

KSU UNDERGRADUATE

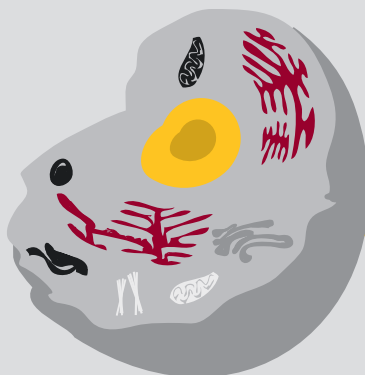
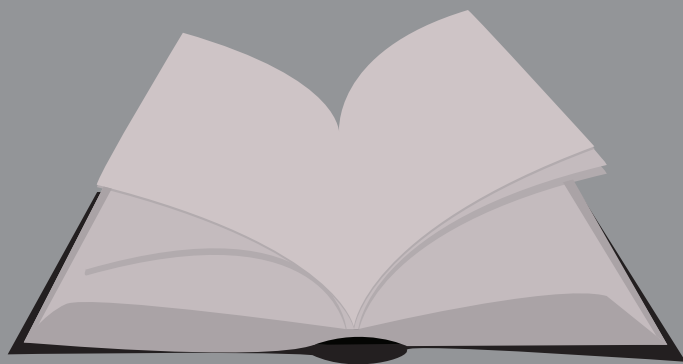
Research & Creative Activity

NEWSLETTER



SPRING 2015

Volume 4
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Students conduct important research that has gone on to assist local clinicians in improving outcomes for preterm infants; they discuss their struggles and triumphs along the way.

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CETL Communications Specialist Camille McDonald discusses the future of the Undergraduate Research Club with the club President: Psychology student Brittany Cordaro.

Interview: *Dr. Linda Lyons*

Interview conducted by Communications Specialist Camille McDonald



Dr. Linda Lyons

During my first semester, freshman year at Kennesaw State University, I was instructed to choose a course within the First Year Freshman Seminars. A lot like my peers, I dutifully did so to check off the box and get it over with. I chose Leadership (KSU 1200). It was taught by Dr. Linda Lyons and from the very first day of class, I knew I was going to enjoy my time in this course.

One of the required texts for KSU 1200 is Foundations of Academic Inquiry (FOAI). It is a valuable resource that can and should be used throughout your college career here at KSU. One thing that FOAI pointed out that struck me as interesting was its claim that undergraduate research has strong positive associations with graduation outcomes. It is said to increase a student's analytical abilities, enhance oral and written communication skills, and you may get the opportunity to enter into a current conversation of a particular field in a significant way. Let's ask Dr. Lyons!

Q Have you participated in any undergraduate research? If so, what was the topic?

A As an undergraduate many many years ago, I did not have a direct undergraduate research assignment to the degree that undergraduate research is today. As I continued with my education at the graduate level, I was exposed to more in-depth research practices, and now as a faculty member I conduct scholarly research projects.

Also, as a faculty member teaching and mentoring first year students, I do get the opportunity to work with students on undergraduate research projects. Specifically, I've worked with honor students conducting global leadership research. These students are introduced to research best practices and then select topics around the current global challenges in the 21st century and beyond. This group of students also has the opportunity to study abroad during their freshmen year and continue to learn research skills by conducting a cross-comparison study on their assigned global challenge with peers at a university in Salvador Brazil.

Q What was the topic of the Graduate Research you conducted and how did you decide on it?

A My research was "Building Intercultural Competence in Higher Education: An Action Research Study". The heart of my research agenda explored a comprehensive tactic to cultural awareness teaching and learning in adult education and student development. Specifically my research investigated three primary interconnected threads: (1) leadership and group development; (2) promotion of cross-cultural awareness through academic curriculum, co-curricular activities, and experiential learning; and (3) the use of action research in the academy to broaden best practices of collaboration and appreciative inquiry when conducting program and curriculum development. Specifically I explored action research—a collaborative approach to research design—methodologies when working with teams that consist of a variety of dynamic complexities such as race, sex, and age and how these influence creating synergy within workgroups. ▶

Q What differences, if any, do you find in participating in Undergraduate Research and in Graduate Research?

A Since I didn't do in-depth undergraduate study, I only have working with my honor students on their undergraduate research projects in comparison to my own graduate research experience. I'm impressed with the thorough research foundation that our students are exposed to and see their participation similar to the research framework of graduate school. This is a great skill to develop at the undergraduate level, especially if students intend to advance their academic studies. Undergraduate students are also encouraged to have the opportunities to conduct collaborative research with their faculty and other students within their discipline and/or research interest. This also builds on research skills for advance studies and future research options.

Q As a former student of your Leadership Course: KSU 1200, we learned about Systematic Inquiry which outlines nine important steps to performing research. Which of those steps do you find most challenging and how did you overcome it?

