

The Lens

Alumni Newsletter 2023
Department of Humanities & Communication



Photo by Dean Orweiler

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Letter from the Editor

By Brooklynn Gravel

Before transferring to Trine, I was not happy at the university I had chosen. I struggled to stay engaged in class while missing a true connection with my professors. As I reflected on my first semester, I began re-evaluating my life. I wanted the opportunity for growth, and I wanted to be challenged and inspired. I wanted to be part of a community where I could develop as an individual, gain experience, and connect with others.

In the spring of 2020, I came to visit Trine's campus for the third time. I originally thought Trine was too small and too close to home, but after touring the Communication Department and meeting with a few professors, I knew I had found the right fit, and I was finally home.

Within my first month at Trine, I began to thrive. I found people to support and guide me, and classes I enjoyed. In my sophomore year, I joined the HAC Media Team. At first, it was difficult to feel involved, but one student took me under their wing. With their guidance, I advanced my

skills and made connections. HAC Media continued to develop into a talented team producing high-quality content.

Not only have I grown as both an individual and student during my time here, I have had the privilege of witnessing the department grow with me. Our department has made great strides in just three years. It started with some physical updates, including a new HAC Lounge and podcast booth.

Now, our department is advancing academically in large strides by adding new faculty, students, and coursework. This growth allows students to expand their minds and grow their skills alongside their peers.

I am grateful for everyone who has supported me and the unique opportunities I have had at Trine. As I move to the next stage of life, the inspiration instilled in me from the HAC Department and the individuals in it will always be with me. As I continue to grow and start a new chapter of life after graduation, I cannot wait to see what progress the department will make in the future.

2023 Graduates

- **Alexis Crawford**, *English*; Writing Center Tutor
- **Brooklynn Gravel**, *Communication*, Psychology Minor, Master in Organizational Leadership; Kappa Sigma Alpha Activities Coordinator and Advertiser, HAC Media Editor-In-Chief, Sports Media Intern, Writing Center Tutor

- **Alexandria (Annie) Lehman**, *English*
- **Katlynn Howley**, *English*, Communication Minor; Kappa Sigma Alpha Treasurer and Social Media Coordinator
- **John Lewis**, *Communication*, Esports and Game Design Minors; Esports Broadcasting, Resident Assistant
- **Amelia Mills**, *English*, Communication and Criminal Justice Minors; Genders and Sexuality Alliance Network Founder, Student Government, Drama Club Head Costume Designer
- **Isabel Newcom**, *English*, Communication and Psychology Minors; The Writer's Block President and Managing Editor, Writing Center Tutor
- **Akanksha Thakur**, *Communication*; Peer-to-Peer Mentor, Student Advocate, HAC Media Team, Multicultural Student Organization Social Media Coordinator
- **Benjamin (Ben) Williams**, *Communication*, Master in Organizational Leadership; Reserve Officers' Training Corps Ops Commander, Black Student Union Marketing Chair, Phi Kappa Theta
- **Blake Williams**, *English*, Communication Minor; Drama Club former President, Delta Chi, Genders and Sexuality Alliance Network

The HAC Experience

COM Adds New Offerings

By Brooklynn Gravel and Lauren Banks

The HAC Department strives to provide relevant and engaging courses for students. This spring, three new classes were

introduced: Recording Tech/Sound, Video Production, and Topics in Com - WANE TV.

Recording Tech/Sound covers the basics of audio recording and mixing using the software Pro Tools. Students learn to create their own podcasts as well as instrumental and vocal tracks. The course also reviews the history and functions of different types of microphones.

In Video Production, students work through the video creation process, from storyboarding to shooting to editing. The class also covers filming and post-production techniques, such as establishing a shot, lighting a subject, and logging footage.



