

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND LETTERS

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2026

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the inaugural newsletter of the School of Arts and Letters. This publication provides an opportunity to inform and to celebrate the accomplishments, activities, and contributions that make our school such a vibrant and important part of our university community.

Within these pages, you will find highlights of upcoming and recent events, news from our programs, and recognition of the outstanding accomplishments of our school.

One of the great strengths of our school is the dedication of the people who make it what it is. Our colleagues challenge and inspire students in the classroom and through their scholarship, creative work, and service. Our students bring curiosity, creativity, and energy to everything they do. This newsletter gives us a chance to recognize and share some of that excellent work.

I hope you will enjoy learning more about what is happening throughout the School of Arts and Letters and take pride in the accomplishments of our community. Thank you to everyone who contributes each day to making the School of Arts and Letters a place where learning, creativity, scholarship, and community thrive. I look forward to sharing our continued accomplishments with you.

Dr. Sheree' Keith
Interim Dean of the School of Arts and Letters
Middle Georgia State University





Department of History and Political Science, Museum of Aviation WWII Curation Project Received Daughters of the American Revolution Historic Preservation Award

Please click through on the [link](#) to read the full story:

SoAL Calendar

September 2026						
SUN 30	MON 31	TUE Sep 1	WED 2	THU 3	FRI 4	SAT 5
	12:30pm How to					
6	7 Labor Day	8	9 11am Self-Care 12:30pm French	10	11	12
13	14 12:30pm Consti	15	16 9:30am Constit 12:30pm Gramr 12:30pm Consti	17 11am Constituti 12pm ESO Club 2pm Blue Light	18 7pm The Belle c	19
20	21	22	23	24	25 12pm ESO Writi	26
27	28 12:30pm ESO B 6pm Open Wat	29	30 Open Waters/Agua	Oct 1 1pm ESO Club I	2	3

Events shown in time zone: (GMT-04:00) Eastern Time - New York
[Add to Google Calendar](#)

EVENTS AT SOAL!

Please join us this semester for events across multiple campuses sponsored by SOAL faculty, staff, and students. The calendar will link you to the [full semester calendar of events](#).

[SoAL Semester Events](#)

SOAL WELCOME BASH EVENTS!

During the second week of the semester as part of the Weeks of Welcome, the School of Arts and Letters hosted a Welcome Bash on both the Macon and Cochran campuses. Titled “Cones and Canvas”, students were able to come out.



**WE HAD 140
STUDENTS
PARTICIPATE!**

SOAL IN THE COMMUNITY

EMPTY BOWLS FUNDRAISER
PARTNERSHIP WITH



The Empty Bowls fundraiser is a service-learning project led by MGA's School of Arts & Letters. Students design, shape, glaze, and fire handcrafted ceramic bowls — about 300 were made for this year's event. Guests purchase tickets, enjoy a simple meal (typically soup and bread), and take home their own bowl as a reminder of food insecurity. Proceeds go directly to the Middle Georgia Community Food Bank, which serves 24 counties in central Georgia.

This year's theme, "The Art of Giving Back," reminds us that every act of generosity matters — and that every donation is a brushstroke helping us create a community where no bowl is left empty. We had approximately 300 attendees (community, faculty, staff, and students) and raised over \$73,000 for the food bank. Many thanks to Assistant Professors Kim Riner and Michael Gillies and their ceramics students for their hard work and the 567 for their bowl donations.





UNIVERSITY CHAMBER SINGERS FALL CONCERT

The MGA University Chamber Singers invites the middle Georgia family and community to its fall concert, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, on November 19, 2026, at 7:30 PM at Northminster Presbyterian Church on Wimbish Road.

The evening will celebrate the power of the collective musical voice and a curated choral music canon to feature and honor Dr. Rebecca Lanning's 33 years of leadership as she passes the baton to her former student and new conductor of the University Chamber Singers, Gerald Lee Ricks.

From the opening *Lift Every Voice and Sing* to the culminating arrangement of *Glory*, concert attendees can expect an evening of beautiful singing, powerful storytelling, and jubilant celebration.