A So glad that still resonates with you and not a haunted memory from my course. As you know this model is a step by step process to get clarity on nine specific tasks that are performed when conducting research.

9 Steps to Performing Research

Assignment (research topic and/or purpose)

Brainstorm Options (identifying possible ways to develop the research topic)

Preliminary Research (establishing if sufficient sources are available)

Focus Topic (creating a specific purpose and thesis statement)

"Real" Research (literature review)

Content Selection (align relevant literature that supports the thesis statement)

Organize Content/Write Draft (create an outline and begin writing process)

Refine/Edit (review/proof draft and revise as needed)

Turn in/Present/Publish (final product)

For me I'm always challenged with the Refine/Edit process. After working so long on a research project and incorporating those first seven steps, I find that I'm too close to the material and tend to overlook areas that need editing. To overcome this challenge, after completing the first draft, I wait a couple of days to look it over again. I'm better at proofing my work in the morning after that first cup of coffee, so this is when I normally revisit my work to refine and edit as needed. But I don't stop there; I also ask friends, colleagues, even family members to read the document. This not only helps in editing grammar but also determines if it makes sense to someone who is not familiar with the topic. After that and if time allows, I wait a couple of days before reviewing the document again in order to get to the final stage of publication.

Q What advice would you give students who are interested in conducting research but are not sure of how to approach a faculty member to ask for their mentorship?

A Three suggestions I would share:

Make sure you select a mentor for all the right reasons; ask yourself the question do I have the same passion for the discipline/area that this potential mentor has and is this someone who I feel comfortable working with in a mentorship?

Do your homework; look for and read journal articles that your potential mentor has published. This will give you more insights on their discipline and area of expertise, how this person does their research, and how credible their work is in the field of study.

Show commitment; you must be sincere when expressing your interest in the discipline and desire for their guidance, such as a mentorship, when conducting research projects.

// I'm impressed with the thorough research foundation that our students are exposed to and see their participation similar to the research framework of graduate school. //

UR Radnocular?

That is the question posed by Kennesaw State University's own College of the Arts. UR stands for both Undergraduate Research as well as the text abbreviation of "You Are".

Radnocular means:

1. The state of being extremely cool to an almost supernatural level
2. Something unbelievably fantastic until seen
3. Almost impossible yet awesome

Keio "Radnocular" Def. 1. *Urban Dictionary*. 16 November 2009.

Web. March 2015

CETL sat in on "RADNOCULAR: The Sampler", an event designed to give a sneak peek into what we can expect to see from each of the four departments over the course of this year. Each department will host its own hour-long showcase of the undergraduate research they've conducted.

Photo Credit: Daniel Gwirtzman



School of Art & Design:

We begin with "Origins," undergraduate research that evolved from looking into the relationship between humans and health, to exploring the psychological paradigm of anthropomorphic forms. Lydia Day shares and explains the journey she took alongside her fellow classmate, Maggie Dunn, and Professor Don Robson:

"During Don Robson's Advanced Drawing course, Maggie Dunn and I initiated a project creating and installing large-scale collaborative sculptures in the Visual Arts Building. What began as a look into the relationship of humans and health transformed into an exploration of the psychological paradigm of anthropomorphic forms. Anthropomorphizing means giving inanimate objects human-like qualities, consequently giving them responsibility for their own actions. These sculptures are created with the intent to mimic life, to show the journey of growth, and to portray a sense of community between individual pieces.

Maggie and I were primarily drawn to depicting roots - giving them life came second. Once we figured out why we were attracted to anthropomorphic roots, our work suddenly opened a discussion about community, energy, and the interchange of ideas. Each sculpture possesses the ability to successfully stand alone, but when existing together the relationships between the pieces become obvious.

Our investigation led to highlighting the binary of natural and manufactured forms of communication. Initially the manufactured materials we use imposed a strange division between our concept of creating apparently naturally existing forms, and the execution. Our manufactured materials (wire, paper, and various electrical equipment) and organic roots are indisputably connected. Both are tools used to communicate and process energy. On one side we have nature's given system of transmission: a gentle meandering of complex and organic networks. On the opposing side is the more direct, simplified, human-made structure derived from the pre-existing natural form. Our installations force both sides of this binary to coexist and thrive within each piece of work."

Department of Theater and Performance Studies:

Headed by Dr. Charles Parrot, in the fall of 2103, KSU Tellers developed and delivered a curriculum for building storytelling skills to the students at the Global Village Project (GVP). The Global Village Project, a school in Clarkston, GA, is comprised of female refugees from across the globe. Its main mission is to prepare the



girls for a traditional high school or GED program. Dr. Parrot and the KSU Tellers visited GVP four times, and each visit focused on a different set of storytelling skills. The girls didn't have much in the way of English language skills and it took some time for the girls to open up to the Tellers but when they did, they blossomed into very enthusiastic storytellers describing events such as the adventurous journey to the grocery store.

