



## ROSS ELFLINE

PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY · CARLETON COLLEGE



Ross Elfline is Professor of Art History at Carleton College, where he offers a range of courses on the history of art and architecture after World War II. His research focuses primarily on Radical Architecture practices in Europe in the 1960s and 70s. In brief, his work considers the many ways architects of the era sought to expand the definition of architecture to include media other than built form. He has published widely on the Italian architecture collective Superstudio, specifically on the ways in which their refusal to build was consistent with autonomist labor movements in Italy at the time. His current book project, titled “Common Ground, Common Time: Architectural

Performance in the 1960s and 70s” looks at the intersection of architecture and performance art in the neo-avant-garde era. By examining both architects who engaged in time-based performance and performance artists who intervened critically into the built environment of the city, this study argues that the medium of the “architectural performance” became a critical tool for questioning the power dynamics that inhere in public civic spaces. His research has been supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Arts.

In recent years, Ross has collaborated with the Minneapolis-based public arts collective Confluence: An East Lake Studio for Community Design to initiate a number of community-engaged projects involving residents of South Minneapolis’s Ninth Ward and Carleton students. These actions propose models for how one might undertake holistic acts of community development that center the needs and interests of the racially and economically diverse people who live in the neighborhood. This ground-up method of community design prioritizes local knowledge and expertise along with creative means to catalyze residents to action.

**Fellowship Project:** During the fellowship period, Ross plans to work closely with the Provost’s Office to develop new models for collaborative teaching and learning at Carleton College. As a leading liberal arts college, Carleton prides itself on interdisciplinary modes of inquiry, and yet persistent barriers to collaborative teaching remain. This project seeks to identify these barriers and propose solutions to them. Some initial questions include: What models for collaborative teaching are possible beyond the standard team-taught course? What role might community partners play both in and beyond the classroom? How can we make these new initiatives sustainable so that faculty, departments, and community partners alike can both collaborate most effectively with one another and make such collaboration an integral part of the curriculum moving forward?

**Fun Fact:** Ross was a hair’s breadth away from being a contestant on the fourth season of The Great American Baking Show. He may very well audition again if taping of the show aligns with a future sabbatical. Fingers crossed.



## LOUIS EPSTEIN

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSIC · ST. OLAF COLLEGE



Louis Epstein is Associate Professor of Music at St. Olaf College. His monograph, *The Creative Labor of Music Patronage in Interwar France*, appeared with Boydell Press in 2022, and he has also published articles in the *Journal of Musicology*, *Music & Politics*, the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy*, and the *Revue de musicologie*. With Daniel Barolsky, Louis co-edited two volumes of *Open Access Musicology*. He won the 2016 AMS Teaching Award for the Musical Geography Project, a repository of student-generated digital maps intended as resources for scholars, teachers, and students of music history. In the last three years, Louis has served as co-director of St.

Olaf's Center for Innovation in the Liberal Arts, Chair of the Faculty Governance Committee, Faculty Representative to the St. Olaf Board of Regents, and as a member of the Presidential Search Committee. Louis currently serves as Special Assistant to the Provost for Student Belonging and Retention and just began a three-year term as Chair of the Music Department.

**Fellowship Project:** Louis's project is titled "From Belonging to Persistence: Small Teaching for Student Success." In collaboration with staff, faculty, and students, Louis is running a classroom research study that measures how new teaching practices affect students' sense of academic belonging in the short term and persistence at the College over the next several years. 40 faculty in 28 departments and over 1100 students are participating in the study. In addition, Louis collaborates on various retention-oriented initiatives with staff colleagues on the Retention Committee, and works closely with the President and the Vice President for Enrollment and College Relations in developing St. Olaf's next strategic plan.

**Fun Fact:** In his spare time, Louis makes unbearably catchy, surprisingly sophisticated music for kids and their families as one half of a duo called Louis and Dan and the Invisible Band. They are currently writing a musical comedy inspired by Homer's *Odyssey*. Ask him to sing you an excerpt.



## DUCHESS HARRIS

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PROVOST FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES · MACALESTER COLLEGE

Duchess Harris is the Special Assistant to the Provost for Strategic Initiatives at Macalester College. She is also a Professor of American Studies and an affiliated member of the Political Science Department and co-directs the Congress to Campus Program.

Harris was a Mellon Mays Fellow at the University of Pennsylvania. She graduated with a degree in American History. In 1990, she was elected Student Body President, making her the first Black woman to serve in this role at an Ivy League institution. Harris earned a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota. Twenty-five years after



earning her degree, she was asked to deliver the prestigious David Noble Lecture at her alma mater. While in graduate school, she worked for the late U.S. Senator Paul D. Wellstone and attended Yale's First Summer Campaign School in 1994. She completed a policy fellowship at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs and postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Minnesota Law School and the University of Georgia. She earned a J.D. from Mitchell Hamline College of Law and is now a trustee.

Her research has been published in the London School of Economics, Litigation News, and the Connecticut Public Interest Law Journal. Her academic books include *Racially Writing the Republic: Racists, Race Rebels, and Transformations of American Identity* with Bruce D. Baum (2009 Duke University Press), *Three editions of Black Feminist Politics*, 2009, 2011, 2018 (Palgrave Macmillan), and *Black Girl Magic Beyond the Hashtag: Twenty-First Century Acts of Self-Definition* with Julia Jordan Zachary (2019 University of Arizona Press). She is also the proud curator of the Duchess Harris Collection, (ABDO Publishing), which has 120 books written for 4-12 graders.

