

A Note from the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

I love the start of a new academic year. Yes, it comes with a lot of stress and worries. But there is excitement, energy, and possibility in the air!

I felt it when I dropped off my son at the airport for his semester-long study abroad in Spain. I felt it when we greeted some 300 new students in Sheslow auditorium during Welcome Week. I felt it at the A&S staff retreat and at our all-faculty and staff meeting, where we shared ideas, big and small, that came out of the faculty summer work reimagining the Arts and Sciences. We feel it in our classes during the first weeks, as we get to know new and returning students. Despite the challenges we face, I see great energy, anticipation, passion, and commitment everywhere. With all of you back on campus, it feels like together we can tackle what's ahead. Let's hold on to this feeling for as long as we can!

As we welcome our new colleagues (see below), there are new connections to be made. Grants, appointments, and publications are opening new doors (see below!). Please keep sharing your news and use those colorful envelopes to invite us to the events you put on! We want to attend, celebrate, and recognize all the great things happening in the College of Arts & Sciences. A student intern will help us increase our social media presence and we are working in partnership with UCM to update our websites.

We will need this energy to address the enrollment challenges we are facing. As we await the final count of students enrolled in our classes, we need to prepare for a budget scenario based on an EFR class of about 600 students. The new recruitment cycle has already begun, and we are excited to meet high school counselors from across the region at several fly-ins and receptions over the next few weeks. We are investing in digital advertising (paid online searches) that will highlight our programs to those engaged in college searches. All the things you do to make connections with area high school students--meeting with campus visitors, offering mock classes and conducting lab tours--will help put Drake on the map and build our 2025 class of Bulldogs.

I am excited for the year ahead. I am grateful to work with you all, with department chairs and directors, with council and cabinet, with staff and the dean team, on the priorities you have set for yourself and for the college. Please let me know how I can support you throughout the year.

Warmly,

Gesine



Important Upcoming Dates

Date	Event/Activity
September 6	Humanities Research Scholar Award (2025-2028) <u>applications</u> due
September 8	Deadline to <u>drop</u> a full-term course without a “W” (through Self Service) by 11:59pm
September 9	<u>Nominations</u> for the Stalnaker Lecturer, Distinguished Engagement Award, and Centennial Scholar are due
September 20	J-Term and Spring 2025 schedules are due to the Dean’s Office
September 27-29	Parents and Family Weekend
September 28	Admissions Event: Fall Saturday Visit Day
October 1	Department recommendations for 2024 P&T Candidate due to Dean
October 1	Intent to apply for promotion to professor in Fall 2025 due to Dean/Chair
October 1	Last day to submit proposal for <u>new travel seminar</u> to A&S Curriculum Committee for J- term 2026
October 4	Admissions Event: Fall Campus Preview Day
October 4	Spring 2025 <u>schedule of classes</u> available through MyDrake

Access the Full College of A&S and University Calendar 2024-25 Here

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

Join us for a Dual-Degree Engineering Overview Session with WashU – Upcoming Sept. 30

Faculty, advisors, admissions team: Have students interested in engineering? You are invited to an overview of a Drake connection with Washington University that allows students to combine liberal arts and specialized engineering training. Students from Drake that have gone on to the Dual-Degree program at WashU have gone on to have illustrious careers, and student interest seems to be growing! Please join us for a session with Wash U's Associate Dean Chris Kroeger, on Monday, September 30 from 2-2:30 (presentation), with time to stay for conversation between 2:30-3pm. We will have lemonade and coffee! No RSVP needed – please join us as you are able (Science Connector Building 101)!

