EXCEPTIONALISM AND ILLUSION: DEMYSTIFYING THE MOROCCAN ARAB SPRING
Undergraduate Researcher: Tiffany Abrahamian
Research Faculty Mentor: Safoi Babana-Hampton (Romance and Classical Studies)

In December of 2010, the self-immolation of a Tunisian vendor ignited a rash of anti-regime protests thus catalyzing the revolutions sweeping the Arab World in 2011. Amidst this “Arab Spring”, Morocco emerged as an exception to the bloody violence and upheaval that ravaged the region. This uprising, later known as the February 20th Movement, is credited with pressuring the Moroccan King to produce democratic concessions. However, critics of the regime cite these concessions as an illusory smoke screen intended to garner international approval. By illuminating multiple perspectives and contextualizing individual experiences, my project provides a multi-dimensional analysis of the events in Morocco to circumvent the generalizations and stereotypes that are often applied to socio-political conflicts. I have compiled these perspectives by tracing the movement through English and Francophone media outlets, social networking, and conducting a primary interview. The purpose of my research is to interpret how social conditions, regional politics, cultural milieu and cyber-activism contribute to engaged citizenship. Through deconstructing media claims, this research seeks to expose dichotomous perceptions of the movement and how plural perspectives and free speech forge the grass roots of democratization.

ACQUISITION OF 2ND PERSON SINGULAR IN CHILEAN SPANISH
Undergraduate Researchers: Camila Alfonso, Anaite Castaneda
Research Faculty Mentor: Cristina Schmitt (Linguistics and Languages)

Latin American dialects of Spanish contain a variety of different pronouns corresponding to the second person singular (2sg) ("you"): usted is the formal form and tú or vos are the informal forms. Usted triggers third person singular (3sg) agreement on the verb. Tú and vos trigger similar agreement, except in the present, imperative, and subjunctive tenses. For example, "you talk" is either tú hablas or vos hablás, but "you talked" is tú/vos hablaste in both cases. In Chilean Spanish verbal agreement with vos is different than in other dialects: "you talk" is vos hablái; additionally both tú and vos are used, and tú can appear with vos agreement but not vice-versa. In other words there is not a one-to-one correspondence between the pronoun used and the verb form used. The child acquiring Chilean Spanish is confronted with a complex and overlapping set of pronouns and verb inflections all corresponding to 2sg. Our goal is to examine their use in child-directed speech and its effect on child learning. Using the Miller-Schmitt corpus we examine the distribution of 2sg in adult speech to children and whether this is mirrored
in child speech. Since frequency has been shown to affect acquisition, one hypothesis is that the most common form will be acquired first. However, children have also been shown to have a strong bias towards regularization. Thus, a competing hypothesis is that the most regular form—that is, the form with the fewest exceptions and irregularities—will be acquired before the others.

**ESTABLISHING THE HISTORY OF ROLLER DERBY UNIFORMS/COSTUMES**

Undergraduate Researcher: Amber Bembnister
Research Faculty Mentor: Theresa Winge (Art, Art History, and Design)

During the last decade, Roller Derby gained in popularity, both with its participants and fans, throughout the world. The attraction to this sport centers around it being an aggressive contact sport featuring female athletes. Despite the aggressive and dangerous aspects of this sport, these athletes dress in provocative and hyper-feminine uniforms. Accordingly, the role of uniform for the Roller Derby athletes cannot be underestimated. The uniform is further intriguing due to the lack of standards regarding dress for this sport. This project investigates the origins and evolution of the Roller Derby uniform. It begins by exploring the many incarnations of the sport, including its early years when men and women roller skated together. From this data, the Roller Derby uniforms will be documented for further analysis to establish the importance of contemporary uniform within this flourishing sport. This research study seeks to understand the complexities for the Roller Derby uniform (or costume) throughout the history of this sport, which is part of a larger study focusing on Roller Derby. This portion of the study is funded by the College of Arts and Letters Undergraduate Research Initiative Grant.

**DIGITAL THEATRE**

Undergraduate Researchers: Gina Benninger and Emily Parker
Research Faculty Mentor: Alison Dobbins (Theatre Department)

This project will examine how adding media to theatre changes the audience response to the performance. The goal of the project will be to create an audience for media-based performance art that extends outside of campus, beyond the city and beyond the state. This goal will be met through a combination of education, communication and networking. Interviews of local arts organizations and artists, as well as local business owners and community members, will create an accurate snapshot of the existing theatre/audience relationship. Methods of cultivating an audience interested in media/theatre productions will be formulated. The mission of this research is determining the use of technology in theatre and connecting with the artists/producers of digital theatre and the artist communities created at EMPAC and iARTA as well as professionals and faculty involved in arts administration and cultural programming.

**FOURTH GENRE: RESEARCHING THE REPUTATION OF A LITERARY JOURNAL**
Fourth Genre is a national literary nonfiction journal published through the Michigan State University Press. The journal publishes a variety of writing, from personal essays and memoirs to literary journalism and personal criticism. After publishing pieces deemed to be noteworthy and innovative, how is the publication then regarded as a whole? The goal of this project is to research the reputation of Fourth Genre by compiling gathered information into a report of the journal’s perception and standing. By being aware of its presence and perception, Fourth Genre can continue to expand and improve its reputation.

