

## NEWSLETTER

- SPRING 2025 -

### A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



**Dr. Wendy Chase, Director**

I think I have begun all of the spring newsletters for the past four years with the same sentence: Every year, the Spring Research Expo gets bigger and better. It has become our own homegrown conference, and it is so exciting to watch it come to life each year. From the wide range of student projects, to the poetry readings by Dr. Julie Marie Wade and Dr. Brandi George, the lecture by art historian Dr. Keri Watson, the performance piece by FSW alumnus Willie Filkowski, readings by our creative writing students, the performance by our jazz ensemble, the Battle of the Bucs, and the Creative Capstone Showcase, this event is a rich and stimulating academic and cultural experience. FSW has always been a special institution, thanks in no small part to our world-class faculty and our inquisitive, energetic student body. The spirit of free inquiry, civil discourse, and intellectual curiosity courses through the veins of our institution, and this showcase of student work is a testament to that fact. We can all take pride in the community we have built and sustain together. The professors who guided the honors capstone students this year, however, deserve special recognition: Professors Jordan Donini, Ihasha Horn, Katie O'Connor, and Lenny Owens.

As many of you know, I will be stepping back into my role as humanities professor in August, and I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the professors, past and present, who have served on the Honors Advisory Council, and built this program from the ground up over the past ten years: Marty Ambrose, Rona Axelrod, Bruno Baltodano, Jackie Davis, Eileen DeLuca, Laura Henning, Mark Herman, Ihasha Horn, Terri Housley, Rozalind Jester, Doug Magomo, Lenny Owens, Emily Porter, Whitney Rhyne, Russell Swanson, Jessica Teets, Phil Wisely, and Amanda Zirzow. I also want to thank all of the Honors faculty, and the members of the Task Force for CURC, and the professors who judged the Research Expo projects (listed in the sidebars of our newsletter), for expanding and supporting the program and making it flourish. Thank you to Dr. Gus Cameron and Dr. Rebecca Harris for developing the Creative Capstone course which offers research opportunities to every single student at FSW. Twice as many Creative Capstone students presented their research projects at conferences this year, and I have no doubt that number will continue to grow, and our students will excel as they attend the Expo and get exposed to and inspired by the impressive projects created by other students. Last but hardly least, I want to thank the amazing Courtney Daniels. It is no understatement to say that CURC would not be where it is today without her diligence, attention to detail, organizational skills, and patience. Our student assistant, Rachelle Charleston is also a bright star, making flyers and videos and helping to host numerous events throughout the year.

One of the most rewarding experiences of teaching at the same institution for over two decades, is staying connected to certain students, and watching them achieve their academic and professional goals with great distinction. Last Thursday, one of my former students, Dr. Marisol Gomez, gave the commencement address to our graduating students in the Honors Scholar Program. Dr. Gomez was a first-generation college student born in Mexico and brought to Immokalee at the age of 8.

She came to FSW as a dual-enrolled student before we had the collegiate high schools. She began her journey in research with her Honors thesis on flesh-eating bacteria, which she conducted under the mentorship of Dr. Nirmala Prabhu. After completing her A.A. at FSW, Dr. Gomez graduated with a B.S. in biology and minors in mathematics and chemistry from FGCU in 2013, went on to work for two years as a Graduate Research Assistant at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and then attended the Morsani College of Medicine at the University of South Florida. She completed her residency last June and now works as a physician in Largo, Florida where she just bought her first house. I want to share some of her words with all of those reading this newsletter— especially our students:

*“To all the students here— especially those from underrepresented backgrounds— those who’ve had to fight a little harder, stretch a little further, believe a little longer—I want you to know: your story is important. Your voice is powerful. And your presence in these spaces is not just valid— it is vital. You don’t need to have it all figured out. Just keep showing up. Keep choosing growth over comfort. Curiosity over fear. And while you are doing this— choose kindness. Always... always... kindness. The world has enough noise. Enough competition. What it needs... is people who know how to listen, to serve, and to love—with intention.”*

After the ceremony, when I complimented her on her speech, Dr. Gomez told me that she learned those lessons for the first time here as a student at FSW, and I hope that we will continue to model that ethos for generations to come.

I want to close with one last thank you to the entire FSW community and our administration for allowing me to be of service in this role over the past ten years. It has truly been the highlight of my career and it feels right to pass the torch to Dr. Jett at this point in its evolution. I have no doubt that Dr. Jett, with his indomitable spirit and enthusiasm, will work with our talented faculty to grow the Center for Undergraduate Research and Creativity as well as the Honors Scholar Program in innovative and exciting ways, and I will be there to cheer you all on from the sidelines.

