



CLA
 College of Liberal Arts
 EXPLORE/ENGAGE/ENRICH/EARN

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SPRING 2020 CLA NEWS

Lyons Appointed Associate Dean

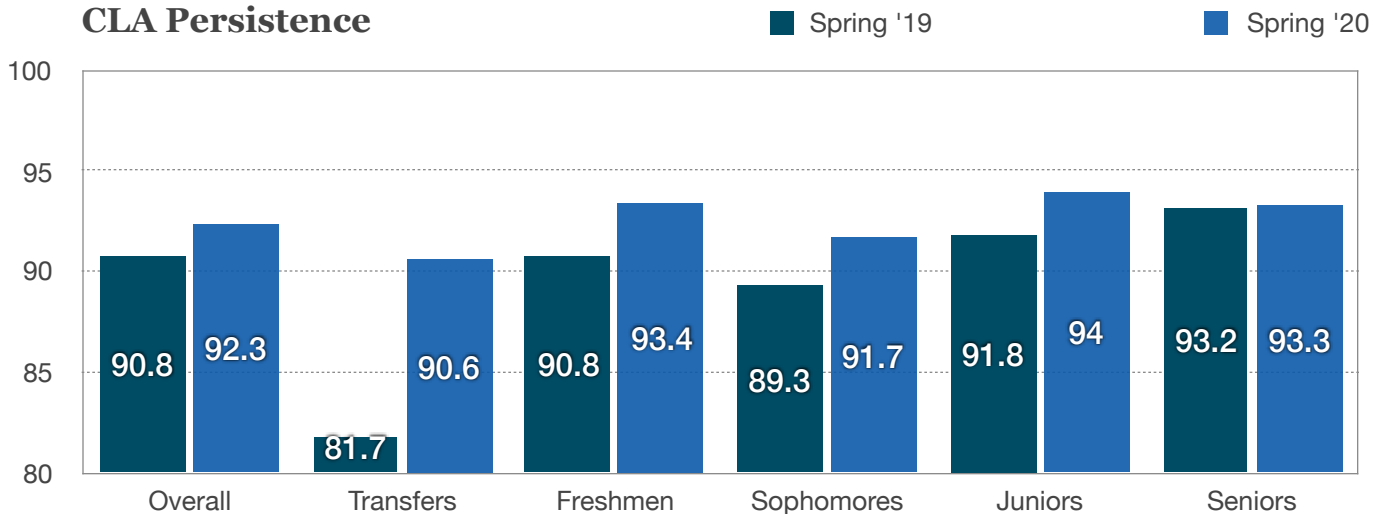


Dr. Leah Lyons (Associate Professor of French) was appointed Associate Dean. A successful scholar, teacher, and mentor in World Languages and in the M.A. in Liberal Arts degree, her background in language and literature provides an important context for evaluating the complex problems our office seeks to solve the problems we face. Since joining our executive team in summer 2019, Dr. Lyons has excelled in her role working with curriculum, assessment, and planning. She mentors our CLA Student Emissaries and is leading a workgroup to accomplish the interdisciplinary research aspects of Goal 1 in the CLA Strategic Plan.

Student Success Update, Spring 2020

The CLA Advising Office reports that we are currently showing gains in every regularly measured category of retention. Our total spring enrollment in CLA is 1,993 students. Three departments, Music, Philosophy and Religious Studies, and Communication Studies, showed retention over 90%!

CLA Persistence



CLA Student Emissaries

We are looking for dynamic students from diverse Liberal Arts majors to represent the College at university events and recruiting functions. Do you know a current student who is well-spoken, personable, and passionate about the value of a Liberal Arts education? If so, please suggest that they apply to be a CLA Emissary. The position comes with a \$400 scholarship during each semester of service. Applications will open in February and must be received by March 20, 2020. Students may contact Dr. **Leah Lyons** for more information. Read more about a few current Emissaries below:



Alexandra Chatman

Hometown: Jackson, Tennessee

Degree Program: English (Secondary Education) with a minor in African American Studies

Why Liberal Arts?: "In my opinion, a Liberal Arts major is valuable because it helps to cultivate the mind and allows a space for creativity. The major helps the student learn to think critically and teaches important skills that are useful in any career."