In her spare time, she teaches "Black Health Law" at the University of Minnesota Law School with Judge Maria Mitchell.

**Fellowship Project:** I am the Co-Chair of the Curriculum Committee. In the fall 2022 report by the Strategic Planning and Analysis committee, the imperative to re-imagine the college's existing general education program was framed to be guided by the fundamental educational goals and priorities of the College as found in the College's Mission statement, its Statement of Purpose and Belief, and the Imagine, Macalester strategic plan. They also noted, "Realizing the curricular goals of the new strategic plan— and doing so in a way that is consistent with Macalester's mission, statement of purpose and belief, and [institutional] learning goals— will require purposefully organizing the various building blocks... into an integrated academic and social curriculum that spans all four years of a typical undergraduate experience."

The Curriculum Committee has met regularly during the past 12 months. We will continue to meet during the academic year 2024-2025.

**Fun Fact:** I hosted a virtual wine tasting in 2021 and called it "Quarantine Blues." We sold \$98,000 worth of wine and gave scholarships to African American high school students. I like to sip and serve!



## MARION HOURDEQUIN

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY · COLORADO COLLEGE

Marion Hourdequin is a Professor of Philosophy at Colorado College. Her teaching and research focus on environmental philosophy, ethics, comparative philosophy, and philosophy of science, with particular interests in climate ethics and climate justice. She is the author of *Environmental Ethics: From Theory to Practice* (Bloomsbury) and co-editor, with David Havlick, of *Restoring Layered Landscapes* (Oxford). Professor Hourdequin is President of the International Society for Environmental Ethics (ISEE) and an Associate Editor for the journal *Environmental Ethics*. At Colorado College, she recently completed a multi-year term on the Faculty Executive Committee, and her



leadership experience also includes serving as chair of the Philosophy Department and Director of the Environmental Studies Program.

**Fellowship Project:** Marion Hourdequin's fellowship project focuses in three key areas: 1) supporting review and refinement of the college's General Education program, 2) working with partners across campus to strengthen holistic and longitudinal undergraduate advising, and 3) engaging in Colorado College's emerging and ongoing climate- and sustainability-related initiatives. A lens of antiracism, diversity, equity and inclusion (ADEI) informs work these areas, with particular attention to issues of access and equity in relation to curricular and co-curricular opportunities; advising, world readiness and career preparation; and institutional climate and sustainability efforts.

**Fun Fact:** I love to play soccer, and the fastest and slowest half marathons I've ever run were both on snow.



## CONNIE KASSOR

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT · LAWRENCE  
UNIVERSITY

I am an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Lawrence University in Wisconsin, where I teach courses on Buddhist thought and Asian religious traditions. My research primarily focuses on Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, and my forthcoming book, *Accounting for Awakened Awareness*, explores the Madhyamaka philosophy of the 15th-century Tibetan scholar Gorampa Sonam Senge.

I'm also interested in issues related to women and gender minorities in Buddhist traditions, as well as Buddhism and social justice, and I have spent several years living with Buddhist communities in India and Nepal. In addition to my scholarly publications, I've written for *Lion's Roar* and *Tricycle*, and I recently published an audio course on Asian religious traditions for The Great Courses and Audible, and a course on Tibet for The Great Courses at Wondrium.

In addition to my research and teaching, I am currently serving as Special Assistant to the President at Lawrence, through the support of a Mellon Academic Leadership Fellowship. In this role, I am working to institutionalize programs that better support our students for future careers and life after graduation.

**Fellowship Project:** As Special Assistant to the President at Lawrence University, I'm working with partners across campus and in our community to showcase the ways that the humanities and the liberal arts prepare students for success after graduation.

Projects related to this work include:

- Developing programming for a new state-of-the-art Humanities Center on campus that will bring together students, faculty, and community partners;
- Implementing a multi-year faculty development grant from the Network for Vocation in Undergraduate Education (NetVUE), focused on integrating career exploration into humanities courses;
- Working with donors to develop campus programs that explore generative AI from a liberal arts perspective, in order to better prepare our students for emerging careers.

**Fun Fact:** I'm on a mission to hike in all 69 of Wisconsin's state parks.





## ANDREA KASTON TANGE

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH · MACALESTER COLLEGE



Andrea Kaston Tange is Professor of English at Macalester College and President of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association. She has served on and chaired the MLA Committee on Academic Freedom, Professional Rights and Responsibilities; spent one term as Director of Digital Liberal Arts and four years as department chair at Macalester; served on the Board for and as President of the Midwest Modern Language Association; and is an incoming member of the Associated Departments of English (ADE) Executive Committee. She has published widely on nineteenth-century British literature and culture, most recently on ephemera and visual images. She is currently working on a monograph entitled *Imagined Encounters: Public Impressions and Private Lives in the Age of Empire*.

In addition to scholarly work on a wide range of Victorian Studies topics, she is particularly interested in public discussions of the value of the humanities. Her public-facing work includes mainstream essays drawn from her research work in venues like Slate; a recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on how we think about "service" in academia; and forthcoming creative nonfiction.