Photo by Lauren Banks

Elizabeth Welker and Kyler Bills work on projects for Video Production

The HAC Department has partnered with WANE-TV to provide a unique classroom experience. Students work with WANE-TV News Director Jenna Huff while completing online exercises and research to improve their newsroom skills. After building the necessary skills, students will have the opportunity to travel to Fort Wayne to work on real news stories with WANE-TV.

Ana Boman Inducted into Spanish Professors' Honorary Society

By Darcy Satkowiak

Ana Boman, Trine Spanish language lecturer, was inducted into the Spanish Professors' Honorary Society within the Indiana Chapter of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP-IN). In November 2022, she was presented with this award at the annual AATSP-IN assembly.



Photo by AATSP-IN Member Gabriela Coolidge

Pictured: Anna Boman receives plaque from AATSP President Paul Coats

Since 2009, Boman has been guiding Trine students through the language-learning process.

“I tell my students, they are not the only ones who are learning in our courses because I am also learning from them,” Boman said.

Teaching at Trine University has helped Professor Boman accomplish her educational goals by

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providing her students with the best learning experience. She has continued to advance her credentials, striving to provide an even higher quality education for Trine's students. Currently, Professor Boman is a doctoral candidate for a PhD in Spanish Linguistics from the Universidad de Salamanca in Spain.

COM at Work

NYTEX Sports/Lone Star Brahmas Internship

By Haylee Richards

This past summer, senior communication major Brooklynn Gravel had the opportunity to intern at NYTEX Sports/Lone Star Brahmas in North Richland Hills, Texas. During her time there, Brooklynn's duties included welcoming new players, writing press releases, assisting in social media creation, directing foot traffic, creating advertising content and performing new player fittings. Her favorite project was updating the alumni pages and writing press releases.



“Not only did this internship give me connections, but it also gave me confidence for the workforce after graduation.”

Gravel offers the following advice to students seeking internships: “Stay open-minded and take the opportunities when they come. I was supposed to be doing a different internship, and moving to Texas was a last-minute change that I am so thankful I did!”

Non-Profit Experience

By Mackenzie Rosenau

Haylee Richards recently completed an internship at Union County Foundation, Inc. in

Liberty, Indiana. Through this internship, she had the opportunity to sit in on Helping Young People Engage (HYPE) Committee meetings as they worked to plan an event that recognizes

extraordinary volunteers within the community. Haylee's role was to build surveys, record data, track RSVPs, and make promotional materials for the event.

After her experience with Union County Foundation, Inc., Haylee decided to pursue a career path in the non-profit sector. She realized that organizations can help people directly in this field, whether through financial support or other programs, like after-school care.

Interested in having a Communication or English intern?

Contact Sydney Hollinger at hollingers@trine.edu

Haylee says she would definitely recommend that other students work for their local foundation.

“When picking an internship, you want something that is going to help grow your resume, and this one definitely did.”



Haylee hopes to pursue a future career in non-profit work. In summer 2023, she will be interning with the Coldwater Economic Development Authority.

PRSA Conference

By Elizabeth Welker

On September 27, 2022, Trine University students had the opportunity to attend the Connecting Students and Professionals conference hosted by the Hoosier Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

The conference included a series of personalized group discussions between students, faculty, and PR professionals. Topics included Crisis Communication, Future of the Workplace, Diversity and Inclusion, Battling Disinformation, Ideology, and News Industry

Changes. Attendees picked which topic interested them and joined in that table’s conversation. After the twenty-minute discussion period, the entire room came together to talk about key points from each discussion.



Photo by Elizabeth Welker

Freshman attendee Riley Piehl enjoyed the intimate environment of the conference. “It made me feel more comfortable talking to the professionals and other students in a small, group setting,” she said.

The conference showcased how versatile the PR field can be and how various areas of expertise can be implemented into public relations work to create amazing, memorable experiences.



