



## First-Year Writing Program:

Katherine Fredlund, Ph.D – Director

Nina Myers – Assistant Director

Kamri Jordan – Graduate Assistant Director



@uofmenglish



[memphis.edu/english](http://memphis.edu/english)

## In This Issue:

- Happenings & Accomplishments
- Materials from 10.24 All CAP Meeting on Generational Theory
- Resources for Planning Your Last Day of Class
- CAP Calendar

# Happenings & Accomplishments

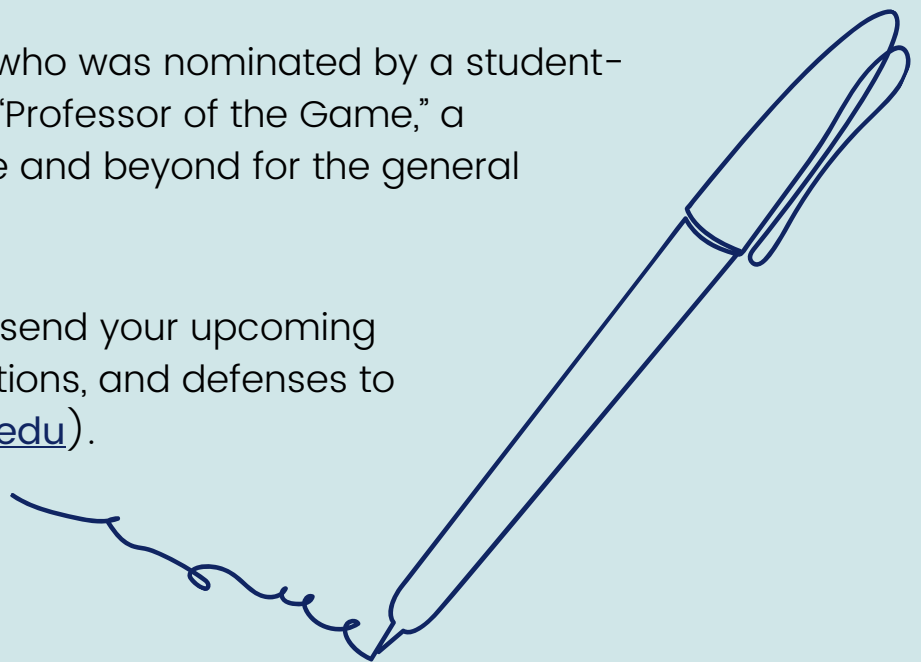
Come out and support our MFA students, Editor-in-chief Courtney Santo, and all the other hard-working editors at the Pinch Fall Release Party on November 3rd! Sign up [here](#).

Mark your calendars for this and other events happening this month!

- **November 3 at 6pm:** Pinch Fall Release Party (Arrow Creative)
- **November 7 at 2:30pm:** Designing GenAI Policies Panel with Dr. J. Elliott Casal, Dr. Will Duffy, and faculty from the departments of French, History, & Philosophy (UC Beale Room)
- **November 9 at 4:30pm:** Beyond Oral Sources: Ajami Manuscripts as New Mines of African Knowledge with Fallou Ngom (Maxine A. Smith University Center Shelby Room – UC 342)
- **November 11 at 2pm:** Black Barbies and The Patriarchy + Book Signing with Alice Faye Duncan (novel. Book Store)
- **November 16 at 7pm:** The Pinch presents... Justin St. Germain, Non-Fiction Reading (UC Fountain Room)
- **November 17 at 12pm:** The Pinch presents... Justin St. Germain, Craft of Non-Fiction Interview (PT 456)

Congratulations to **Cricket Reedy** who was nominated by a student-athlete of the basketball team for “Professor of the Game,” a professor that is seen going above and beyond for the general student body!

We want to celebrate you! Please send your upcoming conference presentations, publications, and defenses to Nina Myers ([cnmyers@memphis.edu](mailto:cnmyers@memphis.edu)).



# Materials From 10.24 CAP Meeting on Generational Theory

Our last all-CAP meeting on Generational Theory was led by Nina Myers and sparked excellent discussion about ways we can reach out to our current cohorts of students, particularly those who are members of Generation Z. You can find the materials used in that meeting [here](#) and [here](#).

Rhonda Powers brought up a couple additional useful resources in that meeting and was kind enough to share them. [Here](#) you can find one that will help you explain the relevance of some of the skills you teach. You can also find some advice on building trust from Anne Morriss's TED Talk [here](#).



# Resources for Planning Your Last Day of Class

As we approach the end of the semester in December, you might be thinking about that all-important last day of class.

The College of Education's Assistant Professor of Literacy in Instruction and Curriculum Leadership (ICL) **Matthew Panozzo**, EdD, shares his thoughts on some of the ways he ended units when he was a middle school teacher:

“At the beginning of the semester, the syllabus and course calendar can seem overwhelming. Within a few days, so many students buckle down, get to work, and narrowly focus on the next task. At the end of the semester, I like to provide space for reflection on the journey. This could be a reflection piece, a cumulative portfolio, or an application of knowledge.

When I taught middle school, I did not focus on the semesters or quarters. I focused on the units. For each unit, there was always a creative project. One of my favorites was a magazine project that included character interviews and advertisements related to the novels they read independently. It was a great way for students to embody the characters.”

Associate Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies **Dr. Lorinda B. Cohoon** provides us with “A Visual-Verbal Last Day of Class Activity”:

“In my children's literature survey classes, I usually end the class with a visual/verbal final activity that offers my students an opportunity to use art to reflect on what they have learned about picturebooks and illustrations or to reflect on their connections to/critiques of texts we have read. These might be adapted for 1010, 1020, 2201, or 2202, or other classes that incorporate visual and verbal texts.