## Research Expo Judges

**Dr. Gabe Gaidos**  
**Dr. Robert Capetta**  
**Dr. Heather Olson**  
**Professor Jane Charles**  
**Dr. Myriam Mompont**  
**Dr. Monica Krupinski**  
**Dr. Lynn Embick**  
**Dr. Brian Page**  
**Dr. Jamie Votraw**  
**Dr. Jennifer Summary**  
**Dr. Brandon Jett**  
**Professor Whitney Rhyne**



## Speaking Words of Wisdom: An Interview with Dr. Mike McGowan

Dr. Mike McGowan has been teaching courses in philosophy, religion, and humanities at FSW since 2013. He majored in Early Childhood Education as an undergraduate and obtained three Master's degrees: one in Religion and Ministry from Malone University, a second from Yale's Divinity School in Philosophy of Religion and Theology, and a third from University of South Florida in Ethics and Social/Political Philosophy. Dr. McGowan is a prolific writer, having published numerous essays and three books, all of which explore the intersection between philosophy, religion and art. He is also interested in political philosophy and humor, which is the subject of the book he is currently writing under the working title of, *All Eyes on Me: Bo Burnham and the Philosophy of Humor*.

I met with Dr. McGowan to learn more about his most recent book, *Speaking Words of Wisdom: The Beatles and Religion*.

**WC:** This book was published in 2024, but how long had you been thinking about this topic, and what was the impetus for writing about the Beatles and religion?

I really started thinking about this book seriously in March of 2020—a time in which there was a lot going on in the world, as you know. Not only were we all worried about the pandemic, but my wife and I found out she was pregnant with our first child. I began thinking about fatherhood and my own childhood. And one of my great memories growing up was the music: my Dad surrounded our family with the best music from what is arguably the best decade for music (the 1960s), and one band leads the way on almost every metric: the Beatles. When I was a kid, I had heard that people were infatuated with the Beatles, even worshipped them, literally bringing sick and needy people to concerts in the hopes that they'd get healed. And I'd heard that John Lennon once said the band was "more popular than Jesus," which rubbed some people the wrong way. Interestingly, both of these responses to the Beatles were religious in nature.

So, in spring of 2020 I started reading about the Beatles and religion in the 60s, trying to find an answer to a simple question: what was going on there? After some looking, I realized that the book I wanted to read didn't exist. For scholars, that's a wonderful moment: realizing that you have an idea no one else has done in quite the same way. I started shaping the structure of the book and putting out some feelers to people who had already written about The Beatles. This was a new area for me: I had written about literature and philosophy of religion in the book on David Foster Wallace, and I'd written about philosophy of religion in my first book. But I hadn't ventured into music, so I asked people if they would be willing to contribute to a book on religion and The Beatles and most of them said yes. I'm humbled by the caliber of the people involved in this book (e.g., my General Editor at Penn State is one of the two leading Beatles experts worldwide).

# Speaking Words of Wisdom: An Interview with Dr. Mike McGowan.

I also put an announcement out on H-net and heard back from some graduate students—young scholars who told me they were interested in this topic and already writing about the Beatles. So, in summer and fall of 2020 the book began to take shape: various musicologists, philosophers, cultural critics, and religion scholars would write most of the chapters and I would write the Introduction, the Conclusion, and the chapter on Ringo Starr, the Beatles' drummer, whose religious journey was particularly interesting to me because it shares some commonalities with David Foster Wallace's journey.

**WC: I don't expect you to summarize the entire book, but if you had to share one or two pieces of wisdom that the Beatles have to offer us today, what would that be?**

I'll give you just one, and it's the title of one of their songs: "All Together Now." That's it. The Beatles collapsed distinctions. They did the opposite of "othering." They helped people see others as a "Thou" and not an "It."

**WC: Yes, in your Conclusion you write, "They brought people together, and we would do well to remember the value of seeing things through others' eyes as the march toward individualized experiences threatens to convince us of a very dangerous proposition: we are "lords of our tiny skull-sized kingdoms, alone at the center of all creation." As Robert Putnam argues in *Bowling Alone*, "The Beatles got it right: we all 'get by with a little help from our friends.'"**

**It seems to me that your interest in art, music, and humor all point to an interest in things that bring us together in spite of our differences.**

That's true. I did a graduate certificate in Conflict and Peacemaking Studies. I am interested in facilitating conversations between people who don't normally talk to each other; it's one of my main pedagogical goals for all of my classes. And yes, I think it's important, especially now. For me, it's a "life mission" kind of thing. And I think art has the power to do it. Lennon and McCartney were fantastic songwriters, yes, but the band became game-changing artists more broadly, so I think that was their big contribution. The Beatles were popular artists who stood advocated for the best of humanity: love.

**WC: In your conclusion you also express your concern over how polarized our society has become. You write, "With the rise of social media's algorithmic customization, hyper-partisan news intake, and lingering effects of pandemic isolation, the problem of division continues to worsen. And herein lies the paradox at the heart of the Beatles and religion: they promoted the religious self-exploration and expression of a younger generation, but these activities are only possible within a highly protected set of unbending democratic political institutions, about which the Beatles were ambivalent" Can you elaborate a little bit more on this idea?**

Certainly. First, some backstory: one of the great benefits of the 60s to American society was that both liberty and equality increased among people whose voices were marginalized and whose agency was denied. To note just three examples (of which there are more): women could finally make reproductive decisions themselves (the pill), overtly racist laws came to an end as black people's rights (like voting!) were finally recognized, and young people began to make their own decisions. One of the editors at *Rolling Stone*, the guy who wrote the "Preface" for my book, highlights the decade's monumental shift related to young people.