**Fellowship Project:** Build an online "Student Pathways" project to help prospective students and their families, as well as current students, see the possibilities of pathways from a major to a career that are enabled by Macalester's unique combination of SLAC cross-disciplinary opportunities and Twin Cities location advantages. Such a multi-year undertaking would draw on campus support for web design and implementation, as well as cooperation with Alumni Relations. In the Fellow term I will pilot this project, including: creating set of interview questions for alumni; helping to design the website functionality (keys: make it searchable by major and by career area, so that people can start at either point and trace student paths); writing up alumni career path profiles based on survey responses; launching a limited version of the site, focusing on humanities and interdisciplinary programs across campus, with the longer-term goal of capturing alumni pathways for all departments.

**Fun Fact:** Because I teach nineteenth-century novels for a living, I can diagnose a surprising number of diseases on the basis of vague symptoms and modest euphemisms.



## MEIRA Z. KENSKY

JOSEPH E. MCCABE PROFESSOR OF RELIGION AND DIRECTOR OF  
ADVISING · COE COLLEGE

Meira Z. Kensky is currently the Joseph E. McCabe Associate Professor of Religion at Coe College, where she teaches a variety of courses for the Philosophy and Religion department and the First-Year Seminar Program. She regularly works with advanced students as they prepare Honors Theses and independent research. Kensky received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Biblical Studies (New Testament) from the University of Chicago.



Her first book, *Trying Man, Trying God: The Divine Courtroom in Early Jewish and Christian Literature*, was published by Mohr Siebeck in 2010, and was the inspiration for a conference on “The Divine Courtroom in Comparative Perspective” at Cordozo School of Law in New York. Currently, she is working on her second book for Mohr Siebeck, an examination of the figure of Timothy in Early Christian literature, and a book for Wm. B. Eerdmans on the Apocalypse of Peter and Early Christian tours of Hell. Recent publications include articles on the Acts of Timothy and on John Chrysostom’s Homilies on 1-2 Timothy (forthcoming). Kensky has lectured widely around the Chicago and Cedar Rapids areas, and gave the 29th Annual Stone Lectureship in Judaism at Augustana College, IL and the Winter 2016 Dean’s Craft of Teaching Seminar at the University of Chicago Divinity School. She was the recipient of Coe College’s C. J. Lynch Outstanding Teacher Award in 2013, and has served as Co-Director of the ACM Newberry Seminar in the Humanities and as Coe’s Director of First-Year Experience. She currently serves as Coe’s Director of Advising.

**Fellowship Project:** Kensky will be implementing Coe's new Academic Core Curriculum. This requires coordination between all departments at Coe, ensuring that students at all levels have equitable access to register for courses, including those whose categories have fewer courses populating them or whose courses are also required for many majors. Kensky will track which categories are the hardest to meet, working closely with department chairs, the Registrar’s office, and the Provost’s office to ensure that the Core is a central part of curricular planning and truly becomes the core, the intellectual and creative commons of the college. The spirit of the new Diversity Across the Curriculum requirement means that these must be courses across the curriculum and not just in discrete categories. Kensky will work with faculty and the Academic Policies Committee to design and integrate new courses at the introductory level that advance true diversity, maximizing opportunities for growth and development.

**Fun Fact:** Not being good at book report “projects,” which my middle and high school teachers loved to assign, I once rewrote all the lyrics to *The Little Mermaid* to be about *Great Expectations*.



## MARY I. UNGER

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AND CHAIR · RIPON COLLEGE



Mary I. Unger is an associate professor of English and Chair of the department as well as coordinator of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at Ripon College, where she teaches courses in American literature and literary theory, as well as in gender and sexuality studies. Her research interests include twentieth-century American literature, recovery work, women's reception practices and reading communities, middlebrow literature, literature of the Midwest, gender and sexuality, critical race theory, and pedagogy.

She is the recipient of the 2020 David D. Anderson Award for Outstanding Essay in Midwestern Literary Studies from the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature and the 2018 Katharine Newman Best Essay Award from the Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States. Her current book project, *\_Reading the Renaissance: Black Women's Literary Reception and Taste in Chicago, 1932-1953\_*, is under advance contract with the University of Massachusetts Press as part of its Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book series...and is due soon!

**Fellowship Project:** As an ACM fellow, Dr. Unger will lead diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts targeting three areas at Ripon College: (1) academic programming, (2) student retention and recruitment, and (3) faculty development. Her portfolio of responsibilities will include designing and implementing an inclusive STEM program with innovative science curricula, networking opportunities, and increased persistence to graduation for marginalized science students. In a similar way, she will work with faculty in the arts and humanities to create programming that promotes inclusive creative and performing disciplines on campus and that accesses new pipelines of traditionally underrepresented students in the arts and humanities. Finally, Dr. Unger will serve as Campus Lead for the CIC's new Belong initiative at Ripon to design inclusive learning, enhance faculty development opportunities, increase student belonging, and advance retention efforts.

**Fun Fact:** I weave (and currently own five looms)!





## RON WATSON

ASSOCIATE PROVOST, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR FOR HEALTH & SOCIETY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE · BELOIT COLLEGE



Ron holds a BA in religious studies and MA degrees in peace studies/conflict resolution and political science, and earned his doctorate in political science in 2013. He joined the faculty of Beloit College in 2013 with a dual appointment in Political Science and the Health & Society program, teaching courses in areas that include the role of race in U.S. governance and political life, U.S. health policy, comparative health systems, health inequalities and research methods. In addition to fluency in Japanese language, society and culture, Ron's research interests include the sociopolitical and health

impacts of race and ethnicity, constitutional reform, domestic and global health inequalities, and public health policy. Ron is a co-founder of #Black Lives Matter Beloit and served as a president on the City of Beloit Police and Fire Commission until April 2024.

