



The Graduate School

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2018

With the current uncertain political and economic climate, deep reflection is due. Where better to look to than the Arts and its champions? This issue spotlights Zach Gehring, adjunct instructor from the Humanities M.A. Program, in the College of Arts and Letters. He is well known for his work in the rock band, Mae (<http://whatismae.com>), but also, locally, Demons (<https://demonsband.bandcamp.com>). Be sure to check out Demon's new album, *Embrace Wolf*.

Continuing to travel the world, teach, embrace the family life, and contemplate issues that plague the world, he has developed a measured and thoughtful approach to life. Herein, he shares with us a piece of his path. It is our hope that his insight helps you navigate your graduate journey with greater ease and a more thoughtful steps.

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STUDENT & FACULTY PROFILE - ZACH GEHRING - M.A. HUMANITIES ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR - INTRO TO NEW MEDIA

What encouraged you to pursue graduate education?

I enjoy being in a structured learning environment, I enjoy the guidance, and the application of so many transformative ideas. It's exciting to me. So, when I received my undergrad degree in Philosophy, I knew that I needed to continue. I also wanted to challenge myself.

What encouraged you to choose your current field?

Well, my interest was in continental philosophy, mainly Kierkegaard. An interest in Kierkegaard led me to Hegel, which led me to Feuerbach and Marx. Once I started reading more about Marxism and in particular neo-Marxism, it really grabbed my interest in a way traditional philosophy did not. Cultural criticism and critical theory invigorated me and applied to my interest in crowdfunding and music cultures.

What drew you to Kierkegaard?

Initially it was his critical attitude towards the Church, but as I immersed myself more in his writing, what appealed to me most was his critique of objectivity in relation to our lived experiences, and that his relentless critique and exhaustive rigor with which he explored Christianity came from a place of extreme devotion to the faith which I think is very important. Also, he is a great writer. There is so much personality and color in his words.

What do you believe that society could learn from him and or apply to their life?

Subjective self-awareness. One of my favorite quotes of his reads: "Most people are subjective toward themselves and objective toward all others, frightfully objective sometimes--but the task is precisely to be objective toward oneself and subjective toward all others." I think that, for me, maintaining a critical stance towards your own actions and examining your motives and behaviors are an important part of becoming meaningfully empathetic towards others- which is something that we are in dire need of.

What works should one start with towards getting to better understand Kierkegaard?

I think that perhaps his approach to Christianity could be characterized as too rigid and too relentless. He made it impossible. There's an irony, Kierkegaard was critical of theology and biblical scholarship because he claimed that those disciplines made Christianity complicated in order to justify their own lack of true devotion. However, Kierkegaard wrote volumes and volumes of text picking apart Scripture and dissecting so many difficult theological ideas and concepts. I think that is funny.



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STUDENT/FACULTY PROFILE - ZACH GEHRING - (CONTINUED)

What do you like most about your research or feel will be its largest implication(s).

I want it to encourage a critical exploration of how neoliberalism is transforming the practice of musicians, in particular, those looking to develop a career as a musician, how they navigate their relationship with fans or supporters, and how they implement new media technologies and social media platforms to further that aim.

What is your philosophy of teaching and learning?

Admittedly, my approach to pedagogy is rooted in my own method of learning – which is just reading and listening. However, I know that different people respond differently to various methods. I want to broaden my approach to spark interest and critical thinking in the students. That is something I will continue to focus on.

What made Old Dominion University stand out?

Location and faculty. My undergrad experience with professors like Dr. Hatab, Dr. Wittkower, and Dr. Vincilette were really encouraging.

What do you like most about ODU?

The faculty. I had a lot of great professors and worked as a GA to some great ones as well.

What has worked with you with maintaining your work/life balance?

Well, my particular situation is complex. I am still very active with music which takes up so much of my time, and also have a job in addition to the adjuncting in the spring and fall. So, it's a balancing act for sure. My PhD ambition is just not strong enough to put my family through the difficulty of that type of change. But time will tell, they are very supportive.

How has music influenced you?

It would be hard to sum up, Art in general (as I'm sure it does for others) continually injects new life into your blood, new sensitivities, new eyes, new hearts, etc. Generally speaking, it has allowed me to remain vulnerable.

What inspired you to pursue music?

Just a love for it, in particular, a connection I felt to punk rock when I was a kid. It's weird. At a certain point it wasn't really a particular decision I made as much as it was just something I continued to do because there was no question of doing anything else.