# Speaking Words of Wisdom: An Interview with Dr. Mike McGowan.

He argues (not in this book but elsewhere) that the Beatles changed how culture itself works. Young people began to make their own decisions about what careers they wanted, how they wanted to dress, what they wanted to spend their money on, and certainly what entertainment they wanted to consume.

But increased liberty was not without cost. Specifically in the 60s, as the number of Beatles fans went up, numbers in church pews went down, a dynamic I explore in the Introduction. The price of increased personal autonomy is the weakening of the authority of an institution (the Christian Church) that provided guidance on contentious moral issues for centuries. Good institutions provide social stability, and stability creates peace. The Beatles, though somewhat “establishment” figures now, were very anti-establishment then. Lennon in particular had an ambivalent relationship with the radical left in the 60s;

There were times when he wanted to change society peacefully, like in his “Bed Ins” with Yoko Ono and in his post-Beatles work (“Give Peace a Chance”). However, there were other times when he was on board with violent destruction.

Anyone whose values push against the values of an established institution ought to be cautious, I’m suggesting, because institutions take tremendous time, treasure, blood, and sacrifice to establish. It’s a fundamental principle of moderation, from Plato to the present, that at least some institutions exist for good reasons. To be sure, I fully understand that it is common among scholars to criticize institutions and power, and we ought to use our voices to counter arbitrary uses of power in the present. However, I also think the same “tear it all down” impulse that drives counter-cultural sentiments has the potential to endanger the last of our peace-preserving institutions: democracy. That’s what I was getting at. “Let’s not throw away all our institutions” is what I meant.

**WC: Was there anything surprising that you learned through the process; anything that you hadn’t given much thought to prior to reading these essays?**

Lots of things, yes, but I’ll only mention two. First, I had no idea until I began reading about the Beatles just how much they were on the forefront of so many things that became standard only after they broke down the wall. Stadium concerts, music videos, recording techniques, sound effects, respect for the avant-garde, Asian religious and philosophical traditions, psychedelics... all of it was started by the Beatles, pushed forward by these four working class guys from some northern town in Britain. I had no idea of the breadth of their influence before doing this book.

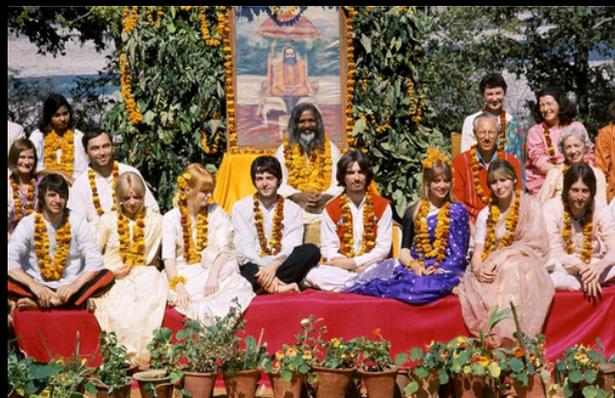
Second, I’m still thinking about one idea in particular. One of the chapter writers discusses Max Weber’s views on religion in society over time. In one of his lectures, Weber sets up this idea that art and religion are on a collision course in society such that judgements of value, which is what religion offers, become simply judgements of taste. I suspect, contra Weber, that art can offer value judgments as well, though couched in an artistic medium that may make it less comprehensible to outsiders. But I’m not sure where I’ll land on the relationship between art and religion, but I am still thinking about it.

**WC: What is the power of humor in politically challenging times? Have you looked at this historically in terms of whether or not political humor becomes more pervasive during turbulent times? I guess comedy is always popular.**

# Speaking Words of Wisdom: An Interview with Dr. Mike McGowan.

True, humor has always been a part of the human experience. The first joke on record—with a set up and punch line—is over four thousand years old. But humor has not always been of interest to scholars. In fact, philosophers have historically been very reluctant to take comedy and humor seriously. The last twenty years or so have seen an explosion of interest in the philosophy of humor, but it is still an under-explored area among philosophers.

I'm interested in it right now because it seems important—maybe more important than at any other time in my life. Laughter helps people cope with tough times. It always has. For example, in the early 20th century, Charlie Chaplin used humor not only for entertainment but also to challenge authority and Power. Given that the 60s were a tumultuous period and the 70s dealt with its aftermath, some writers argue that 1965-75 was the “Golden Age” of comedy. I wonder if we are in a second Golden Age of Comedy right now. People like Hannah Gadsby, Bo Burnham, and, of course, Dave Chappelle (who does not always neatly fit into any of our siloed categories) are pushing the envelope. Burnham in particular is playing with the form of comedy itself, and has been for the past fifteen years. Burnham's comedy, like the Beatles' music and Wallace's writing, is shaping his artform in highly intriguing ways. He and others are trying new things on stage to the point where we begin to ask, “what does it *mean* to do comedy?” and even, “*Is this comedy?*”



## SPEAKING WORDS OF WISDOM

The Beatles and Religion

Edited by Michael McGowan

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# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## Lorena Diaz

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### 1. What has been your most impactful experience in the Honors Scholar Program?