**Don't miss the Percussion Ensemble Concert on
November 5th @ 7:30pm in the Arts Complex Theatre!**

ART EXHIBITION

SEPT. 28- OCT. 29

Open Waters Aguas Abiertas

by ANGELES SALINAS

Gallery Talk & Reception
Monday September 28th at 6:00 p.m.
Peacock Gallery & Russell Hall Lobby

September 28 – October 29, 2026
Monday – Friday
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

NEW CERAMICS STUDIO



The School of Arts and Letters and the Department of Media, Culture, and the Arts are pleased to announce the construction of a new ceramics studio on the Macon campus dedicated to supporting the academic and artistic development of our Applied Art and Design majors. This facility will provide students with an expanded space to study ceramics, develop technical skills, and engage in creative exploration. The new studio represents a continued investment in our art program and will offer students valuable opportunities for hands-on learning, artistic growth, and professional preparation.



THEATER AT MGA!

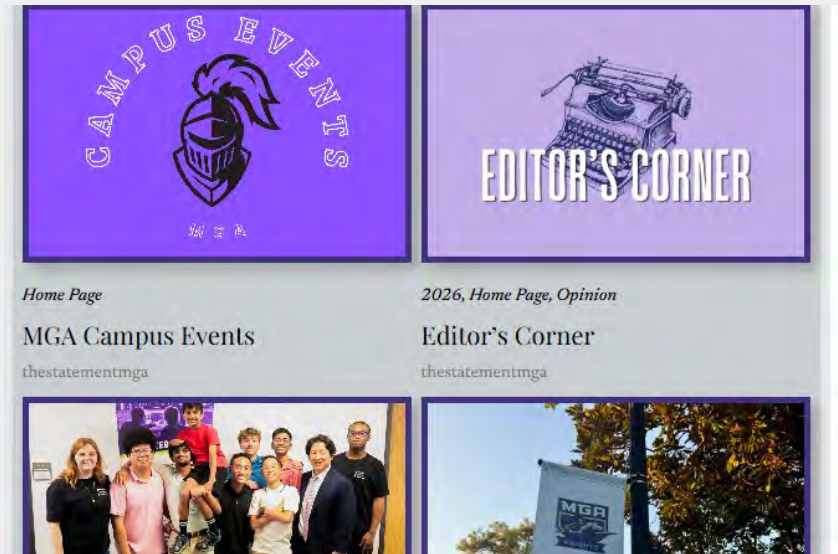
Theater at MGA kicked off with two performances of the Belle of Amherst in Cochran and again in Macon in September. The play was well-attended on both campuses by both campus and community members.

The Belle of Amherst is a 1976 one-woman play by William Luce that dramatizes the life of poet Emily Dickinson through her own words, letters, and diary entries. Set entirely in Dickinson's Amherst, Massachusetts home (the "Homestead") and spanning 1845–1886, the play offers a intimate, stream-of-consciousness portrait of the reclusive poet.

STUDENT NEWSPAPER

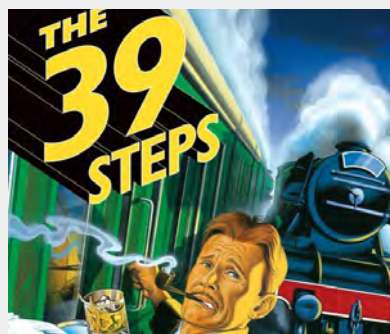
The first fall semester issue of MGA's student newspaper, The Statement, is live! This issue highlights student perspectives, school events, and accomplishments from across our community while giving students an opportunity to develop their skills in journalism, writing, and communication.

