

# ACLS Fellow

## Samantha Seal wins prestigious fellowship

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Samantha Seal, UNH assistant professor of [English](#), has won a 2019 American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Fellowship. This year's 81 fellows were selected by their peers from over 1,100 applicants in a review process with multiple stages. Awards range from \$40,000 to \$70,000, depending on the scholar's career stage, and support six to 12 months of full-time research and writing.

"The 2019 ACLS Fellows exemplify ACLS's inclusive vision of excellence in the humanities and humanistic social sciences," says Matthew Goldfeder, director of fellowship programs at ACLS. "The awardees, who hail from more than 60 colleges and universities, were selected for their potential to make an original and significant

contribution to knowledge. They are working at diverse types of institutions, on research projects that span antiquity to the present, in contexts around the world; the array of disciplines and methodologies represented demonstrates the vitality and the incredible breadth of humanistic scholarship today.”

Seal's award will allow her to work on her book project, "Chaucerian Dynasty: The Father of English Poetry and His Family," which is the first biography of both the poet and his descendants. The book follows the Chaucer family from their merchant roots in Ipswich across two centuries through their tragic downfall at the hands of the Tudor kings and absorption into the French aristocracy. The Chaucer dynasty modeled themselves as England's premier literary family, and balanced their ruthless political ambitions with their claims to a poetic legacy. As part of this self-definition, the family offered up an idea of literary production as collective endeavor, akin to their economic and social machinations. "Chaucerian Dynasty" not only provides an account of a brilliant family at a moment of profound cultural transition, but also challenges traditional narratives of how premodern poetry and the English literary canon were produced.

The ACLS Fellowship program is funded primarily by an endowment. Institutions and individuals have contributed to this program, including The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, Arcadia Charitable Trust, the Council's Research University Consortium and college and university Associates, past fellows and individual friends of ACLS.

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#### FACULTY EXCELLENCE



University of New Hampshire

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