Anually, Utah State University undergraduate researchers share their projects with state legislators at the State Capitol. About 30 Aggies are selected to present, and the 2017 event includes two English majors: Karlie Jordan and Morgan Sanford.

Karlie Jordan is the author of “Tender Tinder: A Study of One of the Hottest Dating Apps and Geographic Location.” She completed her research as a class project during Fall 2016 in English 3470, Approaches to Research in English Studies. The purpose of this project was to analyze the dating app Tinder, while paying particular attention to possible cultural differences between Utah and other states. For this netnography and rhetorical analysis, Karlie’s main focus was on comparing and contrasting pickup lines used in different settings. She said, “By taking screenshots of 50 Tinder users and their profiles, I did a rhetorical analysis of the language used in their biography to describe how users in Utah approached what is usually considered a sexually explicit app.” She found that in contrast to the typical user of Tinder in other locations, Utah users tended to be looking for a long-term relationship and their “soul mate.”

Morgan Sanford, who is an English Honors student, focused her research on the tensions that dominate the lives of Mexican-American adolescents that may complicate their academic achievement. Morgan worked with Professor Crescencio Lopez Gonzalez to consider the influence of visionary, dedicated teachers in the lives of underprivileged students. The study used educational life stories narrated through film, such as Walkout (2006), Stand and Deliver (1988), Spare Parts (2015), and McFarland, USA (2015). Sanford is also working with Professor Jennifer Sinor on a separate research project. In addition to assisting Dr. Sinor on two books being prepared for publication, she doing the groundwork for a research-based literary nonfiction essay that will be the bulk of her honors Contract this semester. She is drawing on letters that her Great Uncle Bruce wrote home from his Navy service during WWII.

The annual event, initiated in 2001 by USU’s Undergraduate Research Program, which Professor Joyce Kinkead directed at the time, coincides with the opening week of the 2017 Utah Legislative Session. The gathering is designed to highlight the benefits of undergraduate research to state lawmakers.

For more information, see the Undergraduate Research Program website:

Karlie Jordan
http://rgs.usu.edu/undergradresearch/portfolio-items/karlie-jordan/

Morgan Sanford
http://rgs.usu.edu/undergradresearch/portfolio-items/morgan-sanford/