



Associate Professor of Biology Nanci Ross presents Professor Athanasios of Physics with the 2026 Stalnaker Lecturer Award. For more photos from the 2025 Stalnaker lecture, see below!

A Note from the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

On my way to work yesterday, I had to stop several times to admire and take pictures of the gorgeous fall colors. Gotta love Iowa when it looks and feels like this! It almost made me forget that we are in the busiest stretch of the semester. Thank you for submitting mid-term grades, making extra time to meet with students as they register for the spring semester, and finding time to check in with your colleagues. Application deadlines for sabbatical, P&T, and Faculty Development Grants are happening right now, and admission events, student support celebrations, and All-College meetings are piling up. Thanksgiving break is just a few weeks away—we can make it!



I am elated by the many accomplishments and exciting developments happening in the Arts and Sciences. The Stalnaker lecture is always a highlight, and the Halloween “Hauntcert” put on by the Drake Symphony—in costumes—was equally delightful! Since my last newsletter note, I traveled to and from Qingdao, where four of our faculty are teaching 170 students in Biology and Data Analytics classes and labs. It was amazing to see how our colleagues have adjusted, bringing the Drake way of teaching and learning to China and converting Qingdao United College students into proud Bulldogs!

During our visit, David Skidmore and I got to observe classes and labs, met students and Chinese colleagues, and checked out living arrangements, campus facilities and local food. There were challenges, such as adjusting lab experiments, learning the Chinese LMS, and ensuring IT security. However, our faculty have been true trailblazers and pioneers. One year into this partnership, we can proudly say that the program is off to a fantastic start. In its second year, the program has not only facilitated global exchange but also generated considerable net revenue for Drake. We have begun searches to hire more faculty to teach in Qingdao, as we will need nine faculty to cover all courses next fall.

Our next College meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 14, where Council will share updates to the annual evaluation form. Please also save the date for our College Social on Sunday, December 7, at 2pm in the Knapp Center. We are doing something new and fun to get together at the end of the semester. I hope you can join us for this family friendly event!

Wishing you a successful and sane last few weeks of the semester!

Gesine Gerhard

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





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Calendar Quick Links

[Academic Calendar](#)

[University Events Calendar](#)

Date	Event/Activity
Wednesday, November 5	First Generation Celebration, 12-2pm in the A&S Student Support Wing
Friday, November 7	Admissions Event: Fall Campus Preview Day
Monday, November 10	Faculty Development Grant Applications are due to the Dean's Office
Friday, November 14	All College Meeting, 2-4 PM, Cowles Library Reading Room
Monday, November 15	Admissions Event: Fall Saturday Visit Day
Monday, November 17	Second-year faculty reviews due to the Dean
Monday, November 17	Independent Study, Internship, Research and Honor's Thesis Course Release Applications due to the the Dean's Office
Wednesday-Sunday November 26-30	Thanksgiving Break
Monday, December 1	Travel Grant Applications are due (2nd deadline)
Monday, December 1	Covid Course Release Applications for 2026-2027 are due

[Access the Full College of A&S and University Calendar 2025-26 Here](#)

COLLEGE END-OF-SEMESTER SOCIAL KNAPP CENTER DRAKE VS WESTERN ILLINOIS DECEMBER 7, 2-5 PM



Join us for the Arts and Sciences Social!

We are excited to invite you to our end-of-semester College Social on Sunday, December 7, at 2pm in the Knapp Center. We look forward to celebrating the end of the semester together, catching up on all that has happened, and supporting our women student-athletes as they take on Western Illinois.

We will have tickets and a drink/food voucher for you and a guest, and will be sitting together in section 204, which is reserved for us. We'll plan to take a group photo at the beginning of halftime. Bring your family—everyone is welcome!

Please click [here](#) to let us know if you are coming and to get your tickets and drink vouchers. We look forward to seeing you at the game!

Celebrating A&S Highlights

41st Annual Stalnaker Lecture

On October 16th, we hosted the College of Arts Sciences' prestigious Stalnaker Lecture, awarded to a distinguished faculty member who gives a lecture to the University community on a topic in their discipline.

Ellis and Nelle Levitt Distinguished Professor of Psychology **Maria Valdovinos** presented "How Did We Get Here? Undertreatment of, and Psychotropic Overprescription to, People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities," drawing from her research as well as from her work in residential and day treatment settings with adults diagnosed with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Her lecture challenged some of the current treatment approaches for this population, calling for greater access to preventative supports and individualized evaluation and treatment.

