



Photo above: Deb Christensen and students standing in front of Sandro Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" at the Uffizi Galleries in Florence. Professors Deb Christensen and Adina Kilpatrick have been busy traveling around Italy during their J-Term class "Art & Anatomy in Renaissance Italy: The Birth of Modern Medicine." See more J-Term experiences later in the newsletter!

Nominations for Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award Due Feb. 15. [More Information Here.](#)

A Note from the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

I hope the first week of classes is going well! The spring semester always starts with a bang, there is no easing in as lots of deadlines and big events are right around the corner in February. And January was no time for rest either. I can't stop bragging about the fabulous J-Term seminars that were offered, both here in Des Moines and as far away as Madagascar! These intensive 3-week courses represent such unique and special opportunities for students to immerse themselves in new topics, experiences, and forms of learning. Kudos to travel leaders,

online and onsite instructors! If you haven't seen the photos yet, check out our Instagram or Facebook posts. Please share any other photos or highlights from winter break with us so we can show them off!

Other January highlights include the recommendations made by the Physics Taskforce, a group of faculty from Physics and allied programs. The recommendations promote an exciting vision for a reimagined Physics program at Drake. The recommendations center around curricular restructuring, recruitment, and retention strategies and engage alumni in internship and career development opportunities. Thank you to the faculty who participated in this visionary work that charts a path for Drake's Physics program!

We are in the midst of hiring faculty for our dual degree program with Qingdao University. These new hires in Data Analytics and Biology will be teaching in Qingdao next fall. Our amazing staff has been busy throughout the month getting everything ready for the spring semester. And soon it will be time to start building fall schedules!

A couple of weeks ago I attended the Board of Trustees meeting in St. Louis. Of special note was the presentation by one of our Arts and Sciences students, Kenton Ausmer, addressing board members, alumni, and high school counselors at two separate receptions. Kenton's story of why he chose Drake, and what his experience majoring in BCMB with a minor in Chinese has been, moved everybody in the room. It was an inspiring reminder of the impact of a liberal arts education at Drake!

I will hold open office hours tomorrow, Thursday, from 3-4:30pm in the Library Café. Please let me know at any time how I can support you in your work. I look forward to hearing from you! Please check out the additional announcements, reminders, and accomplishments below. Send us your updates so we can make sure to include those and celebrate all the College of Arts & Sciences has to offer.

Wishing you a good start of the spring semester!

Gesine

Gesine Gerhard, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Arts & Sciences



Upcoming Administrative Deadlines

Date	Event/Activity
January 30	Dean's Office Hour at Cowles Café, 3:00-4:30pm
February 3 by 4:30pm	Last day to submit proposal to A&S curriculum committee for new course, course change, course removal for inclusion in fall 2025 course schedule and catalog.
February 15	First, third, fourth and fifth-year tenure-track faculty

	reviews (PAEs) due to the Dean from Department Chairs
February 15	Tenured faculty evaluations (PAEs) due to the Dean from Department Chairs
February 19	Last day to submit UCC proposal for AOI or interdisciplinary course number for Feb. 26 meeting
February 21	Summer and Fall 2025 schedules are due to the Dean's Office
February 28	All Faculty and Staff Meeting, 2:00-4:00pm, Cowles Library Reading Room

[Access the Full College of A&S and University Calendar 2024-25 Here](#)

[Academic Calendar](#) [University Events Calendar](#)

College of Arts & Sciences
Harmon Fine Arts Center
1310 25th Street
Des Moines, IA 50311

Phone: [515-271-3939](tel:515-271-3939)
Email: ask.as@drake.edu



Curriculum & Faculty Development Corner

Upcoming Faculty Development Opportunities

Tenure-track faculty mentoring breakfast, Friday, February 21

Early tenure-track faculty (targeted to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year faculty members) are invited to join us for a hot buffet breakfast, community building and dialogue on Friday morning, Feb 21 at 9:00am - 10:30am (Collier-Scripps 301). We will discuss the NCFDD webinar “How to Align Your Time with Your Priorities” (watch live on Feb. 13 at 1:00-2:00pm Central Time; [register here to attend live or receive recording](#)), which provides insight into the teacher-scholar model in action. Interact with your A&S leadership team to ask any questions that might come up – especially around annual evaluations, navigating student issues, and consulting on balancing teaching/research/service. Please contact Jennifer Cooper (jennifer.cooper@drake.edu) by Feb 12 to sign-up and indicate any dietary restrictions.