Mö Campbell

Hometown: LaGrange, Indiana

Degree Program: Political Science

Why Liberal Arts?: "Liberal Arts forms students to be well rounded citizens that are tolerant and understanding of those around them with an extensive field of knowledge to further our society as whole. It is not just one group or major, but a group of people furthering the world to think, learn, and be the best that it can be."



Sarah Oppmann

Hometown: Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Degree Programs: Theatre and Media & Entertainment

Why Liberal Arts?: "Liberal Arts majors not only help you achieve the specific career you are majoring in, but can help you with any career you may pursue. My theatre double major helps with my media major by giving me necessary public speaking skills, self confidence, and the ability to work well and coherently with others."

MTSU Arts Patron Society

The MTSU Arts Patron Society enhances the opportunities for our students in the performing and fine arts programs. When you become a member of the Patron Society, you will help keep the performing and fine arts at MTSU vibrant and support the University's role as a cultural catalyst in Middle Tennessee.

Membership offers opportunities to enjoy special events, exhibits, and performances. Faculty and staff can easily join the Patron Society online at [mtsuarts.com](https://www.mtsuarts.com). If you are already a Patron, an invitation to March's Patron Society Reception will arrive soon.



CLA Faculty in the News

Throughout the year, MTSU's Office of News and Media Relations features faculty who provide expertise to local, state, and national media outlets. To better promote these important contributions, please contact **Matthew Hibdon** and **Gina Logue** to share when you are part of interviews and articles. Here are a few of the CLA mentions in Logue's recent **article** on January 31, 2020:



"Dr. **Mary Evins**, an associate professor of history and coordinator of the American Democracy Project, expressed her views on public consciousness of the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage in a Jan. 24 article in the Boston Globe. Her opinion is available [here](#)."



Dr. **Jon DiCicco**, an associate professor of political science and international relations, penned an editorial on the possible consequences of the United States' assassination of General Qassim Suleimani of Iran that was published in the Jan. 10 Knoxville News Sentinel and other newspapers. His commentary is available [here](#)."



Dr. **Amie Whittemore** (English) was named [2020 Poet Laureate](#) by Murfreesboro Cultural Arts during a reception held on January 12, 2020, at the Washington Theatre Community Gallery in Patterson Park Community Center. As Murfreesboro Poet Laureate, Whittemore will complete a new work inspired by our city, showcase her expertise at city events, and complete at least two arts-related outreach projects benefiting under-represented audiences in our community.

Dr. **Adelle Dora Montebianco** (Sociology and Anthropology) is participating in two policy-related fellowships this year. The Scientist Sentinel Program with [COMPASS](#) aims to strengthen the communication and leadership skills of scientists working at the nexus of environment and society. Montebianco joins fourteen other researchers from across the nation as part of the 2020 cohort. The second fellowship is with [ENACT](#) at Brandeis University. This initiative seeks to get students involved in state-level policy work.



Students Raise Scholarship Funds

By: Alice Judy, School of Music Senior

Two years ago, the School of Music launched a music history study abroad program in Vienna, Austria. Participating students receive credit for History of Western Art Music II, ca. 1750-present. Students attend lectures for several hours a day and spend the remainder of their time visiting art museums, walking through famous composers' apartments turned exhibits, attending concerts, and viewing operas.



The program is an incredible opportunity for music students to gain a deeper understanding of the composers and pieces they study; however, participation in the program is quite expensive. Dr. Brad Baumgardner, CLA Advising Manager, suggested that the primary School of Music student organizations fundraise collaboratively to open a scholarship account specifically for music majors to study abroad. The organizations involved are the School of Music Student Advisory Council, Delta

Omicron, and Phi Mu Alpha. To date, they have hosted two events: a spring Field Day and a Fall Festival. They have raised a total of \$547 and have opened a scholarship account through the College of Liberal Arts. The goal is to hold events to raise and grant \$500 per academic year, beginning 2020-21. The organizations will work together to compile criteria and application materials, and the scholarship will be granted based on the decision of a committee of School of Music faculty members.



