



SEPTEMBER 19-20, 2023



WESTMINSTER
COLLEGE



TUESDAY, SEPT. 19, 2023

PLENARY PRESENTATION

9 A.M.

“THE VALUE OF LANGUAGE”

CHAMP AUDITORIUM

DAVID PETERSON AND JESSIE SAMS

Language Creators for Film and Television,
Including HBO’s *Game of Thrones* and Pixar’s *Elemental*

Language is foundational to human civilization, yet is often taken for granted, both in daily life and in creative endeavors. Language creators David Peterson and Jessie Sams will focus on the role of language in media. They will discuss how the choices made in TV shows, films, books, and even video games help to shape our perceptions of the fictional worlds presented to us, and also have the power to reinforce — or force us to reexamine — our own linguistic biases.

EXECUTIVE PRESENTATIONS

10:30 A.M.

“DIGITAL LITERATURE: BETWEEN THE ROCK AND THE CLOUD”

HERMANN LOUNGE, HUNTER ACTIVITY CENTER

ALEX SAUM-PASCUAL

Associate Professor, University of California, Berkeley

What's the cloud? Can it hold poems? What is a digital poem made of? What does it have to do with rocks? This talk explores the relationship between digital technologies and literary production, looking at the ways in which these media engage with concepts of environmental crisis, through a new materialist lens. Focusing on the work of digital artists from Spain and the Latin American Diaspora, we'll examine how digital materiality relates to its physical and signifying strategies.

“USING THE LANGUAGE OF NONVERBALS TO LEAD POWERFULLY AND PERSUASIVELY”

CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, ALDERMANBURY

LEILANI CARVER-MADALON, PhD

Associate Professor of Strategic Communication and Leadership,
Director of Undergraduate Communication, and
Director of Graduate Strategic Communication and Leadership

If you want to change your world, change your communication. Language is one of our most powerful tools to connect, engage, persuade, and create positive change in our world. When examining language, we may often overlook the incredible power of our nonverbal communication. Academic scholars agree that our body language is often more powerful than the words we use. This executive session provides practical, evidence-based nonverbal communication strategies to help you take your communication and leadership skills to the next level.

“THE LANGUAGE OF PLANTS”

COULTER SCIENCE CENTER LECTURE HALL

KATIE MURPHY

Director of Phenotyping and Principal Investigator,
Donald Danforth Plant Science Center

Plants are constantly communicating in response to the environment: between cells, between plants, and with the insects, animals, and microbes around them. As scientists, we are learning to decode the language of plants so we can understand the basic foundations of biology. If we can understand how plants function in different environments — in other words, converse with plants — we can begin to breed and engineer plants to provide sustainable crop solutions in the face of global climate change. By using high-throughput plant phenotyping to decode the “language of plants,” we will examine how plants cope with extreme environments.

LUNCH BREAK

11:30 A.M. - 1 P.M.

PLENARY PRESENTATION

1:30 P.M.

“LANGUAGE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE MARTIAL ARTS”

CHAMP AUDITORIUM

BURTON RICHARDSON

President/Head Instructor of JKD Unlimited Ultimate Fighting Championship
and Film Fight Scene Trainer

For the last 40 years Burton has traveled the world learning and then teaching a variety of martial arts. He has made several training trips to the Philippines, Japan, KwaZulu Natal South Africa, Brazil, Réunion Island, and singular voyages to other countries. Burton will discuss his interactions with various cultures and how the limitations of the spoken word were often overcome by the unspoken language of martial movement and a spirit of good will. There were also times when unintentional miscommunication created either very dangerous situations or hilarious gaffes.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

3 P.M.

“IPA: THE ALPHABET OF OUR MOUTH”

HERMANN LOUNGE, HUNTER ACTIVITY CENTER

JUDITH MEYER

Freelance Computational Linguist

What kinds of sounds can humans produce? What is it that you hear when you perceive a foreign accent? How can you write down what is happening in your mouth, and how can you use that to reduce your accent in all foreign languages? Join well-known polyglot Judith Meyer for a fun, interactive journey through the human vocal system and through the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), the alphabet that enables us to speak about how we speak.