My most impactful experience in the Honors Program was definitely creating my Honors Capstone project and going through the process of research and data collection. It allowed me to get a sense of what experts go through and also helped me learn so much about how our psychologies are impacted by the environments around us, whether they are natural or artificial. Not only did this give me an opportunity to see what I was capable of but also helped me learn and obtain new knowledge and skills that I will need in the future such as problem solving, critical thinking, and flexibility.



### 2. What are your plans after graduating from FSW?

After graduating from FSW, I am pursuing my Master's in Architecture with a minor in Sustainability at the University of Florida In Gainesville. I hope to also obtain my Master's if possible. With this degree, I plan on becoming an architect and designing spaces that are good for the environment and for people all around the world, simultaneously also allowing me to travel.

### 3. Tell us a little bit about your Honors capstone project. Has it shaped your future academic goals?

My Honors Capstone project was titled "Biophilic Design: Connecting Students To Nature Through Architecture" and was all about the impact bland and lifeless classroom designs are having on college students. It specifically focused on how integrating nature inside and in classrooms betters students' motivation, academic performance, and overall well being while also making the school more aesthetically pleasing. I chose this topic because I wanted to see what specific preferences students had to design choices like these on our own campus and if the college was doing a good job meeting these student desires which all correlates with what I will be doing in the future as a designer. It has helped shape my future academic goals by allowing me to learn more about sustainable and green architecture as well as biophilic design and allowing me to realize that I want to do something down the route of sustainable design so I can ensure that I do my part in keeping our planet healthy.

# Faculty Spotlight

## Professor Terri Housley



### **1. What is one idea in your area of expertise, that you wish everyone could understand?**

One thing I wish everyone could understand about psychology is the connection between our thoughts, feelings, needs, and behaviors. In brief, our thoughts lead to our emotions, our emotions point to met or unmet needs, our needs are tied to our values and deepest longings and desires, and our behaviors are attempts to get our needs met. When we let our needs guide our behaviors instead of our emotions, we increase the chances of getting our needs met. Being aware of this process helps us to make more skillful decisions that ultimately enhance the quality of our lives and relationships.

### **2. Did you always want to be a professor, or did you take a more circuitous route?**

No, I did not always want to be a professor. I majored in accounting for two years after high school and was aiming to become a CPA. At some point, I realized that a career in accounting didn't quite suit my personality, so I started to explore some other options. I had always enjoyed psychology but thought of it more as a topic I liked as opposed to a career. I contemplated becoming a marriage and family counselor, but decided that wouldn't suit my personality, either. After considering various careers in the field of psychology, I eventually landed on an idea that lit me up—teaching psychology at the college level. And here I am, teaching psychology courses 25 years later—still lit up!

### **3. You have been teaching at FSW since 2008, how have students and/or your teaching strategies changed during that time?**

About seven years ago I went to a psychology conference and learned about Wiggins and McTighe's Backward Design model of teaching. The gist is this, when designing a course, start with whatever skills and knowledge you want students to have long after they've left your course, and then work backwards from there to create "purpose-driven" teaching and learning. When I started designing my courses this way, it broke open teaching for me. I felt rejuvenated and excited about my courses and began receiving unsolicited feedback from students about how much they enjoyed the discussions in class AND the assignments. Just wish Wiggins and McTighe's had come up with a better name for their model!

# Creative Capstone



**Dr. Rebecca Harris, Director**

The CREATIVE Capstone continues to celebrate innovation and academic achievement for Associate in Arts students at Florida SouthWestern State College! As education reformer John Dewey said, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." This philosophy resonates throughout the CREATIVE Capstone, where students engage in transformative learning experiences that connect academic knowledge with real-world applications and, most importantly, their own interests.

The CREATIVE Capstone has expanded its horizons this year with several exciting initiatives. Dr. Katie O'Connor led an incredibly successful community-engaged learning section, connecting students with local organizations to address real community challenges through research and creative problem-solving. The maker section of the Capstone, led by Dr. Shawn Moore, continues to flourish, offering students hands-on experiences with various technologies and methods. This approach to learning encourages experimentation, iteration, and the development of tangible solutions to research questions.

Students this year were able to participate in a number of events and experiences during Connections week in March. Highlights include a keynote lecture by Dr. Sid Dobrin on AI in education, a film screening and panel discussion on *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, a Community Partner Fair across multiple campuses, and a field trip to Corkscrew Sanctuary for Capstone students. Thank you to all the faculty and staff who continue to make Connections week a success!

The program's global focus continues to grow as Capstone students prepare for international learning experiences in Spain and Costa Rica this summer. These Study Abroad opportunities expose students to cross-cultural perspectives that enhance their research capabilities and personal growth. And...they are fun!

# Creative Capstone

*Thank you to all of our embedded librarians!*

A key factor in the success of the CREATIVE Capstone is the dedicated support of embedded librarians in each class. These information specialists play a crucial role in facilitating students' acquisition of information fluency—helping them locate, evaluate, and effectively use research materials. Their guidance ensures that students develop research skills that will serve them throughout their academic and professional careers. We can't do it without them!