You can make tax-deductible donations by visiting www.mtsu.edu/supportliberalarts and typing "SOMSAC Education Abroad Scholarship" into the "Other Giving Preferences/Additional Comments" box, or by sending a check to MTSU Foundation, Box 109, Murfreesboro, TN, 37132. Make checks payable to the MTSU Foundation with memo line "SOMSAC Education Abroad Scholarship."

Amazing Advisors

The newest members of the CLA Advising Office have been working hard since starting last summer, and we want to offer everyone a chance to get to know them better. Each has already made an impact on our liberal arts majors, and we are thankful for their dedication to student success.



Heather Boyett (Anthropology, Art and Design)

“I graduated from Middle Tennessee State University with my Bachelors of Arts in English Literature in 2017. A year later, I graduated with a Master’s degree in Administration and Supervision while working as a Graduate Assistant for the College of Education. After graduation, I worked in Special Education for one year until I found my way back to MTSU where I have recently joined the CLA family as an Academic Advisor. Liberal Arts has had a major impact in getting me to this point. It has challenged me to see things from different perspectives, and has pushed me to think critically and creatively in all aspects of my life.”



Lyle Morgan (Global Studies and Human Geography, Political Science and International Relations, & World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures)

“I have worked in education at every level: I taught elementary summer school in Mississippi, then taught English and coached basketball for a middle school outside of Memphis. For four years, I taught and was the legal guardian for incarcerated teenagers for Clemson in conjunction with the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice. I held many different positions at the University of Mississippi – student conduct officer, financial aid advisor, and health professions advisor. I also taught outdoor education (rock climbing, mountain biking, wilderness survival) to elementary through high school students in the Blue Mountains outside of Sydney, Australia. Liberal arts are important to me because I believe there is tremendous value in a well-rounded education, and I believe the liberal arts enhance critical thinking skills that will help students for the rest of their lives, as well as be valuable to employers and graduate programs.”



Sarah Morris (Communication Studies & Theatre and Dance)

“I earned my B.A. in English Literature from the University of Alabama in 2010 and my M.A in English Literature with a special concentration in Shakespeare and the Renaissance from the Hudson Strode Program in Renaissance Studies at the University of Alabama in 2012. Then, I continued my studies with doctoral work at Miami University (OH), where I served as an academic advisor within the English Department and taught Shakespeare, composition, and introductory theatre courses. I am currently ABD. The liberal arts are important to me because they highlight the individual’s place within a global community, and they cultivate transferable skills such as creativity, communication, and critical thinking.”

Amazing Advisors (con't)

Nichole Poe
(English, History, Philosophy and Religious Studies, & Africana Studies)



“Hello! My name is Nichole Poe and I am an Academic Advisor in the College of Liberal Arts. Before coming to advising, I worked at MTSU in the Admissions Office for three years recruiting students to attend our University. I have three degrees from MTSU, a B.A. in English, a B.S. in Electronic Media Production, and M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision. I love being an advisor because it allows me to connect with students and help them to reach their dreams and goals. It is amazing to see how each person is gifted with different passions, talents and abilities. Being a part of the College of Liberal Arts means that our students (and advisors!) are challenged to be creative and think outside the box when it comes to career paths and goals. Without the Liberal Arts I would not have had the freedom to pursue what I was passionate about.”

Excellence On Tap



The 2020 Celebration of Excellence was on Friday, January 31, 2020. Once again, our local business partner Tennessee Brew Works provided wonderful refreshments to help celebrate. Over 40 CLA faculty and staff were recognized with posters describing their awards, publications, works, and honors. We are already planning the 2021 event, so please keep us updated through this calendar year as you achieve career milestones. Thank you to Blue Print Solutions and Creative Marketing Solutions for their collaborative spirit and dedicated assistance in helping make the faculty and staff posters possible.