Additionally, we will hold a student lunch (with pizza) 12:30-1:30pm (also in Science Connector Building 101) for students to learn more about the unique Dual-Degree Engineering Partnership. We are asking for your help to get the word out to interested students (RSVP required for a lunch, but students may also complete the form to be sent information even if they cannot attend). The student sign-up deadline is by Friday, 9/27 by noon! [Student Sign Up](#)

Interested in Teaching a Travel Seminar? Check out these workshops from Education Abroad

Designing a Travel Seminar Workshop | Sept 17 from 11am – 12pm | Cowles 201 “Fish Bowl”

Do you have a great idea for a seminar and want to take the next step of developing a plan that integrates your academic goals with on-site experiences? During this interactive workshop we'll focus on generating ideas and refining a plan for your travel seminar, and then making them a reality. Bring your ideas and we'll discuss the unique blend of academic study, intercultural experience, and travel abroad that combine to create a quality travel seminar. For this workshop, we will be joined by Catherine Spaeth, PhD, an expert in Study Abroad Short-Term Program development who literally wrote the book on short-term programming. Hone your ideas and make them a reality! *RSVP required to chelsea.funk@drake.edu.*

Travel Seminar Proposal Process Workshop | Sept 20 from 11am – 12pm | Cowles 201 “Fish Bowl”

Great for both new & veteran travel seminar leaders! Join Chelsea Funk, Assistant Director of Education Abroad,

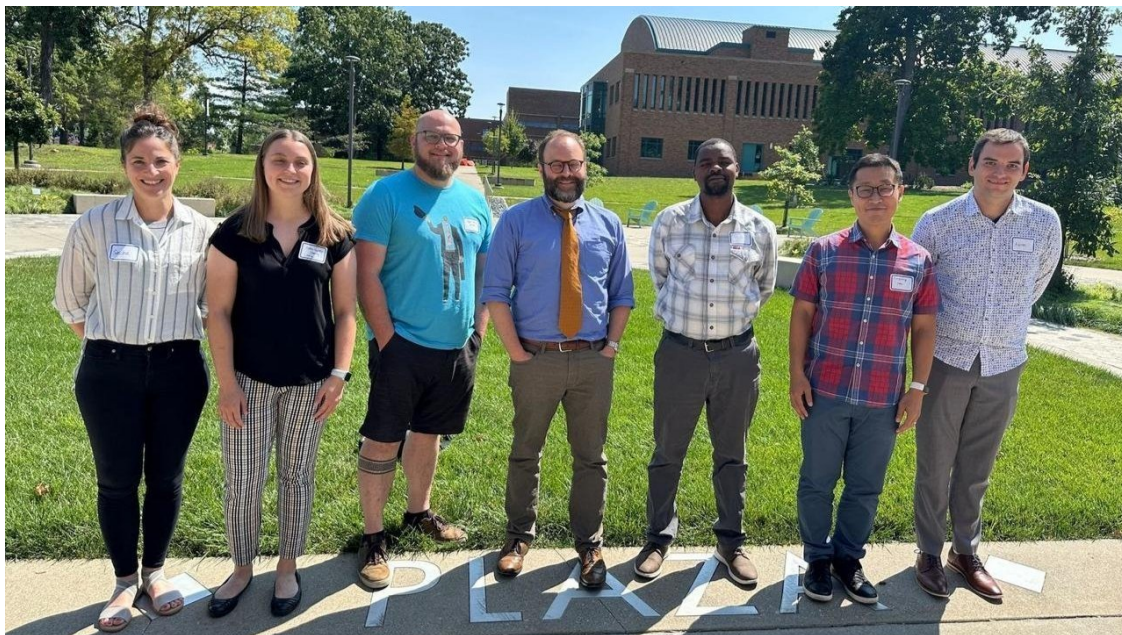
to learn more about specific Drake policies and protocols related to Travel Seminars. This is a great opportunity to ask all your questions about the submission requirements, AOIs, timeline, etc. *For more insight into developing your ideas, join our “Designing a Travel Seminar Workshop” on September 17th. (no RSVP required to attend)*

Application Deadline Extended: Centennial Scholar, Stalnaker, and Distinguished Engagement Faculty Awards Due on September 9

The deadline for College of Arts and Sciences Award nominations have been extended to **Monday September 9**. As a reminder, here are the three awards for which we are seeking nominations. The direct link to the Qualtrics form to submit nominations for all of these awards [is located here](#).