What do you hope to influence through it?

Nothing really. I suppose that, personally, I want to impress a healthy cynicism, a groundedness that is not performatively dire or depressing, but more matter of fact. With my own writing, I want to problematize myself. So, it's a self-absorbed task that I'm sure so many people are tired of.

What advice might you give to aspiring musicians?

Keep a close watch on your ambition. It can become poisonous really quickly.

What does family mean to you?

It is the only thing I feel comfortable calling Truth. I think that anything I could say about the importance of family and the life changing event of having a child has already been said with more impact and eloquence than I could offer up.

How does it influence you?

It provided a much needed clarity of focus at a time when I really needed it. My family informs everything I do and I'm eternally and immeasurably grateful for them.

What are your hobbies?

Reading and music mainly. I don't get nearly as much time to devote to reading as I'd like, and with a new daughter it's hard to just make time.

GRADUATE CONTEST

The Graduate School is announcing three contests which are listed below in bold. Students can submit to all three if they desire via <https://goo.gl/C6F8i1> by 12:00 PM on March 29, 2018. The winners will be selected on the 1st of April. They and their submissions will be featured in a later issue and receive a prize. Questions can be sent to xpalmer@odu.edu.

Eureka Moment / Happy Accident: Describe, in 300 words or less, a finding or realization that excited you or allowed you to clear a major research hurdle

Epic Fail: Describe, in 300 words or less, a research failure or accident that you found embarrassing, yet rewarding.

Getting Artsy: Describe or submit an artwork, in literary, video, or a picture format.

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GPIS MASTER'S STUDENT, SAMANTHA GOLDEN, WINS NATIONAL AWARD: FRASURE-KRUZEL-DREW MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP

"The Frasure-Kruzel-Drew Memorial Fellowship is a paid, full-time, two-year career development opportunity sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) and administered by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery (CISR). The selected fellow will serve in PM/WRA's Washington, D.C. office and gain valuable experience in managing foreign security and humanitarian assistance-related programs.

PM/WRA manages the U.S. Conventional Weapons Destruction (CWD) program, which includes an array of assistance activities that enhance U.S. national security, protect civilian populations from the dangers posed by conventional arms, assist victims of conflict, and facilitate economic development. CWD encompasses small arms/light weapons (SA/LW) destruction and stockpile management programs, as well as humanitarian mine action (HMA) assistance. Through these activities, PM/WRA reduces the harmful worldwide effects of at-risk, illicitly-proliferated, and indiscriminately-used conventional weapons of war. With approximately \$185 million annually, PM/WRA oversees CWD projects in more than 40 countries on five continents, and has provided over \$2.9 billion in assistance to more than 100 countries since 1993".

For more information and how to apply, visit : <https://www.jmu.edu/cisr/other/fellowship.shtml>.

SAVE THE DATE - WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES

Did you know that among female graduate and professional students, 1 in 12 will experience rape or sexual assault? (Via RAINN at <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/campus-sexual-violence>). Additionally, 1 in 5 of women will experience sexual assault during her undergraduate years. Will you join us in the international men's march to stop rape, sexual assault, and gender violence? For more details, contact the Women's Center via the details below.

1 in 5 college women will be sexually assaulted during her undergraduate years

she may be your mother, your sister, your friend, your significant other, your coworker, or your classmate

WALK A MILE IN HER SHOES

• Save the Date •

March 27, 2018 • 12:00-1:30PM • Kaufman Mall

Contact: womenctr@odu.edu for more information



WOMEN'S CENTER
1000 Webb Center
757-683-4109
womenctr@odu.edu
www.odu.edu/womenscenter

PLEASE CONTACT US IF
YOU REQUIRE ADA
ACCOMMODATIONS TO
PARTICIPATE

**OLD DOMINION
UNIVERSITY**
IDEA FUSION

Social
Cultural

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ODU PRESENTS: KIMBERLY BRYANT, FOUNDER OF BLACK GIRLS CODE

ODU PRESENTS

Featuring multidisciplinary speakers that support the colleges' research initiatives and community outreach efforts. All events in this lecture series are free and open to the public.

Seating is limited.
Guests are encouraged to RSVP to
(757) 683-3116 or at
odu.imodules.com/KBL18



Kimberly Bryant
Founder of Black Girls CODE

Kimberly Bryant is the founder and executive director of Black Girls CODE, a non-profit organization dedicated to introducing girls of color to the fields of technology and computer science with a concentration on entrepreneurial concepts. Since 2011, Bryant has helped Black Girls CODE grow from a local organization in the San Francisco Bay Area to an international organization with chapters across the United States and in Johannesburg, South Africa.