In children's literature, we study a picturebook design theory book by Molly Bang titled *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. Bang uses a limited color palette and geometric shapes without drawn-in details to create a version of “Little Red Riding Hood” that explores how changing vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines and sizes and shapes can change the mood and meaning conveyed by the images. Bang makes Little Red Riding Hood a red triangle, and she depicts the wolf's mouth as two narrow black triangles with white teeth and a red tongue. The wolf's eyes are red diamonds, suggesting his end goal of eating Little Red.

# Resources for Planning Your Last Day of Class

On the last day of class, I bring in construction paper, children’s safety scissors (they are less expensive than scissors for adults), and glue sticks—for a thirty-five person class, I usually have six-eight pairs of scissors, and six-eight glue sticks, and a new pack of construction paper, plus old scraps, and old examples. I ask my students to think of a nursery rhyme or fairy tale and pick three colors of construction paper and create a Molly Bang-style scene using only simple geometric shapes. They are not supposed to use pen or pencil to add details. I sometimes have them do this in groups. Then, we “publish” our pictures and guess the fairy tale at the end—this reviews some of the history of children’s literature and some of the picturebook concepts we have worked on during the semester, and gives students a chance to return to the history of children’s literature, which is where we start.

This activity works for online sections as well—students can upload images of their art or they can use computer shapes and colors to create a nursery rhyme or fairy tale. Alternately, they can use words to describe an image without naming the text the scene is supposed to represent. Here is an example of a nursery rhyme description: this image might have three panels—one with a large white oval shape in the upper left hand corner that shows the oval sitting on a structure made up of red rectangles, a second with the large oval shape hitting the bottom center, and a third showing fractured triangles that are the same color as the large oval shape bouncing toward the upper right hand corner. Can you guess the nursery rhyme?



For 1010, this activity can be adapted into an autoethnography reflection, where participants use construction paper and simple shapes (I have also seen a version of this with torn construction paper instead of scissor-cut construction paper) to create self-portraits of themselves as writers—they can pick colors that have meaning specific to their identities as writers and their specific literacies.

# Last Day of Class

For 1020, students can pick an area of Memphis they have studied and create a **representation of that space or community or topic** using simple geometric shapes and torn paper. Literature students can pick a favorite poem, scene from a play, scene from a short story, or character from a short story and create a construction paper representation that conveys key themes or perspectives—how might they depict the “realms of gold” in Keats’s “On First Looking Into Chapman’s Homer” or the “cup of trembling” at the end of “Sonny’s Blues” or a visual representation of a book or piece of writing as significant to them as Hai-Dang Phan’s father’s edition of the Norton Introduction to Literature is to him (Norton p. 4, p. 681). Sharing the images and having students guess the text will review material from the course of the semester and allow students to **highlight what they have learned while you get feedback on which texts** have been particularly important to them as readers, writers, and human beings.

I usually bring hand sanitizer, snacks, and napkins, (and sometimes milk, juice, or iced tea if I can park close enough and have an easy enough way to keep the drinks cool to make this feasible), and this makes the activity more of a final celebration. **As we say goodbye, I thank the students for what they have brought to class each day—their ideas, their readings, and their humanity.**

I let the students know that we would love them to come back to the Department of English for more classes or for help with their other upper-level classes, and I remind them that English professors are also pretty good at writing letters of reference that might help them with their future professional endeavors. **Happy end-of-the semester!**

You can find the Works Cited for Dr. Cohoon’s piece [here](#).

One of the English Department’s newer members of Teaching Faculty, Dr. Adam Sneed, contributes his ideas for last-day activities:

“On the last day of class, I often ask students to break out into small groups, **reflect on the big “takeaways” of the course**, and then share their group insights in a final class discussion. In first-year writing courses, I typically ask students to write individual final reflections on the course (which serve as the final exam), and I frame this group activity as a way they can work together to generate ideas for that more formal writing assignment.



# Last Day of Class

I'm not sure how well this activity would work as preparation for ENGL1010's final auto-ethnography assignment, so I need to experiment with new ways to make it feel productive and fun (so essential for that weary last day).

This semester, I plan to ask my ENGL1010E students to work together to draft a short letter to incoming students that offers **advice about how to be successful in the course**. Students have enjoyed this prompt in the past, but I've never tried it as a small group activity. I plan to create a shared Word document online that my students can edit simultaneously, draft the frame of the letter myself, and then ask each group to contribute 1-2 pieces of advice, formatted as a bullet point with a header (5-7 words) accompanied by a short explanation (2-3 sentences). Ideally, this group activity will provide an opportunity for my students to **recount and celebrate the hard-earned insights** they've gained about the writing process, time management, and other aspects of academic success over the course of the semester.

I think what resonates with students is the **sense of experience and authority** this activity naturally bestows on them. And I enjoy it too because, if all goes well, my students create an authentic, compelling letter that I can share with future students to reinforce course expectations and recommendations for success.”



# CAP Calendar

## **November 7:**

First-Year CAPs meet in PT 456

All other CAPs meet in cadre

## **November 14:**

First-Year CAPs meet in cadre

Professional CAPs meet in PT 315

## **November 21:**

Thanksgiving Break (no CAP meetings)

## **November 28:**

End of Semester Celebration

All CAP meeting in PT 456

## **December 5:**

All CAPs meet in cadre