School of Music:

"Cultivating Creativity in the Trumpet Studio" is Professor Doug Lindsey's approach to undergraduate research. He says, "Creativity is letting yourself be seen and heard without the fear of failing." His student, John Thomas says, "It's spontaneity with great artistic integrity." As he helps his students "find a language" for the music, he asks them not to just describe music as "bad" or "good" but to discover ways to relate to others through an artistic expression. Lindsey does this by using imagery, having the students play for each other, and creating a narrative that centers on why we make music.

Department of Dance:

Professor Daniel Gwartzman took his students to the Zuckerman Museum of Art. He challenged them all to explore the museum and to choose a piece that compelled them. At the time, the students were unaware that they would then be asked to create a solo dance based on their chosen artwork. "It was important," Gwartzman says, "that at first the students were able to view the collection without a concern for the next step. In this way, the pull to a specific art work was wholly honest and disconnected from the framework of an assignment." After distilling the essence of the visual art into movement, the students returned to the museum to perform the solos they had created in response to the artwork they had chosen. The main objectives of this project were to internalize what artwork moves you to do and to show that inspiration can be



pulled from multiple places to create choreography. Gwartzman says, "Through this multi-faceted investigatory processes, students gained proficiency learning the craft and art of choreography and developing a critical voice; identified rich commonalities and differences with other disciplines, both in and outside of art; and embarked on individual creative pathways." One fascinating process involved a piece featured in the art museum that actually had been inspired by dance. Martha Graham's Lamentation is a seminal solo dance in the history of modern dance. An artwork in the Zuckerman abstracted an image from this dance and turned it into a sculpture entitled "Homage to Martha Graham". The student then re-translated this artwork back from the sculpture to a solo dance, connecting with its lengthy history and bringing the movement back to the body.

School of Music RADNOCULAR will be held on Friday, April 17, 2015 at 12:30pm. Two more events in September and October will finish the series, followed by a College of the Arts Undergraduate Research Symposium in early November, 2015.

What began as a look into the relationship of humans and health transformed into an exploration of the psychological paradigm of anthropomorphic forms.

Grow Baby Grow

Investigators:

M. Louise Lawson, PhD;
A. Nicole Ferguson

Impact of Weight, Length, Head Circumference, and BMI for Age Percentile on Morbidity and Mortality of Preterm Infants in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

It is always pleasing to meet students engaging in undergraduate research and seeing their enthusiasm. For one student in a Design and Analysis of Human Studies class, being faced with the opportunity to participate was nerve-wracking. It all began when students grew anxious to use what they had learned in class in a real life application. It was unanimously decided to scrap the original syllabus and conduct real-world clinical research instead. These students conducted important research that has gone on to assist local clinicians in improving outcomes for preterm infants.

With the advice of a trusted professor, and an interest in furthering her understanding of research and writing reports about it, Holly Deal chose this course to satisfy one of the requirements needed to minor in applied statistics and data analysis. She says, "Initially, the plan was we would each select our own medical topic to research and report on. However, when the opportunity arose to have our class help with a real-life project, Dr. Lawson asked if we would be interested in that, in which case the trajectory of the course would be completely altered. Unanimously, we all agreed to the syllabus change".

Taking on a new challenge can be exciting. But sometimes students can get discouraged by the hard work that challenge calls for. As Holly sat listening to the background relevant to their research being given via Skype, she says she felt herself getting smaller and smaller and thus, inadequate for the task. She expressed that same sentiment to Dr. Lawson, who accepted the challenge to prove Holly otherwise. Dr. Lawson instructed her students to stand and strike a "power pose" and say to themselves, "Yes, we do belong in this class and yes, we can do it." Thus, began the 2-minute power pose routine. Through trial and error, these remarkable students have joined the clinical research conversation in a significant way.

Holly tells us that the purpose of this project is improving outcomes for preterm infants. "Pediatrix Medical Group graciously handed us a dataset of more than 130 variables for 974,699 infants from 361 neonatal intensive care units from 33 U.S. states!"

"Some of the unexpected things we discovered are that getting certified to do clinical research is an involved process that requires a lot of time," Holly explains, "There were communication errors to work through, ideas that did not work out, computer issues to overcome, and the arduous task of making sure each team was coming up with the same results in the initial stages of cleaning up the data. It may seem that these challenges would be eliminated were the crew more experienced, but that's the beauty of this approach Dr. Lawson has taken to allow us to learn hands-on! We were able to see what clinical research is *really* like! Real researchers work in teams, have computer problems, miscommunications, and ideas that do not pan out. And of utmost importance is the meticulous, time-consuming need to ensure that everyone has the same data and that the cleanup process was done right.