Fall 2025 First Year Seminar (FYS) course proposals open through Monday, Feb. 3

Faculty who are interested in proposing a new FYS or continuing to offer a previous FYS are invited to [submit their proposals](#) by Monday, February 3. New this year, instructors are encouraged to propose a Learning Community with a colleague—on your proposal form, list both instructors’ names, a shared meeting day, and your two section topics, which should be related in some way. Faculty are encouraged to align their topic the following themes: Civic Connections (Community Engagement) and Justice in Action (Social Justice). Stipend support is available for instructors who align with one of these themes.

Please note, everyone must fill out this form (even in taught previously) – although you will only be asked a few brief questions (such as time preferences).

If the FYS is a new proposal, you will be asked to provide more information about the course such as types of readings, activities, and assignments (a full syllabus is not expected at the proposal stage), in addition to the information above.

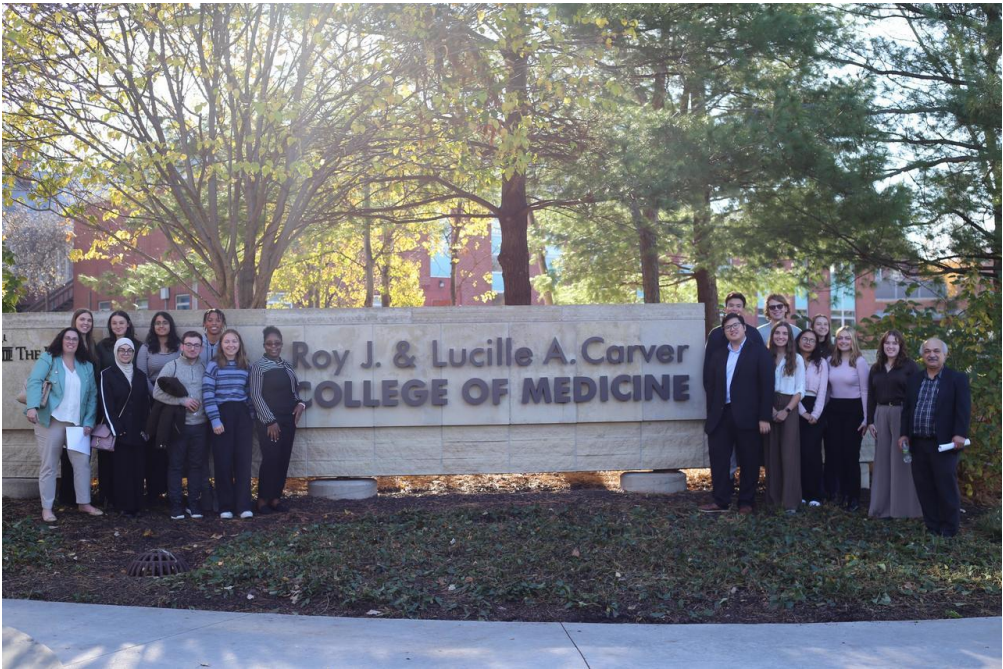
Please contact Deputy Provost, Jimmy Senteza (jimmy.senteza@drake.edu) with questions.

The Value of a Liberal Arts Education: “Student as Citizen” model

Christine M. Nowik proposes that higher education return to and renew the notion of the "student as citizen" in this essay from *Inside Higher Education*. While Keith B. Murray's notion of the "student as client" does challenge the pervasive metaphor of "student as customer," thinking of students as citizens allows for a greater sense of collaborative creation, active learning, and transformation on the parts of student, faculty, classrooms, and even institutional frameworks. See the [linked essay](#) for more on Nowik's formulation of such a shift. We hope to engage some of these ideas as a College this semester.