The Statement

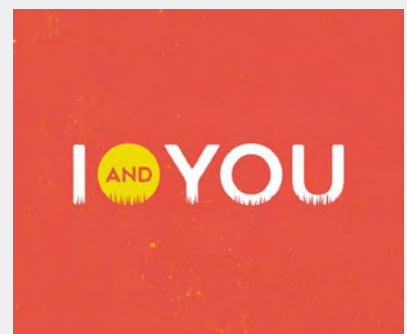


UPCOMING THEATER PRODUCTIONS

The next opportunities for theater performances include "The 39 Steps" on the Macon campus on October 22, 23, and 24 at 7:30 pm. "The 39 Steps" is a fast-paced comedic thriller in which Richard Hannay becomes embroiled in a spy conspiracy, pursued across England and Scotland while a small cast portrays over 150 characters. Directed by Cindy Sams



The final opportunities for theater performances include "I and You" on the Cochran campus on November 12, 13, and 14 at 7:00 pm. "I and You" is a poignant, intimate drama about two teenagers, Caroline and Anthony, who form an unexpected connection while working on a school assignment, revealing the beauty and fragility of human relationships. Directed by Dr. John Iverson



HONORS PROGRAM UPDATE



GCHC HONORS FACULTY RETREAT

On Friday September 18, MGA's Honors Program hosted the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council (GCHC) deans and directors for an Honors faculty retreat. The deans and directors were accompanied by faculty members from their honors colleges and programs throughout Georgia. Attendees represented 12 institutions across Georgia.

On Thursday September 17, MGA's Honors Program hosted a reception dinner at Piedmont Brewery & Kitchen in downtown Macon for the out-of-town visiting faculty. Friday included Honors themed faculty development panels on the Macon campus.

Keynote speaker Denise Domizi, director of faculty development for the University System of Georgia, focused on the current landscape of higher education in Georgia and encouraged faculty to consider what they would like Georgia higher education to be known for in the next five years and how they can enact that change through their Honors education.

GCHC hosts the state undergraduate Honors conference where MGA Honors students attend and present every February. In February 2027, the conference will be held at Georgia College and State University.

MAKING HISTORY: THE BREAKUP MICROGAME

Dr. Susan Asbury facilitates Reacting to the Past role-playing games in her history classes and to share the game experience with the broader Honors and campus community, Dr. Asbury hosted a mini game session.

The Making History: The Breakup Microgame is a short, one-shot investigative game where students use primary sources and historical research methods to determine why two fictional students broke up on campus. Dr. Asbury hosted The Breakup on the Cochran campus on Tuesday, September 22 and will host the game again on the Macon campus on Wednesday September 30 after her coffee and conversation talk in the library.

Dr. Asbury is the 2026-2027 Honors Faculty Fellow and will teach Honors HUMN 2111 Designed for Play: The Evolution of Material Culture and Play Spaces for Children in the spring 2027 semester.

HONORS SPOTLIGHT!

This fall semester Dr. Sharon Colley is teaching a cross-listed Honors ENGL 1102 English Composition II and Honors ENGL 2132 American Literature American Literature II. This Honors course involves experiential events for fiction, drama, and poetry. To highlight fiction, on Friday, September 11, Dr. Colley took her class on a field trip to Andalusia in Milledgeville to visit Flannery O'Connor's home. Her class is the anchor and inspiration for the Page to Stage event open to other Honors and interested students. For poetry, Dr. Kelly Whiddon will visit Dr. Colley's Honors class for a poetry reading.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SERVICE DAY

On Saturday, November 14, MGA's Honors Program will partner with Macon Area Habitat for Humanity. Students and faculty can participate in a day of service constructing a Habitat for Humanity home in Milledgeville.



PAGE TO STAGE: TOUR OF THE PIEDMONT GRAND OPERA HOUSE

On Friday, October 16, MGA's Honors Program will provide a behind the scenes tour of the Piedmont Grand Opera House in downtown Macon. This tour will include a technical workshop by technical director Patrick Hamilton. Students will also be able to engage in an on stage dramatic reading of the one-act play Trifles, facilitated by theatre professors Cindy Sams and John Iverson.



FALL SYMPOSIUM

Oct. 13 @ 12:30pm

At the upcoming Center for Middle Georgia Studies Fall Symposium, Dr. Monica Miller will talk about the research that she has been conducting as a CMGS Faculty Fellow into the history and restoration of the Waddell Barnes Botanical Garden. Drawing on MGA's extensive archives about the project as well as information about the current restoration project supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, she will explain significance of the Botanical Garden to MGA's own history as well as its importance as a living classroom, site of scientific research, and community enjoyment.