Following a Question and Answer session, emcee Dr. Nanci Ross, Associate Professor of Biology and Vice-Chair of A&S Council presented the award for the 2026 Stalnaker Lecturer to Professor of Physics Dr. **Athanasios Petridis** for his work on high-energy nuclear physics and quantum mechanics as well as his mentorship of undergraduate researchers. Dr. Petridis will present a lecture at this esteemed event next October.

Dr. Ross also presented the Distinguished Engagement Award to Associate Professor of Art and Design **Neil Ward**, recognizing his artistry, service and leadership in his collaboration, mentorship and community engagement.

Associate Professor of Art and Design and board member of the Center for the Humanities, Emily Newman, recognized Associate Professor of English **Yasmina Madden** as the recipient of the 2025 Humanities Research Scholar Award. The research scholarship award will allow Professor Madden to write a novel continuing her exploration of the cultural composition of the female body, gender construction and expectations, female sexuality, and taboo behavior.

Congratulations to our outstanding faculty, and thank you to all who helped with the celebration!









Congratulations to Professor of Biology and Director of Kinesiology **David Senchina**, who has been named the inaugural chairholder of the Cliff Rea Endowed Chair In Biology.

Dr. Senchina was selected based on his outstanding research record, excellence in teaching, and active involvement of undergraduate students in research. Students in his lab have co-authored 22 peer-reviewed publications since 2011, focusing on the somatosensory perception—the body's ability to sense touch, pressure, pain, and temperature—of athletic footwear.



Dr. David Skidmore of Drake's Department of Political Science just published a new book titled *China, the West, and the Global Development Financing Regime: Competitive Convergence* with Edward Elgar Publishing. The book examines how China and traditional Western-led financial institutions are reshaping the global development landscape—sometimes in competition, often in convergence, and always with implications for multilateralism and global order. Congratulations, David!



Periphery Art & Literary Journal, advised by Professor of English **Carol Spaulding Kruse**, placed first for Best Literary Magazine Cover and third for Literary Magazine of the Year (Division III) in the College Media Association's Pinnacle Awards for 2025! Congratulations to Editor-in-Chief Avery Hjelm (BA '26, English) and the rest of the Periphery staff for this great achievement!



Above: Jordan Wyer, Lilah Anderson, Keith Taylor and Jill Wells



Congratulations to the Anderson Gallery director **Lilah Anderson** and artist and Drake University alum **Jill Wells** for the phenomenal opening night reception for Wells' new exhibit, *I AM A MULTITUDE*, a site-specific immersive meditation on identity, health, and renewal.

You can see more photos from the exhibit as well as a video of Wells speaking with Lilah about the exhibit, her process, and advice for Drake fine arts students in a short preview video on the Anderson Gallery Instagram page (@theanderson_drake/). She will also be speaking about her work on First Friday this November 7 at 6:00pm in FAC 204 (see Events section below for details).

You can experience this exhibit in person at the Anderson Gallery through December 19. Anderson Gallery hours are posted [here](#).



2025-2026 Faculty Development Grant Applications Open through November 10

The College of Arts & Sciences offers support for research, scholarly work, grant writing, pedagogical development, and creative endeavors (submit by November 10, 2025).

Collaborative Projects (up to \$2,500) These grants are available to two or more faculty who are working on a joint project: reading groups, conference planning, curriculum revision and development, and so on. Funds may be used to purchase materials and/or compensate student research assistants.

Teaching/Scholarship/Research Projects (up to \$2,000) These grants provide faculty with support for research, creative activity, writing projects, and pedagogical development. Grants may be used to purchase materials (books, software, permissions, supplies), support project-related travel (libraries, laboratories, archives, sites, etc.), and/or compensate student research assistants.

Professional Activities Small Grant (up to \$300) This easy-to-apply-for grant provides funds for faculty to purchase items related to professional activities (e.g., books, software, permissions, instrumentation fees, facility admission, teaching/research supplies, subscriptions, honorariums, publication charges).

[**Access the Faculty Development Grant Proposal Form Here**](#)

Last 3rd Friday of the Year

Join faculty and staff colleagues from around this university on Friday, November 21 in the Howard Hall Faculty Lounge Room 212. This will be the last of the 3rd Friday series for 2025!

At 11am, hear from Adrien Halliez, A&S Political Science, about American political opinion, polarization, and what all those yard signs can tell us.

At 1pm, join Leanne Purdum, A&S Law, Politics, and Society to discuss the role of technology in college classrooms.

And from 2-4pm, stop by to socialize and enjoy a refreshment and snacks before the weekend.