**Fellowship Project:** In addition to Associate Dean roles concerning part-time faculty appointments, as part of the fellowship, Ron is charged with the following:

- Assisting the programmatic buildout of Impact Beloit, an organizational point of contact for student-community interaction and community-campus relations.
- Launch of the Beloit Institute for Social Innovation (BISI), a “think tank” connecting students, faculty, staff and community organizations for research to produce white papers on topics important to the community.
- Organizing and convening an inaugural Community Summit, a biannual gathering designed to improve community-college relations, share awareness of pressing local issues, and increase student civic knowledge, awareness and connection with the city and surrounding areas.
- Aggressive promotion of equity and anti-racism in career-readiness curriculum to reduce inequalities in employment, salary and other career areas post-graduation.

**Fun Fact:** I enjoy writing short stories, especially those based on vivid dreams I remember.



## DAYO ABAH

PROFESSOR OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATIONS ·  
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

Dayo Abah is a professor and head of the department of Journalism and Mass Communications at Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. She teaches courses in law and communications, news media and society, strategic communication, and global communication. Her research interests include the First Amendment, digital media and the law, women and the media in Africa, and media and pop culture in Africa.



Her work has appeared in media and communications journals such as Communication, Culture & Critique, Media Culture & Society,

Journal of Media Law and Ethics, International Communication Gazette, Interactions: Studies in Communication and Culture, and edited books. Dayo has served on several university committees and in several leadership roles for the university including chairing the university-wide undergraduate research conference, Science, Society and the Arts in 2015. She was the at-large board member and the treasurer for the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Blue Ridge chapter. She is a member of the Community Board for Cardinal News, an independent online publication serving southwest and south side Virginia. She is also an editorial board member of Communication Law and Policy.

**Fellowship Project:** I believe all leadership styles should come with a DEI perspective otherwise, it becomes box-checking and something you do merely to satisfy stakeholders' expectations. Sustainable DEI initiatives are derived from a leader with a DEI perspective. This is not to say that leadership with a DEI perspective is easy. It is a very difficult form of leadership because it requires you to listen carefully, especially to those who are convinced that your perspective is the wrong one. The point of diversity is to give careful examination to everyone's viewpoints, including those with whom you disagree. How do you focus on solutions and act while also genuinely attentive to opposing viewpoints within the organization. My project is to locate how one develops a DEI perspective as a leader rather than a leader with DEI initiatives and achieve organization DEI goals without alienating those with opposing viewpoints on the issue.

**Fun Fact:** I cannot eat eggs unless I cook them myself.



## JUDITH G. CABALLERO

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SPANISH · MILLSAPS COLLEGE



Judith Caballero was born in San Luis Río Colorado, México and moved to the United States at the age of 13. She is Associate Professor of Spanish at Millsaps College. She earned her doctorate in Early Modern Peninsular Literature in 2011 and has a B.F.A in Theater Arts Education from the University of Arizona. She co-edited “Peculiar Lives in Early Modern Spain” and “Living the Comedia” (University Press of the South, 2020), a two-volume collection of essays honoring her mentor, Amy Williamsen. Her research focuses on the mother in Early Modern Comedias, gender issues, cognitive literary studies, sartorial relevance, marginalized voices, and gifting and commodity exchange. She is a founding member of the trilingual graduate journal

*Divergencias: Revista de estudios lingüísticos y literarios.*

She was member of a Mexican Folkloric dance group, which provided cultural programs about Mexican heritage in Tucson, Arizona, and a member of Borderlands Theater, an organization whose aim is to represent the art and struggles of all people within the borderlands in general but focusing mostly on the Latino/Chicano/Mexicano voices. She worked in the Arizona State Museum in the Office of Ethnohistorical Research as a paleographer and translator in a project that aimed to create a more accurate account of the Hopi and the Tohono O’odham lives during the Spanish presidio era based on archival documents and oral histories from the tribe’s elders.

At Millsaps, she volunteered to participate in the DiverCity Council, the Intercultural Affairs Task Force, and the Hispanic-Latinx Focus Group. She also initiated collaboration with the University of Mississippi Medical Center, to train majors and minors in Spanish to do health screenings, which they carry out in Spanish in underserved communities free of charge but under the supervision of a representative from the hospital.

**Fellowship Project:** I will act as the Associate Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment. My responsibilities will be overseeing and improving the college’s processes for unit-based (office-level) assessment of effectiveness and the Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (ASLO) at the academic department and program level. I will report directly to the Provost and Dean of the College and serve on the President’s Cabinet.

I will work closely with members of the college’s Executive Staff, since all administrative units ultimately report to a member of that body. For the ASLO process I will work with department chairs and program directors, as well as the divisional deans, to review and provide feedback on the ASLO reports and identify additional areas for curricular improvement and pedagogical/curricular development.

**Fun Fact:** My last name means “gentleman.” When I was little, I saw “caballeros” in a bathroom sign, so I was very upset when my mom would not let me go into that bathroom.