More information about these awards, the nomination process, and eligibility requirements [can be found here](#).

Meet Our New Faculty and Staff!



Fresh from the New Faculty Orientation, we introduce the new A&S faculty for fall 2024. Welcome!

(L-R): Sascha Crasnow, Andrea Van Wyk, Noah Files, Gabriel Ford, Alfred Limbere, Jinmyung Choi, Adrien Halliez



Dr. Jinmyung Choi, Visiting Assistant Professor in Physics & Math

Dr. Choi earned his Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Florida in 2010. Since then, he has worked as a postdoctoral researcher in the field of biomedical data science. Recently, he completed training in biostatistics at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai before joining the faculty at Drake University.

His primary research interest is in addressing mathematical and data analytical challenges in the field of biomedical data science to discover novel insights into human health and diseases.

Teaching: Dr. Choi gained teaching experience in introductory physics lab and discussion courses as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for several years. In the Fall 2024 semester, he will be teaching Calculus 3, Business calculus, and Introductory Physics lab courses. He is enthusiastic about guiding students to build strong foundations in the courses he teaches.

Fun Fact: Jinmyung enjoys walking and jogging around his neighborhood.



Dr. Sascha Crasnow, Assistant Professor in Art History, Department of Art & Design

Dr. Crasnow received her B.S. (Honors) in Psychology from the University of Washington, her M.A. in Art History from Hunter College, and her Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego. For the past 6 years she has taught art and visual culture as a lecturer in the Residential College of the University of Michigan.

Her research focuses on contemporary art from Southwest Asia and North Africa, with a particular focus on Palestine. She is interested in how artists’ works articulate their experiences of their particular socio-cultural conditions, in particular as relates to race, gender, and sexuality.

Teaching: Dr. Crasnow is looking forward to teaching classes related to her research and interests including *Art & Resistance: Global Responses to Oppression*, *Art & Conflict in the Modern Middle East*, *Gender & Sexuality in Contemporary Islamic Art*, and *Palestinian Art: 1948-Present*. She is also looking forward to developing new classes such as one that looks at how science fiction and futurism has been adopted by a variety of global contemporary artists.

Fun Fact: Sascha taught her dog Parker how to “talk” using recordable buttons that she presses to express herself. The two of them are currently featured in a new Netflix documentary called “Inside the Mind of a Dog”.



Noah Files, Director, Theatre Tech and Design

Noah has a M.F.A. in Theatre Scenic Design from Minnesota State Mankato.

In his professional career, he has been a Scenic Artist, who has worked with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, New York Stage and Film, and most recently with Des Moines Metro Opera.

Noah is the Vice-Chair of Design and Technology for Region 5 of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

At Drake, he will be teaching classes related to Scenic and Sound Design.

One of Noah's goals here at Drake is to bring a show to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, a world-renowned and open-access performing arts festival. Every August, talent from all over the world, from household names to emerging artists to perform at hundreds of stages across the city.





Dr. Gabriel Ford, Assistant Professor in English

Dr. Ford has been teaching for the English Department as a Visiting Assistant Professor since the fall of 2021. Before that, he was Director of Equity and Inclusion at Drake. He also taught in the English departments at Converse College and Davidson College in the Carolinas. He received a Ph.D. from Penn State University and an M.Phil. from Trinity College Dublin.

Dr. Ford is a medievalist and philologist, focusing on the Britain from c. 1100 to c. 1500, with particular interest in the British reception of Arabic and Hebrew language secular narrative material over that period. He is working on an edition and translation of the Anglo-French *Le Romaunz Peres Aunfour*, a thirteenth-century verse story collection distantly related to the Arabic *1,001 Nights* as well as on a monograph about the influence of this narrative tradition on books like Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* that tend to be better known today. Recent essays have appeared in the journals *Digital Philology*, *postmedieval*, *Studies in Philology*, and *Medieval Encounters*.

