

# MA English Newsletter

OLD DOMINION  
UNIVERSITY

◆  
Fall 2024



## OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

Welcome to Fall 2024 ODU's MA English newsletter! We are thrilled to share with you the latest developments in our program.

We would like to express our gratitude to all of our faculty and students who have made this newsletter possible. Your willingness to work with us and be interviewed allows others to see various perspectives about our program, which will help it expand and grow.

We also included valuable resources and opportunities for MA students throughout the newsletter.

### Career Development Support

ODU Career Pathways is a free service that supports graduate students in their career development. Career Pathways offers two professional development programs and associated certificates: PFF (Preparing Future Faculty) and PFP (Preparing Future Professionals). Learn more about [how Career Pathways can support your career goals](#).

#### In this newsletter you can expect:

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Graduate  
Student  
Resources

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Highlight of  
Faculty and  
Students

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Introduction to  
Our GPD

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Perspective of  
New Faculty

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Perspective of  
New Faculty

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A Student's  
Perspective of  
the MA English  
Program

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## Highlight of Faculty and Students



**Dr. Osorio**

Dr. Osorio is the GPD for the MA English program. She teaches courses in Women's and Gender Studies and English.



**Dr. Alexander**

Dr. Alexander is a new faculty member here at ODU, specializing in medical humanities.



## CONGRATS

The English Department is thrilled to award scholarships to our English MA students.

Congratulations to **Elizabeth LaBreak** for winning the Joan Argyle Shambaugh Graduate Scholarship in English and to **Michael Burdette** for winning the Jerri Fuller Dickeski Endowed Master of Arts in English Scholarship!



**Dr. King**

Dr. King is a new faculty member at ODU. On top of being an educator, she is the Director of Writing Across the Curriculum and in the Disciplines in Writing.



**Dahlia Perez**

Dahlia Perez is currently a MA English (Literature) student who works as a tutor in the Writing Center.

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## Introducing the New MA in English GPD!

In May 2024, Dr. Ruth Osorio became MA English's new Graduate Program Director (GPD)!

In this new role, she aspires to learn from her predecessor Dr. Lopenzina, her colleagues, and students. As she becomes more familiar with the MA English program, she hopes to support students in reaching their academic and career goals, whether that be through course offerings, mentoring workshops, or creative thesis/portfolio options.

Dr. Osorio teaches courses ranging from first year writing all the way to PhD seminars! Next semester, she will be teaching Women Writers and the History of US Women's Activism, both at the 4/500-levels.

As an instructor, she wants to educate students as whole human beings who bring in a wealth of knowledge and experience to class—and who also have a variety of needs that need to be supported in order for them to create brave and engaging work.

Her research interests are disability rhetoric, activist histories, and feminist historiographies. She's published on disability activism and critical access literacies. Currently, she's looking at rhetorical histories of interracial feminist activism in the US. **"I'm interested in how groups work across difference to create arguments for social change."**

Her research on activist rhetoric informs her teaching: **"I encourage students to explore how the research and writing we do in the classroom can make tangible impacts in their communities."**

In her free time, Dr. Osorio loves to bake, watch The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City, read novels and obsess over community organizing and policy. She also loves camping with her family and walking her dog.

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## Let's Welcome Dr. Travis Alexander

Dr. Travis Alexander recently began teaching here at ODU.

Dr. Alexander received his Bachelor of Arts at UT Austin and his PhD at UNC Chapel Hill.

As a medical humanist, Dr. Alexander is excited by opportunities at ODU to meet and interact with students that come from STEM backgrounds to methods within the humanities for the first time. **“With each passing year, it seems that healthcare comes to dominate more of our public life.”**

He is currently not teaching any graduate courses, but in Spring 2025, he will be teaching “Psychoanalytic Theory.” In Summer 2025, he will be teaching “US Health Humanities.”

Within his classroom, Dr. Alexander relies heavily on the discussion between his students, noting what areas he needs to revisit based off of how they comprehend the material gone over from his lessons.

For lessons to be taught, Dr. Alexander does not rely on bringing in lesson plans written onto paper; instead, he uses the Socratic method of philosophy, which involves questioning to reveal the truth.