Celebrating A&S Highlights



During November of 2024, Professor **Gholam Mirafzal** provided an opportunity for Drake University pre-medical

students to take a field trip to the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine to tour their facility and to interact and learn from their medical students and director of their medical school admissions. He also mentored the students on the trip. Students found the panel discussions and the entire trip experience very helpful. Professor Mirafzal is co-chair of the Pre-Med Advisory Committee.



J-Term Experiences at Home and Beyond

Congratulations to faculty, staff, and students who participated in a number of exciting and timely J-Term seminars. Throughout January, we followed our on-campus and travel courses on the A&S [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. See below for photo highlights of some of these experiences. Thank you to the many leaders in our College who provided such innovative learning opportunities, locally, nationally, and internationally that students will remember for years to come!

Left: [POLS 119: "Inside Washington: The Presidential Inauguration"](#) On [Instagram](#)



[MUS 160: "Mexico: Cultural Immersion Through Music"](#) On [Instagram](#)

[BIO 145: "Art & Anatomy in Renaissance Italy: The Birth of Modern Medicine"](#) On [Instagram](#)





[REL 114 "Religions of Des Moines"](#) On [Instagram](#)

[CS 195: "Stem for All: Inclusive STEM Instruction in Kosovo"](#) On [Instagram](#)

Drake Theatre Department receives awards at Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival

Recently, the Drake Theatre department received the notable recognition at The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. Congratulations to the faculty, staff, and students who positively represented Drake across acting, design, choreography categories – and more! Read on below for their individual accomplishments:

For *DRACULA*:

Achievement in Acting - The Ensemble
Achievement in Directing- Erik Meixelsperger
Achievement in Scenic Design- Noah Files
Achievement in Stage Combat- Erik Meixelsperger & Cami Marquart
Achievement in Sound Design- Wren Royer

For *42nd Street*

Achievement in Stage Management- The Stage Management Team

For *First Date*

Achievement in Choreography- Savannah Fisher and Emily Devick
Achievement in Music Direction- Taylor Mayne
Achievement in Hair/Makeup Design- Eliana Mascarenas
Achievement in Ensemble Acting- The Ensemble
Achievement in Scenic Design- Erika Snyder
Achievement in Costume Design- Mylo Bissell



Admissions & Enrollment Corner

The Virtual Spotlight Series hosted nine programs that represented all College and Schools. Overall student

attendance was 252 students. Arts and Sciences hosted three programs in addition to a collaborative session with three other Colleges (SJMC, Zimpleman, Law School) to represent Pre-Law. Thank you to the faculty who participated - **Deb DeLaet, Will Garriott, Lisa West, Rachel Paine-Caufield, Tim Urness, Terrance Pendleton, Adina Kilpatrick, and Marc Busch**. Below are the attendance numbers:

Virtual Spotlights:

Event Title	Date	Attendance
Natural Sciences	12/4/2024	33
Tech, Data, Math and Computer Science	12/10/2024	19
Social Sciences and the Humanities	12/12/2024	7
Pathways to Pre-Law	1/6/2025	35