ANALYZING DESIGN TO REFLECT THE DIGITAL AGE
Undergraduate Researcher: William Boor
Research Faculty Mentor: Chris Corneal (Art, Art History, and Design)

This project will research the meshing of printed, tangible design with digital mediums, but particularly what that means to a user and how they interact with content. We will study the problem of competition: a digital platform displaying design must be designed to be taken seriously, and be designed well. At what point, however, does a web site or application become a piece of art itself and retract from the design it is showcasing? Many theoretical issues come up when design is packaged in more design, which we will study and attempt to solve through experimentation. Using content from the past 7 years of Design Center, an invite-only professional design course, we will produce an online display (portfolio) of design that will reflect our research. Data and methods will be collected from a multitude of online resources that showcase contemporary design. From museum sites to digital asset management systems, the subtle differences in visual cues, specifically how they drive a user to navigate through content, will be explored. A web site or application will be developed to mirror research and user testing and then analyzed as potential solution.

“EVERYBODY HAD TO HAVE SOMEONE”: THE ISSUE OF RELATIONSHIPS AMONG MEN AND BOYS ON A TRANSPORT FROM AUSCHWITZ TO BUCHENWALD
Undergraduate Researcher: Justine Brunett
Research Faculty Mentor: Kenneth Waltzer (Jewish Studies)

In Women in the Holocaust, Dalia Ofer, like many writers of gendered Holocaust literature, asserts that women exhibited a greater “willingness to establish relations with others for mutual aid” in the Nazi camps than their male counterparts (305). Joy Erlichman Miller in Love Carried Me Home reaffirms this claim by quoting a survivor who said, “Women...have motherly instincts, friend instincts more...That’s
what was holding the women together because everybody had to have someone to lean on...The men, no...the men didn’t do that” (190). Scholars like Lois Pine, however, suggest women report incidents of mutual support in their testimonies more than men because they “were socialized to cherish relationships,” but men may have formed relationships just as frequently (133). My examination of Nazi records of youths on an all-male transport that arrived January 26, 1945, at Auschwitz from Buchenwald—the transport that carried Elie Wiesel—supports Pine’s view by demonstrating that men and boys formed and maintained cluster relationships as well. Initially sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau and then to Buna (Auschwitz III), these youths were transported to Gleiwitz and ultimately to Buchenwald as the Soviets advanced toward Auschwitz. Of 304 boys on the transport born after 1927, 25% were clearly clustered with family and friends, typically in small groups. Some clusters disbanded or formed at different times in the camps and transports, but some exhibited astonishing continuity. Each cluster suggests that while women may have relied upon relationships to survive in the Nazi camps, men and boys did too.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE BLACK EXPERIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE AFRICAN AMERICAN IN SPORTS
Undergraduate Researcher: Lorenzo Buchanan
Research Faculty Mentor: John McClendon (Philosophy)

Two projects were developed. The first was on the Philosophy of the Black experience which involved gathering primary sources from various libraries from across the country as well as evaluating research material. In addition, for the 18th Annual Philosophy Born of Struggle Conference, hosted by the MSU Department of Philosophy, Mr. Buchanan performed organizational responsibilities including working with student participants from other campuses and ensuring their full participation in the conference proceedings. The second project involved assisting with the completion of a manuscript dealing with the philosophy of sports and the African American experience. This project required working with a vast array of research materials and a range of research skills as well as intellectual insight into various aspects of the theoretical framework informing the work.

VARIABLE LENITION AND THE ACQUISITION OF 2ND PERSON SINGULAR IN CHILEAN SPANISH
Undergraduate Researchers: Anaite Castaneda, Camila Alfonso
Research Faculty Mentors: Hannah Forsythe (Linguistics and Languages), Cristina Schmitt (Linguistics and Languages)

Chilean Spanish differs from Mexico City Spanish in that syllable-final /s/ undergoes a variable process of weakening called lenition. Sometimes it is pronounced as /s/, sometimes it is weakened to /h/, and other times deleted altogether. Syllable-final /s/ is
the crucial factor in marking plurality (la niña = the girl vs. las niñas = the girls), as well as informal second person singular forms (hablas = you-informal speak vs. habla = s/he or you-formal speak/s). Therefore, we might expect Chilean children, who receive an inconsistent input, to lag behind Mexican children in their development of the plural, as well as second person singular. The delay in plural comprehension has been amply demonstrated, but that of second person singular has not. In this paper, we examine Chilean children's production of 2nd person singular, compared to their parents, as well as to their peers in Mexico. Specifically, we look for any errors of agreement and analyze their rate of lenition in different verbal contexts (null versus overt subjects, position at the end of the utterance, etc.) to determine whether they match the adults or whether they are generalizing to a single form. We test four children grouped by age and socioeconomic status.

THE EFFECT OF PARASITES ON THE EVOLUTION OF SEXUAL RECOMBINATION
Undergraduate Researcher: Mairin Chesney
Research Faculty Mentor: Charles Ofria (Computer Science and Engineering)

Avida is an artificial life software platform that allows for the study of evolutionary biology through the maintenance of populations of self-replicating and evolving computer programs. Avida allows us to study evolutionary theories in silico as opposed to in vivo, drastically reducing the amount of time such experiments usually take. I use Avida to study the possible effects of parasites on the evolution of sexual recombination. Sexual recombination is the process by which an offspring receives half of its genes from each parent. Due to the timescales for complex features to arise, the evolution of sexual recombination has had only limited empirical study. Using digital organisms, however, I am able to compare the persistence of parasites between sexual and asexual populations and am now performing experiments where I let organisms choose their mode of reproduction. Digital evolution provides insight into the evolution of complex traits, and can be easily manipulated to study hugely varying characteristics of biology such as cooperation, sexual reproduction, predator-prey interactions, and host-parasite relationships. As we gain understanding of how and why organisms evolve one way or another, we may start understanding the directions organisms will evolve in the future. Evolution is ongoing, and if we can harness our understanding of pathogen evolution to develop new management and treatment regimes, the implicit guesswork involved in treating diseases could be reduced.

