

Warm Winter Welcome

Looking back, looking forward in the College of Liberal Arts

Wednesday, December 15, 2021

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DEAN MICHELE DILLON

Dear members, alumni and friends of the College of Liberal Arts,

We've had a terrific fall semester! The weather has been (mostly) gorgeous and the campus bustling with activity all semester long. In late August, the College welcomed 907 first-year students, accounting for a third of all first years at UNH, and [10 new faculty members](#). It was wonderful to catch up with colleagues at the beginning of the semester with a College faculty reception and a staff breakfast on the lawn close to

Murkland. I continue to be in awe at the range of learning that I witness occurring every day — the rigor and hands-on activities in the classroom; the array of student-faculty research collaborations; the multiple weekly foreign language conversation hours open to all; and the many ways that students and faculty engage with public audiences as well as with guest speakers on pressing topics such as the recent German elections, and U.S.-China relations. We are excited to have launched our new 4-year B.A. education degree with teacher certification. Other curriculum innovations include a dual major in global languages; an option and cognate in political and legal philosophy; minors in Arabic, survey research and medical humanities; and accelerated master's in history and psychology. We take particular pride in the breaking news that [Abrita Kuthumi](#), who graduated last May with a dual major in political science and international affairs, has been awarded a highly prestigious Marshall Scholarship, the first for UNH.

I'm delighted to share a couple of highlights from the semester with you.

Our [Music](#) and [Theatre and Dance](#) departments maintained a hectic schedule of in-person performances; and exhibitions and artists' talks are drawing many visitors to the [Museum of Art](#). Several COLA faculty members were honored at UNH's celebratory award dinners recognizing faculty excellence, with [2020 awardees](#) honored on October 8, and [2021 awardees](#) honored on November 9. The College also hosted three signature lecture events and receptions — the annual [John C. Rouman Classical Lecture](#), presented by theology professor George Demacopoulos from Fordham University; the College's Lindberg Lecture, presented this year by our psychology colleague, Professor John (Jack) Mayer, who spoke about his pioneering and impactful work on [emotional intelligence](#); and the annual Charlotte and Roland Kimball Faculty Fellowship Award lecture presented by associate research professor of education Mary Schuh on the topic "Locating Disability in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion."

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Early in November, we had a vibrant, well-attended reception in the Hamilton Smith Atrium to officially launch our new **Global Racial and Social Inequality Lab** (GRSIL). The Lab will serve as a hub for, and further advance, the array of thematically-related research projects, curriculum and co-curricular activities, and community partnerships with which our faculty and students are engaged. We are currently funding 10 student or faculty-initiated initiatives as well as inaugurating a January Research Opportunity Program (JROP) to encourage students' exploratory engagement in research; this January we will be supporting the projects of 13 students representing several different majors. Learn more about GRSIL in [Rolling Up Our Sleeves](#), a story in this edition of The College Letter. (Here is the [GRSIL website](#) and a link to [photos](#) from the reception.)

Also last month, we welcomed representatives from the New Hampshire Women's Foundation and from the New Hampshire Women's Trail to campus to celebrate the unveiling of a new historic marker in the Murkland Courtyard. The marker commemorates the **School for Citizenship** held on campus in 1919 in anticipation of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution's Nineteenth Amendment (please see some [photos](#) and [my brief remarks](#)). The marker includes a QR code that allows public access to a [website](#) created by Dr. Nicole Ruane and her students documenting this history, which I encourage you to visit.

I was also thrilled this semester to reconnect in-person with several alumni and to meet others for the first time. I truly marvel at the accomplishments of our alumni — not just the impressive careers — which, I should note, provide compelling evidence of the enduring groundwork for success embedded by a Liberal Arts degree — but also the deep personal commitments to family and to serving a larger good that invariably, though un-self-consciously, thread their conversation.

As we anticipate the spring 2022 semester, we are excited about significant public lectures the College will be hosting: [Professor Amy Binder](#) (University of California San Diego) will present the John T. Holden lecture on March 21, addressing the topic of campus politics and free speech; [Professor Elissa Bemporad](#) (Queens College and CUNY Graduate Center) will present the Hans Heilbronner lecture on March 30, examining the experiences of Jewish women both during the Russian Civil War and the Holocaust; [Professor Annette Gordon-Reed](#) (Harvard University) will present the Rutman Distinguished Lecture on the American Presidency on April 7; and, co-sponsored by COLA, [Professor Eddie Glaude](#) (Princeton University) will speak about race and democracy on March 31. We also look forward to the College's second annual Earth Day celebration on April 22, which again will showcase a sliver of the numerous ways in which Liberal Arts students and faculty integrate a focus on sustainability in their work.

The strength and impact of the College is boosted every day by dedicated and hardworking students, faculty and staff and by generous alumni and friends. I am thankful to each of you for all that you make possible. Warm wishes to you and your families for a wonderful holiday season and for good health and much joy in 2022! Please enjoy this [UNH Chamber Singers performance of "Let It Snow,"](#) under the direction of Professor Alex Favazza.

Sincerely,

Michele Dillon
Dean, College of Liberal Arts

PHOTOGRAPHER:

[Jeremy Gasowski](#) | Communications and Public Affairs | jeremy.gasowski@unh.edu | 603-862-4465



University of New Hampshire

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Email us: unhtoday.editor@unh.edu.

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