



CAL *Currents* : The Newsletter of the College of Arts and Letters

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A Message from the Dean



I often times tell people that the best part of my job is getting to attend the [nightly performances, recitals, exhibits, screenings, lectures, openings, and events](#) that make the UT campus so exciting and so alive. I know that time, passion, and expertise that students and their faculty mentors from the College of Arts and Letters pour into these happenings is significant - but in the past few months I really gained a new appreciation for how dedicated our students are.

When **Prof. Paul Finocchairo** (or "Fino" as the kids call him) asked me to take a small cameo part in the Fall musical "Baby" I thought I'd say a line or two and walk off the stage - a cameo like he promised. He even told me "it's easy" and I'd only have to go to a few "short rehearsals." Well it turns out that short rehearsals for the musical theatre students are about six hours, and that finishing at midnight or later is not uncommon.

I also learned I am a really, really, *really* bad actor.

Liz Callaway, who was Tony-nominated for originating the lead role in "Baby" during its initial Broadway run and visited UT to workshop with our musical theatre students, told me plainly, "don't quit your day job." Noted.

I may not get to see a career on Broadway, but I did see, night after night, how hard the dozens of students on stage and behind the scenes worked to mount a Broadway musical that truly is one of the best (and best-priced) tickets in town. The students are not only extremely talented, they work together as a team, support one another, practice leadership skills, problem solve, and they have the utmost respect for the dedicated faculty who work so closely alongside of them. This is not just the case with the musical theatre majors, but all of our students in the College of Arts and Letters.

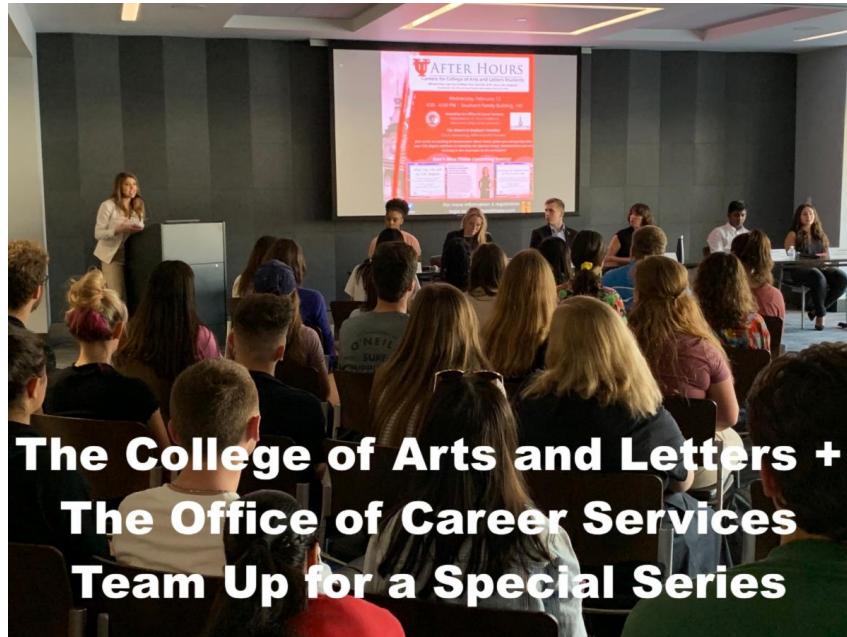
I am grateful for the experience, but I think you'll see me mostly in the audience and not on the stage. I hope you'll join me there for what is undoubtedly one of the best seats anywhere in Tampa Bay.



David Gudelunas, Ph.D.

Dean and Professor

CAL Means Careers



The College of Arts and Letters + The Office of Career Services Team Up for a Special Series

We know that studying the liberal arts ["leads to meaningful economic mobility"](#), that studying in the arts and humanities provides for a wide degree of [versatility in the current economy](#), that the technologically-focused job [markets of today actually demands arts and humanities majors](#), that humanities majors actually do [just as good if not better better](#) than their colleagues studying in hard sciences in the long run, that [employers are more likely to cite empathy and strong organizational and communication skills](#) as more important than quantitative ones, [and that creativity is one of the biggest driving forces](#) of the current economy...but students passionate about the arts and humanities are often times not as confident.