Dr. Ford teaches courses on early period English literature, literary history, linguistics, grammar, book history, science fiction, and fantasy. He is particularly fond of book history courses built around a “book lab.” These courses involve activities like cutting quill pens, binding books, setting moveable type, marbling paper, and printing on letterpress printing presses.



Dr. Adrien Halliez, Assistant Professor in Political Science

Dr. Halliez was an English, Spanish and U.S. studies major in France before making the transatlantic move to the department of political science at Georgia State University from which he graduated in 2023.

He studies the impact of visible or "in your face" politics (e.g.: MAGA, BLM, yard signs) on the polarization of interpersonal communication in the U.S. He is also currently working on other projects including one about immigration communication on Twitter/X (from agencies such as ICE and CBP) and the construct of "elites" in populist rhetoric in the U.S., France, Mexico and Brazil.

Teaching: Dr. Halliez has taught undergraduate classes on public opinion, ideology and partisanship, media effects, and political participation in his previous position as a visiting assistant professor at Wake Forest University in North Carolina. You may see his students running surveys or displaying posters on campus later this semester!

Fun Fact: After living in three different countries, people are doubting Adrien's French-ness because he is not overly critical of American bakeries, and he can't recommend a good bottle of wine. Besides, his English accent has been so twisted that it has been labeled many different things including French, British, "definitely not Southern", "exotic," "hip-hop," "weird" and too many other adjectives to count.



Dr. Alfred Limbere, Visiting Assistant Professor in Math

Dr. Limbere earned his B.ED. Science (Mathematics and Physics) from Kisii University, in Kenya. He taught High School mathematics and physics in Kenya before he joined Graduate School. He also holds a Ph.D. in mathematics education and a master’s in mathematics from Montclair State University, as well as a master’s degree in mathematics education from Rutgers University.

His research focuses on the preparation of preservice secondary mathematics teachers and professional development of in-service mathematics teachers. His current work focuses on developing a model in which pre-service mathematics teachers develop knowledge for teaching calculus, with emphasis on the concept of derivative.

Teaching: Dr. Limbere leverages students’ mathematical thinking in his instruction, making the learning process active and student-centered; thus, supporting development of a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.

Fun Fact: When Alfred mentions he's from Kenya, folks often ask if he’s a marathon runner. His reply? “Some of us decided to join the cheering team!”



Erik Meixelsperger, Assistant Professor of Theatre

Professor Meixelsperger received his B.F.A. in Acting from the University of Minnesota-Duluth, and his M.F.A. in Acting from Florida State University. He has been a professional actor in stage and film for the last ten years. He also has extensive certifications and professional experience in stage combat.

Along with acting, his main area of research is Playwriting. He has had several plays produced across the US including a play called FISHBOWL that was produced at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC. Last year, while serving as a VAP of Acting here at Drake, his plays titled WAITING FOR SNOW and AFTER EVER HAPPILY both had their US world premieres and AFTER EVER HAPPILY received two national awards; The Citizen Artist Award AND Distinguished Production of New Work.

Teaching: Prior to teaching at Drake, Professor Meixelsperger taught 4 years as an Adjunct Professor of Theatre Johnson County Community College in Kansas City. And has been teaching workshops in Voice work, Movement, Shakespeare Acting, and Stage Combat for local High Schools and theatre companies in the Kansas City area.

Fun Fact: The entire reason Erik got into acting was because when he was a kid, he saw Dick Van Dyke in Mary Poppins and loved it. Then, the first professional acting job he got when he finished school was the role of Bert in Mary Poppins.



