



A stunning photo from the Drake University Theatre Production, "42nd Street," Directed by Shayne Mims, choreography by Erin Degner. BFA Senior Design/Technology major Jacob Galos was the assistant designer for 42nd Street and designed the white gown pictured. Photo by Alyssa Speck

A Note from the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

Summer is here! Just a few more days of grading (final grades are due next Wednesday at 10am!), and then things will hopefully slow down for everyone. The end of the year means transitions and new beginnings. At our all faculty and staff meeting last Friday we celebrated and said goodbye to eight colleagues who are retiring after a combined 248 years of service to Drake. Check out the photos below. It is hard to imagine the college without Dennis, Colin, Klaus, Josie, Clarence, Phillip, Michael, and Chrystal! Generations of students will carry their legacy, and it was an honor to work alongside these outstanding teachers, scholars, and mentors. We also introduced the next two Associate Deans, Lisa and Jill, as Natalie and Heidi transition back to faculty after years of amazing service to the college!

The month of May feels different this time around. We are still recruiting students for the next academic year, as the deadline to apply has been extended to June 1. We will then move right into five orientation sessions for new students. We will need to treat these summer events as an ongoing recruitment season. The demographic challenges in higher ed require new actions, and I thank you all for what you do above and beyond your regular responsibilities. Your department chairs will convene next week for a retreat to prepare for what we need to tackle in the coming year. While the campus will feel deserted on some days, summer camps and summer classes are happening, as well as admission events, workshops, and bridge programs. I hope you all will find time this summer to do the things you enjoy most and will be able to disconnect and recharge. It has been a challenging year, but I look forward to the creative work we have ahead of us. And I couldn't imagine a better group of people like you to do that work with next year!

Happy end of the semester!

Gesine

Gesine Gerhard, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Arts & Sciences



Important Upcoming Dates

May 13-17 Finals week

May 15 Start of summer semester

May 19 10 a.m. Commencement, Knapp Center

May 22 Final grades due by 10 a.m.

May 29 Memorial Day (university closed; classes do not meet)

June 19 Juneteenth holiday (university closed, classes do not meet)

July 4 Independence Day holiday (university closed, classes do not meet)

July 5 Independence Day holiday (university closed; classes do not meet)

Aug 20 End of summer semester

[Academic Calendar](#) [University Events Calendar](#)

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College of Arts & Sciences Honors and Awards Ceremony

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2024 Arts & Sciences Honors and Awards Ceremony on April 18, whether you presented awards onstage, or cheered from the crowd! We packed Sheslow Auditorium, and over 300 people tuned in to the live stream of the event. We were inspired by the Honors Address by 2023 Outstanding Teacher of the Year John Pomeroy, as well as Rachel Ihde's Sheslow Prize address. In addition, department chairs and faculty presented awards to 105 students and recognized members from ten honors

societies. It was an inspiring night celebrating our amazing faculty and students, and we are excited to see what they do next!



Elizabeth Talbert Awarded the 2024 Outstanding Teacher of the Year

Congratulations to Assistant Professor of Sociology Elizabeth Talbert, who is the 2024 Dean and Sue Wright Arts and Sciences Outstanding Teacher of the Year. The award was announced at the College of Arts and Sciences Honors & Ceremony in April by last year's winner, John Pomeroy.

One student who submitted a letter in support of Talbert's nomination wrote, "Professor Talbert encourages us to interact with one another and encourages critical thinking/originality. I always feel like I am valued in her courses and I am more included to speak up because she creates a welcoming environment. Her class made me feel like I am capable of doing anything that I put my mind to; this is something that I will carry with me for the rest of my life."



College of Arts & Sciences End-Of-Year Celebration: Honoring the Past and Looking to the Future



Above: Clarence Padilla, Dennis Goldford, Klaus Bartschat, Michael Renner, Chrystal Stanley, and Josie Poppen. Also retiring are Phillip Chen and Colin Cairns. Combined, these colleagues have given an astonishing 248 years of service to Drake. Congratulations!



Dr. Keith Summerville spoke about Dr. Michael Renner's impact on ENSS, particularly in the development of the Zoo and Conservation Sciences major, and partnerships with the Blank Park Zoo and Ape Cognition and Conservation Initiative. Michael joined the faculty in 2009.



Dr. Kieran Williams shared a story about students viewing Dr. Dennis Goldford as the metaphorical waterfall that nurtures the Political Science Department. Dennis started his tenure at Drake in 1985.



Dr. John Gitua talked about the monumental impact of Dr. Klaus Bartschat on the field of Physics. He also challenged him to a rematch at the next Drake Relays. Klaus has been with the Physics Department at Drake since 1988.



Professor Robert Meunier and Dr. Jim Romain paid tribute to Professor Clarence Padilla's impact on his students, as well as his virtuosity on the clarinet, his contributions to the department, and to the city of Des Moines through his work with the Des Moines Symphony. Clarence joined the Music Department in 1993.



Professor Phillip Chen was unable to attend, but Professor John Fender shared stories about Phillip and the impact his printmaking and drawing courses the Studio Arts department and in the art world beyond Drake. Phillip began his tenure at Drake in 1995.