- Attendance at Virtual Spotlights overall is lower than last year. Evaluations from prospective students and parents remain very high. This form of engagement is atypical; it is something Drake can stress that *we do* - have *live* forums for prospectives based on core interests - that differentiates us from competitors.
- Admitted Student Days have been live on the website for one month and we are seeing impressive registration numbers, compared to last year. March 7, March 28, April 4 and April 11 are the Admitted Student Days. Faculty will participate in Academic Meetings at 9 AM and Mock Class Options at 10 AM.
- Prospective/Admitted students who register 2 weeks in advance are able to select an individual faculty appointment (SR, JR, TR). Last year, 52.7% of the seniors who had a Faculty Appointment during their visit matriculated, compared to 37.4% of the seniors who did not have a faculty appointment during their visit. For transfer students, those who had a Faculty Appointment matriculated at 69% compared to TR visitors who did not have a faculty appointment, matriculated at 53. 3%.
- One-on-one visits are continuing. Admissions expects that these will become more frequent in the spring semester. A new trend is emerging students tend to have ONE SINGLE visit to campus, whereas in past years, prospective often made several visits.
- We look forward to celebrating at Admitted Student parties that will be held in Midwestern cities, from St. Paul to Denver over the next two months, including two local parties for Central Iowa admits in February to continue generating excitement for Drake!



Advising & Student Support Corner

Welcome to the spring semester. Please remember to **welcome your new and returning advisees** to Drake (or back to Drake). There are over 40 entering first year and transfer Arts & Sciences students beginning this spring. If you were assigned a new advisee(s), you received an email with their name(s).

Please be sure to **complete enrollment validation**. The process of validation removes students who do not attend/validate their enrollment on the first day of class, without making prior arrangements with you. The

accurate validation of courses is tied to a variety of financial aid and billing processes. To submit validation: MyDrake > Self-Service > Teaching and Grading > Enrollment Validation. And, while validation is important, **so too is letting our office know if a student disappears post-validation**. Students who stop out need to be removed from the term and the University needs to have an accurate accounting of where students are, if they are on campus.

J-term 2025 GRADES: Grades for j-term courses are due before **10 a.m. on Wednesday, Feb 5**. You can view this due date and other important dates, by visiting [Important Dates | Drake University](#).

Spring 2025 Drake University Career Fair

Students can register on Handshake: https://app.joinhandshake.com/stu/career_fairs/49427

Thursday, February 13, 2025

3:00-6:00 pm (3:00-3:30 reserved for recent alumni & graduating students)

Olmsted Center

How Can you Help?

- Encourage students to attend. The organizations in attendance have internships, jobs, and graduate opportunities, and they want to recruit Drake students! Continuing to recruit employers and graduate school partners depends on strong attendance each year! Including dates in syllabi, sharing class announcements can all help.
- Consider giving extra credit for attending. Students develop True Blue Skills (career competencies) by networking and discussing the skills they have developed in your course.
- Promote drop-in, in-person Resume Reviews on Thursday, February 6 between 10am and 4pm in Olmsted Conference Rooms to help students prepare for the fair.
- We'd also love to have you attend the fair! Our partners and guests enjoy meeting faculty and staff to better understand the programs, classes, activities, and students with which you work. Additionally, we have several organizations sending Drake alumni to host booths, so it's a great time to reconnect with alumni too.

If you have questions, please reach out to **Jill Batten**, Director of Advising, jill.batten@drake.edu.

Supporting Pre-Law Interest

On Friday, Feb 14, students interested in learning more about the law school admissions process, Drake Law School, and 3+3 Law Program can attend a session led by **Kara Blanchard**, Assistant Dean, Law School Admission and Financial Aid. Scheduled from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., in Cartwright 201, the session will include information on the law school admission process, Drake's admission and financial aid practices, a panel with current law students who attended Drake as undergraduate students and a session on the 3+3 law program. We ask that students RSVP before Feb 11 by completing this [survey](#). Students pursuing traditional "pre-law" majors received an invitation on Jan 22 and will be resent the invitation this week. Please feel free to share the link with your advisees as relevant.