Dr. Andrea Van Wyk, Assistant Professor in Chemistry

Dr. Van Wyk went to undergrad at Simpson College where she double majored in Chemistry and Math. She then went on to the University of Iowa where she just completed her doctorate in chemistry this past May. Over the summer she worked at the University of Iowa as an adjunct assistant professor teaching an introductory chemistry course.

She conducts chemistry education research where she investigates ways to support student learning in chemistry. More specifically, her work focuses on designing and assessing more authentic research experiences in the laboratory setting.

Teaching: This fall Dr. Van Wyk is teaching two sections of General Chemistry I. She’s looking forward to introducing students to the world of chemistry and helping them start to cultivate scientific skills. She loves being able to put the things she learns in her own chemistry education research into practice in the classroom to make learning chemistry better for all students.

Fun fact: 5 years ago, when Andrea was a senior year of college, she ran a 10K at the Drake Road Races! She is working on training to be able to run it again this upcoming relays, now as a faculty member!



Admissions & Enrollment Corner

Census day, the date Drake uses to establish final numbers of enrollment, has not arrived yet, so we cannot share those final numbers. Drake is, however, already moving into the next cycle for Admissions. Here are some of the upcoming events. On September 16, Drake will host a bus tour of high school guidance counselors from a variety of states. Dean Gerhard will provide an overview of the College of Arts & Sciences in this whirlwind event. Plans are underway for a STEM Admissions Day October 25, featuring lab experiences for potential students as well as overviews of Arts & Sciences and CPHS programs. We want to expand the STEM academic fair to include Non-STEM faculty articulating ways science is integrated into other areas of study, such as AI, Writing, and Art. On Saturday, September 28, there will be a Campus Visit Day for prospective students in various stages of the college selection process. Thanks in advance to faculty helping with all these events.

UCM welcomes videos and stories that communicate individual student experiences. Please share with Lisa, Jill, or Jennifer any material related to internships, experiential learning, hands-on projects, or exciting combinations of classes. We want to do better promoting what the College already does well - which is a lot.



Advising & Student Support Corner



Katie Evenson, Academic Advising Specialist

Katie Evenson is an Academic Advising Specialist in the College of Arts & Sciences. She completed her undergraduate coursework at the University of Iowa, earning a degree in English and secondary education licensure. Most of her work has been with high school students, including most recently with her role as Upward Bound Academic Advisor at Simpson College. Katie's career experience is rooted in guiding limited-income, potential first-generation college students to be successful in high school and coaching students through the college admissions and financial aid processes.

Outside of work, Katie enjoys spending time with her family and chasing after her two young children. A passionate college football fan, Katie spends most fall Saturdays taking in as much football as possible. She's also fond of spending time outdoors and reading.

Do You Validate...Your Courses?

Enrollment validation is tied to a number of processes, including financial aid. If your best intentions didn't result in submission, please confirm the accuracy of (science rosters) with [Alina Grimm](#), and (non-science rosters) with [Mary Beth Holtey](#). The accurate validation of courses (now) makes the rest of the semester run more smoothly for the student and University offices.

But...They Validated and Are Now Ghosting...

Send that student's name to [Alina Grimm](#), science courses, and [Mary Beth Holtey](#), non-science courses, and let us reach out to the student to finalize their enrollment now.

It Ain't Over Till It's Over...The Drop Period That Is...

Students have through Sunday, Sept 8, 11:59 p.m. to drop a course in MyDrake. Note that University academic offices are not open on weekends, but a variety of registration resources can be found at [Knowledge Base - Registration \(teamdynamix.com\)](#). Students should not drop below 12 credit hours if they wish to retain full-time standing.

Fall Tutoring

Fall tutoring will become available on Monday, Sept 9. Tutoring times and a variety of other resources can be accessed at [Tutoring | Drake University](#).

New Faculty Mentor Training

Training for new Faculty Mentors will be offered on Friday, Sept 20 from noon to one in CS 335 (though of course returning advisors are welcome, too.) We recommend that all second-year tenure track faculty attend this event. Lunch will be served. To confirm your space and reserve a lunch, please contact Lisa West at lisa.west@drake.edu before Friday, Sept 13.