In addition, Dr. Matt Jennings worked with Dr. Kim Sumner and Dr. Scott Spangler to produce and publish descriptions of dozens of plants and their historical uses by various communities. History major Caleb McKinney's assistance was invaluable along the way.

The Center for Middle Georgia Studies invites you to:

Fall SYMPOSIUM



DR. MONICA MILLER
Associate Professor of English &
Coordinator of Graduate Writing Programs



DR. SARAH ROCHE
Center for Middle Georgia Studies
Scholar in Residence



DR. MATT JENNINGS
Caleb McKinney (Grad. Student/History of Biology)

Please join us for an informed discussion with the
Center for Middle Georgia Studies Faculty Scholars.

PRESENTATION TITLES:

Dr. Monica Miller | **"The Rebirth of the
Waddell Barnes Botanical Gardens"**

Dr. Sarah Roche | **"The Missing Middle: Building
Opportunity & Removing Barriers for Working
Families in Our Region "**

Dr. Matt Jennings | **"A 'Lost' Town Found:
Stephensville, Georgia"**

MACON CAMPUS LIBRARY:
LOCATION: Center for Middle Georgia Studies
100 University Pkwy, Macon, GA 31206

TUESDAY | OCTOBER 13, 2026
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM



Middle Georgia
State University
CENTER FOR MIDDLE GEORGIA STUDIES

For additional information please contact:
kristie.robertslewis@mga.edu



HAPPINESS INITIATIVE

The Happiness Initiative began in Fall 2023 to support the well-being of MGA faculty and staff. Rather than making well-being one more item on an already busy to-do list, the initiative seeks to identify existing resources within the MGA community and explore additional opportunities that can help employees thrive both personally and professionally. These conversations have led to a variety of meaningful activities, including CETL's weekly Conversation + Coffee, faculty reading groups, and guest speaker events on topics such as A Pedagogy of Kindness and this fall's book discussion on Flower Darby's *The Joyful Online Teacher*.

Knight-to-Knight Chat2

During this interactive workshop, participants will explore practical strategies for supporting their well-being in the classroom, at work, and in their personal lives. A significant portion of the session will focus on collaborative discussion and brainstorming to connect participants' needs and ideas with existing campus resources and support systems.

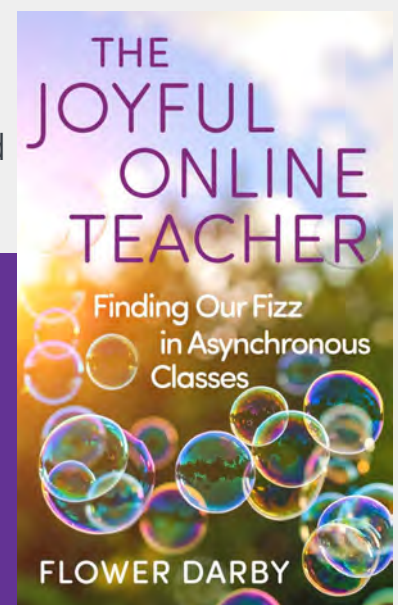
By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Learn practical strategies for enhancing personal and professional well-being
- Discover resources available throughout the MGA community
- Explore ideas for fostering connection and support among colleagues
- Participate in an engaging activity designed to promote both personal happiness and the well-being of others

Presentations by Dr. Monica Miller and Dr. Shane Trayers

Session 2: Wednesday, September 30 | 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM |

Virtual – Microsoft Teams





Middle Georgia
State University

SCHOOL OF ARTS & LETTERS

SCHOOL OF ARTS & LETTERS

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION

Learn about our Masters of Arts in:

- Technical Writing
- Public Relations

And our Graduate Certificate in:

- Creative Writing
- Teaching College Writing
- Technical Writing and Digital Communication
- Strategic Business Communication

REGISTER HERE



**TUESDAY,
SEPTEMBER
29**
STARTS AT
6:00 PM

QUESTIONS? CONTACT:
monica.miller@mga.edu
andre.nicholson@mga.edu

Visit Our Website
www.mga.edu/arts-letters/graduate-info