DRAMATURGY OF MSU'S SPRING 2012 PRODUCTION OF MOTHER COURAGE BY BERTOLT BRECHT
Undergraduate Researcher: David Clauson
Research Faculty Mentor: Mark Colson (Theatre)

Dramaturgy will be performed for MSU’s spring 2012 production, directed by Colson, of
Mother Courage by Bertolt Brecht. One of the roles of the dramaturge is to research and help adapt a piece of theatre with accuracy and social relevance. This multi-media production of Mother Courage will pose questions about society in wartime and also the nature of war itself. The dramaturgy of the play will provide the cast and crew with background on Brecht’s writing and vision of this drama as well as its relevance to wars throughout history. This production will not be limited to the 30 years war of Europe in the 1600s, but will have a broader approach using elements of wars all over the world from the past and even the future. With this broad timeline in mind, the dramaturgy of this project will also include research into ways to incorporate technology into this multi-media production.

RESEARCH FOR THE VIRTUE OF WASTE: FOOD, PROTEST, AND PERFORMANCES OF AMERICAN MORALITY DURING THE NEW DEAL

Undergraduate Researcher: David Clauson
Research Faculty Mentor: Ann Eleanor-Folino White (Theatre)

The student researcher assisted in preparing Folino-White’s book manuscript for publication by conducting secondary research, checking facts, working on in-text notes and citations, creating proposal packets, and researching university presses. The manuscript is an archival, performance theory based monograph concerning three protests against the New Deal administration’s 1933 Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). The Virtue of Waste: Food, Protest, and Performances of American Morality during the New Deal specifically explores how food politics intersected with gender, race, and class in protest aesthetics to shape the moral stakes of New Deal policies for local and national American publics.

EPISTEMIC OPPRESSION
Undergraduate Researcher: Maya Comfort
Research Faculty Mentor: Kristie Dotson (Philosophy)

We generally agree with Rae Langton, that when it comes to knowledge “women get hurt” (“Feminism in Epistemology: Exclusion and Objectification”). Our research questions center on giving detail to the idea that people can “get hurt” when it comes to knowledge. Specifically, we probe the idea of epistemic oppression and whether and to what degree epistemic resistance exists. That distinctly epistemic forms of injustice exist is, at this point, generally accepted (see Gayatri Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” and Miranda Fricker’s Epistemic Injustice). The claim that epistemic oppression, a broader form of epistemic exclusion, exists is accepted, to a degree, but includes a great deal of confusion concerning the limit and scope of such an oppression. In like fashion, the ambiguity surrounding epistemic oppression finds its downside when attempting to theorize and identify epistemic resistance. In our research, we will probe the concept of
epistemic oppression and epistemic resistance with the aim of clearing some of the unnecessary vagueness surrounding the concept of epistemic oppression in order to gain a clearer view of epistemic resistance.

**THEATRE ENGINE—AUDIENCE CONTROL OF MEDIA IN THEATRE**
Research Assistant: Dennis Corsi  
Research Faculty Mentor: Alison Dobbins (Theatre Department)

The goal of this project is to create an interface design for the audience to use a personal handheld device (such as a smart phone, PDA, iPad) to control elements of the projected environment of a theatrical production. This is part of a larger project to examine how advances in game engine programming can be used to control and display media for theatre. An interface design will be created, tested and prototyped for the smart device for integration with the larger game engine project. The focus of the research is to implement a collaborative interaction with a device that is most often seen as a tool for personal communication. The project will entail research on current interface standards and design; establishing parameters of measuring methods to determine if the audience is successfully engaged in the overall performance, rather than individual performance with the device; designing a framework of interface for needs, function, results; work with programmers in the Theatre Engine project to create a working prototype of the design; testing the interface design.

**CONNECTED KNOWING—CONNECTED DANCING: FINDING HOME**
Undergraduate researchers: Megan Dailey, Tricia Gordon, Richard Price, Kaity Sinke  
Research Faculty Mentor: Sherrie Barr (Theatre)

Our presentation at the Humanities Education and Research Association (HERA) 2012 Conference: Crossroads, March 8-12, Salt Lake City, highlighted seven months of research focusing on notions of home. The research was undertaken as a creative exploration to inform dance making endeavor. To fully represent the scope of our research, we interfaced talking and moving within the presentation. A significant corollary emerged to this research that pertained to the ways students enter learning – whether in dance or other discourses. This project allowed all participants to explore the relationship between the personal and the universal. The presentation has been invited for submission as a formal journal essay to the scholarly journal, Interdisciplinary Humanities, associated with HERA.

**ORGANIZING AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE STUDY OF RELIGION**
Undergraduate Researcher: Travis Dodge  
Research Faculty Mentor: Arthur Versluis (Religious Studies)
As an undergraduate research assistant I have been very involved in the planning process for an international academic conference on religion to be held in California from July 19-22, 2012. I have seen, from the ground up, what it takes to put out a call for papers, how proposals must be evaluated, and how everything needs to be systematically documented. My responsibilities in planning this conference include working alongside the conference organizers, receiving proposals and making sure the proposals get sent out for peer review, tallying the votes that are sent back from separate conference committee members, alerting those that have submitted proposals if they are accepted or rejected or if they need to revise their proposal, and interacting with those who are submitting proposals. Another duty of mine as an undergraduate research assistant has been working on the publication of a collection of articles due to be released this summer. This collection is titled *Esotericism, Religion, and Politics*. Through working on this publication, I have been involved in the collection and editing of articles and how those articles will fit together in one collection of work. My responsibilities in working on this collection of articles include corresponding with the authors as far as their corrections to the articles, putting in place the edits that the authors or editors have decided are necessary, and assembling all elements of an article into something cohesive and readable.

