Two Faculty-Student Research Teams Awarded College Grants

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The College of Humanities and Social Sciences awards Faculty-Student Summer Mentorship Grants to faculty and undergraduate researchers. Two teams of researchers from the Department of English have received funding for their projects: Dr. Jennifer Sinor and Morgan Sanford; Dr. Joyce Kinkead and Morgan Wykstra.

This summer Dr. Jennifer Sinor will be working with Morgan Sanford. Having already collaborated with Dr. Sinor on primary source materials and the movement from archive to art, Morgan will be traveling to Chile in May to spend several days at the Pablo Neruda archives. Her project, “Lost in Translation,” is an examination of how words and lives are born from one side to another. At the Neruda Foundation, Morgan will view original copies of his manuscripts, in particular Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair, the collection that contains “Poema XX.” She will also travel to Valparaiso and Isla Negra and visit two of Neruda’s homes to make connections between writer and place. From this immersion in both primary materials and primary places, Morgan will return home to work with Dr. Sinor on a long, lyric essay that moves between her work in Chile, a personal exploration of her parents’ relationship, and then her original translation of Neruda’s “Poema XX.” Aware that translation cannot be separated from translator, in the same way that an artist cannot be separated from place, Morgan will highlight the interconnectedness of knowing by writing a woven essay that circulates around a difficult question: how to bear a story, a word, a past across time, space, and linguistic divide.

The project undertaken by Morgan Wykstra focuses on an interactive website that will supplement a book project, A Writing Studies Primer, which Kinkead is writing. The website will map important sites in the history of writing across time and place. According to Kinkead, “Morgan brings skills from her Technical Communication expertise that are invaluable. We’ve already started meeting to confer on design details.” They are focusing first on the history of the printing press as Kinkead visited a historic printing press museum in Hawaii recently and plans to visit the Gutenberg Museum in Germany in May. “The literacy rate in Hawaii soared between 1820 when there was no written language to astonishingly high levels just 40 years later due to the printing press,” Kinkead said. Other sites to be mapped include origins of writing, writing implements, and paper.

Student recipients of the College funding receive $2000 in compensation and up to $1000 in travel funding to conduct research or attend a conference while the faculty mentor receives $1000. This is the second year of these College awards. Dr. Phebe Jensen and Claire Harlan were recipients in its inaugural year.