Nominations are open for the Windsor Professorship in Science—submissions to Deans accepted through December 15, 2025

Two new Windsor Professors will be appointed effective July 2026. The individual chosen will hold the title "Windsor Professor" and receive a salary supplement of \$3,750 per year for five years.

To nominate a colleague, please send end a nomination letter and current CV to the Dean by December 15. Self-nominations are acceptable. Deans will forward nominations with their comments and evaluation to Deputy Provost Jimmy Senteza by **February 15, 2026**.

[Access the 2026 Windsor Professorship Guidelines Here](#)

Ellis and Nelle Levitt Distinguished Professorships announced at Drake for 2026

Deputy Provost Jimmy Senteza announced the selection of three new Ellis and Nelle Levitt Distinguished Professors at Drake University in 2026. This prestigious honor recognizes exceptional faculty for their teaching excellence, scholarly contributions, consulting activities, leadership, and service to the university's mission.

Full professors are eligible to apply for the professorship. The awardees will receive an annual salary supplement of \$5,000.

To nominate a colleague, please send a nomination letter and current CV to the Dean by February 13, 2026. Self-nominations are welcome.

Deans will forward recommendations to Deputy Provost **Jimmy Senteza** by March 13, 2026, who will convene a faculty committee to review nominations and make recommendations to the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees.

Thank you for your attention to this opportunity to recognize excellence and superior performance on behalf of an outstanding faculty member!

Spring Course Sought for "Generations Over Lunch" Series

A new [intergenerational lunch-and-learn series](#) hosted by the Office of Community Engaged Learning and Wesley Life kicked off this fall with four Drake instructors and their courses sharing meals and topical discussions with seniors from around the community. Instructors interested in hosting a "Generations Over Lunch" event as a part of a spring course are invited to [submit a proposal](#) by November 14. Selected instructors will receive a \$600 stipend. Please contact Mallary Allen, Director of Community Engaged Learning, for more details.



Admission Corner

While we may be living post-COVID and favoring in-person interactions, we continue to hear that prospective students and families still appreciate virtual flexibility to make their college decision.

Between November 11 and December 15, 2025, Admissions will host ten [Virtual Academic Spotlights](#) across the University! Thank you for your collaboration and participation again this year. Last year a total of 252 students attended Virtual Academic Spotlights. Of this number, 185 were entering 2025 students of which 90 enrolled (48.65%) compared to the year prior that welcomed 292 entering 2024 student attendees, of which 100 enrolled (34.25%). These Spotlights are a unique and effective recruitment strategy, bringing together Admissions staff, our faculty and current students, and prospective families on Zoom.

Virtual Spotlights which include A&S programs, with dates and presenters, are featured below:

- **Social Sciences and Humanities** (Thursday, November 13 at 6:00pm-6:45pm)
 - Thanks to Dr. Rachel Paine Caufield and Dr. Lisa West for leading this session.
- **Natural Sciences** (Monday, November 17 at 6:00pm-6:45pm)
 - Thanks to Dr. Marc Busch and Dr. Adina Kilpatrick for leading this session.
- **Pre-Law** (Wednesday, December 3 at 6:00pm-6:45pm)
 - Thanks to Dr. Deb DeLaet and Dr. Will Garriott for representing A&S in this session.
- **Pre-Medicine** (Tuesday, December 9 at 6:00pm-6:45pm)
 - Thanks to Dr. Gholam Mirafzal for representing A&S in this session, in collaboration with our colleagues in CPHS.
- **Tech, Data, Math, and Computer Science** (Wednesday, December 10 at 6:00pm-6:45pm)
 - Thanks to Dr. Terrance Pendleton and Dr. Tim Urness for leading this session.

The personal touches make the difference: Your commitment to helping recruit the next class of first-year students at Drake is greatly appreciated – and we aim to stay flexible and creative in this process!

Your ideas are welcomed: Associate Dean, [Jill Allen](#), is organizing an ad-hoc committee on Admissions to launch in J-Term 2026, with possibilities to shape College decisions on divisional (Natural Sciences, Humanities/Social Sciences, Fine Arts) and pre-professional (Pre-Law, Pre-Med, Pre-OT + others) strategy. The committee will meet in-person over brunch or lunch for an initial conversation during J-Term.

[Please sign up here](#) by December 1 if you are interested in joining this effort!

Student Support Corner

The deadline to drop a course with a W was Sunday, Oct 26. If a student requests to drop a course at this point in the semester, that request should be directed to Associate Dean Adina Kilpatrick, adina.kilpatrick@drake.edu, and should be accompanied by evidence of an extenuating circumstance to justify the withdrawal.