She has earned a reputation as a thought leader in the area of tech inclusion and has spoken on the topic at events such as TEDx Kansas City, Big Ideas Festival and SXSW. Bryant has received many honors, including the American Ingenuity Award in Social Progress from the Smithsonian and a Champion of Change designation from the White House. She was recently named to Elle magazine's power list of women in technology.

March 29, 2018

7:00 p.m. Lecture
Big Blue Room, Ted Constant Convocation Center

G.R.C. 2018 - THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2018



16th Annual Graduate Research Conference

March 16, 2018

Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA

odu.edu/graduateschool

STUDENT PROFILE - KEYONDRA WILSON (M.A. APPLIED SOCIOLOGY)

LAB SHOWCASE - SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER (SSRC)

Old Dominion University is host to a large variety of labs and research spaces that many students are unaware of. In this section of the newsletter, we aim to showcase interesting happenings in labs across the campus. In this issue, we interviewed Keyondra Wilson, a M.A. student in Applied Sociology, who was happy to share with us a perspective into the SSRC (<https://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>), her experience working there, and her overall graduate work.



What is the SSRC?

The SSRC is a fully equipped social science research center on campus with staff expertise in various forms of research methods and data collection including mail surveys, telephone surveys, household interviews, and focus groups; and most conventional forms of data analysis. SSRC staff can assist in all stages of research including instrument design, project management, data collection, data auditing, data management, data analysis, technical report writing, and the development of multi-media report presentations.

Please describe your research/work at the SSRC.

My role at the SSRC changes as the projects change, which is my favorite part. I never do the exact same thing for long. One day I could be programming a survey and the next day I am at a focus group taking notes. Other tasks include transcription, supervising telephone interviewers, data entry, data collection, editing, and creating graphs, charts, and tables.

What excites you about working at the SSRC?

The versatility. I never grow bored with my job, I am always learning something new. I learn new skills and information frequently. It also excites me that I get to use knowledge from the classroom in my job. The people in my office also make work exciting. They are helpful, even when something is not work related.

How has this experience impacted you?

I really believe that working at the SSRC has given me sort of an advantage over my peers in the program. A lot of them are Teaching Assistants that assist with grading and classroom assignments. I actually get to learn skills and techniques that will carry on long past graduation and help me with a job 'in the real world'. The experience itself is awesome because I have not only learned how to do my job but I have learned other things like office etiquette and insight into the day in the life of a researcher.

Describe your research.

I am currently researching how school connectedness affects students' academic success.

What encouraged you to pursue graduate education?

I didn't exactly know what I wanted to do after undergrad so I figured that more education can't hurt and it could help me narrow in on what I wanted to do for a career.

What encouraged you to choose your current field?

I've always been interested in people's actions and what makes them act that way. I have always been so fascinated with peoples' 'story' and how that affected their life trajectories.

What have been your greatest challenges so far?

My biggest challenge in grad school so far has been the papers. I was not the strongest writer when I first got into my program but I am definitely improving, I've honestly shocked myself.

Who are some guiding or influential figures in your life?

My mother. She has shown me the definition of strength and resilience. I always strive to be as strong as my mom.

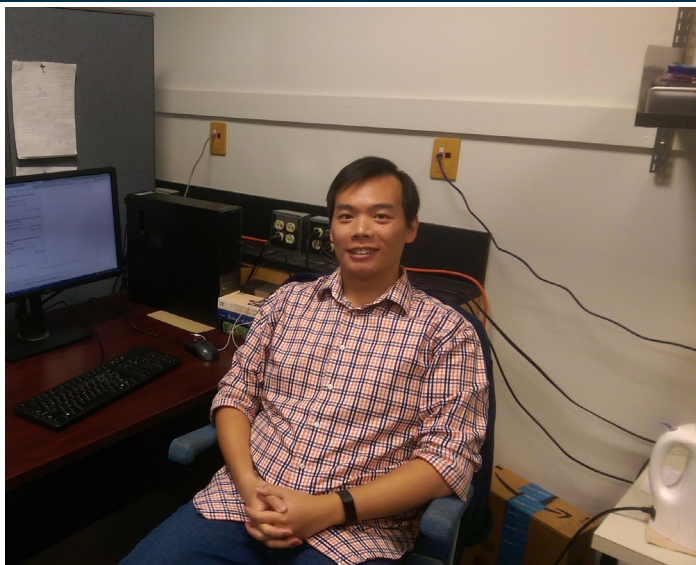
What is/are a funny experience(s) that you have had at ODU?

