

From the Director of Undergraduate Studies

In an era when journalists often proclaim the death of English as a discipline, I am happy to report that our department is thriving. We currently have 143 English majors and 660 ECW majors. 173 students will graduate this May. Many of these seniors earned Honors in one of our two majors. Our undergraduates read and analyze challenging works from Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* to Sylvia Wynter's "1492: A New World View"; write scholarly essays (e.g., Nicole Sansone's "The Failures of Undifferentiation"); and craft original works of literature (e.g., Madeline Riske's poem "Manatees of Tampa Bay"). Our majors attend graduate programs at Cambridge, Columbia, and the University of Massachusetts; and pursue successful careers in law, marketing, publishing, screenplay writing, and teaching. We are one of the brightest stars in the UI firmament and a model for other humanities departments. If Nathan Heller, the author of "The End of the English Major," had bothered to visit the third floor of EPB, he would have changed the title and tenor of his piece. I don't know about other schools, but English is alive and well at the University of Iowa!

HS

English Department Scholarships

Helen Aicher and Kenneth Ward Nelson Scholarship

This award is for individuals who intend to teach at the high school level following completion of their studies.

Sophia Acklin, Josie Boyle

Darwin T. Turner Award

This prize honors the legacy of Dr. Darwin T. Turner, chair of the African-American World Studies Program and Professor in the Department of English. The award honors outstanding students who have significantly contributed to fostering a culture of pluralism, dialogue, and democracy in the Department of English and who best combine Dr. Turner's devotion to literature and scholarship with his exemplary qualities as teacher and leader.

Samara White

Ruth Gulden Holsteen and Charles Sophus Holsteen Memorial Scholarship

Established by Jon Holsteen and Nancy Holsteen Lerner in honor of their parents, Charles Sophus and Ruth Gulden Holsteen, natives of Burlington, Iowa. Mrs. Holsteen graduated with a degree in English and this award honors students who share her commitment to excellence in the field.

Sophia Acklin, Madeline Riske

Louise P. Herring Scholarship

Established in honor of Louise P. Herring, who earned her master's degree from the University of Iowa in 1930 and her doctorate in 1932.

It recognizes excellent students with a commitment to English studies as a preparation for life.

Joy Singer

Sherry Loring Memorial Scholarship

Established by Eric Loring in honor of his late wife, Sherry Simmons Loring, who earned her BA in English at Iowa in 1970. The award recognizes students who, like the Lorings, have demonstrated their commitment to and pleasure in the life of the mind at the University of Iowa.

Jessica Housour

Emily Wagner Scholarship

This award honors Emily Wagner, who received her B.A. in English from the University of Iowa in 2002. After graduating, Emily pursued her love of reading and writing by joining the Teach for America Corps, and continued her career as an inspiring English teacher, challenging and engaging middle-school students until her death in 2010. This scholarship supports an English major who shares Emily's love of literature, demonstrates academic excellence, and is a graduate of an Iowa high school.

Josie Boyle, Lillian Giddings

Melvin J. Blough Scholarship

Established in honor of Melvin J. Blough, this award is given to support students studying in the English Department.

Jinx Buehring, Marion Cline, Nicco Cruz Cruz, Larisa Greway, Noa Jones, Ella Mainville, Autumn Mayer, Waverly O'Malley, Leah Pena, Jobin Terranova, Solenn Vincent, Archie Wagner, Samara White, Jillian Witt, Kalleigh Young

Scott A. Anderson Memorial Scholarship

Scott Anderson received his B.A. in English with highest distinction from the University of Iowa in 1984. He was an honors student, a member of Phi Be-ta Kappa, a winner of the Hancher-Finkbine Medallion, and, after graduation, he worked as a writer for the UI Foundation and in the television industry in New York and Los Angeles. This scholarship honors students who share his love of writing.

Jinx Buehring, Marion Cline, Nicco Cruz Cruz, Lillian Giddings, Larisa Greway, Jessica Housour, Noa Jones, Ella Mainville, Autumn Mayer, Waverly O'Malley, Leah Pena, Madeline Riske, Jobin Terranova, Solenn Vincent, Archie Wagner, Samara White, Jillian Witt, Kalleigh Young

Sean Wu Memorial Scholarship

This award was established by Dave Wu and Una Yang in honor of Sean Wu and is used to support a first-year English and Creative Writing major who shows promise in this area.

Emily Jarecke

English Department Scholarship

An award to honor high-achieving students in the English and English & Creative Writing majors, based on fundraising efforts of the department.

Gianna Ceriotti, Jillian Abreu, Camden Hershberger, Max Goodin, Ariana Luna, Ellie Fischer, Rhianna Koppes

Elizabeth Dietz Essay Prize

This award is given for the best essay on poetry, in honor of Elizabeth Dietz, who was a poet, a professor of Renaissance Literature at Rice University, and a graduate of the Iowa Writers Workshop and the doctoral program in English.