**“Be open-minded, and students will come to you and trust in you.”**

For graduate students that hope to become educators, Anderson suggests that you practice teaching methods until you find the one right for you. Refine it. Critique it. Make it your own. Trust within your methodology, as you would know best.

When he isn't teaching or writing, Dr. Alexander loves listening to music, going to the movie theaters, cooking, and cycling! He is the owner of an 11-year-old mini dachshund mix, who he has had since he was 4 months old.

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## Let's Welcome Dr. Carolyne King!

Fall 2024 is Dr. King's first semester teaching here at ODU.

She graduated from the University of Delaware in 2019 with her PhD.

Dr. King was excited to join the English department at ODU because of the emphasis placed on collaboration. As the Director of Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines and Stem initiatives for the Writing Center, collaborating with faculty to explore and improve writing instruction as a core aspect of her work.

Currently, she is currently teaching ENGL 527 (Writing in the Disciplines), which is combined with her ENGL 427W course. Dr. King also teaches ENGL 211C, the second course in the general education writing sequence.

**"Writing is epistemic. Carefully crafting what we write is an act of power. It shapes what we think is really important."**

King wants students to see writing as an important part of knowledge. Within her classrooms, she creates assignments and prompts discussions that have her students critically think about how they use writing as they navigate the world. Reflection is an important aspect within her pedagogy.

In her free time, Dr. King loves embroidering. Currently, she embroiders flowers and recently started pet pictures as well! Jane Austen is one of her favorite authors and she considers embroidering as **"living out a small part of her Austen fantasy."** Outside of this, she enjoys hiking and running with her puppies! She has two dogs---Radegast and Gondor. Radegast resides with her in Norfolk, VA; Gondor resides with her husband in Salisbury, MD. Although they live separately due to her job here at ODU, Dr. King sees her husband every weekend.

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## Dahlia's Experience Within Our Program

Since starting ODU's MA English (Literature concentration) program in Fall 2024, Dahlia notes that some of her best experiences so far have been at her assistantship in the Writing Center, where she has formed friendships and connections due to the inclusive and inviting environment.

After completing her MA in her Literature concentration, Dahlia intends on applying to the PhD program at ODU. This is all part of Dahlia's long-term goal to become an educator:

**"In my own classroom, I hope to cultivate an environment that's open, inclusive, and flexible. There isn't a right way to teach students. Writing can be such a sensitive/anxiety inducing activity for students because they may be coming from previous classrooms where they've been told that they're "bad writers" and I hope that I'm able to mend their relationships with writing."**

In her free time, Dahlia enjoys streaming on Twitch, playing card games, and spending time with Mabel, her cat! Next semester, she will work as the graduate assistant for the English MA program.

### Speaking of the Writing Center...

Did you know that the ODU Writing Center offers writing support for graduate students at any stage of writing? [Make an in-person or virtual appointment here.](#)

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# MORE RESOURCES

## Travel Funding

ODU graduate students have access to multiple sources of conference travel funding!

- The College of Arts and Letters offers up to \$500 for current graduate students to travel to conferences where they are presenting. [Instructions on how to apply can be found here.](#)
- ODU [Student Engagement offers one-time travel grants](#) for students who are presenting at conferences. Funds for 2024-2025 are exhausted, but keep an eye out for funding for the 2025-2026 year.

## City of Norfolk Summer Internships

The City of Norfolk invites applications for its Executive Internship program. These are paid internship positions that pay \$17.00/hr for 40 hours a week. This is a great opportunity for local graduate students to gain “practical work experience and insight into the functions, operations, and public policies of municipal government.” More information here ([scroll down to Executive Internship Program](#)).

## Fulbright U.S. Student Program

Come learn about Fulbright U.S. Student Program which supports graduate students to study/create/research abroad! We are offering a series of Fulbright Forums for graduate students interested in this prestigious program. The first is January 23, 2025 from 12:30 to 1:30 pm via Zoom. Contact the Graduate School at [graduateschool@odu.edu](mailto:graduateschool@odu.edu) for more information.

*Thank you for reading!*

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