We read articles to become acquainted with the research already done, and to grasp an understanding of why what we were attempting to do was even important in the first place. We had to learn new terminology those not in the medical field do not generally use in their daily vernacular, such as antenatal, intraventricular, what LMS growth curves are, and is meant by preterm and NICU and gestational age, and why are percentiles important." ■



Back row, pictured left to right: Dr. Louise Lawson, Tiffany Hill, Sara Herrold, Holly Deal, Lexie Bandemer, Kélanie Hédou, Jennifer Clift, Jessica Barnes, and Brad Barney

Front row, pictured left to right: Greg Saunders, Andrew Dewar, Joshua Hill, Erin Cobett, and Nicole Ferguson

“We were able to see what clinical research is really like! Real researchers work in teams, have computer problems, miscommunications, and ideas that do not pan out.”

Interview: *Brittany Cordaro*



Brittany Cordaro

KSU's latest President for the Undergraduate Research Club has been chosen. Meet Brittany Cordaro, a Junior pursuing a

degree in Psychology. I sat down with Ms. Cordaro to get to know her better and to discuss the future of the Undergraduate Research Club.

Interview conducted by Communications Specialist Camille McDonald

Q Tell us a little about yourself.

A I am a Psychology major, a Junior, from Syracuse NY. I was a music major when I first began school in 2008. After being out of college from 2010-2014 and then returning to college, I realized after multiple life experiences that psychology was definitely the path I wanted to take for my career endeavors.

Q How did you obtain the position as President?

A I actually wanted to join the URC club. A professor of mine teaching the careers in psychology class (Dr. Helms) said it was a great club to be a part of and as I went to join, the faculty advisor (Dr. Buddie) informed me that the club had sort of disintegrated because the previous officers graduated and nobody had stepped up to take over. So she suggested if I wanted to start the club up again, I could serve as president, so that's exactly what I did and was really excited to do so! And, here it is!

Q What do you hope to accomplish?

A Goals of the URC include to grow in numbers, which we already have even from last semester, and to continue to provide a great environment where students can learn and

practice scientific research. We hope to also give students the opportunity to present research as a group or individually, and to bring relevant topics and issues to the surface in the academic community.

Q What is your experience with Undergraduate Research?

A I do not have any personal experience with Undergraduate Research prior to this semester; however, that is one of the reasons I am most excited about this club. I have a very new and fresh perspective and my ambition to succeed in this area is very high. ■

// We hope to also give students the opportunity to present research as a group or individually, and to bring relevant topics and issues to the surface in the academic community. //


RESEARCH ACROSS CAMPUS

"The opportunity to conduct *real* clinical research was like Academic Christmas!"

-Holly Deal, Statistics and Analytical Sciences

"Having the opportunity as a student-athlete to write something I am passionate about is a great feeling, because it really highlights the student aspect of who I am."

--Alicia Whittle, Communication



"Research has changed my future in many ways. It has helped me find my passion in statistics as well as taught me to be deductive and objective. I have met great friends and an amazing mentor in the process."

-Nicole Davis, Psychology (major), Applied Statistics (minor)

"Undergraduate research is about building bridges between education, practice, and theory that lays the foundation for empirically-based thinking into the everyday lives of our students."

--Dr. Linda Lyons, Transition Studies

CHECK IT OUT!



IMPORTANT DATES

URCA Applications Due July 3, 2015

URCA funds are designed to enhance undergraduate involvement by supporting **only travel expenses** to present at conferences. Applications should be submitted no later than the above date at **5:00 pm**.

cetl.kennesaw.edu/faculty-funding/undergraduate-research-creative-activities-urca

Undergraduate Research Club Meeting April 15, 2015

Clendenin Hall 1009 12:30pm to 1:30pm
Join us at any of our upcoming meetings and find out how undergraduate research can enhance your student life! Visit us at: <https://owllife.kennesaw.edu/organization/undergradresearchclub>

Symposium of Student Scholars April 16, 2015

The Symposium of Student Scholars is an event to showcase student scholarship conducted at KSU during the past year. It will be held on the Kennesaw Campus in the Convocation Center from 4:00pm to 9:15pm.

EDITOR'S CORNER

Newsletter Submissions

Do you have research that you believe should be highlighted? Do you have a story to share or advice to offer regarding undergraduate research? Your submission could be featured in an upcoming issue of the Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Newsletter. All inquiries should be made as soon as possible. Email cetl4ur@kennesaw.edu or call CETL at (470) 578-6410 to submit ideas.

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Amy Buddie

Editor: Camille McDonald

Layout Design: Grace Easton