“LANGUAGE THROUGH THE LENS OF THE MARTIAL ARTS (CONTINUED)”

HISTORIC GYMNASIUM

BURTON RICHARDSON

President/Head Instructor of JKD Unlimited Ultimate Fighting Championship and Film Fight Scene Trainer

In this workshop, Richardson will be demonstrating and teaching a variety of introductory martial arts to the attendees.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 20, 2023

EXECUTIVE PRESENTATIONS

9 A.M.

“ELEVATE AND CELEBRATE: EXPLORING THE INFLUENCES OF MUSIC IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY”

CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, ALDERMANBURY

GEORGE W. MAHN III, '92 ΣΑΕ

Musical Artist, Composer, and Producer: Vertical Leap and Gentry Avenue Productions

Sonorous ideas spiral from the soul, dance in the light, and howl in the darkness, frequencies exciting emotion, intellect, and matter as each vibration resonates across the universe and back again. Musical tones transcend cultural boundaries, divergent attitudes, and all generations to express volumes about the human condition. Let us meet at the crossroads of life, art, and science to explore the power of music and how the exchange between creator, performer, and audience influences individual identity and collective experience in contemporary society.

“SELF-TALK FOR SOCIAL CHANGE”

CHAMP AUDITORIUM

MARC CORDON

Marc Cordon Creative, The Joy Revolution, LLC

By adopting empowering self-talk, individuals can cultivate resilience and agency for meaningful societal transformations. Marc Cordon will discuss the powerful impact of self-talk in driving social change. Self-talk plays a crucial role in shaping our thoughts and behaviors. Compassionate self-talk fosters inclusive relationships, while affirmative self-talk promotes activism for equality and justice. Recognizing the risks of negative self-talk, individuals can replace harmful patterns with constructive alternatives to contribute positively to social change efforts. Harnessing the potential of internal dialogue paves the way for a more equitable society.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

10:30 A.M.

POLITICAL SCIENCE/LAW PANEL

COULTER SCIENCE CENTER 206

ANTHONY LARAMORE AND GRETA MORINA

Attorneys

Join us for a discussion with local Missouri lawyers as they discuss “the Language of the Law.” More details to be provided closer to the event.

HEALTHCARE PANEL

COULTER SCIENCE CENTER 207

Join us for a discussion with local Missouri healthcare practitioners and ethicists as they discuss the challenges of communicating with patients. More details to be provided closer to the event.

“EMPATHY AND THE MACHINE: USING LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS TO UNDERSTAND AND IMPROVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONVERSATIONS.”

COULTER SCIENCE CENTER LECTURE HALL

ZACH IMEL, PhD, '01 ΔΔΔ

Professor, University of Utah, Co-Founder, Chief Science Officer, Lyssn.io

Advancements in artificial intelligence — now synonymous with ‘large language models’ in the popular press are poised to have dramatic impacts on everyday life — this is particularly the case with mental healthcare which relies on conversation as the primary mode of treatment. I will describe several advancements in this area emerging from the work of my team and then offer a brief demonstration of how this technology might work in a clinical setting seeking to improve the quality of treatment that clients receive.

“ARE CHILDREN INTELLECTUALS? EDUCATION AND WEST AFRICAN PUBLICS, 1880-1930”

CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, ALDERMANBURY

MERVE FEJZULA, PhD

Assistant Professor, University of Missouri

At what age does one become an intellectual, join a public? Can one articulate membership in a public, say, by drawing on newspapers instead of reading them, as West African children did? This talk will explore the ways that West African schoolchildren from the late 19th to the early 20th century push us to redefine common conceptions of public spheres. It will argue that by centering education as a condition for the emergence of publics, and children as protagonists in their development, we can build new understandings of both 20th-century West African intellectual life and public spheres.

LUNCH BREAK

11:30 A.M. - 1 P.M.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

1:30 P.M.

“ASL AND WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE A LANGUAGE-RICH ENVIRONMENT”

COULTER SCIENCE CENTER 206

CHRISTOPHER DAILY

Superintendent, Missouri School for the Deaf

JOANN BENFIELD

Assistant Superintendent, Missouri School for the Deaf

American Sign Language is the primary language of most deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in America and some other countries. At Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD), ASL is also the primary language for academic

and social communication. While public schools focus on students being in the least restrictive environment, MSD focuses on providing a language-rich environment. Join Superintendent Daily and Assistant Superintendent Benfield, from MSD, as they share the value of ASL and what it means to have a language-rich environment.