**PREDICATE NOMINALS IN CHAUCER: A STUDY IN DIACHRONIC SYNTAX**  
Undergraduate Researcher: Bailey Doolittle  
Research Faculty Mentor: Cristina Schmitt (Linguistics and Languages)

In Romance languages, German, and Dutch it is possible to say 'John is professor/doctor/lawyer', indicating that it was possible in Middle English (ME). In modern English, professions and other roles in predicate position must be preceded by the indefinite article 'a' except when the role is unique as in 'Obama is President'. In this paper we ask what is the status of NP predicates in ME (1150-1500). Do post-copular NPs require determiners in ME or not? When did the indefinite determiner start to be required? What changed in English grammar to require the use of the indefinite? The existence of linguistically parsed corpora available online makes much more efficient and reliable the otherwise time-consuming task of examining old manuscripts to track changes. In this paper we analyze texts from later eras in the East Midlands dialect of ME available in the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of ME and texts from the Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English. Using Corpus Search to automatically extract all predicate nouns, we determine whether post-copular NP predicates were productive and whether they followed the same constraints as other Germanic and Romance Languages. We follow Munn & Schmitt's 2005 study of predicate nominals across various languages and we hypothesize that singular in previous stages of English did not require a determiner, but in modern English it does. Given that predicate nouns must have number (singular or plural), the indefinite is used to realize number.
SOCIAL INVISIBILITY AND TESTIMONIAL JUSTIFICATION
Undergraduate Researcher: Victor Draine
Research Faculty Mentor: Kristie Dotson (Philosophy)

We generally agree that trust is one of the primary ingredients necessary for robust acceptance of the testimony of others. However, trust, particularly epistemic trust, is by no means a fairly distributed commodity. That is to say, social factors and historical inequalities influence conferrals of epistemic trust in a given geo-political space. Our research questions center on outlining the degree to which historical inequalities influence social knowledge production and the extent to which these influences produce “unnatural disasters.” Taking unnatural disasters to mean the inability to track social reciprocity with respect to a given population, we ask to what degree do prevailing conceptions of testimonial justification, or how a belief formed through testimony is approved, aid in perpetuating broad failures in social reciprocity. By failing to take seriously the social factors influencing epistemic trust and defensible testimonial sensibilities, current philosophical literature on testimonial justification fails to grapple with the truly thorny social issues surrounding testimonial knowledge and, as a result, one of the major philosophical questions of the 21st century (i.e., considering seriously alternative epistemologies).

INCREASING THE VISIBILITY AND PRESENCE OF FOURTH GENRE: EXPLORATIONS IN NONFICTION AT THE ASSOCIATION FOR WRITERS AND WRITING PROGRAMS CONFERENCE
Undergraduate Researcher: Lauren Ebelt, Christine Scales
Research Faculty Mentor: Laura Julier (Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures)

Fourth Genre is a national literary nonfiction journal published biannually through Michigan State University Press. The journal has a small staff, comprised mostly of interns with an interest in the publishing industry. Given the high turnover rate of interns and a new editor to the journal, Fourth Genre is looking to create a firm and interesting presence in the publishing community. This project aims to research, enhance, and promote Fourth Genre’s presence at the Associated Writers and Writing Programs conference in Chicago. The hope is that future interns will be able to use the materials that we create to use for future writing conferences. To complete this goal, we first researched the conference and past designs and ideas. We collaborated with the editor to come up with a budget, and brainstormed ideas on what could feasibly work with a small working station and transportation in mind. We also helped design a new brochure and bookmark for the journal. We then worked to create a schedule for people to work at the conference, organized transportation, and helped create and organize the table design and materials. We will use these designs at the conference from March 1-March 3, and then leave instructions and thoughtful hints for future interns.
UNDERSTANDING FASHION DESIGN UTILIZING TRANSFORMATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION PATTERN METHODS
Undergraduate Researcher: Martin Flores, Jessie Moyer
Research Faculty Mentor: Theresa Winge (Art, Art History, and Design)

Transformational Reconstruction is an innovative pattern design methodology developed by Shingo Sato. Sato redefines Western pattern methods by incorporating the Japanese geometric spatial relationships from the folds of origami to construct with curvilinear seams. The transformational qualities of these techniques may revolutionize the geometric and mathematical aspects of pattern drafting, as well as introduce inventive silhouettes in fashion designs. Since Transformational Reconstruction is a relatively new method, the limits and extensions of its applications are unknown. This project focuses on researching the Transformational Reconstruction methodology through experiential learning, as well as a search of the literature for patterning techniques used in Japanese culture. The outcomes are designs that reflect the concepts introduced and explored within Transformational Reconstruction. These innovative fashion designs suggest the extents without approaching the limits of these experiment techniques. This study is funded by the College of Arts and Letters Undergraduate Research Initiative Grant.