Registration is in full swing! Registration times for students are based on earned hours (not including fall 2025 courses). The registration timeline for spring 2026 can be found at [Microsoft Word - Spring 2026 Registration Times.docx](#).

Many practical advising resources can be found at [Registration Information | Drake University](#) including a listing of courses restricted to certain programs during the first two weeks of registration.

If you have advisees, who aren't sure how to navigate registration on MyDrake, please direct them to these "how-to" resources, [Knowledge Base - Registration](#).

NEW (AND NEW-ISH) FORM!

The [Registration Waiver Request](#) form, i.e., a request to waive a course pre-requisite was released last spring, but this fall sees the release of the [Credit Overload Request](#) form, another ProcessMaker form. This form is used by those students required to enroll in more than 18 credits due scholarship or ensemble requirements, CREW Scholar membership, ROTC involvement or participation as a tutor. Please encourage advisees who will need to raise their credit hours, to complete this form prior to their registration window. The completion of the credit overload request form will prompt our office to seek faculty advisor/mentor approval and help identify those students who can adjust schedules and avoid an overloaded semester. Both forms can be found at the bottom of the page at [Registrar Forms | Drake University](#).

Note: Thank you to the faculty, staff and students who helped make our first Arts & Sciences Fall Connections event such a success!



Career Services Update



THE FORUM

ON EDUCATION ABROAD

From Rebecca Muntz, Assistant Director of Career Services and Liaison to Arts and Sciences

New Research Shows Study Abroad Boosts Career Skills

A recent report from the Forum on Education Abroad entitled “**The Talent Advantage: What Study Abroad Alumni Can Do Differently in the Workplace**” demonstrates that students who participate in study abroad cultivate key competencies that align closely with employer priorities. Specifically, the research finds that through micro-moments experienced abroad (e.g., navigating unfamiliar cultural contexts, adapting on-the-spot, and collaborating across difference) participants develop **adaptability, innovation mindsets, resilience, and strong interpersonal communication skills**.

These findings reinforce how global learning experiences not only enrich the undergraduate journey but also actively contribute to career readiness by strengthening the very skills that differentiate successful professionals. [Read the report here.](#)

Internship Corner

Hear of an internship you'd like to highlight for our students? Email the link to Rebecca Muntz, and it will be shared with A&S students in the **bi-weekly Career Connections Newsletter**.

Upcoming Events:

Need a new headshot? UCM is hosting a free headshot day!

Fri, Nov 7, 10:00am - 2:00pm, Old Main Conference Room 115

Register here: <https://calendar.drake.edu/event/headshot-day-fall-2025>

Save the Date: Spring University-Wide Career Fair

Thursday, Feb 12, 3:00-6:00pm, Upper Olmsted

Upcoming Events



[In Conversation with Jill Wells](#)

November 7, 6-7:00 p.m. | Harmon Fine Arts Center, Room 204

Celebrate First Friday at the Anderson Gallery! Artist **Jill Wells** will be in conversation with Gallery Director **Lilah Anderson** about her current exhibition **I AM A MULTITUDE**. The site-specific immersive installation is a meditation on identity, health, and renewal. This conversation will offer insight into the current exhibition as well as Wells' process, other projects and growth as an artist. The event is free and open to all. The exhibition will run from Oct 30 – Dec 19, 2025. Free parking is available on 25th St.

Drake Opera Theatre Presents

RISING STARS

A Concert of Opera Arias and Scenes

Friday, November 14, 2025 at 7:30pm
Sheslow Auditorium

[Rising Stars—Drake Opera Theatre](#)