Francesca Hendricks

Miriam Gilbert Award for Shakespeare Studies

This award is given each year for the best essay on Shakespeare, renaissance literature, or drama and performance, in honor of Professor Gilbert, who taught Shakespeare at Iowa until 2013.

Jessica Housour

McGalliard Medieval Prize

Established by his former student, Professor Dolores Warwick Frese of Notre Dame University, in honor of John McGalliard, a widely known scholar and teacher of Old English, Old Norse, Old Irish, Chaucer, and other medieval subjects at the University of Iowa for more than forty years, from 1931 to 1975. This award is given to an English or comparative literature major who submits the most outstanding essay on a medieval subject.

Cher Hibbing

Fiction Prize

The UI English department's annual excellence in fiction writing prize, for his story "If I Were You."

Calvin Brickner

Poetry Prize

The UI English department's annual excellence in poetry writing prize for her poem "Manatees of Tampa Bay."

Madeline Riske

Nonfiction Prize

The UI English department's annual excellence in nonfiction writing prize for her video essay "They Didn't Tell Me."

Isobel Perez

Essay Prizes

*The UI English department's annual excellence in critical writing prize with an **emphasis on twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature** for her essay "The Failures of Undifferentiation."*

Nicole Sansone

*The UI English department's annual excellence in critical writing prize with an **emphasis on pre-1900 historical contexts** for his essay "The Power of Imagery in the Old English Metrical Charms."*

Elliott Berling

*The UI English department's annual excellence in critical writing prize with an **emphasis on postcolonial and transnational studies** for her project "'House on Mango Street: Home is Family, Belonging, and Art.'"*

Lauren Heck

Hancher-Finkbine Medallion

The Hancher-Finkbine Medallion is an opportunity for members of the University community to recognize their peers for exemplary dedication in leadership, learning, and loyalty. These awards, the most prestigious at the University of Iowa, seek to recognize individuals of extraordinary ability and potential.

Jaden "JB" Bartlett

John Gerber Undergraduate Teaching Award

This award is for a faculty member, selected by the department, who excels in undergraduate teaching.

Professor Bluford Adams

Pictured below: JB Bartlett and Eric Ensley at the Hancher-Finkbine Dinner



Honors in English

Graduating English Majors

Chopskie, Ella

Onate, Matthew James

Thiravong, Tanae S

Graduating English and Creative Writing Majors

Bartlett, Jaden Jon

Burgess, Andrew

Chong, Tsong

Clark, Chasity Mae*

Conrad, Taylor Katherine*

Covington, Calvin Galen*

DeCoste, Madeline

Fait, Madeline Bailey*

Fortelka, Jordan Renee

Franzone, Noelle Katherine

Friedman, Isabelle J

Geiger-Lee, Josephine Jordan

Gullen, Emma Lauren

Hanson, Gwendolyn

Hubbert, Robin Elizabeth*

Layeux, Nicholas Scott*

Lessard, Ariana Evie

Litman, Michael Nathan

Murphy, Elle Elisabeth*

Pickel, Joseph John

Pignolo, Grace Anne

Pope, Julien Layne*

Ramsden, Tessa Marie

Ritchie, Te'a*

Rupe, Ella Lynn

Seamans, Allison Jane

Selvarajaguru, Amritha N A

Shipman, Stella Sequeira Rose*

Smithgall, Sydney*

Sneed, Kristen Elizabeth*

Stewart, Anne Hadley

Vande Krol, Emma Kay

Walters, Elana Faith*

Yandel, Ellen

Zell, Madigan Aylin*

**Graduating with a publishing track specialization.*

Sigma Tau Delta Members, 2024-2025

Alpha Tau Iota is the University of Iowa Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, International English Honor Society. Sigma Tau Delta's central purpose is to confer distinction for high achievement in English language, literature, and writing. Names in bold designate graduating seniors, those with an asterisk designate officers.