## ANENE EJKEME

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PROVOST · TRINITY UNIVERSITY



A historian of modern Africa, Anene has wide-ranging interests. Anene has been at Trinity University for two decades; as well as courses on African history, she has taught courses on food and boxing. Before coming to Trinity, Anene was Director of the Pan-African Studies Program at Barnard College (New York). Anene's research interests revolve around constructions of identity in colonial and postcolonial contexts, with a particular attention to gender and religion, and she has written about, among other topics, elite Catholic women in Nigeria and the boxer Hogan Bassey. Anene is also the author of *Culture and Customs of Namibia* and she has also written for the national and international newspapers. Anene was the NEH

Endowed Chair in the Humanities at Albright College, 2010-2011. From 2020 to 2023 she served as chair of the History department at Trinity. From 2014 to 2023 Anene served as the Executive Director of the Africa Network, a consortium of liberal arts colleges.

**Fellowship Project:** The focus of Anene's work is student success. As an ACS Mellon Academic Leadership Fellow, Anene is working closely with Trinity University's Academic Leadership Team and Trinity's Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness to use qualitative as well as quantitative data to identify trends and patterns that will inform strategic recommendations for student persistence, retention, and graduation efforts.

**Fun Fact:** I am tone deaf!



## ANDREA C. HATCHER

ALFRED WALTER NEGLEY PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE ·  
SEWANEE: THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH

Andrea C. Hatcher is the Alfred Walter Negley Professor of Politics and is the Director of the Pre-Law Program at the University of the South, where she teaches courses in American political institutions, constitutional law, and religion and politics.

She earned her Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University where she trained in the study of Congress. Her book *Majority Leadership in the U.S. Senate: Balancing Constraints* (Cambria Press, 2010) is the first comprehensive study of the office of Senate Majority Leader. Her research has turned to religion and politics, particularly the

comparative political behaviors of American and British Evangelicals on which she published *Political and Religious Identities of British Evangelicals* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017). Her most recent publication presents research on how American Evangelical leaders frame the January 6 Insurrection, and she has in progress a study of the politics of Black-majority churches in the UK.

She is a member of the Tennessee Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights, which is currently investigating hindrances to ballot access in Tennessee, with a particular focus on recent legislation that felonizes certain protest activity.

**Fellowship Project:** The Sewanee ACS Mellon Fellow will oversee various activities related to the recruitment and retention of faculty of diverse backgrounds at Sewanee, particularly:

- Research and make recommendations regarding inclusive hiring and retention practices, programs, and materials at Sewanee
- Assist efforts to address issues of salary equity
- Assist efforts to establish equity in promotion and tenure expectations across departments
- Design and implement activities of the cohort program for new tenure-track hires (e.g., setting up mentorship opportunities, writing groups, presentations) and assist in onboarding of faculty to create pathways for diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Oversee and train future groups of Equity Advocates (faculty group) and the Sewanee Academic Diversity Cohort (student group) to participate in tenure-track faculty searches

**Fun Fact:** Andrea is a political scientist because she remembers standing on her dad's shoes while he voted. Across hemispheres, her mother remains her most adventurous travel partner. Although she has seen Renee Fleming dozens of times around the world, Snoop Dogg has visited her backyard and Paramore has been her neighbor.







## ERIC HENAGER

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MODERN LANGUAGES AND  
LITERATURES · RHODES COLLEGE

In addition to courses in the basic and intermediate Spanish language/Hispanic cultures sequence, Eric teaches a wide range of courses in the advanced literatures and cultural studies curriculum. Many of the advanced courses he teaches are related in some form to his primary interests in contemporary Latin American narrative, popular culture in literature, literary representations of transculturation, and Spanish in the US.



His current research focuses on Spanish-language fiction set in the US Midwest and on the roles literature and journalism play in Latin

America in modifying meanings associated with imported US cultural products, especially baseball. He has directed more than twenty summer courses in Ecuador, Argentina, México, and Spain. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois and still suffers way more than he should with the fortunes of the university's mediocre athletic teams and with those of the (also perennially mediocre) Chicago Cubs. His wife Alicia teaches, elementary, middle, and high school Spanish. Eric and Alicia have three children: Paul Andrew, is a high school Spanish teacher and baseball coach; Liam is a recent college graduate who is starting a career in firefighting; Emma Paz is a student at Rhodes College who is considering a double major in International Studies and Educational Studies. In his free time, Eric plays tennis, does an amateurish job of keeping a garden, and plays with Tulip, a Cairn terrier-Lhasa Apso mix.

**Fellowship Project:** As Associate Dean for Global Initiatives, Eric will work with the Office of International Programs at Rhodes on a range of projects, all related to internationalization of the college. Among Eric's charges in the role are addressing obstacles for groups who are currently underrepresented in study abroad, facilitating development of new faculty-accompanied study abroad programs, assessing existing study abroad programs, extending Rhodes's reach in recruitment of international students and faculty, enhancing the integration of global education in the curriculum, and creating an organizational model for managing and sustaining the college's international initiatives.

**Fun Fact:** Stubbornly ignoring the fact that Eric and Alicia are not nearly old enough to be grandparents, their son and daughter-in-law are expecting a baby in July.



## MICHELLE S. HITE

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH · SPELMAN COLLEGE

Michelle S. Hite, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor of English at Spelman College, where she directs the Ethel Waddell Githii Honors Program, co-directs prestigious international fellowships, and serves as the Campus Coordinator for the UNCF Mellon Mays Program. In addition to her role as the Vice President of the Toni Morrison Society, Dr. Hite also serves as the Phi Beta Kappa President of the Epsilon Chapter of Georgia at Spelman College.