Photo by Elizabeth Welker

Back Row (left to right): PRSA Member James Tew, Ian Hoffman, Nate Ware, Mackenzie Rosenau, Samantha Dorn, Amira Faulkner
Front Row: Riley Piehl, Elizabeth Welker, Gracila Padilla, and Professor Sarah Zimmer

HAC Contributes to Community

Book Night is Back

By Haylee Richards

On October 13, Book Night made its return to Trine University and the Angola community for the first time since 2019.

Guests were able to browse and choose from various fiction and nonfiction genres, ranging from memoirs to romance.

After collecting roughly 4,500 books, the Trine Humanities Institute hosted 262 guests, giving away 1,695 books throughout the night.



Photo by Dean Orweiler

This year’s event was a project for COM 253: Event Planning and Promotion. The class split up into three committees, which were led by two event co-chairs. Working closely with the Trine Humanities Institute, the class was able to decorate, market, and set up the event. “We contacted a lot – and I mean a lot – of

different people on campus to make this event happen,” Event Chair Isabel Newcom said. Volunteers worked diligently to ensure that the event ran smoothly, as well as helping guests throughout the night.

Book Night would not have been possible without the generosity of the community. Several local businesses donated raffle prizes and put out donation boxes to collect books. Community members from across Angola attended the event.



Photo by Sarah Zimmer

One guest was able to get books for her grandchildren. Students came and grabbed books for their own personal libraries. Some guests were taking books as presents for their loved ones. Others even took books to use as materials in future craft projects.

Remaining books were donated locally.

Trine University Theater Presents *Dracula*

By Haylee Richards

On November 11 and 12, Trine University’s Theater Department presented *Dracula*, directed by

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Associate Professor LouAnn Homan. Production consisted of 25 members, both cast and crew, to pull off this performance. *Dracula* is based on Bram Stoker’s novel but was adapted by Steven Dietz for the stage. This event was open to the public as well as the Trine community.

I had the opportunity to see *Dracula* opening night, and I was immediately transported into a world of vampires and aristocracy. The eerie lighting set the stage for a sinister plot with comedic elements. The guitar stylings of Lee Jackson set the mood for what would be an excellent performance.

The Theater Department is scheduled to perform *Vintage Hitchcock* at 7:30 p.m. March 30 and 31 and 2:30 p.m. April 1.



Photo by Dean Orweiler

Alumni in the Field

Cooper Lee

By Riley Piehl

Cooper Lee is a recent graduate of Trine University who is currently pursuing a law degree at the University of Dayton School of Law. He decided to attend this school because he enjoyed the



faculty, students, and culture during his visit. Cooper chose to pursue law because he is passionate about advocating change regarding policies of public interest. He is proud to be part of the inclusive and nationally-competitive environment that the Dayton School of Law creates.

When he looks back on his years at Trine, Cooper is most grateful for the literary skills he learned, such as research and interpreting texts. These tools have helped him excel in graduate school. His favorite classes at Trine were Literary Theory with Dr. Jeanette Goddard and Advanced Writing for the Media with Professor Andy Brown.

Cooper’s ideal goal after finishing his degree is to work in a private environmental sector or government procedure. He plans to graduate in 2025.

Abbey Wang

By Darcy Satkowiak

In the spring of 2022, Abbey Wang graduated from Trine University with a degree in communication. Less than a month later,

Abbey secured a job at Purdue University in Fort Wayne as the Student Leadership and Student Government Association Coordinator. In her role, she hires executive assistants, advises the director on daily tasks, and works with students to direct leadership workshops, etc. Abbey's favorite component of her job is helping students make the most out of their undergrad experience.



“I loved my college experience and had so many opportunities for growth, so helping students achieve what they want to achieve is really rewarding to me.”

At Trine, Abbey served as Vice President of Student Government and interned with Student Affairs. In those extracurriculars, she acquired skills in event planning, public relations, and social media marketing, which she utilizes in her current position.

Abbey noted one of her favorite memories at Trine was working for a local business known as Sisters Garden LLC. “This gave me a lot of experience in creating content for a client, and it was so

fun to make marketing posts for social media,” she said.