I went to ODU for undergrad so my freshman year was a whole year of funny. Now that I look back at it, it is exactly what the TV shows and movies say going to college is like.

What do you feel could be improved at ODU?

Definitely the food! The food and where ODU decides to allocate their resources. For example, I believe we should focus more on getting additional housing and parking rather than new buildings and sports fields on campus. I understand we probably need the sports to bring in the money, but it doesn't seem fair to students like me who do not participate in any sporting events.

POSTDOC PROFILE - DR. ANDY WONG



Please describe your area of research?

My area of research is related to measuring molecules that are found in planetary atmospheres and other astrochemical environments.

What got you into it?

I chose this area of research as I was interested in astrochemistry and I wanted to have a good understanding of what molecules exist in different astrochemical environments. The work that I performed at ODU is also like an extension of what I did during my PhD studies.

What excites you about it?

The possibility of discovering something new when observing something so far away is really exciting. The object (or system) that we are studying may be hundreds or thousands of light years away, yet we are able to discern its chemical and physical properties just by looking at it.

What encouraged you to pursue a graduate (and or postdoctoral) education?

The main factor which led me to pursue a postgraduate degree was the potential to learn something new every day. Research is always evolving and when one project finishes, there is always another project that will lead to new discoveries.

What encouraged you to choose your current field?

I chose my current field because I thought it would be a good extension to what I did during my PhD which focused on molecules that were found in the Earth's atmosphere and the interstellar medium (ISM). Although the topic isn't much different from what I am working on now, the method of experimental design and analysis was different.

What have been your greatest challenges so far?

I think many of the challenges I have faced relate closely to my research at ODU due to the learning curve of performing different research as well as the need to teach myself new skills to complete certain tasks. However, I think these are very normal occurrences while working as a researcher.

What do you like most about your research or feel will be its largest implication(s).

I think one of the largest implications for this type of research is the potential to find more planets that have the potential of sustaining life, similar to some of the ones that have already been discovered.

Tell us about your vision of the field: where do you think the field is headed in the next five years?

I think my field of research is headed in the direction where scientists are building bigger and better instruments to obtain higher quality results of what they observe. This will also drive a need for more laboratory-based data so that we are able to compare and discern what exists in different astrochemical/planetary environments.

How does that relate to the preparation of professional educators?

I think there will be a need to properly educate researchers on effective methods of teaching or communication. This will be important when it comes to inspiring the future generations of scientists as well as informing the general public who might not have any experience with science.

How do you give back to the community?

One of the ways I have tried to give back to the community is participating as a member of the postdoctoral advisory committee (PAC) and helping identify issues that my peers within the postdoctoral community are facing and looking for possible solutions. Other methods of giving back to the community would be attending conferences where I have the opportunity to describe my research to a wider audience.

What do you feel could be improved at ODU?

I think communication between peers within the postdoctoral and undergraduate community could be improved. I believe this would be beneficial for all parties involved whether they be professors, undergraduates, or the postdoctorates. This is also one of the reasons why I decided to participate as a PAC member.

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POSTDOC PROFILE - DR. ANDY WONG (CONTINUED)

What efforts have you made in the last year to become a better faculty member?

I have put time into completing the preparing future faculty (PFF) and preparing future professional (PFP) workshops. I have also given lectures to help improve my teaching skills.

What interesting qualities or experiences do you feel you bring to ODU?

I think being an Australian is quite unique within the ODU community especially when it comes to my accent and the perceived stereotypes of Australia, which is quite amusing.

What is your philosophy of teaching and learning?

When teaching students, I believe it's important to interact with them so that they understand the principles behind the material and how to apply it to various situations rather than trying to memorize and reproduce it during an exam.

Who are some guiding or influential figures in your life?

The most influential figures in my academic life would be my PhD advisors as they guided me through the whole process of becoming a professional. Outside of academia, would be my family as I definitely wouldn't be here without them.

Faced with many competing demands on your time, how do you determine your priorities?

It all depends on what I need to do for each project and what my deadlines are. I try to prioritize higher complexity tasks or projects that are due earlier before other things.

What is/are a funny experience(s) that you have had at ODU?