## Award-Winning Student Scholars

As the CREATIVE Capstone continues to evolve, it remains committed to fostering intellectual curiosity, creative problem-solving, and community engagement among Associate in Arts students. The 2024 Innovative Thinking Showcase highlighted extraordinary student research projects that exemplify critical thinking, creativity, and real-world application. The Capstone Student Research Awards recognize emerging student scholars who have demonstrated outstanding creative and critical thinking in their projects.

**Best Overall Project** was awarded to **Rohan M. Sojan** for his Leadership Magazine on JFK and the Cuban Missile Crisis. As a student of Dr. Katie O'Connor, Rohan's project demonstrated impressive depth and analysis, making meaningful connections between information sources while communicating the importance of the historical moment. His work exemplified transdisciplinary research by combining insights from multiple fields of study and perspectives.

**Joseph McLaughlin** earned the **Best Creative Project** award for his Zombie Game Mod Tools Maker Project under the mentorship of Dr. Matt Vivyan. Joseph's project advanced a coherent creative vision through an "unessay" format, demonstrating how critical thinking can be expressed through creative mediums and non-traditional forms of research.

The **Best Experiential Project** award went to **Bryanna Anderson** for her Anders Art Studies Drawing Program. Under the guidance of Prof. Jamie Votraw, Bryanna produced research that perfectly illustrates FSW's General Education Program philosophy of creating "active, informed, and ethical citizens" who can apply their skills in real-world settings. Her project was educational and informative, a great resource for aspiring artists in her community.

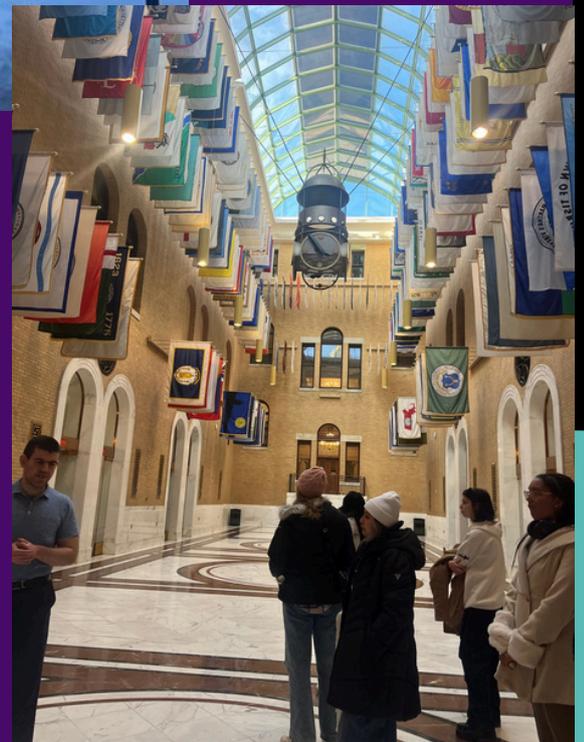
# Creative Capstone

Two exceptional projects received **Honorable Mentions**: **Savanah Mcgaughey's** Snowboard Building and Design Project (mentored by Dr. Evan Johnson) and **Samantha Luc's** comparative study of Summer Fashion Trends Among College Students in the United States and Italy (mentored by Dr. Alessandro Cesarano).