TRANSITIONING TO LIFE AND LEARNING AT MSU: OUR CHINESE STUDENTS’ PERSPECTIVE
Undergraduate Researcher: Cara Gonzalez
Research Faculty Mentor: Scott Chiu (WRAC)

As a pioneer university for international exchange, the MSU community has a vested interest in the transition, experience, and perception of the Chinese students that call East Lansing home. In my research, I engaged the Chinese student community through interviews and data compilation. By exploring their experiences, my aim was to assess if there is a gap between accommodations available for Chinese students and the goals they have for their college experience. This exploration was piloted by the following questions: Where do they live in terms of space and community? What challenges and advantages do they encounter in and out of the classroom? And how do professors or local students perceive their growing Chinese community on campus? The answers to these questions can add insight to conversations and decisions about how to better accommodate this burgeoning demographic. Chinese students continue to be the fastest-growing international student population in U.S. colleges--MSU alone has 3,012 Chinese students, five times as many as they had in 2005. This near exponential growth speaks volumes about MSU’s commitment to promoting diversity. It also has far-reaching implications, from how professors structure their classes to creating new dynamics in college culture. With so many resources invested in reaching this community, it would be remiss to neglect the viewpoint of Chinese students.
THE MAP OF NAMUR AS EXTENDED MIND: A COGNITIVE AND LITERARY HISTORY OF ARTIFICIAL MEMORY
Undergraduate Researcher: Austin Gorsuch
Research Faculty Mentor: Natalie Phillips (English)

In Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767), the narrator’s obsessive uncle hangs in his room a map of the battleground upon which he was wounded. His goal is to reconstruct a picture of his remembered campaign—one that will allow him to “stick a pin upon the identical spot of ground where he was standing in when the stone struck him.” In an age of artificial memory systems, like the Blackberry, GPS, and Google Maps, considering how such mnemonic tools have been historically conceptualized (and critiqued) can help problematize our progressive narratives of unhindered technological integration. This project, first, historicizes ideas about artificial memory in the Enlightenment. Reading Sterne’s novel alongside Descartes’ *L’Homme*, I argue that Sterne satirizes and deploys a Cartesian model of memory to mock a vision of consciousness that locates the self purely in the material brain. I show how such early literature complicated any theory of cognition that restricted human memory to the physical, emphasizing the mind’s mnemonic reliance on the surrounding world. My work points toward an alternate eighteenth-century model of memory storage that locates the remembered self in the relationship between brain and environment—and highlights the vital role of the external objects we use to store memories. I end discussing an fMRI experiment that uses technologies from modern neuroscience to investigate the brain’s engagement with different external memory systems (books, maps, and digital applications); through such interdisciplinary work, I demonstrate how historical perspectives on the mind and brain can inform modern views of cognition.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF CITIZENS UNITED V. FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
Undergraduate Researcher: Samantha Goulet
Research Faculty Mentor: James Roper (Philosophy)

Professor James Roper and I, Samantha Goulet, have been researching a detailed philosophical analysis of the Citizens' United v Federal Election Commission (FEC) Supreme Court decision. This is very important research in that the decision brought about both extreme praise and criticism. Some claim that the United States government has been fundamentally changed from the decision and it seems vital to look at this from a philosophical perspective. Also, there are some that claim that the decision will influence the direction in which social and political philosophy is headed academically. The primary objective of the research is to look at the decision through the focus lens of social and political philosophy with special attention to social contract theories and social covenant theories.
PRACTICE MAKES OPAQUE: LEARNING OPAQUE PHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES
Undergraduate Researcher: Christopher Heffner
Research Faculty Mentors: Karthik Durvasula (Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian, and African Languages)

Almost all humans are capable of learning a language; however, it remains an open question whether there are any hypothetically conceivable patterns in language that cannot be learned. Here, one of these possible patterns, known as “phonological opacity”, is examined. Under traditional phonological accounts, known as Rule-Based Phonology (RBP), opacity can result from rule ordering: one sound change that precedes a second could be obscured by the latter change. The more modern theory known as Classic Optimality Theory (OT) cannot accommodate opaque phonological patterns without additional, sometimes ad hoc, mechanisms. A recent study by Ettlinger, Bradlow, and Wong (revision submitted) argues that only participants with high scores on tests of memory can learn opaque phonological processes in an artificial language. Here, it is claimed that the question of whether there are memory constraints that slow the acquisition of phonological opacity is irrelevant to the ultimate question of whether opacity itself is learnable. Under traditional generative accounts, memory falls straight forwardly under the umbrella of linguistic performance constraints; if even some people can learn opacity, it indicates that opacity may eventually fall under linguistic competence for all. In our extension to Ettlinger et al.’s (revision submitted) paradigm, participants were evaluated on their acquisition of opaque phonological processes twice, each after a block of practice; it is hypothesized that acquisition of the opaque generalizations will improve for all participants across time, indicating that the ultimate endpoint for nearly all participants is the acquisition of phonological opacity.

HOW CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE SHAPES LITERACY
Undergraduate Researcher: Michelle Hevelhorst
Research Faculty Mentors: Chien-Hsiung Chiu (Writing, Rhetoric, & American Culture)

This research focuses on two assignments from Michigan State University’s Writing and Rhetoric in American Cultures (WRA) 1004 Writing and WRA 150 classes. The first assignment calls upon students to analyze their personal literacy, while the other asks students to write about a cultural artifact and its significance to daily life. The focus of this research is not on why or how international students choose topics for these assignments. Rather it explores how the choice of non-western cultural artifacts, by international students, affects the consultation session and the complications that arise when L2 learners attempt to relate non-western cultural artifacts to western teaching and rhetorical paradigms. More specifically, how these topics are worked through by the L2 learners’ native culture lens and how this ultimately affects the consultation session between writing consultant and client. I believe that by examining consultations between L2 clients and American consultants’ one can obtain qualitative data that will measure the effectiveness of cross-cultural consultations with these assignments. For
example, does a consultant’s unfamiliarity with non-western cultural artifacts hinder or help an L2 student’s navigation of western teaching methods and assignments? Does the present writing center methodology aid international students or frustrate students who are likewise unfamiliar with western academic tropes and questions? By observing writing consultation sessions that meet the specific parameters of my research, and interviewing clients after the sessions, I aim to answer these questions and shed light on how to better aid consultants and clients alike dealing with these assignments.

