed the center since 2010 and coordinated its move from the English department in Dakota Hall to a more central location in the Academic Commons in the I.D. Weeks Library. Under her direction, the Writing Center expanded its services to include a satellite office in the Native American Cultural Center, which is staffed by a Native American writing consultant. “We saw this as a way to serve more Native students, who might feel more comfortable getting help in the Native Center from a student they know,” Rogge Gannon said.
Members of the Department of English’s Sigma Tau Delta honor society chapter spent the year raising funds to establish a “Little Free Library” in Vermillion. These tiny libraries are small boxes in residential areas where people can exchange books—no library card required.

“One of the things that Sigma Tau Delta is known for is promoting literacy in communities,” said English graduate student Jenny Ferguson, the chapter’s public relations officer. Ferguson said the group wanted to serve Vermillion residents by installing and stocking the first Little Free Library on public land in the city.

Working with the City of Vermillion, the chapter members raised funds through donations from area businesses and through a haiku poetry contest on campus for Valentine’s Day, which netted the group $50. This amount will cover the fee to enroll in the national registry of these libraries. Ferguson said volunteers from the group and community will construct the small, building-shaped box to hold the books. City employees will install the library in a small public park later this year.

Geralyn Palmer, a medical biology major, penned the contest’s winning haiku:

Your fine phenotype
My recessive genotype
Would make great zygotes

Sigma Tau Delta
English Honor Society
Fundraises for a Little Free Library

When Crystal (Gorden) Farrington began her undergraduate studies at USD in 2003, she looked forward to the multiple-choice exams in her science classes and approached her English papers with trepidation.

“I didn’t think I could write well,” said Farrington, who graduated in 2007 with a degree in English and history and a minor in French. With a few assignments under her belt, however, the practice of writing began to appeal to her. “Writing English papers gave me a chance to express myself. I enjoyed developing my thesis statement and coming up with supporting arguments.”

This ability to gather information, substantiate claims and express a narrative has helped Farrington in her studies in medicine. She finished an internal medicine residency in Des Moines, Iowa, this spring and has started a nephrology fellowship at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, a teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. She previously earned her medical degree at Des Moines University in Iowa.

“I think that having a degree in the humanities helps me relate to patients,” Farrington said.

She describes the physician’s role as one of a story gatherer and story teller. “I take the patient’s history and gather physical information from a patient and then present that information to an attending or consulting physician,” Farrington said. “My information has to grab their interest. I don’t think I would have had that ability if I would have spent my life in the lab.”

Farrington, who grew up in Fergus Falls, Minn., and Elk Point, S.D., said her degree in the humanities has led to positive reactions from residency programs to which she has applied. “Many of the places are impressed that I have an English degree. They know how important it is to have the linguistic ability to write engagingly,” she said.

Majoring in the humanities is an undergraduate experience she recommends. “I really want to emphasize that you can do anything with an English degree. And this is coming from someone who thought she couldn’t write,” Farrington said. “Your horizons are broad; you have a world of opportunity open to you as an English major.”

Alumna Crystal Farrington
Credits Humanities with Medical Career Success

Crystal Farrington

Sigma Tau Delta Honor Society
Although her novel about two families who adopt children from Romanian orphanages after the revolution in 1989 is a work of fiction, recent English Ph.D. recipient Holly Baker’s background in creative non-fiction lead her to approach the project from a researcher’s perspective. A grant from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program will allow her to travel to Bucharest, Romania, this fall to learn more about life in the former communist country.

Living in Bucharest for eight months starting this October will provide Baker with an opportunity to present a more truthful depiction of the people, places and past events in Romania. “I want to get some of the flavor of the culture, the people, the language,” she said. “It’s important to me to portray everything with a more genuine flavor instead of me just sitting in my room in South Dakota and trying to write about Romania.”

Baker graduated from the English program with a Ph.D. this May and the novel, Steal Them Away, is her dissertation project. While she has already finished about three-quarters of the story, Baker’s research in Romania will allow her to add the birth mother’s perspective to the piece.

To gain an understanding of life in Romania during the communist regime in the 1980s, Baker plans to research newspaper articles and other publications at two major libraries in Bucharest as well as to make connections with Romanians as she lives in the city and travels to sites mentioned in the novel. Although she currently speaks little Romanian, Baker said she will dedicate her summer to learning the language so that she can translate materials and converse with residents.

Baker said she became interested in the topic after hearing a TED talk on the poor state of Romanian orphanages even decades after the fall of the oppressive dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu. “The more I learned about it, the more I felt compelled to write about it,” she said. “Although I have a background in creative nonfiction, I didn’t want to tell someone else’s story in a literary journalist approach. I wanted to tell an original story.”