Celebrating Faculty Highlights

Dr. Heidi Sleister appointed as incoming DUSCI Director (2024-2027)



It is with great pleasure that we announce Dr. Heidi Sleister, Professor of Biology, has been appointed as the incoming Drake Undergraduate Science Collaborative Institute (DUSCI) Director beginning during AY 24-25 for a three-year term. Dr. Sleister served on the faculty committee to establish DUSCI in 2005 and was one of three founding members of the annual Drake University Conference on Undergraduate Research in the Sciences (DUCURS). She maintains a rich history of leadership within the program (8 years on the Faculty Advisory Board) and as a faculty mentor to over 30 students participating in it. Dr. Sleister's research interests span from human genetics to the teaching and learning of biology, and we are grateful for her 22 years of service to Drake University in other leadership capacities, including as former Department Chair and outgoing Associate Dean of Strategic Initiatives. In reflecting on her new role within DUSCI, Dr. Sleister remarked, "I look forward to leading efforts to foster a collaborative positive environment in the sciences across campus, recognizing our colleagues' accomplishments, and expanding the reach of DUSCI to increase the institute's impact on science/math faculty/student recruitment, retention, learning, and professional development." Congratulations, Heidi!



Dr. Claire Hruby receives \$161,880 grant from Great Outdoors Foundation to examine Iowa Water Quality over next five years

Recently, Dr. Claire Hruby (Assistant Professor, Environmental Science and Sustainability Department) was awarded a \$161,880 grant from the Great Outdoors Foundation for her proposed Iowa Water Quality research project in partnership with Google, a company that anticipates a growing need for water resources. The project, "Evaluating the effectiveness of water and erosion control basins in southwest Iowa" involves Dr. Hruby's mentorship of ENSS students in the Soil and Water Assessment Team (SWAT) Laboratory and will involve water monitoring in the Loess Hills area in southwestern Iowa. This project builds on Claire's 20 years of experience working with the Department of Natural Resources, and she has been a leader in the state of Iowa in helping public drinking water supplies, watershed groups, and individual landowners to understand and address water

quality challenges. This project will evaluate the effectiveness of structures designed to store water on the landscape and reduce erosion. The broader goal of the project is to increase the sustainability and resilience of landowners, communities, businesses, and downstream ecosystems. According to Dr. Hruby, students on her research team will also serve a valuable role in understanding the impact of water quality issues, flooding, erosion, and drought on local communities and engaging community members in education, monitoring, and improvement efforts.

Dr. Hruby has long been interested in water quality and public health, and she is an avid paddling enthusiast, so she wants to see Iowa live up to its potential as a state with healthy rivers and healthy citizens. It is no surprise that she teaches courses aligning with these interests, including a First Year Seminar (What's in Your Water?) and field and lab-based courses on Hydrology, Soil and Water Monitoring, and Water Resources. Students who work with her, work to collect water and soils samples, and analyze data to inform planning and develop solutions to challenging environmental problems. Currently, Dr. Hruby is working with approximately 10 students who are contributing to projects that advance the SWAT Laboratory's mission. Importantly, the vision of the SWAT lab involves significant community engagement and outreach, such as attending community events, city planning and watershed group meetings, meeting with water operators and school groups, and building interactive tools and maps to communicate about risks and the actions individuals can take to protect our shared resources.

When asked about the vision and proposed outcomes at the completion of this five-year grant project, Dr. Hruby mentioned increasing awareness of water issues and building relationships, building the capacity of the her students and her lab to take on more projects, working with more partners, and ultimately seeing measurable improvements in the health of our natural environment, which impacts human health, our economy, and helps to grow and strengthen both our rural and urban communities. **Claire notes that all of us do better, from bullfrogs to businesses, when we have enough clean water**, "It is an honor to receive this funding and to be able to bring more opportunities to students," Dr. Hruby says. The grant includes scholarships for students as part of the Darling Institute, which works to bring impactful research and financial support to students who come from rural parts of the Midwest, like southwest Iowa. Congratulations, Claire!