THE EAST/WEST THEME IN RUSSIAN SYMBOLIST LITERATURE
Undergraduate Researcher: Richard Holland
Research Faculty Mentor: Jason Merrill (Russian)

Geographic location has often been used in discourse surrounding Russian national identity as a context for exploring Russia’s historical, political, and spiritual relationships with other nations. Traditionally, Russian thinkers have positioned their country between a “West” conceptualized as progressive, civilized and democratic, and an “East,” cast as barbaric, culturally stunted, and despotic. While numerous scholars have explored this construct, as well as its use in Russian political and cultural life, its use in literature of the Symbolist period (1890-1920) has yet to be thoroughly examined. I propose to explore the use of this East/West dichotomy by Russian symbolist writers by examining selected prose works of Andrei Bely, Fyodor Sologub, Valery Bryusov, and Alexei Remizov, and analyzing these authors’ depictions of East/West interaction in the context of Russian literary and political thought. By examining the symbolists’ uses of the East/West construct, we may gain a more complete understanding of the symbolist movement’s characterization of Russian national identity, as well as of the movement’s relationship to earlier thinkers regarding the role of Russia in world political and spiritual life. My preliminary research indicates that, although the aforementioned writers frequently used the East/West theme to engage with contemporary philosophical questions regarding Russia’s fate (particularly in the wake of the 1905 Revolution), they, unlike earlier Russian thinkers like Vladimir Solovyov and Fyodor Dostoyevsky, refrain from making messianic claims regarding Russia’s role in world political and cultural affairs.

RESEARCH ON THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS
Undergraduate Researcher: Curran Jacobs
Research Faculty Mentor: Christina Traister (Theatre Department)

The Society of American Fight Directors is the leading organization in the country that helps teach actors how to safely create the illusion of violence for the stage, television, and film. These SAFD guidelines are currently used in teaching stage combat to MSU students. Although our students have the opportunity to take a beginning stage combat class, it would benefit them greatly to further develop their skills. This would be best
achieved in a local regional workshop in which they would be exposed to professionals from across the country. These newly learned skills would be highly beneficial and provide our graduates with an edge in seeking employment as actors. We presently have no means to provide this higher level of training to students in the Department of Theatre. I would like to provide a current student who is extremely dedicated to the art form and has a strong interest in the field, Curran Jacobs, with the opportunity to research how to facilitate this advanced training including what would be needed to create the infrastructure for a new SAFD sanctioned regional workshop to be held in East Lansing.

INTERNET RESOURCES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GERMAN MIDDLE CLASS
Undergraduate Researcher: Aaron Kozikowski
Research Faculty Mentor: George Peters (Languages and Literature)

In teaching a course on the formation of German identity in the 19th Century (GRM 341) printed textual material allows students to begin to critically engage with the major developments during this pivotal period in German history. Poetry, novels, plays, and historical documents serve well to initiate a student dialog with the ideas that propelled Germany from the abstract world of Romanticism to the gritty realities of late 19th Century Naturalism. Increasingly, however, the Internet allows for the introduction of visual texts and interactive websites that engage students more fully with the cultural artifacts of the time. In this project we will research on-line sites that can be used to supplement current texts with a view to developing an on-line version of the course. Of particular interest are sites that illustrate cultural, social, and historical manifestations of the period such as painting, architecture, interior design, fashion, transportation, industrial progress, and class struggle. Using such websites as those available from the German Historical Museum and the German Institute for Political Education, students will also be able to interactively follow the development of the German middle class. The outcome of this project will be a demonstration by the student researcher of how the Internet can enrich and enliven a course with a historical focus.

LIONS, ZEBRAS, AND PLURALS, OH MY!
Undergraduate Researchers: Adam Liter, Christopher Heffner
Research Faculty Mentor: Cristina Schmitt (Linguistics and Languages)

While English has an obligatory singular/plural distinction, in Japanese/Korean bare nouns allow both plural and singular interpretations. To disambiguate between a singular and a plural reading, optional markers (“one” or a special pluralizer) can be added. We report an experiment testing English-speaking participants’ ability to learn an artificial language based on Japanese/Korean-like number system. We specifically investigate adults’ ability to produce and interpret bare nouns and the optional number markings as well as adults’ ability (or lack thereof) to generalize grammatical structures.
We ask whether (i) adults can learn that bare nominals can have singular and plural interpretations and, if so, whether they will treat bare nouns as English plurals and (ii) whether they will match the frequency of determiner usage in their inputs, as opposed to generalizing the usage of determiners. We hypothesize that participants acquire an English-like understanding of bare nouns—that is to say, that they will treat it as the English bare plural (Sauerland et al., 2006)—but that participants produce determiners with a frequency consistent with their inputs in learning sessions, as Hudson Kam & Newport 2005, 2009 found. Our results will shed light on the process of regularization—that is, on generalization beyond the input given to build a grammar in a novel language.

THE BA IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING: THE OTHER UNDERGRADUATE WRITING DEGREE
Undergraduate Researcher: Catherine McCaffrey
Research Faculty Mentor: Jonathan Ritz (Writing, Rhetoric, and American Culture)

The rapid growth of bachelor’s degree programs in professional writing provides new possibilities for students and new opportunities for faculty who teach writing. This presentation offers an intergenerational overview of one such program, as seen from the perspective of five unique stakeholders: a current undergraduate student; a recent graduate who went on to earn an MFA; two faculty members with creative writing backgrounds who teach in the program; and an administrator who directs the program.