A new collaboration between the College of Arts and Letters and the **Office of Career Planning** hopes to help students studying in the arts and humanities understand their value in the workplace.

The series kicked off with an alumni/ae event, coordinated by **Alaina Rahaim, Assistant Director of Career Readiness**, on February 12th that brought back to campus six graduates from CAL. These alums graduated with degrees ranging from Philosophy to English Literature to Dance who are now finding success in fields like technology, public advocacy, government relations, and development. The message to the current students was clear: there are great careers available for students studying in the liberal arts. The kickoff event drew a large crowd of CAL students - extra seats were needed!

Future workshops designed specifically for students in CAL will focus on career exploration for arts and humanities majors, and how to translate skills learned in many CAL majors like strong presentational skills, cultural awareness, and organizational leadership to resumes and interviews. One of the goals of the program is to counter the myth that career planning does not serve those students majoring in CAL and that the professional opportunities of students in the arts and humanities are limited.

CAL Production Airs on WEDU/PBS

The Departments of Music, Communication and Film, Animation and New Media collaborated on a landmark new production that premiered on WEDU.



College of Arts and Letters faculty members **Dr. Christopher Boulton, Prof. Aaron Walker, Prof. Warren Cockerham, Prof. Taylor Curry, Dr. Bradford Blackburn and Dr. Ryan Hebert** [collaborated with over 100 students](#) in front of and behind the camera to bring the popular UT holiday concert "Let Heaven and Nature Sing" to living rooms across Tampa Bay -- and all over the world through PBS digital services.

The interdisciplinary project brought together students studying music, broadcast television, film editing, sound design and graphic design in a large scale production that demanded cross-disciplinary learning, strong organizational and communication skills, and collaborative teamwork.

The concert featured UT students and faculty and was filmed and edited entirely by UT students and faculty using UT equipment. The concert premiered during the holiday season to rave reviews, and if you missed it you can [watch the entire production online here](#).



You can't miss CAL faculty and students

The College of Arts and Letters is a place where a lot is going on, and our friends in the local and national media can't help but notice too.



CAL Writing major Indira Moosai (second from left) is seen on-air at NBC's "The Today Show" while interning in NYC recently for the iconic morning news program. As part of her internship she was able to pitch several stories and segments that made it on-air and gain valuable experience and contacts working in New York City.

Part-time Art + Design and FMX faculty member Prof. Mikhail Mansion was recently [featured in 83 Degrees Media](#) for his vision to bring an interactive and immersive arts experience to South St. Petersburg. Mansion, who taught previously at Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design, has worked with clients like Toyota to use cutting-edge robotics and artificial intelligence to installations and exhibitions.

The [MFA in Creative Writing](#) program's popular Lectores series that coincides with the January residency was given [attention by the Tampa Bay Times](#).

<https://youtu.be/8yAC6WrprP0>

Senior **Art + Design major Nneka Jones** was featured on the popular NowThis media channel for her artwork using condoms that explores political and social injustices. Her stunning work was also featured prominently in the [Trinidad and Tobago Guardian](#).

Dr. Ryan Hebert , Associate Professor of Music , performed on the organ as part of the seventh annual Masterworks Concert in November. The event was written about in the [Osprey Observer](#) .

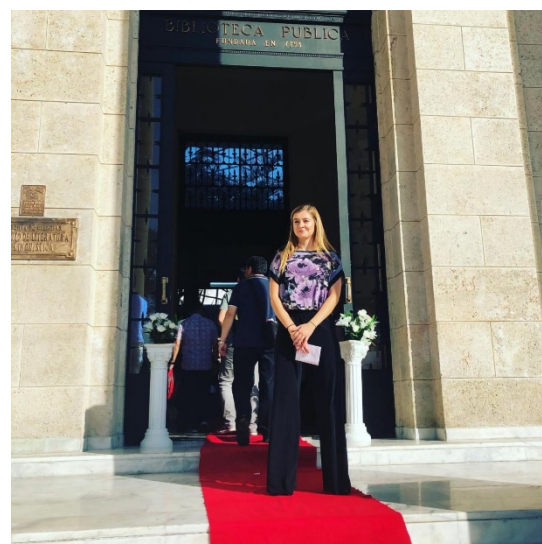
Dr. David Wheeler, Associate Professor of Journalism , was cited in a court brief as part of a successful First Amendment lawsuit at the national level. In this national case, his Atlantic article “ [The Plot Against Student Newspapers](#) ” was cited in a friend-of-the-court [brief](#) in a case before the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, only one step below the Supreme Court.