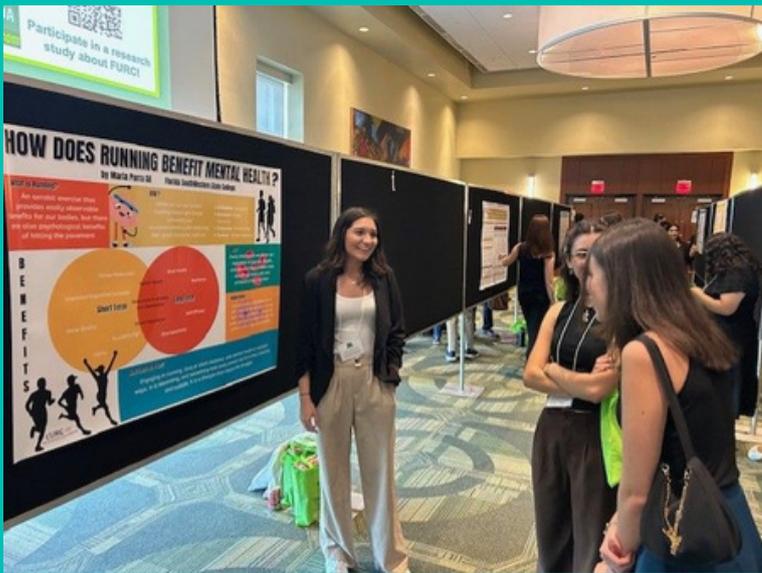
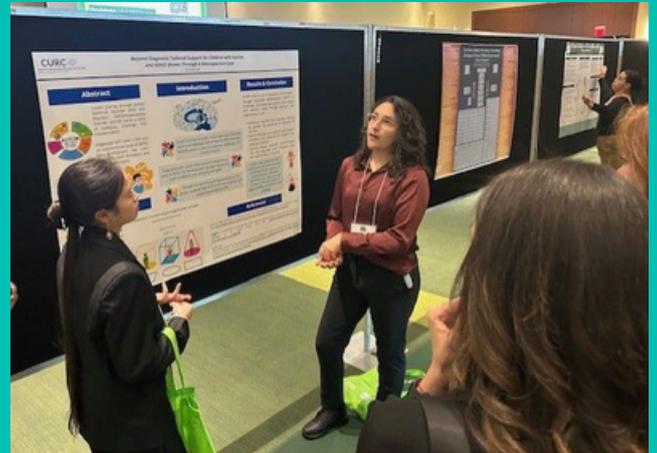
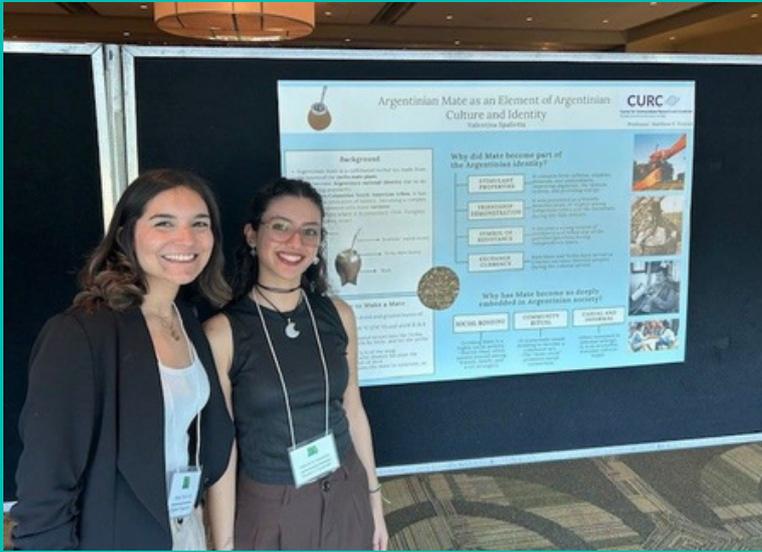
We extended our warmest congratulations to all of the student nominees and winners. There were so many incredible nominations this year and we cannot wait to see how our students and faculty continue to grow!



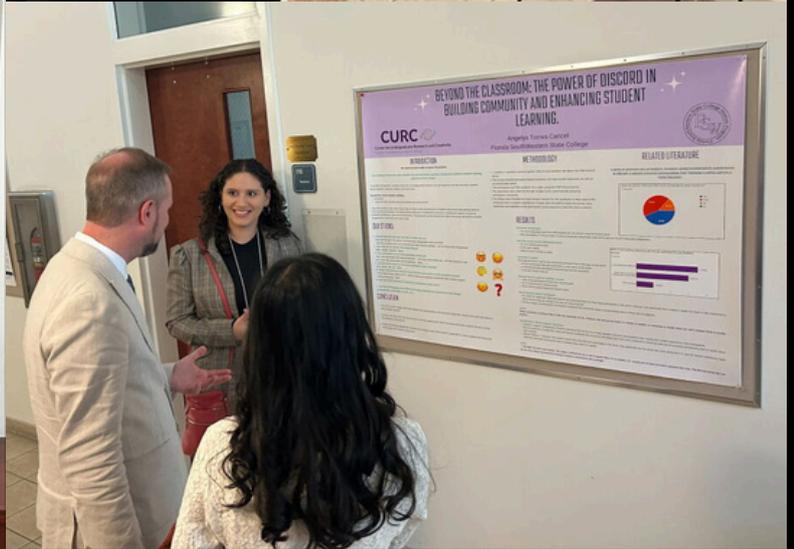
# Harvard Model United Nations Conference