“FROM BEGINNING TO TRANSLATION: A HISTORICAL APPROACH”

HERMANN LOUNGE, HUNTER ACTIVITY CENTER

DAVID PETERSON AND JESSIE SAMS

Language Creators for Film and Television,
Including HBO’s *Game of Thrones* and Pixar’s *Elemental*

Language creators David Peterson and Jessie Sams guide participants in the evolution of a new language. Participants will learn the elements of phonological evolution and grammaticalization and will leave with the beginnings of their own new language.

“PERSONAL BUDGETING BASICS”

COULTER SCIENCE CENTER 207

SARAH MOREAU

Vice President/Community Outreach Officer – ProsperU
Director for Central Bank of Boone County

Budgeting is the key to financial success. Learn some simple strategies to get your financial life under control. Personal Budgeting Basics teaches you the importance of creating and utilizing a money roadmap to make your hard-earned money work for you. This workshop covers a variety of topics, including:

- Analyzing spending habits
- Steps to creating a successful budget
- Understanding how to embrace expenses
- How to map out a budget plan
- Ways to effectively track and manage a budget
- Understanding common budgeting mistakes
- How to begin creating your budget

PLENARY SESSION

3:30 P.M.

“OPENING THE WORLD’S DOORS: ONE LANGUAGE AT A TIME”

CHAMP AUDITORIUM

CHUCK SMITH

Chief Technical Officer, Amikumu Pty Ltd Language/Social Media App Creator

Get ready to be inspired! This motivational talk is all about how learning foreign languages can open doors to opportunities around the world and impact your life in ways you never expected. The speaker will share his experiences learning different languages and how that has helped him in his personal and professional life. Through his talk, the speaker wants to help you see the benefits of learning a foreign language and give you renewed energy when returning to your foreign language classes. Don't miss out on this exciting opportunity!

CLOSING PERFORMANCE

5 P.M.

“ACOUSTIC MUSICAL PERFORMANCE BY GEORGE W. MAHN, III, '92 SAE”

LATSHAW PLAZA

GEORGE W. MAHN III, '92 SAE

Musical Artist, Composer, and Producer: Vertical Leap and Gentry Avenue Productions

SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE

ENRIQUE SALAS DURAZO, PhD

Associate Professor of Spanish
and Hancock Symposium Chair

ASHLEY DODSON, CPA

Director of the Hancock Symposium, Assistant
Professor of Leadership Studies, and Director
of Leadership Studies

JOSHUA HOLZER, PhD

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JOHANNA MORROW, PhD

Assistant Professor of Biology

MANDY SCHICK, MPH, MEd

Counseling and Prevention Specialist

LINDSEY BENNETT, '24 KΑΘ

Student Representative

JONATHAN BANZA, '24 ΦΔΘ

Student Representative

DULCIE ROSALES- FOSTER, '24 ΑΓΔ

Student Representative

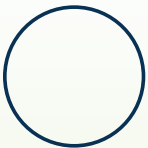
FAITH BECKMANN '26 ΑΓΔ

Student Representative

PASSPORT

Student Use

PLENARY SPEAKERS

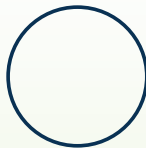


DAVID
PETERSON
AND

JESSIE SAMS



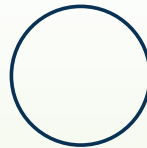
BURTON
RICHARDSON



CHUCK
SMITH



EXECUTIVE
SESSION 1



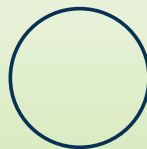
EXECUTIVE
SESSION 2

BREAKOUT SESSIONS



BREAKOUT
SESSION

WORKSHOP SESSIONS



WORKSHOP 1



WORKSHOP 2



HANCOCK SYMPOSIUM

Each fall since 2006, Westminster students, faculty, and staff have gathered for two days to learn about a topic of international importance, and they have invited the community to join them. Topics have ranged from global health to peace in the Middle East to the arts and activism to global sport. Noted experts on each subject have come from all over the world to take part. In 2013, a gift from David, '67 FIJI, and Linda Hancock endowed the Symposium, ensuring that Westminster students will benefit from this annual event for generations to come.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO
Or Visit WCMO.edu/Symposium