The most notable memory would be when I left my (literal) footprint at ODU. This happened in the early hours of the morning when I came in to start some experiments and the cleaners were waxing the floor. Unfortunately, I did not see the warning signs they put up and I proceeded to walk onto a freshly waxed floor, thus leaving my footprint.

What are your hobbies?

I don't really have any particular hobbies that I participate in at the moment. I guess you could say that I like listening to music (anything with a good tune really) and also cooking.

GRADUATE AND CAREER PATHWAY EVENT

Career Pathways workshop: **Teaching Elements of the Job Search**

When: Friday, March 23, noon-2pm

Where: Learning Commons, LC 1310-1311

What: This workshop will focus on how to prepare for a teaching-focused academic job search. Panelists will discuss teaching elements of the application packet and interview, such as teaching materials to include in the application packet, classroom demonstration, and the teaching job talk.

Workshop also available via WebEx: http://vs.odu.edu/kvs/interface/?cid=201510_PreparingFutureFacultyVS_94013

ODU COMPUTER SCIENCE GRADUATES WIN THIRD PLACE AT HACKATHON



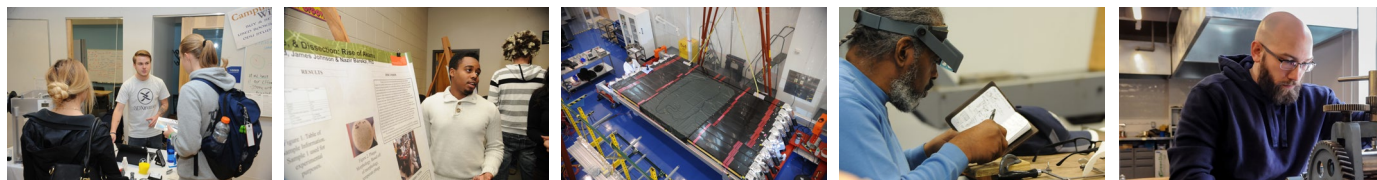
Team Arrow, a team comprised of ODU computer science graduates, won third place out of 9 competing university teams across Virginia at Hack U6, a two day Hackathon held by Dominion Enterprises on the 22nd and 23rd of February. Their victory net them a shield and a \$2,500 cash prize, as well as approval from the Vice President and Administrative staff at Dominion Enterprise. Let's give them a round of applause! The participants were Aniket Shrikant Chandak, Girish Kathireddy, Monica Marisetty, Chandrasekhar Reddy Muthyala, and Sai Ratnakar Nidumolu.

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FULBRIGHT WORKSHOP OPPORTUNITY

Are you interested in augmenting your education via a rich experience abroad? If so, you are encouraged to attend a Fulbright Workshop on March 20, 2018 as delivered by Mr. Grant Stream-Gonzalez, a Fulbright Student Program Advisor working with the Institute of International Education. This is the only Fulbright workshop being offered this year. More information can be obtained at <https://us.fulbrightonline.org/>.

G.R.A.D. 2018 REMINDER - THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2018



GRAD will take place on Thursday, March 29, 2018, from noon to 2:00 p.m. in Webb Center. In addition, a business and industry networking event focusing on graduate students' opportunities will be held in the morning, from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

LOCAL SPRING CONFERENCE - ISBIOTECH 8TH SPRING MEETING



8th Spring Meeting

March 5-7, 2018 • Norfolk, Virginia USA

The Waterside Conference

November 12-14, 2018 • Norfolk, Virginia USA

Join us in the most exciting and challenging discussions on the industry's most difficult applications including viral gene vectors and vaccines, adeno-associated virus (AAV), and other products derived with baculovirus technology, plus cellular therapies and three-dimensional, cellular structures. You can attend any talk you choose from the three concurrent programs, plus you'll participate in a number of fun and stimulating networking events throughout the meeting that you can attend at no additional cost. This meeting offers unique opportunities to share technology with some of the most talented people in the biotech industry, plus key regulators and essential supply firms.

For more information and to register, please visit isbiotech.org/8thspringmeeting.

Students can participate at no cost by volunteering or presenting a poster. They can contact the meeting organizers at info@isbiotech.org for more information.

ABOUT



Find Graduate School News online at:
www.odu.edu/graduateschool.

ODU graduate student Xavier-Lewis Palmer compiled and edited this newsletter with help from Dr. Robert Wojtowicz, Dr. Bryan Porter, and Ms. Missy Barber in the Graduate School.
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