

Sponsored by

The School of Arts and Letters

and

The School of Health and Natural Sciences

**Interdisciplinary Student
Conference
April 8-10, 2026
“Our South: Resources and
Challenges in the Natural
World”**



Middle Georgia State University

Wednesday, April 9

Warner Robins Campus

12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

**Poster Presentations: "Community Health Nursing Roles
Poster Presentations"**

Oak Hall, Lobby

Presenters:



Special thank you to the following community partners:

Twiggs County Health Department

Georgia Hospice

Central Georgia Birthing Collaboration

Loving Arms Family Support

Online Plenary Session

3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

**Plenary Speaker, Odessa Blaine, "Southern
Appalachian Roots: Storytelling in Film and
Writing," on [TEAMS](#)**

Thursday, April 10 (Cochran Campus)

2:30 p.m.

Conference Session I

Wiccan and Wyrd: Pre-Christian Religious Echoes in Old English Poetry (Roundtable Discussion)

Russell Hall, Room 310

Moderator: Chris Cairney

- Nora Mack
- Evan Maddox
- Savannah Reynolds
- Januel Ortiz

3:30 p.m.

Spring Art Show and Reception

Peacock Gallery

Moderator: Charlie Agnew

- TBD
-

4:30 p.m.

Conference Session II

Exploring Themes in Horror Film and Fiction

Russell Hall, Room 310

Moderator: Crystal O'Leary-Davidson

- Julie Bryant, *The Weapon: Technology's Relationship with Intellect in Slasher Films*
- Sidney Dempsey, *The Postcoital Death in Classic and Modern Horror Films*
- Michael Frye, *Dr. Van Helsing: Helper of Hero?*

- Cynthia Mitchell, *The Eyes Have It: Camera, Viewer, and Psychology in a Multiplicity of Lenses Focused on Peeping Tom and Psycho*

Thursday, April 10 (Macon Campus)

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Registration

Library 1st Floor

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Poster Presentations

Library, 2nd floor

Psychology Research Methods

Faculty Advisor: Heather Ness-Maddox

- Serena Dean
- Robyn Freeman
- Oliver Hall
- Edwin Meelina-Gonzalez
- Ricky Vaughn

Faculty Advisor: Brandi Simpson, Wesleyan College

- Minal Agrawal, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Community Resilience Initiative

Education Posters

Faculty Advisor: Kelly Causey

- Luke Davis and Alexis Monroy, Liberté, Égalité... Education? A Comparative Study of France and the USA

Faculty Advisor: Luminta Hartle

- Brianna Jenkins, Living and Learning with Intellectual Disabilities: Lessons Through the Eyes of a Teacher and a Sister
- Ashlee Johnson, Strategies for Supporting Students with Emotional Disturbance Disorder

- Elyn Byington and Caroline Weir, The Impact of Early Screening on Developmental Delay
- Mackenzie Loughridge, Liberty Saylor, and Casey Ruffin, Teaching Through the Spectrum
- Olivia Paladino and Melina Williams, The Impact of Developmental Delay
- Sarah Alphonse and DJ O'Neill, Mental Health First Aid Matters
- Shanya Wyatt, 30 Seconds is All it Takes: How the Halo Effect Shapes Perceptions of Competence and Friendliness

Communications

Visual Storytelling Through the Lens of Journalism

Students

Faculty Advisor: Andre Nicholson

- Gabi Calloway
- Sarah Rabel
- Londy Ramirez-Perez
- Zaniya Simpson
- Tjay Whitehead

Friday, April 10 (Macon Campus)

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Registration

SOAL Lobby

10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Morning Session I

Korean Language Competition

SOAL, Room 122

Moderator: Yunsuk Chae

KOR 1002

- Tristan Sadler
- Ashley Stoudemire

HUMN 215

- Serenity Clark
- Erin Erschen
- Alyssa Russell

SOAL Room 120

Cultural Psychology of Georgia (Roundtable)

Moderator: Heather Ness-Maddox

- Patience Angel
- William Randall Bivins
- Robyn Freeman
- Kelsey Hollis
- Isaac Smith