Global Engagements from around the College

Italy, Cuba, Germany and Thailand are just some of the destinations you'll find CAL faculty and students.



Dr. Francesca Bacci, Associate Professor of Art + Design engaged in museum planning, sustainability planning, exhibition curation and design, and digital engagement design of the Rovereto City Museum (Museo della Città, Rovereto, **Italy**). Dr. Antonio Lampis, Director of Italian National Museums for the Italian Ministry of Culture, has praised this museum as a model and an inspiration.



Rachel Kozikowski (pictured above **Cuba**), class of 2020, and **Dr. Andrew DeMil, Associate Professor of Languages** , presented research in Havana, Cuba at the Lingüística 9th Annual International Conference at the Institute of Literature and Linguistics. The research is on comparing an online language teaching platform to a university classroom. This conference was supported by the SURF grant from the OURI office and the Office of the Dean.



Dr. Tim Ridlen, Professor of Instruction in FMX, presented work at Studio Waveland + Gallery in Waveland, Mississippi as part of the exhibition *The BODY and ARCHITECTURE – Cinematic Expressions of Space*. He also contributed to two films that screened at the Arsenal Institute for Film and Video Art in **Berlin** (pictured above).

Students from **Dr. Christopher Boulton** 's COM 212: Social Justice Communication travel course to **Thailand** had their short documentaries accepted at the Show Me Justice Film Festival, Dunedin International Film Festival, and the Moving Film Festival. All three films also won awards at the 2019 MY HERO International Film Festival.

Guest Artists Enrich Learning Experiences



Noted Artist Gregory Siff

[Gregory Siff](#) has a successful career that spans many disciplines: painting, design, fashion, singing, experimental film, television and theater (acting). His artworks are included in many prominent collections: Swizz Beatz's Dean Collection, Deitch Projects, Santa Monica Museum of Art, Moscow Museum of Art, Soho House New York and the Google HQ, to name a few.

He joined students on campus to discuss his career and his art.



As an actor, Siff started out on stage at the New York City Opera; among the operas he sang were: *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Lucia* to name a few. He has been cast in the True-Life story of *The Brady Bunch: The Final Days*, and in I.F.C.'s *Romeo and Jewel*, a modern update of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. He has also guest starred on ShowTime's *Nurse Jackie*, C.S.I.:NY, and HBO's *How to Make it in America*.

His show opens at [CASS Contemporary](#) Gallery on February 28th. He will also be at the [Tampa Museum of Art](#).



Broadway Icon Liz Callaway

Liz Callaway appeared on Broadway in productions of "Cats," "Evita," and "Merrily We Roll Along," and in film as the singing voice in Disney's "Anastasia." She originated the role of Lizzie in the musical "Baby" and visited campus to do a talkback after the student production of the same musical she earned a Tony nomination for. She also performed as part of the Damron Concert Artist Series and at a special reception for the **College of Arts and Letters Advisory Board**.



Opera Tampa's Robin Stamper

Robin Stamper, Managing Director and Chorus Master of Opera Tampa, the resident opera company at the Straz Center for the Performing Arts, visited UT opera students to give a master class and share his expertise. He is seen here working with music major **Faith Kopecky** in the Sykes Chapel and Center for Faith and Values.

