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Three Clayton State Students to Present at Medieval Renaissance Conference

Morrow, Ga., Sept. 15, 2008 – Three students enrolled in Associate Professor of English Dr. Gregory McNamara’s spring 2008 Renaissance Literature course will present their research at the 22nd Annual Medieval Renaissance Conference, a scholarly discussion in all disciplines of Medieval and Renaissance studies. The conference will be held at the University of Virginia’s College at Wise in Wise, Va., from Thursday, Sept. 18 to Saturday, Sept. 20.

Students to present at the conference include; Kristina Bjoran (Stockbridge), Sibongile Lynch (Jonesboro), and Jennifer Navarre (Ellenwood). These students have all been enrolled in McNamara’s English 4210, Renaissance Literature course. In order to participate in the conference students have to meet certain criteria.

“The students must submit abstracts describing their research: these abstracts must suggest originality of ideas, clarity of concept, and a strong knowledge of the literature in the field. Acceptance is determined by a panel of field experts in Medieval and Renaissance studies,” explains McNamara. “The Elizabethan and Early Stuart period ranges from 1559-1649 and is generally considered one of the most significant periods of achievement in the history of English literature.

“The students’ essays address the work of a major dramatist of the period, Ben Jonson, and two major poets of the period, Sir Philip Sidney and Lady Mary Wroth. The papers address issues related to biography, period history, gender roles, issues of class, the colonial enterprise, and of course genre issues associated with poetry and drama.”

This is the second year for Clayton State University’s student to participate in the conference, and McNamara looks forward to attending in the future.

“It’s a pleasure to work with groups like this, and it’s a great conference in a beautiful part of Virginia,” he says.

Students that participate in the conference will benefit in several ways that include; gaining valuable professional experience, meeting and working with scholars in the field and socializing and comparing notes with their peers who are participating in the undergraduate sessions.

Students are able to attend conference with the help and generosity of several offices and officials on campus.

“We are grateful for the generous support we’ve had from the Clayton State University community, notably, Dr. Joe Johnson, interim head of the Department of Language and Literature, Dr. Elaine Manglitz, assistant vice president for Student Affairs, and our Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Nasser Momayezi,” says McNamara. “If anyone would like to donate, I would be glad to receive the funds and add them into the students’ travel budget for this year and toward future excursions. Donations can also be made to the Clayton State University Foundation under the auspices of Language and Literature Student Travel funding.”

McNamara also encourages students to participate in the England Maymester 2009.

“It’s a wonderful opportunity, and May 2009 will be the third time Clayton State students have traveled to London earning credit through the Department of Language and Literature,” he says. “I am looking at a note I received from a student who went on the trip this past May — it’s written on a menu from an Italian restaurant in London: the note says ‘This has been the best experience of my life.’ I think that says a lot about Literary London. There are several similar sentiments on that same menu: I keep it by my desk at home to inspire me to make the trip better every year we offer it.

“Interested students might want to drop by my office, have a look at my web site, and keep their eyes peeled for new promotional materials which should be appearing on campus over the next few weeks.”

To learn more about the student presentations, or the Literary London Maymester trip, contact McNamara at (678) 466-4557 or by email at gregorymcnamara@clayton.edu.

A unit of the University System of Georgia, Clayton State University is an outstanding comprehensive metropolitan university located 15 miles southeast of downtown Atlanta.