AI WEIWEI’S VISION: CONCEPTUALIZING ART AS A RESULT OF NATIONAL TRAGEDY
Undergraduate Researcher: Kristin McCool
Research Faculty Mentor: Karin Zitzewitz (Art, Art History and Design)

In May 2008, an earthquake ravaged China’s Sichuan province, claiming over 70,000 lives, according to the Chinese central government. An overwhelming number of lives lost that day were school children, trapped in poorly constructed schools. Families of the children petitioned the Sichuan authorities, calling for an investigation of local officials involved in the schools construction, but after countless attempts, still the Chinese government remained silent. In response, Chinese artist Ai Weiwei co-launched the “Citizen’s Investigation.” This project was designed both to name the corrupt officials who profited from the faulty construction and more shockingly, to record the names of the dead children. In March 2009, he extended the project by creating Remembering, a brightly colored display of backpacks covering the façade of Munich’s Haus der Kunst Museum. In my research, I intend to examine the preconceived notion of art as only referring to the “visual image.” I will raise the question of how both the “Citizen’s Investigation” and Remembering can be considered works of art. Of key importance are the relationships between the textual and the visual and the concrete and the impermanent. In so doing, my paper attempts to account for the social role of the artist in contemporary art.
MOST EFFECTIVE METHODS OF CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK
Undergraduate Researcher: Nina McNure
Research Faculty Mentor: Shawn Loewen (Linguistics and Languages)

When professors correct student’s mistakes they use a variety of techniques to do so. The focus of this study will look at how receptive students are to the different ways corrective feedback is used during class periods. Student receptiveness will be measured by how well students notice the given feedback and whether or not they can produce the correct form afterwards. If the student can continue to use the correct form even after the initial feedback then optimal learning has occurred and the technique is effective. The study looks at a Spanish 102 classroom with high beginning to low intermediate level students. The professor primarily uses recasts and metalinguistic feedback among other strategies to correct his student’s errors. Which of these forms produces the most beneficial feedback will be examined based on the above-mentioned criteria of being received and producing long lasting learning. Since teacher or professor feedback is one of the primary ways students grow in their language learning, then knowledge of the best practices for various error corrections plays a vital role in students’ future language learning success.

IMPROVING INVENTION STRATEGIES OF ACADEMIC WRITING USING WEB BASED TECHNOLOGIES
Undergraduate Researchers: Madelyn Morris, Alaina Perez
Research Faculty Mentor: James Davis (Writing, Rhetoric and American Culture)

At present there are no viable writing software programs, in particular any that coincide with current composition and rhetoric trends and theories. Thus, adding an additional researcher to this CAL project will help expedite and link the phases necessary to understand and eventually to solve this problem through research, design, composition, testing, and implementation. The CAL URI researcher in place has been directly involved with literature searches and creating an IRB-approved survey to be distributed across the humanities departments at MSU (beginning with CAL). The additional researcher will begin designing and writing the inquiry-based content of the software itself. Once the survey results are collected, both CAL URI researchers can assist in examining this surveyed data to see what types of arguments are being created and in what settings. In sum, the CAL Research Assistants will help identify aspects of writing academic (i.e., argument) essays, in particular in the College of Arts and Letters, which need to be implemented into such an electronic program that stresses invention as an important part of the ongoing and overall writing process. As well, the researchers will help co-author a potential journal article for Computers and Composition Online that will show the need for new software that matches today’s students’ acceptance of electronic nonlinearity, relationships, and layering.
**THE ROAD TO 501(C)3: REGISTERING MIDDLE OF THE MITTEN EVENTS AS AN OFFICIAL NON-PROFIT**
Undergraduate Researcher: Dan Nufer
Research Faculty Mentor: Jonathan Ritz (Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures)

For the past several years, a music showcase called Middle of the Mitten (MOTM) has been bringing together indie bands and music fans in the Lansing region for a yearly show. Now MOTM wants to expand into a community-based arts organization that not only produces an annual event but also provides ongoing opportunities to connect musicians, fans, media personnel, venue owners, retailers, and other stakeholders in the regional music community. Professional Writing student Dan Nufer has created a strategic plan that provided MOTM with a clear path to reaching this next level. His work began by researching model organizations and articulating needs in the local music community that MOTM could help meet. He has also created a working blueprint for MOTM as a nonprofit organization, including its mission statement, staffing structure, and various projects and initiatives it will pursue. Finally, he will present this strategic plan at the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum, along with reflections on what he learned from the process. Each step has been mentored by Dr. Jonathan Ritz, an assistant professor and academic adviser in the Professional Writing program.