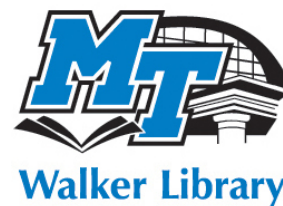


CLA Events & Announcements

- **MTSU Student Dance Gala:** The Department of Theatre and Dance will present its annual Student Dance Gala. This concert, on Wednesday, March 4 at 7:30 PM, is produced entirely by the department's students. Tickets are \$5 and available online at mtsuarts.com.
- **Scholars Week—CLA Day:** CLA Day allows us to focus on scholarship and creative activity in our college. Present research or do a performance for a supportive audience. Mentor your students as they present their work. Give a 10-minute research talk; it can be part of a longer project or a work in progress. Perform; this can be as creative as you are. Present a panel of research or creative activity. Please note that students must have a faculty mentor. To sign up, just complete this [online form](#) no later than March 16, 2020.
- **“Road to Suffrage: Celebrating the Centennial of Woman Suffrage” Symposium:** Dr. Laura Free (Hobart and William Smith Colleges), Dr. Minoa Uffelman (Austin Peay State University), and Dr. Tiffany Momon (Sewanee: The University of the South) will participate in the symposium on Tuesday, March 17 from 2:30-4:30 PM in the Student Union Ballroom.
- **The Search for Guatemala’s Disappeared:** On Tuesday, March 31, FIRE presents the next installment of its William M. Bass Legends in Forensic Science Lectureship. The Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala (FAFG) provides forensic assistance to recover, identify, and return the remains of loved ones who were massacred, extra-judicially executed, or disappeared during the internal armed conflict (1960-1996). FAFG Executive Director, Mr. Fredy Peccerelli, will discuss the ongoing and dedicated work of the FAFG, including specific cases that illustrate the investigative strategies used to search for the Disappeared. The public lecture starts at 6:30 PM in the Student Union Ballroom.
- **CLA Awards Banquet:** This annual event will be held on April 13, 2020, to honor the students, faculty, and staff who will be the recipients of this year’s awards.
- For more information about upcoming events, visit the [CLA Events Calendar](#). If you have questions about featuring your event online, please contact [Connie Huddleston](#).

Did You Know?

Walker Library offers free journal hosting services to the campus community. All of the journals they service are digital and open access—free to read online. Walker Library's [Digital Scholarship Initiatives](#) webpage houses information about workshops and grants. Their staff can also help you learn how to avoid predatory publications. Check out the [Scholarly Communication Guide](#) for more information.



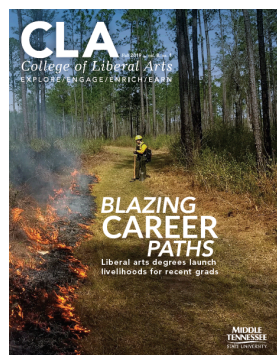
Still Using That MTSU Headshot From 2004?



If your official MTSU headshot looks like this silhouette, then it is time to contact Creative Marketing Solutions (CMS). They are located in the Fairview Building (820 Fairview Ave., Room 130). In addition to designing and printing most of the University publications, CMS also has a dedicated staff of professional photographers who will gladly take your first MTSU portrait or update your current headshot with a more up-to-date version. CMS recommends visiting their studio for a new photograph at least once every five years. To schedule an appointment, send an email to photorequest@mtsu.edu.

Five MTSU Fulbright Semi-Finalists

Three of MTSU's five student Fulbright semi-finalists are CLA majors: Brittney Johnson (Global Studies and Human Geography), Joan Shock (Art and Design), and Jonathan Story (World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures). Congratulations to these outstanding students and their department mentors, and thanks to Laura Clippard (Honors) for her work on behalf of our students.



CLA Magazine

The Fall 2019 issue of the CLA Magazine was distributed to all current faculty and staff. If you did not receive a print copy and would like one, please email [Matthew Hibdon](mailto:Matthew.Hibdon@mtsu.edu). The electronic version is also available online on the [CLA Publications](#) webpage and at this [link](#).

True Thankfulness

Thank you to all faculty and staff who contributed during the 2020 True Blue Give! Because of your generous support, we were able to raise over \$43,000 that will directly help our students.