Abigail Adams
Ben Ahlrichs
Sam Bayer
Greta Berg
Olivia Bishop
Noah Bossler
Archer Bouslog
Bri Brands
Abby Buechel
Jinx Buehring
Samantha Burds
Elisa Burba
Kyleigh Call
Gianna Ceriotti
Chasity Clark
Sophia Considine
Henry D'Souza*
Riley Dunn
Andre Eisele
Thalia Eliazar
Ella Fangmann
Eleanor Fickenschner*
Julia Fout
Josephine Geiger-Lee
Lillian Giddings
Elizabeth Godsoe
Erin Gray*

Emma Gullen
Kelly Gurdak
Reagan Hendricks
Camden Hershberger
Emma Hussin
Lynne Inouye
Charlotte Ip
Sydney Joos
Sarah Kapustka
Rhianna Koppes
Aishani Kundu
Nicholas Layeux
Misha Litman
Leigh Malake
Calvin Mansel
Grace Martin
Karlee Mathena
Autumn Mayer
Aurora Michael-Caceres
Jon O'Keefe
Waverly O'Malley
Kayla Person
Madeline Riske
Ella Rupe
Maya Salentine
Lauren Sanyal
Amritha Selvarajaguru

Olivia Shick
Stella Shipman
Sydney Smithgall
Caroline Stickney
Natalie Stitt
Shaye Sullivan
Rachel Swack
Tanae Thiravong*
Emma Vande Krol*
Solenn Vincent
Elizabeth Von Loh*
Adelynn Wijaya
Kenna Wolbers
Kalleigh Young
Felix Zywicki

ATI Officers, 2024-2025

President, Historian — Elizabeth Von Loh

Vice President — Erin Gray

Secretary — Tanae Thiravong

Treasurer, Membership Officer — Eleanor Fickenscher

Alumni Liaison — Henry D'Souza

Publicity Officer — Emma Vande Krol

ATI Report from Marie Kruger

Alpha Tau Iota (ATI), the University of Iowa chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honors Society, has enjoyed another remarkably successful year in promoting the mission of the English Honors Society and foster an inclusive community with a love for creative expression and a commitment to community service. Under the leadership of President Elizabeth von Loh, a team of dedicated ATI officers (Erin Grey as Vice President; Eleanor Fickenscher as Treasurer and Membership Officer; Tanae Thiravong as Secretary; Emma Vande Krol as Publicity Officer; and Henry D'Souza as Alumni Liaison) recruited an exceptionally large group of 37 new members into their ever popular community.



Spring 2025 ATI Inductees with ATI officers [first row, from left: Eleanor, Henry, Elizabeth, Tanae, Erin and Emma, with honorary four-legged member Daisy]

Through a series of biweekly events, ATI offered English students a welcoming and inclusive space to engage in conversations about their creative and critical writing, to share their niche PowerPoint presentations, and to transform the Gerber Lounge into a lively Karaoke venue. Several events in the past year have been dedicated to ATI's mission to serve the Iowa City community: ATI members supported the UI Food Bank through a donation drive (February 2025); and they created bookmarks for the patrons of the Iowa City Library, in addition to participating in a book collection benefitting the library (October 2024). Continuing last year's success, ATI organized an event in September 2024 that featured Natalie Diaz's *When My Brother Was an Aztec*, selected by the international English Honors Society as this year's "Common Reader." The event was recognized by Sigma Tau Delta with a Regents' Common Reader Award, the second consecutive year in which ATI secured such a prestigious acknowledgment from its parent organization.

Thanks to the Department's generous support, ATI was able to send seven Iowa students to the annual Sigma Tau Delta convention in Pittsburgh. Please congratulate Elizabeth Von Loh, Amritha Selvarajaguru, Emma Vande Krol, Ben Ahlrichs, Chasity Clark, Lily Giddings, and Madeline Riske on their poised and eloquent presentations at the convention. In fact, their original work caught the attention of the judges and two students left Pittsburgh with President's Awards for their poetry (Madeline) and for their creative non-fiction (Lily).



ATI convention attendees: Ben, Lily, Madeline, Elizabeth, Chasity, and Emma (not pictured is Amritha)

A word of appreciation also for Z'Mariks, the local restaurant that partnered with ATI to raise funds for the honors organization. We appreciate their support and are thankful for English students, staff and faculty who found their way to Z'Mariks on April 17. While fundraising is always a collaborative effort, I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of ATI's treasurer, Eleanor Fickenscher, who not only managed the budget with meticulous attention to detail, but who also secured a grant from the Student Organization Business Office to help with the cost for ATI travel to Pittsburgh.

Finally, let me congratulate all graduating seniors and thank officers Elizabth von Loh (President; Historian), Erin Grey (Vice President), Tanae Thiravong (Secretary); Eleanor Fickenscher (Treasurer; Membership Officer), Emma Vande Krol (Publicity Officer), and Henry D'Souza (Alumni Liaison) for their excellent work leading our Iowa Chapter throughout the year. Seniors, we wish you well on your future journey beyond the University of Iowa. Stay in touch!

Marie Kruger
Alpha Tau Iota's Faculty Sponsor



ATI convention attendees: Ben, Madeline, Amritha, Chasity, Lily, Emma, Elizabeth, and furry friends.

UI English alums, [please let us know about your career](#).

The English Department welcomes your generosity: give [online](#) anytime.

Stay Connected: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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