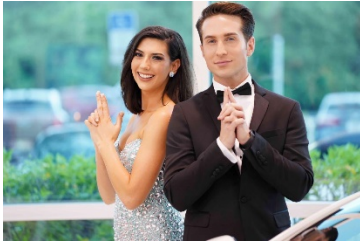


Lectores Series

[Jeff VanderMeer](#), called "one of the most remarkable practitioners of the literary fantastic in America today" spoke to a standing room only audience as part of the [MFA in Creative Writing](#)'s Lectores Series (pictured left). Other writers in the series included Valeria Luiselli, a 2019 MacArthur

"Genius Grant" recipient and Fernanda Santos, from the *New York Times*.

CAL students make all of Tampa Bay their stage



Students from the musical theatre program performed at the My Hope Chest benefit gala which supports breast cancer survivors and patients.



Student performers from the College of Arts and Letters participated in the Henry B. Plant Museum's Great Gatsby event.



Student opera performers gave a free concert at the Tampa Museum of Art as part of the College's first Wednesday series.

Experiential Education Around CAL

Classrooms, Studios and Laboratories aren't the only places where CAL students put theory into practice.

Tampa Downtown Partnership

Public Relations Campaigns students in **Dr. Lina Gomez-Vasquez's** class developed campaign plans to bring awareness of the services provided by the Tampa Downtown Partnership, among target audiences. Ashly Anderson, Director of Marketing and Design at the Tampa Downtown Partnership, praised the quality of work performed by UT students and the professionalism and commitment showed during meetings and presentations.



Tampa Bay Lightning

Voice Students participated in a recent Tampa Bay Lightning hockey game singing the national anthem.

Center for Public Speaking Speech Contest

Over 400 students attended the annual Speech Contest sponsored by the Center for Public Speaking and UT Student Government. Five students competed for top honors and judges for the event included CAL Advisory Board member **Lea Davis** and the late Honorable **David Straz**, former UT trustee and beloved member of the UT community. **Dr. Meredith Clements, Assistant Professor of Speech Communication**, coordinated the event.



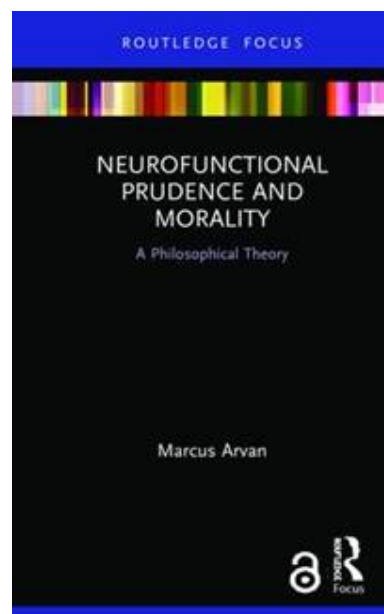
American Red Cross

Dr. Marcus Arvan, Associate Professor and Chair, Philosophy and Religion, worked with **Tiffany Maziarz '21** and **Joseph Cappuccilli '21** (pictured, left), in UT's new Applied Learning Experience course, a partnership between UT's Office of Undergraduate Research and Inquiry and Career Services. As part of the course, Dr. Arvan's two students worked with a third student supervised by Dr. Tracy Zontek (Associate Professor, Health Sciences and Human Performance) to contribute to the American Red Cross International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign. The students' applied learning experience project was a symposium on the topic of autonomous weapons.

CAL Faculty Excellence

CAL faculty are productive scholars and creative leaders. This is just a small sampling of their recent achievements.

Dr. Marcus Arvan, Associate Professor and Chair, Philosophy, published his second book, *Neurofunctional Prudence and Morality: A Philosophical Theory* (New York: Routledge). This book outlines a theory of prudence and morality that unifies a wide variety of findings in neuroscience with philosophically sophisticated normative theorizing.



Dr. Jeff Neely, Associate Professor of Journalism, with his coauthor Mitzi Lewis of Midwestern State University in Texas, published their chapter "Literary Journalism and the Pedagogy of a Liberal Education" in *The Routledge Companion to American Literary Journalism*, which was released in December. Dr. Neely has also been invited to write an article based on this research for *Gateway Journalism Review*, formerly the *St. Louis Journalism Review*, and he will be part of a panel presenting on teaching literary journalism at a conference in Copenhagen in May. Additionally, Dr. Neely's book review on *Rewriting the Newspaper: The Storytelling Movement in American Print Journalism*, was published in December in the academic journal *Literary Journalism Studies*.



