



News Release

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WESTERN STUDENTS PRESENT PAPERS IN SAN DIEGO

St. Joseph, Mo. — March 16, 2005 — Thirteen Missouri Western State College students will present papers at the 2005 Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association (PCAACA) joint conference in San Diego, March 23-26.

Because very few undergraduate students are accepted to present, no other undergraduate institution will be represented as well as Western, according to Dr. Kenneth Rosenauer, chair of the department of English, foreign languages and journalism. He said it is an outstanding honor.

Eleven of the students wrote their proposals and papers for submission while taking ENG 399: Studies in Popular Literature, taught by Dr. Patricia Donaher, assistant professor of English. The other two students heard about the project and asked to be included.

The students were required to write a conference-length critical paper and an abstract of their paper, which was submitted to area chairs of the PCAACA. The students also developed proposals to obtain help in funding their trip to San Diego.

“Each paper relates directly to the students’ majors or their professional goals,” said Dr. Donaher. “Whether as an English/literature major, a history major or an education major we helped prepare their professional portfolios and résumés.

“By submitting their papers to an outside juror, the students are engaging in the kind of real-world experiences that are fundamental to Western’s applied learning initiative,” she added.

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Western students presenting papers at the PCAACA conference include Dawn Baker, Agency, Mo.; Jeff Briedwell, Centralia, Mo.; Amanda Gruber, Falls City, Neb.; Brandie Ponting, Hale, Mo.; Katherine Burns, Hamilton, Mo.; John Grogan, Memphis, Mo.; Kelli Gardner Bell, St. Joseph; Candace Collins, St. Joseph; Melanie Fisher, St. Joseph; Matthew Lillie, St. Joseph; Kim Schutte, St. Joseph; Mildred Stewart, St. Joseph, and Ashley Wales, St. Joseph.

Paper topics included works on several science fiction writers and horror writer Stephen King, papers covering popular culture food and celebrity culture, and a paper focused on the song “Imagine” by John Lennon. Dr. Donaher and Dr. Ian Roberts, associate professor of English at Western, will also present papers at the conference and will travel with the students.

The PCAACA conference is an international, refereed conference for scholars in the fields of popular culture and American culture.

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Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.