SOAL Room 106

Education Panel

Moderator: TBA

- Luke Davis, Hidden in Plain Sight: Shedding Light on Epilepsy and Other Health Impairments

- Sarah Ruuth, Education, Race, and Partisanship in the Fair Counting of Votes
- Sherry King, Education as a Southern Resource: Using Writing to Guide Students into Purposeful Pathways Through the Southern Growth Model™
- Candace Robards, Strategic Communications by LGBTQ+ Advocacy Groups During the Obergefell v. Hodges Campaign

SOAL 104

Studies in J.R.R. Tolkien

Moderator: Karmen Lenz

- Julie Bryant, The Firstborn and the Followers: How Death and Immortality Appear Within Tolkien's Work
- Sidney Demsey
- Cassie Mossbarger

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

SOAL Theater

“Horizon Lines — A Writing Life,” Gordon Johnston,
Mercer University

Gordon Johnston is author of *Seven Islands of the Ocmulgee: River Stories*, which was published by Mercer University Press and Georgia Humanities in 2023 and was a finalist for the Townsend Prize in Fiction in 2025.

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Conference Awards Luncheon

SOAL Lobby

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Afternoon Session I

SOAL Room 122

Creative Works

Moderator: Karmen Lenz

- Julie Ann Hogan-McGirt, When Philomela Does Not Weave: Sexual and Generational Trauma in Hannah's The Nightingale
- Autumn Johnson, Paper Planes Fly Best in the Storms, Lullabies for a Moondust Trekker, Antisocial Media, Generational Curses
- Jesse Price, The Making of a Modern Fairy Tale: We Have Always Lived in the Castle and Girl in Red
- Sabrina Tingle, Unmarried Men in Shakespeare

SOAL Room 120

Appalachian Studies Roundtable

Moderator: Monica Miller

- Carrie Gilbert, Native America is Appalachia
- Sarah Jessup, The White to Suffer: Indigenous Removal and the Construction of Appalachia's Hillbilly
- Cynthia Mitchell, Dolly Parton as an Icon of Cultural Multiplicity in Appalachian Identity
- Victoria Price, The Cost of Coal Mining in Appalachia

SOAL Room 106

Interrogations of Film History

Moderator: Patrick Brennan

- Cameron Shoemaker, Heidi: A Cultural and Political Influence during an Uncertain Era
- Jonathan Brewer, The Critical Spectacle of Metropolis
- Yufiel Franklin, German Expressionism in The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari

- Blake Patterson, *Dracula: How Browning's Film Embraced German Expressionism*

SOAL Room 104

Trending Trouble: Media Influence and Reputation Risk

Moderator: Andre Nicholson

- Alaina Brown, *The Evolution of Feminism Through Modern Day Music*
- Ethan Bulharowski, *Representation of Women in Video Games*
- Kelsie Dodd, *AI, Recalls, and Reputation Risk*

3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Afternoon Session II

SOAL Room 122

The Human, the Monstrous, and the Divine in British Romantic Literature

Moderator: Loretta Clayton

- Chassidee Matthews, *Defining What it Means to be Human in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*
- Scott Clance, *Man Versus Nature: The Monster as a Force of Justice in Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*
- Jesse Price, *The Making of a Monster: An Examination of Victor Frankenstein and His Creation*
- Ana Haynam, *The Elusive Divine: Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty"*

SOAL Room 120

Graduate Students on Teaching College Writing Roundtable

Moderator: Monica Miller

- Sherry King
- Josie Hadaway

SOAL Room 106

Education Roundtable

Moderator: Luminita Hartle

- Alexis Monroy, Unlocking Expression: Strategies for Supporting Diverse Communicators
- Jada Aldana

The Interdisciplinary Student Conference Committee thanks the MGA Alumni Office for providing bags for our presenters and SOAL Dean Billy Wooten for the Dean's office financial support for the 2026 Interdisciplinary Conference, "Our South: Resources and Challenges in the Natural World."

**Susan Asbury and LaRonda Sanders-Senu
Conference Co-Directors**