In the future, Abbey hopes to obtain her master's degree at Purdue Fort Wayne and continue her career in higher education.

Meghan Schrader

By Lauren Banks

Life has been moving at a fast pace since Meghan Schrader graduated with an English and Communication degree in the spring of 2022. “I really thought life would slow down after college, but find myself woefully incorrect,” Schrader said.



Shortly after graduation, Meghan was hired as the Marketing & Communications Coordinator for the Third Party Risk Association. She had worked for the not-for-profit as an intern for a year before being hired full time.

“I am responsible for all of the organization's marketing,” Meghan said. Her duties include managing the company website, social media pages, and YouTube channel; writing press releases and blog posts; and creating ads for Google and LinkedIn.

“At Trine, I learned marketing and public relations strategy, graphic design, video and audio editing. . . and general professional communications skills, all of which are relevant to my current role,” Schrader said.

In the future, Meghan plans to “buy a house in the woods, plant a garden, [and] publish a book.”

New Faculty

Ryan Schnurr

By Elizabeth Welker

Ryan Schnurr wanted to teach at a small institution close to home that contained a community where people felt welcome. Naturally, this led him to Trine.

Schnurr grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and attended Huntington University for his undergraduate. He received master's degrees from the University of Illinois at Chicago and Purdue University and is currently finishing his Doctorate in American Studies with an emphasis on 20th and 21st century U.S. culture and literature at Purdue.

Beyond graduate school, Schnurr has an extensive background in both writing and communication, having worked in video

production for PBS39 and WANE-TV, journalism for KPC Media Group, freelance writing (including a nonfiction book titled *In the Watershed*), and serving as editor for Belt Magazine, a publication based in Cleveland, Ohio.



Initially, Schnurr was not interested in writing. He described his experience as “coming to writing through the backdoor.” Professor Schnurr discovered his love when he took a nonfiction writing course on the road to his first master’s. Since then, he has dedicated his professional career to storytelling.



Schnurr said he tries to always do “the next most interesting thing,” and that was the opportunity to teach at Trine. So far, his favorite parts about Trine are the great students he gets to work with every day, his colleagues, and the ability to expand his skills and teach individuals how to become more confident in their work.

Professor Allen Named New Department Chair

By Kylar Crowl

As of January 2023, the HAC Department has a new Department Chair: Assistant Professor Brendan Allen. With a Master in English from the University of Maine and a Master in Fine Arts from Temple University of Philadelphia, Allen describes finding Trine as the “right time, right

place, right situation.”

Hired as an Assistant Professor, Allen specialized in creative writing and poetry. Later, Dean Sarah Franzen brought the chair position to his attention.

Professor Allen gives credit to his colleagues for supporting him during his transition into the role. He was able to get a first-hand report from Dr. Christine Olding, the previous chair, and her advice helped prepare him for this position. Furthermore, Allen asked his fellow professors how he could best support them as chair. “I don’t think I would have been interested in the position without their support,” he said.



Working with the HAC Department students and faculty has really opened his eyes to the exciting opportunities that this position brings. Professor Allen draws motivation from his colleagues’ engaging work and looks forward to supporting their projects in his new role. The people around him have inspired the type of environment Professor Allen hopes to create: one in which everyone feels recognized.

Giving

By Lauren Banks

We are excited to see continued growth in the Humanities and Communication Department. Thanks to our donors, your generosity has helped create a better learning experience for our students!

With continued donations, we will be able to expand student opportunities even more! Donations help fund field trip experiences, digital equipment for communication students, and props and building supplies for the Theater Department.

We continue to ask alumni and friends to give to the Jannen School of Arts and Sciences. Donors may choose to give to a specific department, program, or activity.

Scan the QR code below with a phone camera to fill out the donation form, or contact Dean Sarah Franzen at franzen@trine.edu. Your gift, whatever the size, greatly impacts each student in our school!