Upcoming Events



Detail - *I seem to pray only when I need to the most*, Oil on Canvas, 72 " x 96 ", 2024

Artist Talk with Jordan Ramsey Ismaiel

February 6, 4:30-5:30 pm Harmon Fine Arts Center Room 204

Opening Reception of *The One Year Between Us*

February 6, 5:30-7 pm, Anderson Gallery, light refreshments will be served

The One Year Between Us opens on February 6 in the Anderson Gallery. The exhibition contains a group of large-scale self-portraits by artist **Jordan Ramsey Ismaiel**. A recent University of Iowa MFA graduate, Ismaiel described their work as, “consider[ing] the insufficiency to 'move past' events which have ultimately altered my art practice. Referencing Edwin H. Blashfield’s mural, 'Westward,' (1905), commissioned by the State of Iowa for its capital building in Des Moines, these group of paintings and drawings consider the idealization and pitfalls of westward expansion as an out-dated promise for both individual and communal growth.” The impressive group of works will be on display through March 14, 2025 in the Anderson Gallery and will begin with an artist talk and opening reception on February 6.



Keys to Excellence Piano Series: Jody Graves and Sapphire Trio

PRESENTATION: Sunday, Feb. 9, at 4 p.m. in Sheslow Auditorium. Professor Graves will offer a workshop entitled “The Heart of Performance©.” The event is eloquently described in her own words: “This workshop includes discussion on the pathway to successful performance, and how to foster that within ourselves as performers, and for our students. The presentation includes interactive discussion, visual and audio illustrations, and hand-out. Participants are invited to bring their questions and stories about performance as we explore the topic that seems to be the most elusive, and at times, the most mysterious. Performance is the result of our process, and clarity of intention within the process can effect powerful changes in how we and our students approach and navigate through every performance. Humor and perspective are included in this seminar, along with specific tools to employ that can give the energy and confidence required for a beautiful outcome.”

CONCERT: Monday, Feb. 10, at 7:30 p.m. in Sheslow Auditorium. After a selection of preludes for solo piano by Claude Debussy, Professor **Jody Graves** will share the stage with her longtime collaborators of the Sapphire Trio, **Margaret Baldridge** (violin) and **Maxine Ramey** (clarinet); music by Philip Martin, Alexander Arutunian, Rick Sowash, and a work by Brian A. Van Winkle that was composed especially for the Sapphire Trio. The evening will conclude with Graves’ original multi-media presentation, “A Celebration of the Piano and the Many Places it Finds Itself!”



Ferguson Concert: The Crossing

Friday, February 14, 2025 7:30pm

Sheslow Auditorium

Grammy Award winning choir, **The Crossing**, is coming to Drake University on February 14 at 7:30pm. Conducted by Donald Nally, and celebrating their 20th season, they will be performing David Lang's new work, *Poor Hymnal*. Come and listen to this world-class ensemble as they make their way through the Midwest! This performance will take place in Sheslow Auditorium, and it is free and open to the public.



Jordan Concert Series: Han-Setzer-Finckel Trio

Friday, February 21, 2025 7:30pm

Sheslow Auditorium

Acclaimed musicians Cellist **David Finckel** and pianist **Wu Han** and Violinist **Philip Setzer** will perform at Sheslow Auditorium as part of the Jordan Concert Series on Friday, February 21 at 7:30pm. Their multi-faceted musical lives encompass world-class performances, acclaimed recordings and visionary artistic direction. Take advantage of the opportunity to enjoy their performance that is free and open to the public.