(Photo caption)- Three of Dr. Hruby's students participating in spring water monitoring snapshot with Polk County, interacting with a Polk County Rain Campaign employee, Cassie Druhl, to test for sources of bacteria (located at Raccoon River in summer 2024).

Dr. Maura Lyons awarded grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State Historical Society



Maura Lyons has had success securing external grant funding this year. First, she was awarded a Summer Stipend from the National Endowment for the Humanities for 2024. These highly-competitive grants support major scholarly projects that contribute to the humanities. In Lyons' case, this is her current book project, titled *Reckoning with Trauma: Intermedial Visual Culture and the Civil War North*, under contract with the University of Georgia Press for their UnCivil Wars series. The book examines the traffic of popular imagery during the U.S. Civil War across media and formats similar to today's meme culture. Most recently, Lyons was awarded a grant from the State Historical Society, Inc. of Iowa, a regional non-profit, in support of an exhibition she is curating with Drake students for the Anderson Gallery. This exhibition, which grows out of her book project, is titled *Acts of Projection: Magic Lantern Shows and the U.S. Civil War* and opens November 7, 2024. Congratulations, Maura!

Dr. David Skidmore publishes political commentary in Des Moines Register



Professor of Political Science David Skidmore published an Op-Ed in the [Des Moines Register](#) following the Republican National Convention in July. His essay integrates a class-based analysis for the 2024 Presidential Election, integrating empirical research on topics such as immigration and labor issues. In accordance with our [political activity_policy](#), the views expressed in this article are those of the author, not those of Drake University.

Upcoming Events



Thursday, Sept 5, 5:00-7:00pm, Anderson Gallery "Beautiful Land" exhibition opening

The Anderson Gallery will open its season with the exhibition Beautiful Land on Thursday September 5 from 5-7pm. The exhibition features the work of artists Ken Buhler and Kim Uchiyama. Both artists live and work in Brooklyn, NY, however each started out in Iowa and the landscape of this place is present in their work. The exhibition expands on the idea of what painting the landscape can be and celebrates the land and sky of our state. Immediately proceeding the reception Kim Uchiyama will give an informal tour of the exhibition at 4:30 pm. The reception and tour are free and open to all and light refreshments will be served. Additional events and more information can be found on the Anderson Gallery [website](#). This exhibition is co-organized with the [Wege Center for the Arts](#) at Maharishi International University.graph block.



September 10, 7:30-8:30 PM, Sheslow Auditorium. Recital: I Exist Project at Drake.

Nick May & Alex Li will present a recital that brings focus and awareness to LGBTQ+ composers and their music at Sheslow Auditorium on September 10. Through the I Exist Project, founder Nick May and Alex Li bring

awareness to “the richness and diversity of queer life, culture, and artistry by partnering with a broad spectrum of talented queer composers and performers.” [Learn more about the I Exist Project here.](#)

Textures Of Life

A one month Art
Showcase by

Patrick Thomas Lucas

On Display at
St. Johns Lutheran Church
600 6th Ave, Des Moines, IA 50309

September 2024 - October 2024



ptlartworks.com 

September-October 2024 Patrick Thomas Lucas, Textures of Life

Patrick Lucas presents "Textures of Life", a one month Art Showcase at St. Johns Lutheran Church.

Patrick is currently pursuing his B.F.A.at Drake in graphic design with a minor in marketing and art history, and will complete his studies this coming December. His work has appeared in three of the four Annual Student Juried Exhibitions at Drake, including *Afraid of Modern* (2022) and *Orbital* (2024).

Like A&S on Social Media!



Please check out and share on A&S Facebook and 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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