# Florida Undergraduate Research (FURC) Conference

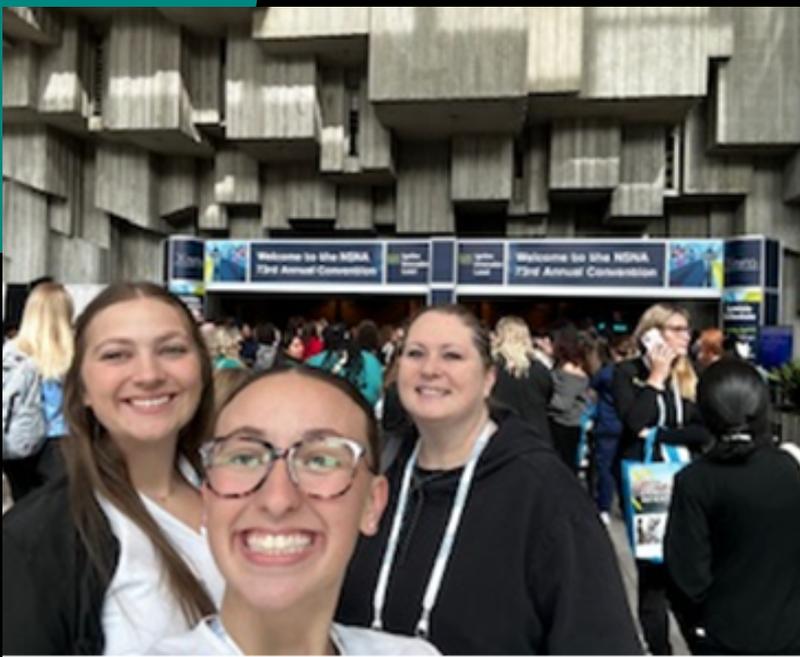


# Florida Collegiate Honors Council (FCHC) Conference

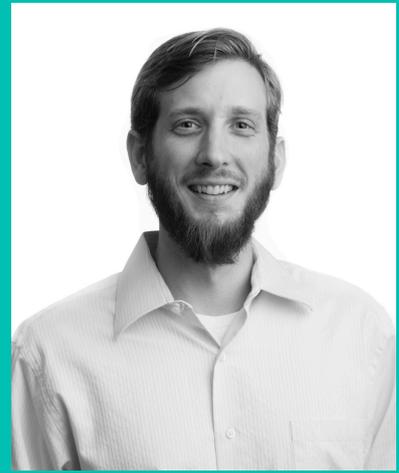


# NSNA Convention

From April 8th to 12th, a few of our Charlotte Campus NSNA board members had the opportunity to attend the 72nd Annual NSNA Convention in Seattle, Washington. NSNA is the national student nurses association that helps mentor and prepare student nurses for their licensure, while conveying the standards, ethics, and skills needed to become accountable leaders and members of their profession. At this convention, Kelsie Tumbarello and MaKenna Wootton attended a live NCLEX review course, sat in on several focused sessions, networked with other nursing students from around the world, and learned more about what it means to become a professional nurse.



# One Theme, One College (OTOC)



**Dr. Brandon Jett**

This year, the One Theme, One College Committee proudly led Florida SouthWestern State College in college-wide conversations around the theme “Our Changing World.” Through a rich variety of events, discussions, and artistic expressions, students, faculty, staff, and community members came together to explore the forces reshaping our personal lives, communities, and global society.

Building off of our programming from last fall, OTOC events this semester explored changes at broad and local levels. Our connection to the local community remained strong, with a lively panel discussion that brought together elected officials from LaBelle, Florida. These leaders spoke about how their rural community is navigating economic development, shifting demographics, and environmental challenges. Students were able to engage directly with the panel, asking insightful questions and reflecting on how local governance plays a vital role in shaping societal change.

The future of education was another key area of focus, with a compelling presentation by Dr. Sid Dobrin, a leading scholar on digital literacy and artificial intelligence. Dr. Dobrin discussed how AI is already influencing the landscape of higher education and challenged us to think critically about the ethical and pedagogical implications of these emerging technologies. His talk sparked important conversations about what it means to teach, learn, and create in an age of accelerating innovation.

As part of our commitment to exploring change through art and narrative, the committee also sponsored screenings of the film *Her* followed by faculty-led discussions. The film, which explores the intersections of technology, intimacy, and identity, served as a springboard for deep, personal conversations among students about the emotional and psychological dimensions of technological advancement.

Finally, the year ended on a powerful and celebratory note with an Open Mic Poetry Slam on the Charlotte Campus. Students shared original poetry, music, and spoken word pieces that expressed their own experiences of change, challenge, and hope. The evening was a testament to the power of creative expression to make sense of a world in flux—and to bring people together across differences.

We are grateful to everyone who participated in this year’s events. Thank you for helping us explore Our Changing World with curiosity, courage, and creativity. The committee is already looking ahead with excitement as we prepare to lead next year’s conversations around a new theme: “The Power of Story.”

# One Theme, One College (OTOC)



Come celebrate  
National Poetry  
Month with us!



Calling all  
creative writers,  
musicians, and  
comedians!

One Theme One College presents...

## OPEN MIC NIGHT

APRIL 22ND, 5:30-7 P.M.

Charlotte Campus, Cafeteria (O-112)