**CHANGING URBAN LANDSCAPE**
Undergraduate Researcher: Aubrey Owada
Research Faculty Mentor: Xia Gao (Art, Art History and Design)

The purpose of this project is to reflect on changing urban landscapes through creative visual expressions from the perspectives of the individual artist, artist group, and participating local community. The changing urban landscape in Michigan, particularly in Detroit, has raised worldwide awareness. A visual comparison between upbeat and deteriorating urban places within the state and other places, such as the fast transforming Chinese urban landscape, is thought provoking. The shocking contrasts stimulated me to develop a creative project addressing this nearby reality and the factors/issues related to it. In seeking broader visual expressions and social impacts, I proposed this topic at the Surface Design Association Michigan regional meeting to advocate the joining of artists’ and community voices beyond my individual interpretation. The proposal met with great interest among textile and fiber artists statewide. Aubrey Owada assisted in each stage of this project’s development, from researching the causes behind changing physical, physiological, social impacts on urban dwellers' lives, to studio production, and installation on site after securing exhibition space. She also contributed to external funding and show venue identification and the project’s postproduction publicity. Aubrey was involved in the entire creative process and was in contact with local and regional artists in the field in developing collaborative and community projects.
CAN YOU TELL ME MORE?: COMPUTER-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM
Undergraduate Researcher: Marissa Perry
Research Faculty Mentor: Senta Goertler (Linguistics and Languages)

Learning a second language is one of the most challenging intellectual undertakings for adults. Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) offers the hope of making language learning more effective by allowing students to personalize their language learning experiences within a classroom. This research project will evaluate the effectiveness of introducing the CALL program Tell Me More in German language classes at Michigan State University. The Tell Me More research group has conducted pretesting of all students enrolled in a German class in order to determine a base German language level and will administer posttests at the end of April to establish language improvement over the course of the semester. It is expected that 200 students will complete the full Tell Me More study. By tracking the amount of time students spend using Tell Me More, it will be possible to discern any correlation between Tell Me More and language acquisition. In my presentation, I will present the results of the Tell Me More project thus far. In particular, the study will show whether students are working on areas that the placement test designated as weaknesses, or if individuals spend more time on already proficient areas. This research project will provide insight on ways language instructors can better connect CALL programs such as Tell Me More to classroom instruction.

AN EYE-TRACKING PERSPECTIVE ON PROSODIC DISAMBIGUATION COMPETENCE
Undergraduate Researcher: Elliot Selkirk
Research Faculty Mentors: Jessica Gamache (Linguistics and Languages), Cristina Schmitt (Linguistics and Languages)

Green house can have two meanings: (i) a house that is green (phrasal prosody) or (ii) a place where plants are grown (compound prosody). In order to recognize this difference, English speakers must know that the stress and timing of the two readings, i.e., the prosody, affect the meaning. Previous studies looking at adults’ ability to use prosody to disambiguate phrasal units from compounds reveal that adults perform poorly on judgment tasks with novel compounds (e.g., red cup for a red flower), showing a bias for phrasal prosody (Vogel & Raimy, 2005; Good, 2008). We argue that these results are an artifact of the offline task used. In this study our aim is to determine to what extent adults can use prosodic cues to differentiate between compound and phrasal prosody of linearly identical word sequences. We use both judgment and eye-tracking data in order to more accurately gauge the strength of the prosody-syntax interface. Subjects will be presented simultaneously with two images and an accompanying phrase and will be asked to select the image that corresponds to what they hear. Eye movements will be recorded from the onset of the audio stimuli using
the EyeLink eye-tracker. Based on work by Zhou et al. (2011) and Good (2008), who showed that when using online measures (eye-tracking, response times) eye movements follow a prosodic parse, we predict that adults may judge novel compounds inaccurately but may have the same eye-movement patterns for known compounds, showing sensitivity to the prosody.

MARKETING NONFICTION: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUSTAINABLE ONLINE PRESENCE FOR FOURTH GENRE
Undergraduate Researchers: Kimberly Tweedale, Katie Conley
Research Faculty Mentor: Laura Julier (Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures)

Fourth Genre is a national literary nonfiction journal published through the Michigan State University Press. It has a small staff and provides internships to students looking to enter the publishing industry. Tasks and responsibilities change hands frequently because of the high turnover rate of student interns, and this journal has struggled to maintain a cohesive online presence. This project aims to create, promote, and maintain an online presence for Fourth Genre through the use of social media and its website that can be maintained by future members of the editorial team. To achieve this goal, we first completed secondary research to discover what other small-staffed journals were doing to promote themselves online and evaluated the feasibility of implementing these strategies for Fourth Genre. We then conducted primary research about the journal by meeting with and talking to the editor and editorial staff to determine the identity that Fourth Genre wants to project with its online presence. We then used this research to create and implement a communication strategy for the journal that can guide current and future Fourth Genre team members in their decisions about how to promote the journal online.

ROLLER SKATES, BRUISES AND LIPSTICK: FEMININE AND MASCULINE DISPLAYS WITH ROLLER DERBY
Undergraduate Researcher: Erin vonKronenberger
Research Faculty Mentor: Theresa Winge (Apparel and Textiles)

During the last two decades, Roller Derby in North America has experienced renewed popularity, both with its athletes and fans. Roller Derby is an aggressive contact sport on roller skates around a flat or banked track, featuring female athletes dressed in provocative and hyper-feminine uniforms. A superficial read of Roller Derby suggests numerous similarities to male dominated sports; however, upon closer examination it reveals unique feminine practices and compensations, such as “hosting” the visiting team and “taking a knee” when someone is injured during play on the track. Still, this sport provides its athletes with agency and power not often afforded women. Accordingly, the athletes rename themselves with humorous yet powerful and often highly sexualized names, such as Anita Punch and Charmed ‘n’ Dangerous. In this paper,
I discuss how female athletes explore feminine and masculine identities within the sport of Roller Derby from my ethnographic research with teams in North America. Specifically, I explore the ways that Roller Derby athletic dress/uniforms express hyper-feminine identities (or fantasies), while the sport encourages and allows behaviors both on and off the track more often associated with male athletes, such as swearing, verbal taunts, spitting, and fights. I analyze in depth the Roller Derby uniforms (and the sport’s related dress), which are rich with non-verbal communication about the athletes' displayed identities; their relationships with team mates, opposing teams, and fans; and socio-political positions of the athletes (and fans).