29th Annual Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Student Research Symposium

Friday, April 24, 2026

Bone Student Center

8:30 AM – 9 AM

- **Registration** (Outside Old Main Room)
- **Coffee and Pastries** (Founders Suite)

9:00 AM – 10 AM

Intersectional Literary Analysis (Circus Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Katherine Ellison**
- **Grace Gross**, "Patriarchal Gender Norms in Contemporary Romance Novels: *The Love Hypothesis* by Ali Hazelwood"
- **Jia Zuo**, "The Success / Failure of a Girl Entrepreneur: Female Agency and Subjectivity within Neoliberal and Biopolitical Spaces"
- **Kate Fortner**, "'Where Peeta's Child Could Be Safe': Reproductive Justice in *The Hunger Games* Trilogy"
- **Barbara Kuznetsova**, "'A Race of Devils': De-eroticized Corps Morcelé and Asexual Resonances in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*"

Struggles for Inclusive Education (Founders Suite)

- **Moderator: Dr. Megan VanGorder**
- **Dr. Angell Howard**, "Refusing to Die on The Vine: Black Women's Survival, Resistance, and DEI Labor in Historically White Institutions"
- **Lauri Klump**, "Education in the Age of Censorship: Educator Insights into the New Sociopolitical Environment in Education"
- **Kayleigh Anderson**, "A Universal Right, a Gendered Reality: Analyzing the Global Barriers to Girls' Education"

Colonial Legacies, Political Dynamics (Old Main Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Christine Varga-Harris**
- **Campbell Arington**, "African Football's Modern Ties to Colonialism: The Africa Cup of Nations as Decolonial Practice"
- **Lily Linden**, "The Impact of *The Women, Peace and Security Agenda* on International Peace and Security"
- **Letícia Vicente Horst**: "'Why Do Women Vote For Them?': Social Identity and Intergroup Perspectives as Guidance for Brazilian Women's Political Support for Left- and Right-Wing Parties"

10:10 AM – 11:10 AM

Critical Media Studies (Circus Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Kyla Cary**
- **Ilaria Noonan**, "The Aesthetic of Domesticity: Traditional Wives and Entrepreneurial Feminism"
- **Nicholas Stulga**, "Benson Boone's Queer Commercialization of Aesthetics and Body"
- **Dean Romack**, "Cultural Representations of Serial Offenders in a Third-Wave Feminist Lens"

10:10 AM – 11:10 AM (Continued)

Inequalities in Place (Founders Suite)

- **Moderator: Dr. Caitlin Mercier**
- **Tyler Despe**, "Dispossessed: A Critical Analysis of Resources and Barriers to Food Security for the Unhoused"
- **Grace Haack**, "Money, Sex, Race, and Environmental Hazards"
- **Erica Montegrande**, "Gendered Racism and Coping Through the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Critical and Feminist Methodological Interventions (Old Main Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Liv Stone**
- **Emily Grimany**, "Cross-Gender Casting in Shakespeare"
- **Jacob Taylor**, "Using Feminist Speculation for Epistemological Justice"
- **Raylinn Vasquez**, "Beyond Colonial Bodies: Rethinking Gender in Mesoamerica"

11:20 AM – 12:20 PM

Sexualities and Sex (Circus Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Kyla Cary**
- **Fenix Perkins**, "LGBTQ+ = Let God Burn Them Quickly? Queerness, Christianity, and the Price of Prejudice"
- **Camila Fontes Fialho**, "Pain and Pleasure in College Students' Sexual Experiences"
- **Tyler Thomas**, "What's in the Box?: An Examination of How Transgender Women are Labeled, Fetishized, and Dehumanized in Pornography"

The Power of Social Pressure (Founders Suite)

- **Moderator: Dr. Caitlin Mercier**
- **Molly Marin and Julianna Marroquin**, "The Impact of Skin-Tone Messages on Appearance-Altering Behaviors Among College Students"
- **Lila Mitchell and Thalia Gordon**, "'We Are Stunning in Every Shape, Sort, or Form': A Qualitative Investigation of Black Women in Regard to Body Image and Self-Esteem"
- **Grace Gross, Kyah Joseph, and Ilaria Noonan**, "Romance Readers and Their 'Happily Ever After': How Romance Novels Influence Romantic Relationships"

Gender-Based Violence (Old Main Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Jacklyn Weier**
- **Ella Woodruff**, "Transmisogyny Within Analyses of Verdict Leniencies for Violent Crime"
- **Kelly Harman**, "The Epstein Files at the International Scale"
- **Mackenzie Reimers**, "Rachel Zegler: Intersectional Celebrity Feminism and the Resentment It's Met With"
- **Luka Anderson**, "Men, Masculinities, and Intimate Partner Violence"

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

- **Lunch and Awards Ceremony** (Old Main Room)

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

- **Keynote Address** (Circus Room)
- **Dr. Sarah Ensor, "Queer Extinctions: Or Learning How to Last"**

3:10 PM – 4:10 PM

Interrogating Physical or Mental Well-Being (Founders Suite)

- **Moderator: Dr. Derek Sparby**
- **Breck Holtz**, "'He Implied I'm Not a Real Person Because I Don't Eat Gluten': Women's Gastrointestinal Health Boundary Management in Families"
- **Natalia Preza**, "Can You Find Me? Autoethnography of Grief after the Death of an Animal"
- **Tyler Ellison**, "The Mentally Ill Black Woman"
- **Lainey Campbell**, "Harm Reduction on College Campuses: An Intersectional Analysis of Access to Naloxone"

Exploring the Art of Visual Expression (Old Main Room)

- **Moderator: Dr. Lauren Bratslavsky**
- **Allie Schlottman, Maccrae Barnett, Sarai Arevalo**, "Designing for the 29th Annual WGSS Symposium"
- **Amaka Chime**, "Composing from a Third Place: Black Gaze, Icons, and Womanism in the Art of Njideka Akunyili Crosby"
- **Cynthia Nwakudu**, "Confronting Violence against Women: Text-Textile Tension in the Art of Peju Alatise"