Dr. Hite's research often draws on figures in popular culture to meditate on humanist, civic, and spiritual concerns. This work began with her dissertation at Emory University, where she completed her

doctorate. Dr. Hite's most recent publications use Beyonce and rapper Andre Benjamin to explore death and mourning in African American culture. NPR's Bottom of the Map podcast features Hite's interview on Benjamin and the Atlanta Child Murders as a special extended play titled "Survive and Advance." She can also be heard on NPR's a Closer Look with Rose Scott reflecting on the life and legacy of Toni Morrison, the subject of Dr. Hite's monograph currently under contract with McFarland Press. Dr. Hite's interview for Art Papers in collaboration with the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art with artist Amy Sherard further highlights her interest in race, citizenship, and art. Seeking opportunities to showcase the relevance of the humanities for public life, Dr. Hite began facilitating conversations between and among participants "from the shop floor to the c-suite" through Reflection Point.

**Fellowship Project:** Execute an institution specific project to review, update, and modernize the Spelman College faculty handbook.

**Fun Fact:** My great aunt, Shirlee Lewis, attended high school with Muhammad Ali, then Cassius Clay, and has a rare photograph of him from high school. In fact, there's a picture of her with Ali and another student in cap and gown that appears in the Ken Burns documentary, Muhammad Ali.



## AZITA OSANLOO

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, FILM, CREATIVE WRITING ·  
CENTRE COLLEGE

Azita Osanloo joined Centre's faculty in 2015. She is Associate Professor of English, Creative Writing, and Film. Her teaching focuses primarily on Fiction Writing, Screenwriting, and Iranian Film. In 2021, she received Centre's Kirk Award for excellence in teaching. She is also Director of The Writing Center.

She earned a B.A. in creative writing and Russian from Oberlin College, an M.F.A. in creative writing from the University of Montana, and a Ph.D. in literature and creative writing from Florida State University.



**Fellowship Project:** My project focuses on re-imagining student employment at Centre College. In addition to giving students a few extra dollars in their pockets, student employment programs provide opportunities for students to connect their academic interests with their career aspirations. Designing a meaningful and visionary student employment program, one that tracks with--if not enhances--Centre College's mission to "prepare students for lives of learning, leadership, and service," is a daunting yet exciting challenge. Is Centre College helping students make the most of on-campus employment opportunities? Do we promote diverse, welcoming, and discrimination-free policies at the student-employee level? Are we providing enough support to those who supervise and train student employees? How can we create a dynamic program that stays in line with our other budgetary goals? These are just a few of the questions to ask, as I, and many others, consider the complexity of--and possibilities for--undergraduate student employment.

**Fun Fact:** During the summer of 2012, I rode my bicycle from Cleveland, Ohio to Missoula, Montana. I camped under the stars almost every night of the six-week journey, with all camping gear stored on my 42" Surly "Long Haul Trucker." I make excellent campfire hashbrowns.



## LAURA SENIO BLAIR

ASSISTANT DEAN OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES- SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY



Laura Senio Blair is Assistant Dean of Strategic Initiatives and Professor of Spanish and Latin American Studies at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Since earning her Ph.D. from the University of Kansas, she has continued her research on contemporary Spanish American narrative and film. In 2012, Senio Blair served as a Fulbright Scholar in Chile where she researched exiled director Angelina Vásquez. Selected chapters and essays include “Unlocking the Door to Shadow and Substance: Nona Fernández’s *La dimensión desconocida*” in *Ciberletras* (2024), “Atravesando continentes y océanos: La obra fílmica de Angelina

Vásquez” published in *Nomadías* (2016), “Bordering Adolescence: Latin American Youth in Road Films” published in *Screening Minors in Latin American Cinema* (2014), “Driving Toward Heterotopias: Taxis and Taxista in Contemporary Chilean Cinema” published in *Letras Hispanas* (2012), and “Bridges Between the Divide: The Female Body in *Y tu mamá también* and *Machuca*” that appeared in *Studies in Hispanic Cinema* (2007). Senio Blair began her deanship in 2023 to focus on initiatives related to the institution’s recent designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution.

**Fellowship Project:** Laura Senio Blair’s ACS Mellon Leadership Project focuses on initiatives for the Southwestern University community, particularly its role as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). The assistant dean will champion diversity and HSI efforts, collaborating with stakeholders, securing funding, and advocating for inclusive policies. Partnering with a 13-member task force, the project aims to boost student success, especially among Hispanic and underrepresented students, through tailored programs like LatinXcel. Efforts will also connect students with external opportunities like internships and scholarships from organizations such as HACU. Additionally, the project will seek to expand educational opportunities through grant funding programs like Title V, Part A of the Higher Education Act, enhancing course offerings and institutional stability.

**Fun Fact:** Laura grows lettuce in her garden and gives it all away because she isn't fond of it.



## ERIC SMAW

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY · ROLLINS COLLEGE

Eric Smaw is a Professor of Philosophy at Rollins College; a Clinical Ethicist at Florida State University, School of Medicine at the Orlando campus; and the President of the Board of the ACLU of Florida. He received his PhD in philosophy of law from the University of Kentucky in 2006, after which he pursued post-doctoral studies in international human rights at the University of Massachusetts in 2007. Most recently, Dr. Smaw received an honorary doctorate from the Hellenic American University in Athens, Greece.