Dr. Natalie Bayer recognized Director of Career Services at Drake Chrystal Stanley for her deep commitment to helping Arts and Sciences students to find their best career path throughout her years of service to Drake. Chrystal has been with Drake since 2000.



Dean Gerhard honored Instructor Josie Poppen's 36 years of service at Drake as the costume designer for countless shows put on by the Drake Theatre program. As the Director of the Costume Studio Josie has taught generations of students the art of costume design and has brought light and beauty to the basement of FAC since 1988.



Professor Colin Cairns of Chemistry was unable to attend, but Dr. Mark Vitha shared stories of his first days in the department when Dr. Cairns was chair, and about their friendship and shared coffee duties which he remarked were often his favorite part of the day. Colin has been in the Chemistry department for 38 years, since 1986.



Provost Mattison announced this year's promotion and tenure achievements. Congratulations Associate Professors Leah Huizar and Maureen Yuen and Professor Natalie Bayer!!!



With a heavy heart, Dean Gerhard said goodbye to Associate Deans Dr. Heidi Sleister and Dr. Natalie Bayer. Natalie has overseen student support in the college for the last six years, and her empathetic leadership has made student success the trademark of the college. In her two years in the dean's office, Heidi worked successfully on strategic initiatives, improved processes and clarified policies. Heidi's and Natalie's great leadership makes a difference wherever they are—and their home departments (Biology and History) finally get to have them back in full-time teaching capacities.



Dr. Lisa West (English) and Dr. Jill Allen (Psychology) will serve as the new associate deans starting June 1. Lisa will head the student support team, and Jill will lead strategic initiatives in the college. Their varied experiences as department chairs, directors and faculty leaders positions them well for these new roles. Thank you!



Marjorie Foster Bequests \$900K Pledge for Zoo & Conservation Scholarships with the Foster Scholars program

Professor Renner and students pictured above with local wildlife Griff II, who was in attendance for Renner's last lecture.

Thanks in large part to Professor Michael Renner's involvement with the Blank Park Zoo, Drake is to be the recipient of a \$900K gift to fund scholarships for students majoring in Zoo and Conservation Science over the next ten years. The program will fund 4-5 new Foster Scholars per year and support these students throughout their time at Drake. In addition to the scholarships, the gift will provide money for paid internships at the Blank Zoo. This generous gift is a tremendous boost to our new Zoo and Conservation major!



Admissions Corner

Thank you for your continued efforts to recruit our next cohort of Drake Bulldogs- entering fall 2024! We are looking forward to partnering with Drake Admission to welcome many prospective students and their families to campus this summer. We'll offer individual visits throughout the summer and several group events: June Sneak Peeks (June 7 and 21) and Bulldog Days of Summer (August 2, 5, and 9). We are in the process of reaching out to faculty to help with these events and appreciate your support!!



Advising Corner

Final Grades: Final grades are due by 10 a.m. on Wednesday, May 22. The timely and accurate entry of grades is tied to a variety of end-of-term processes, including but not limited to, degree posting, Dean's and President's Lists consideration and academic standing reviews. Please enter grades for all students on your roster. If a student stopped attending your course early on, but did not take action to drop, please email [Mary Beth Holtey](#) so she can conduct outreach.

Resolving Incomplete (I) Marks: If in a previous term you issued an incomplete (I) and the student has now earned a letter grade, please update the grade: MyDrake > Self Service > Course Grading > I/IP/NR Grade Updates.

If you wish to extend the time by which a student has to complete the work in a class currently marked as incomplete, please email [Alina Grimm](#) or [Mary Beth Holtey](#) so they can work with the Registrar's Office to create the extension.

If working with a student who will not successfully complete your course this spring, it may seem "friendly," to offer the student an incomplete and urge them to re-register for the course in the fall, but please do not pursue this path. Why? Only one grade can be included on the transcript/calculated in the GPA. Repeated courses will result in an XX on the transcript and (only) the higher grade in the course calculated in the GPA. It is in the student's better interest to resolve the incomplete and not re-register for the course.

If you are considering granting an Incomplete this semester, please refer to the [Academic Regulations in the General Catalog](#) for the procedures and note the differences between an Incomplete (I) and In Progress (IP).

A Caution on Iowa Nice:

If a student has not attended your course for several weeks, nor submitted any work during the term, it may seem friendly to extend an incomplete, but experience (and data) has shown that these students rarely successfully complete the work or earn a high grade. Furthermore, the presence of several incompletes gives the student a false sense of hope (don't most of us have the best of intentions to complete work, only to find we take on too much?). And, students who take several incompletes may be in a type of financial aid "limbo," without resolved credits and a clear sense of hours earned.

Upcoming Events



[At the Anderson Gallery: BFA Thesis Exhibitions](#)

May 7 - May 18 | Anderson Gallery, Harmon Fine Arts Center

Introspective: Thesis Exhibition of Shykala Brinkman, Paige Minor, Annie Pool, Heath Wheeldon, Eli Woodson and Alanna Wuensch

MAY 18, 2-4 PM, Anderson Gallery Closing Reception for Introspective

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to jennifer.cooper@drake.edu. Thanks!!



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