November 14, from 7:30p.m. | Sheslow Auditorium

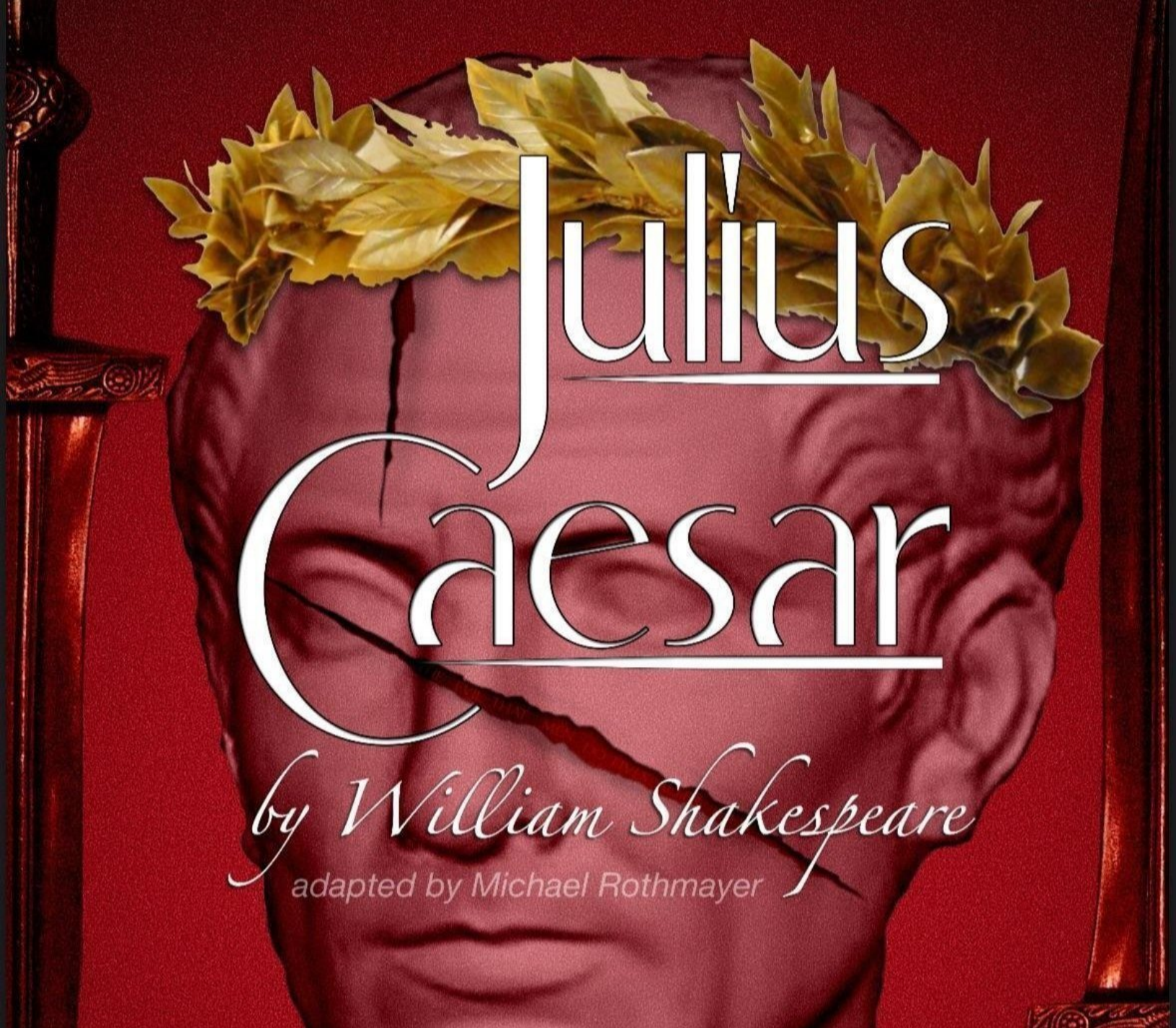
The 2025-2026 Drake Opera Theatre Season will open with *Rising Stars: A Concert of Opera Arias and Scenes* in Sheslow Auditorium, led by Director of Drake Opera Theatre **Christine Blanner**. This event is free and open to the public. Hope to see you all there!



[Drake University Jazz Ensemble One: Andrew Classen, director](#)

November 16, from 7:30p.m. | Patty & Fred Turner Jazz Center

Come check out Drake University's premier jazz ensemble, led by Professor of Trumpet and Patty & Fred Turner Professor of Jazz Studies **Andrew Classen**. This event is free and open to the public.



[Drake University Theatre Arts Department presents Julius Caesar](#)

November 20-23 from 7:30p.m. | Harmon Fine Arts Center, Performing Arts Hall

Come see Drake University Theatre Arts Department's final production of the fall semester, Julius Caesar - adapted & directed by Associate Professor of Theatre Arts **Michael Rothmayer**.

The show will run from Nov. 20th - 23rd. Get your tickets [here](#) online, or in person at the Harmon Fine Arts Center box office. They are selling fast!

Tag A&S on Your Social Media!

Please tag Arts & Sciences in your social media posts so we can share what you're up to. When you create your post, add @DrakeUArtSci to tag us in Facebook, and @drakeartsci in Instagram.

In partnership with UCM, we would love to spotlight faculty, students, staff, and alumni and feature your programs through the College of A&S accounts: please send your suggestions to jennifer.cooper@drake.edu.

Thanks!



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