**Fellowship Project:** My project is to oversee, manage, track, and assess the implementation of DEIB initiatives in the academic programs across the three schools that make up Rollins College: the College of Liberal Arts, the Crummer Graduate School of Business, and the Hamilton Holt School.

**Fun Fact:** Kung Fu Panda is my favorite action movie hero.





## DANNY BARRETO

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LGBTQ STUDIES · COLGATE UNIVERSITY



Danny Barreto is Associate Professor and Director of LGBTQ Studies at Colgate University. His research focuses on LGBTQ literature, film and activism in Galicia, a non-sovereign nation within the Spanish state. Specifically, his recent publications explore the productive tensions in Galician-language literature between emergent queer cultural movements and more institutionalized Galician nationalist discourses. During the 2022-23 academic year, he published an article on queer carework and aging in the *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, a new introduction to the novel 'Outono aquí' (2012) by Mario Regueira, and a special issue on feminist cultural production for the

*International Journal of Iberian Studies*, co-edited with Catherine Barbour (Trinity C, Dublin). As an undergraduate student at Hunter College (CUNY), his interests in Puerto Rican studies and sovereignty—and by extension, questions of migration, language and imperialism—led him to the field of Galician studies, which remained the focus of his graduate studies. Danny completed his PhD in Hispanic Languages & Literatures and certificate in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies at Stony Brook University (SUNY) in 2010.

At Colgate, Danny serves as a member of the advisory boards for Women's Studies and Africana & Latin American Studies. He is an elected member of the Faculty Affirmative Action Oversight Committee and the Faculty Diversity Council, and has participated in numerous DEI-centered initiatives, such as the Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Coalition and Living Learning Workshop committee. Beyond Colgate, he has served on the Modern Languages Association's Delegate Assembly (2018-2021) and its Forum for Galician (2016-2021), and was the Vice President of the Asociación Internacional de Estudos Galegos (2018-2022).

**Fellowship Project:** Several years ago, Colgate began work on an Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan, which has become a major pillar of its broader Third Century Plan. This guiding document outlines initiatives that increase training and support for staff and students, enhance accountability structures, and strengthen efforts to recruit and retain a diverse faculty, staff, and student body. However, the curriculum is largely absent. Many see this as a glaring omission given that students and faculty are often drawn to a particular school because of the intellectual atmosphere and curriculum there. Reluctance to mandate DEI work in curricula is understandable, especially given national debates about whether DEI is incompatible with academic freedom. While I am not yet sure what shape my project will take, I aim to lead initiatives grounded in artistic and creative practice that would foster conversation about the role of the curriculum in meeting our other institutional goals.

**Fun Fact:** I know the lyrics to pretty much any song that played on the radio in Brooklyn in the 1990s.



## KIRA JUMET

SPECIAL APPOINTMENT TO THE VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS · HAMILTON COLLEGE

Kira Jumet is an associate professor in the Government Department at Hamilton College focusing on the Middle East and North Africa. She is also Director of the Middle East/Islamicate Worlds Studies Program and was recently awarded the NY6/Mellon Fellowship - Special Appointment to the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Dean of Faculty and the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Jumet is the author of *Contesting the Repressive State: Why Ordinary Egyptians Protested During the Arab Spring* published by Oxford University Press in 2018.



In addition to her work on social movements and Egypt, Jumet has also conducted fieldwork in Morocco related to national identity narratives and Imazighen (Berbers), North Africa's indigenous population. At present she is co-editing a book on the challenges faced by scholars native to repressive and/or illiberal states researching in their home countries. Before she joined Hamilton, Jumet served as Director of Development at the American Iranian Council.

**Fellowship Project:** In spring 2022, a significant number of faculty, mostly from underrepresented groups and/or women, resigned from Hamilton. My fellowship project seeks to explore the primary reasons for faculty departures from Hamilton College over the past two decades to identify areas that the College can address to retain diverse faculty. The research focuses on faculty of all racial, gender, and other identities (e.g., religious, ability, and sexual orientation) who were hired after the year 2000 and have since left the College. Thus, I aim to interview the approximately 50 former faculty members for interviews about their experiences at Hamilton College and Central New York to understand what issues with the College and/or surrounding community (if any) impacted their decisions to leave.

**Fun Fact:** My family owns a Christmas tree farm in New Hampshire, and I can cut down a tree with a handsaw.



## JEN MITCHELL

ASSISTANT DEAN FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION ·  
UNION COLLEGE



Jennifer Mitchell is currently Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Union College, where she's also Associate Professor of English and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's studies. She is the author of *Ordinary Masochisms: Agency and Desire in Victorian and Modernist Fiction* (University Press of Florida, 2020) and the co-editor of *The Female Fantastic: Gendering the Supernatural in the 1890s and 1920s* (Routledge, 2018). Her work has also appeared in *Feminist Modernist Studies*, *College Literature*, *The D.H. Lawrence Review*, *The Journal of Lesbian Studies*, and *The Journal of Bisexuality*. She is currently working collaboratively on a book about reading postures, gender, and the academy. At Union, she teaches courses like *Literature and Sexuality*, *Uncanny Texts*, *Queer Theory*, *Global Modernisms*, *Experimental Texts*, *Sex and Power*, and *Confronting the Canon*. Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, she has two very charming cats and one not-so-charming-but-still-very-lovable cat.