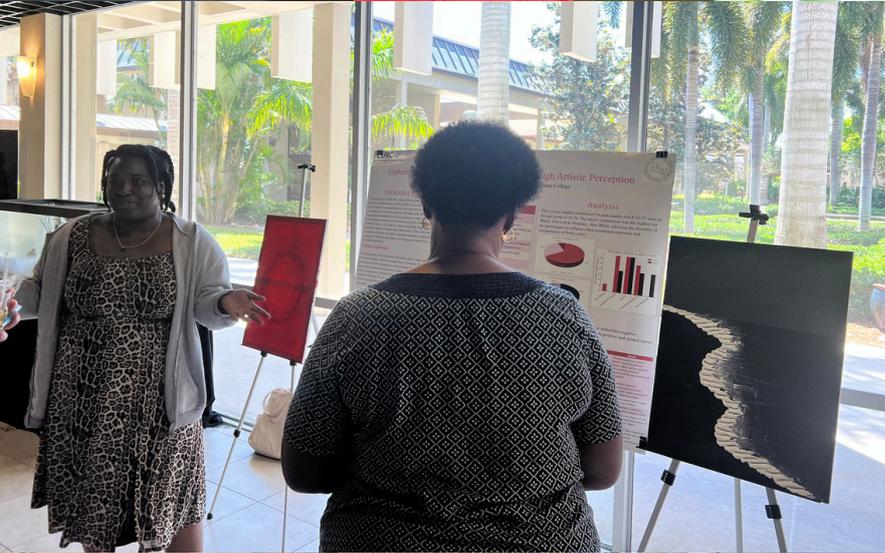
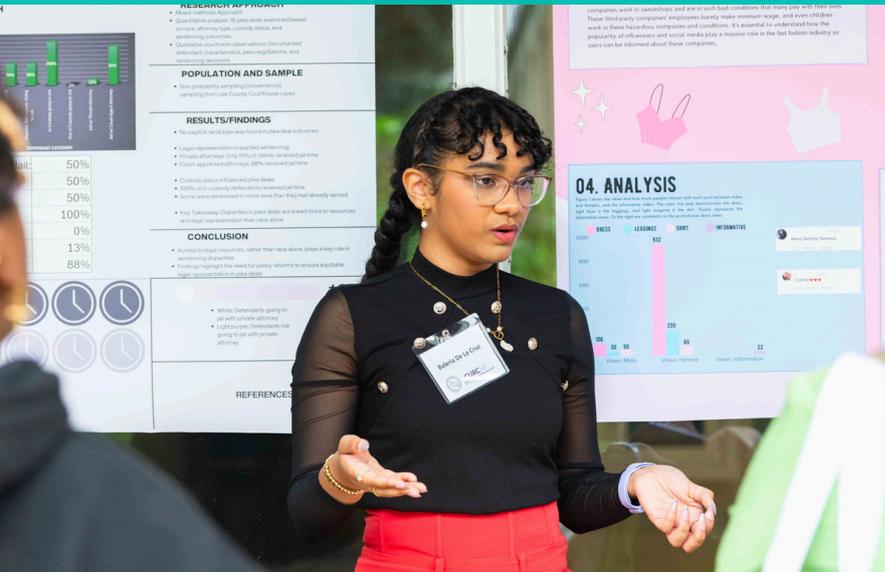
Choose a mystery poem  
themed around "Our  
Changing Worlds!"

Refreshments will be  
provided!

FSW is an equal access, equal opportunity organization.  
More: [www.fsw.edu/equality](http://www.fsw.edu/equality)



# Spring 2025 Research Expo





# Spring 2025 Research Expo

# Honors Cord Ceremony



# Congratulations Capstone Winners!

## Science, Technology and Health:

**1st: Eden Sterk:** *Ranavirus prevalence in a population of Two-Toed Amphiuma (Amphiuma means) in Southwest Florida*

**2nd: Nicolas Santana:** *Comprehensive Multi-Loci Sequencing for Species- Comprehensive Multi-Loci Sequencing for Species Level Identification of Antibiotic-Producing Streptomyces from Soil Samples*

**3rd: Nikko Bustamante and Jordan Farmer:** *The Diet of Two-Toed Amphiumas (Amphiuma means) in Southwestern Florida*

## Environment, Sustainability and Design:

**1st: Julian Vagg:** *The Educational Difference Between 3D Model, and Physical Geological Sample*

**2nd: Lorena Diaz:** *Biophilic Design: Connecting Students to Nature Through Architecture*

**3rd: Santino Pasquale:** *The Future of Encryption: Computing Technology and the Quantum Threat*

## Social Sciences, Psychology and Communication:

**1st: Catherine Burzo:** *How Does Ad Algorithm on Social Media Platforms Adjust Based on the Demographic Data?*

**2nd: Emily Kremenchuker:** *Exploring Implicit Racial Bias in Sentencing: A Study of the 20th Judicial Circuit*

**3rd: Aidan Buchanan:** *Analyzing Semantic Similarities between ChatGPT and various demographics*

## Arts, Culture and Literature:

**1st: Sophia Gibson and Shayna Symonds:** *Disparities in Women's Mental Health: The Reflection in Women's Literature*

**2nd: Ivonne Rodriguez:** *Monsters: True Crime in Media*

**3rd: Luciana Cortez:** *Causa, a Bite of History*

## Business, Sports and Innovation:

**1st: Arleasia Carter:** *A Continued Legacy of Safety Hill*

**2nd: Avianna Hill:** *Defying Gravity: The Meissner Effect, Superconductors, and Magnetic Levitation*

**3rd: Johnathan Rawlings:** *Protein problems: How the Gym Industry has Failed Us*

# Congratulations Honors Scholar Program Graduates!



**Ofelia Aguirre**

**Kayla Alamilla**

**Cynthia Alaniz**

**Ariana Arias**

**Victor Arias**

**Noor BenMaamer**

**Surelys Beruvides Perez**

**Belmore Betancourt**

**Sandy Bruce**

**Aidan Buchanan**

**Catherine Burzo**

**Gabriel Carmona**

**Arleasia Carter**

**Eric Castro**

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# Congratulations

Life Changer Award presented to  
Professor Laura Henning

Professor Jordan Donini  
Special Award for Outstanding Teaching

Dr. Wendy Chase  
Award for Dedicated, Transformative Leadership



*Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.*

-John Dewey

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