The Fulbright award covers airfare and most living expenses while in Romania. “I’ll never get an opportunity like this again,” Baker said of her trip. “I’m really quite thrilled to be able to dedicate so much time to writing.”

Lee Ann Roripaugh Named South Dakota Poet Laureate

Gov. Dennis Daugaard appointed USD Professor of English Lee Ann Roripaugh to a four-year term as South Dakota’s poet laureate on July 1. Roripaugh has taught creative writing in the English department since 2000 and has served as the editor-in-chief of the national journal South Dakota Review. She is also the author of four volumes of poetry and has received various awards and recognitions.

Roripaugh said she envisions working as poet laureate to foster “a love for and participation in the arts.”

Through poetry readings and workshops throughout the state, Roripaugh said she will serve as an advocate for poetry in South Dakota. “As I see it, the poet laureate position is really about building a literary community,” she said.

Her first major event in her new position will take place at the South Dakota Festival of Books in Deadwood this September. There, she plans to read from her latest book, Dandarians, which was released last year, and to read some new pieces that focus on the Fukushima nuclear disaster in Japan.

Roripaugh was selected from a pool of candidates by a committee from the South Dakota State Poetry Society. Throughout her term, Roripaugh will work with the society and the South Dakota Arts Council to facilitate events and readings.

The designation of a poet laureate in South Dakota was established in 1937. “It’s a tremendous privilege,” Roripaugh said of her new title. “I’m really honored and thrilled and excited.”
Duncan Barlow, Ph.D., lecturer, had a story, “Phone Etiquette,” published in The Denver Quarterly and started reviewing books for the literary website Vol.1 Brooklyn.

Prentiss Clark, Ph.D., assistant professor, published “‘Pulse for Pulse in Harmony with the Universal Whole’: Hearing ‘Self-Reliance’ Anew” in the December 2014 issue of the journal Nineteenth-Century Literature. She also presented “Rediscovering the Intimacies in which We Exist: Emerson and Ethical Life” at the Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy in March 2015 and “When ‘things most listened for’ Remain Unsaid: Making Something Matter in the Poetry of Walt Whitman” at the Northeast Modern Language Association in May of this year.

John Dudley, Ph.D., professor, presented “‘Death is the Mother of Beauty’: Naturalism, Humanism, and the Sublime in Denis Johnson’s Angels” at the American Literature Association conference in May.

Darlene Farabee, Ph.D., associate professor and chair, published Shakespeare’s Staged Spaces and Playgoers’ Perceptions, a monograph, and Early Modern Drama in Performance, a collection of essays to which she contributed an essay and of which she was co-editor. Farabee was awarded the Richard and Sharon Cutler Faculty Award in Liberal Arts for the Humanities Division. She also will be leading a Shakespeare Association of America Conference Seminar in March 2016 in New Orleans and organized and participated in the CAS Scholars’ Roundtable at the South Dakota Shakespeare Festival this summer. She is working on another book project, tentatively titled Travel and Perception on the Early Modern Stage.

Paul Formisano, Ph.D., assistant professor, has two articles under consideration with the Journal of Ecocriticism and Western American Literature, respectively: “Cultivating California: Sowing Force in Frank Norris’s The Octopus” and “It had all become a natural condition: California’s Garden Movement, Land Eugenics, and Naturalization in Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s Herland.” He presented this June at the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment conference. The presentation, “Voices from the Deep: Literature of the Lost, Environmental Justice, and Navajo Dam,” was part of a roundtable on dams in literature and culture and builds on Formisano’s research about Western American rivers and their rhetorical constructions in literature and other texts.

Chris Jenks, Ph.D., assistant professor, co-edited two books this year, one on classroom interaction and the other on the discourse of identities in transnational contexts. He also edited a special issue for Language & Intercultural Communication on cultural issues in the workplace. A book chapter on English as a lingua franca will appear later this year, as well as a co-authored article on the translanguaging dispositions of multilingual writers in College Composition and Communication, the leading journal for writing studies.

Lee Ann Roripaugh, M.F.A., professor, South Dakota’s new poet laureate, was awarded artist residencies at Willapa Bay AiR in Oysterville, Wash., and at the Bunnell Arts Center in Homer, Alaska. Her fourth volume of poetry, Dandarians, was published by Milkweed Editions, and her poems and short stories appeared in numerous literary journals, including American Poetry Review, Cream City Review, Midwestern Gothic, and The Feminist Wire.

Skip Willman, Ph.D., associate professor, has had his essay, “Reframing ‘official memory’: Don DeLillo’s Libra and the House Select Committee on Assassinations,” accepted for publication in Arizona Quarterly. He also presented a paper in February entitled, “Rewriting Cold War Catastrophes: The Philby Case in Robert Littell’s Young Philby,” at the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture after 1900.
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