The University of Tampa speech program is considered the nation's "top undergraduate communication program," after receiving the National Communication Association (NCA) Rex Mix Program of Excellence award at the NCA's 105th annual convention in Baltimore.

The NCA awards the Rex Mix award to the nation's top program annually. Nominated programs are evaluated for excellence in curriculum, program quality, course design and special programs. Dartmouth College won the award last year.

Dr. Chris Gurrie and Prof. Kristen Foltz (pictured, left) from the speech program accepted the award in Baltimore.

A new major in Communication and Speech Studies will launch in Fall 2020.

Prof. Paul Finocchiaro, Associate Professor of Theatre, visited with the popular Friday morning community speaker series [Café con Tampa](#) about the history of musical theatre. Guests of Cafe con Tampa were also invited to the production of "baby" that Prof. Finocchiaro directed.



Dr. Carter Hardy, Professor of Instruction, Philosophy, published the article "Humor and Sympathy in Medical Practice" in the journal *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy*.



Prof. Jaime Aelavanthara, Assistant Professor, Art + Design, received the "Instructor of the Year Award" from the [Florida Museum of Photographic Arts](#). Prof. Aelavanthara volunteers her time to teach in the FMoPA institute and uses the University of Tampa darkroom in the recently remodeled [Bailey Art studios](#) to introduce the FMoPA community to darkroom processing and photography techniques.

Dr. Minjie Li, Assistant Professor of Advertising and Communication, published original research in the AEJMC official journal, *Newspaper Research Journal*. The article is titled "(Mis)Matching: Journalistic Uses of Gender Pronouns and Names Can Influence Implicit Attitudes towards Transgender People, Perceived News Content Credibility, and Perceived Reporter Professionalism."



Dr. Caroline Hovenac , **Assistant Professor of English and Writing** , published the article “Darwin’s Earthworms in the Anthropocene” in Victorian Review. She also wrote the piece “A Manifesto for the World as One Finds It” which can be read in [Public Books](#) .

Dr. Anne Heminger , **Assistant Professor of Music** , had a chapter published in a volume on Lutheran music in November: “‘Zu dienst wan sy syngen jn eyynn:’ Music, Politics, and the Reformed Livonian Service Books of 1530 and 1537” in the volume *Celebrating Lutheran Music: Scholarly Perspectives at the Quincentenary* published by Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.



Prof. Marcio Goncalves, **Assistant Professor, Animation**, gave an Industry Talk at Autodesk University 2019, the biggest user convention of Autodesk software in the world with an attendance of 12,000 this year. More than 2400 proposals for talks and workshops were sent, and only approximately 300 were selected. You can [see his talk here](#) .

Coming CAL Attractions

New Master of Arts in Professional Communication

https://youtu.be/JLwZ4INZ_RM

The College of Arts and Letters will launch its second graduate degree in Fall 2020: the new Master of Arts in Professional Communication* (MAPC).

UT's Master of Arts in professional communication equips students with the communication knowledge and skills needed for success in a variety of fields. Students gain experience with masterful presentation techniques, theories of organizational communication, crisis communication, conflict management and the effective use of visuals and media, with an emphasis on digital and emerging technologies.

All classes have immediate, real-world applicability, making the program ideal for both working professionals and those beginning or changing careers.

[You can read more about the degree here](#) or click above to hear program director **Dr. Chris Gurrie** talk about the exciting new program.

**This program is pending approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.*

French Film Festival



The Dept. of Languages & Linguistics in collaboration with the Dept. of Film, Animation & New Media is proud to present the Tournées French Film Festival, generously supported by the French Embassy in the United States. Films are FREE and open to the public and are subtitled.

The Ferman Center for the Arts

<https://youtu.be/y7XJIXwnwNs>

Excitement is building, literally, for the new facility that is scheduled to open in Fall 2020.

Support the Arts + Humanities at UT!