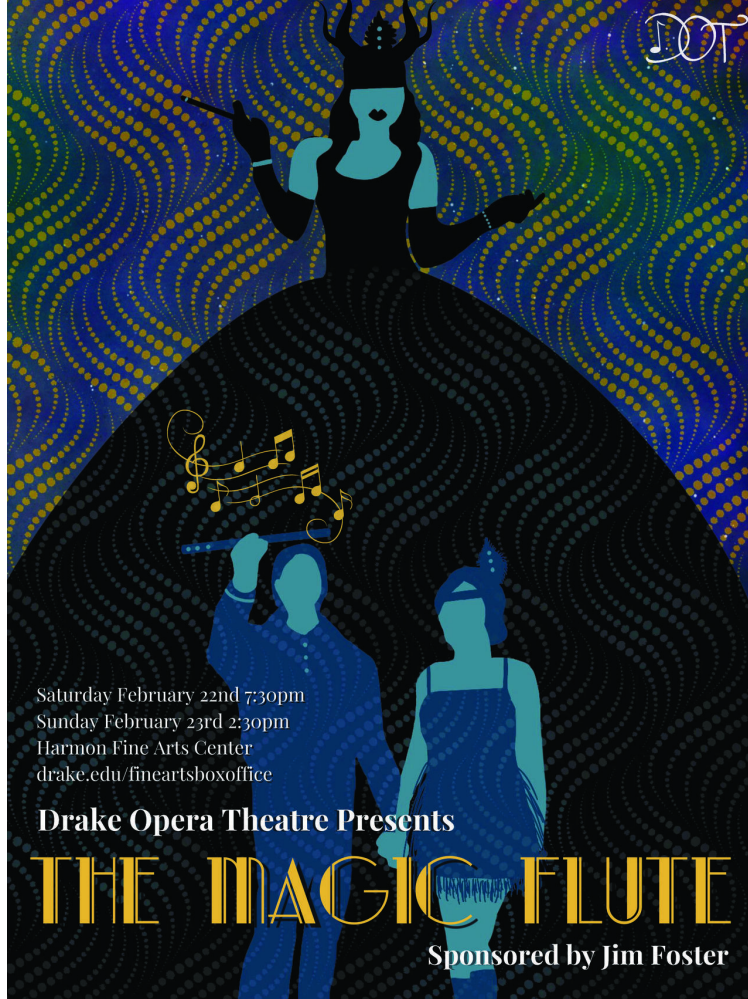
Join us for the DUSCI Research Colloquium Series: Friday, February 21, 1:00-2:00pm in Olin 206

Schedule of Presentations:

- **1:00 PM** – Dr. **Richelle Williams**, Assistant Professor of Athletic Training
Bringing Forward Youth Sports Safety Initiatives Through Research and Community Involvement
- **1:30 PM** – Dr. **Alimoor Reza**, Assistant Professor of Computer Science
Precision in Pixels: Harnessing Human-AI Synergy for Advanced Image Labeling

This event is designed to provide a quick glimpse into our colleagues' work across disciplines, followed by **snacks and socializing at 2:00pm** in the Olin Atrium. Come learn, connect, and enjoy!





Drake Opera Theatre Presents: The Magic Flute

Saturday, February 22, 2025, at 7:30pm

Sunday, February 23, 2025, at 2:30pm

Performing Arts Hall in Harmon Fine Arts Center

One of the greatest opera ever written, Mozart's timeless classic concerns the search for truth, reason, love, and enlightenment.

The Magic Flute follows the adventures of Prince Tamino and the bird catcher Papageno on their quest to rescue Pamina. To assist their mission, they are given musical instruments enhanced with magical powers, which they deploy to conquer the trials and tribulations placed in their path towards a deeper understanding of true love and happiness. A big thank you to Jim Foster for sponsoring this exciting production!

The full production with orchestra will feature two unique casts.

Get your *The Magic Flute* Tickets Here



The Comparison Project: Roads to Religion

Sunday February 23, 3:00-5:00pm

Olmsted Center (Parents Hall)

Features dozens of local religious communities, collectively representing at least a dozen religious traditions. These communities will be arranged throughout the hall as if on a map of the metro area. Visitors will receive a map to guide them in their exploration of them. Refreshments provided by Sodexo. This event is free and open to the public.

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Details!

Date- June 16 - 20

Time- 9am - 5:30pm

Price-\$400

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Final Performance:
June 20th at 5:30pm

Registration Website:
<https://duvi2025.eventbrite.com/>

Questions? Email:
ducsom@drake.edu

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College of Arts & Sciences

1310 25th Street | Des Moines, IA 50311 US

- T [1-800-44-DRAKE \(37253\) x3939](tel:1-800-44-DRAKE)
- T [515-271-3939](tel:515-271-3939)
- W drake.edu/artsci

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