**Fellowship Project:** There are two branches of the project I'll be working on during my fellowship. One is connected to DEI workflow reporting and the other to anti-bullying policies. At this point, Union is looking to improve its reporting structures around misconduct. While students who have issues with other students outside the classroom and staff members who have issues with other staff members have their respective procedures and offices to address their concerns--the Office of Community Standards and Human Resources, respectively--any issue that involves faculty members has been handled on a case-by-case basis with no real procedures or policies to guide the investigation and management of the complaints, outside of whatever might fall under the purview of Title IX. So during my fellowship year, I'll be working to develop both procedures and policies to help formalize this process.

**Fun Fact:** I went to high school across the street from a hospital and a jail and next to a golf course.



## OSCAR A. PÉREZ

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SPANISH AND ASSOCIATE DEAN OF  
THE FACULTY · SKIDMORE COLLEGE

Oscar A. Pérez is an Associate Professor of Spanish and the director of the Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies program at Skidmore College. He has recently been appointed Associated Dean of the Faculty. His research focuses on science, technology, and the environment in Hispanic literature and film. His work has appeared in various academic and he recently published the book *Medicine, Power, and the Authoritarian Regime in Hispanic Literature* (Routledge, 2022), which looks at the relationships between authoritarianism and medicine in the Spanish-speaking world from the perspective of literary studies.



**Fellowship Project:** Faculty retention project that will collect data from tenured and tenure-track faculty that have made the decision to leave the college in the last 15 years.

**Fun Fact:** Used to be an opera supernumerary (non-singing role).



## JESS SIERK

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION · ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY



Dr. Jessica Sierk is an Associate Professor of Education at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York, where she teaches Sexuality Education, Identity in Higher Education, Critical Whiteness Studies, and Critical Media Literacy. She received her B.S. in Secondary Mathematics Education and her Ph.D. in Education Studies with a specialization in Social Analysis, Educational Policy, and Reform from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and her M.S. in English as a Second Language Education from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her previous research about education in demographically transitioning communities has been featured in journals like *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies* and *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*. Her work has also been published in books like *The Price of Nice: How Good Intentions Maintain Educational Inequity* (edited by Angelina Castagno, published by University of Minnesota Press), *Pedagogical Translanguaging: Theoretical, Methodological, and Empirical Perspectives* (edited by Päivi Juvonen and Marie Källkvist, published by Multilingual Matters), and the forthcoming *Teaching and Learning in the New Latino Diaspora: Creating Culturally Responsive Practice* (edited by Edmund Hamann, Socorro Herrera, Enrique Murillo, and Stanton Wortham, published by Teachers College Press). For her fellowship project, she conducted 31 ethnographic interviews of faculty to better understand how perceptions of faculty well-being and DEI initiatives intersect, with the goal of making data-informed recommendations for how to best proceed. She hopes to one day be Associate Dean for Academic Advising Programs and/or Faculty Affairs.

**Fellowship Project:** In spring 2022, when I was serving as Vice Chair of Faculty Council, we conducted a survey of faculty and staff about well-being and hosted a follow-up conversation where we presented preliminary observations from the survey and facilitated small-group conversations to gather ideas for action items for the University. In spring 2023, the HEDS Campus Climate Survey for Diversity and Inclusion was administered on our campus for the second time (the first occurred in 2018). While this data collection has been invaluable to our understanding of faculty well-being and DEI, they treat the two as separate constructs. I contend that these are intimately intertwined and plan to conduct ethnographic interviews of faculty during fall 2023 (analysis in spring 2024) to better understand these concepts and how they intersect to impact the welfare and productivity of our faculty, with the goal of making data-informed recommendations for how to best proceed.

**Fun Fact:** I supplemented my research and teaching assistantships in graduate school with a side hustle as a Zumba instructor. At one point, I held six fitness certifications (Zumba, Aqua Zumba, Zumba Toning, Zumba Sentao, Turbo Kick, and NETA Group Exercise).





## KATHERINE WALKER

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF MUSIC · HOBART AND WILLIAM  
SMITH COLLEGES

Katherine Walker serves as Associate Professor of Music at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, in Geneva, NY. Her research interests include eighteenth-century musical aesthetics and intersections of identity politics and popular music in the U.S. since 1920. Recent titles include "Leopold Mozart, the Rationalist? Humanism and Good Taste in Eighteenth-Century Performance Practice," "Remixing Western Music History," "Competitive Jamming in 1930s and 1940s Jazz," and "Eminem's Alter-ego and the New Authenticity."



Her current project is a book called, *Interpreting Music, Engaging Culture: Introduction to Music Criticism*, which is in contract with

Routledge. Walker holds dual Bachelor of Arts degrees in Music and Psychology, as well as Master and Doctoral degrees in Musicology from Cornell University. She also earned a Performance Certificate in Double Bass from the François Rabbath Institute at the Nadia Boulanger Conservatoire de Paris, France and spent 2003 studying music of the African diaspora as a Rotary Ambassadorial Fellow in Cape Town, South Africa.

**Fellowship Project:** During my fellowship year, I will address four key action items in our institution's recently-updated Strategic Diversity Plan: these include updating the Faculty Handbook from the perspective of DEI; campaigning for changes to the Faculty Bylaws (which can only be amended with a majority faculty vote) to better support our under-represented and under-served faculty; updating our semi-annual climate survey to capture perspectives of invisible and marginalized communities on campus; and developing a student-based identity and inclusion training module to be implemented as part of our new Leadership Certificate Program.

**Fun Fact:** In my spare time, I am completing the certification training to become a board-certified Music Therapist.