Timeline of English Department Events

Note: This timeline does not include faculty publications or presentations that are listed elsewhere in this website.

1911 Middle Tennessee Normal School enrolls 125 students, known as Normalites. The two faculty members teaching English are H. H. Clark and Logan S. Gillentine, who studied at Chicago University and Teachers College and The University of Tennessee. Four buildings exist on campus.

1912 First literary magazine published: Middle Tennessee Signal. Three faculty members teach English with the addition of Eugene Murphey of the University of Chicago. Four literary societies established by this date: The Mary Noilles Murfree Literary Society, The Claxton Society (for men), The Dromgoole Society (for women), and The Grady Literary Society.

1919 Eugene Tavenner serves as President of the Tennessee Philological Association.

1925 Middle Tennessee Normal is renamed Middle Tennessee State Teachers College. English is taught in the Languages Department.

1926 Four faculty members teach English in the Languages Department until 1936.

1928 James D. Burmmer serves as President of the Tennessee Philological Association.

1943 Middle Tennessee State Teachers College is renamed Middle Tennessee State College. The College of Arts and Sciences is comprised of Languages, Biology, Chemistry/Physics, Mathematics, and Social Sciences.

1944 Philip Cheek serves as President of the Tennessee Philological Association.

1951 Middle Tennessee State College Graduate Program is established.

1956 Fourteen faculty members teach in the Languages Department, which includes faculty who teach English.
Dr. Richard C. Peck is named as Chair of the English Department (serves until 1973). The English Department moves to the Murfree Building, also known as the "Old Library."

Dr. Richard C. Peck serves as President of the Tennessee Philological Association.

Middle Tennessee State College is renamed Middle Tennessee State University.

Twenty-nine faculty members teach in the English Department. The Master of Arts Program is established. (Note: A record exists of a 1953 and a 1957 M.A. in English, but these were granted by the university, not the department. No record has been found to date of a M.A. being granted to a graduate student who did not write a thesis.) The department begins publishing *The Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin* after it moves to MTSU. Dr. Ralph Hyde, Editor. Later Editors are Dr. Charles K Wolfe and Co-Editor Prof. Guy Anderson.

Dr. William Beasley receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.

Dr. H. Clay Tucker of the English Department becomes Dean of the Liberal Arts College (serves until 1978). Dr. Richard Peck receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.

MTSU’s first D.A. degree in English is granted to Helen LaVerne Emery (Dr. Charles K. Wolfe, Major Professor).

Dr. William M. Beasley is named the Chair of the English Department (serves as chair until 1978). *Border States: A Journal of Cultural Studies,* is published (until 1999) Editors include Dr. Michael Dunne, Dr. Sara Dunne, and Dr. Ellen Donovan.

Dr. C. Edwin Howard is Director of the Lower Division. The Richard C. and Virginia Peck Awards established.

Thirty-six faculty members teach in the English Department. The English Department Poetry Parody Club is established (circa 1976).

Dr. Bene’ Scanlon Cox is one of the founders of the Women's Information Service for Education, later re-named the June Anderson Women's Center (1984). Dr. Rhynette Hurd is the first African American hired in the department.

Dr. John N. McDaniel is named as Chair of the English Department
The original Writing Center was proposed by Dr. Bene Cox, who was instrumental in its development. It was housed in PH 306. Dr. Larry G. Mapp is appointed as Director of the English Department’s Writing Center (serves until 1986). The New Classroom Building is dedicated as Peck Hall.

1979  Dr. John Paul Montgomery receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.  Prof. Thomas Harris is named as Editor of the *English Department Newsletter*. Prof. Charles Dean directs the Henry Harrell Lecture Series, a series of public lectures by prominent theologians.

1980  Dr. Bene’ Scanlon Cox is named as a Fellow of the Brooklyn College Institute for Training Peer Tutors. The N.C. Beasley Scholarship is established. (He was the former MTSU Director of Admissions and father of the English Department Chair Dr. William Beasley.)

1982  The Neal D. Frazier Writing Award is established. (He was a former chair of the department.) Dr. Charles K. Wolfe receives the MTSU Distinguished Research Award.

1983  Dr. Ayne Cantrell founds MTSU’s celebration of National Women’s History Month. The Christine Vaughn Scholarship is established. (She was a former member of the department.)

1984  Dr. John N. McDaniel is named Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Dr. Frank Ginanni is named as Chair of the English Department (serves as chair until 1992).

1985  Dr. John N. McDaniel is named as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (serves from 1984-2010). The English Department’s Writing Center becomes part of the Developmental Studies Program.

1986  Thirty-eight faculty members teach in the English Department. Dr. Jacqueline Jackson serves as President of MTSU’s American Association of University Professors in the late1980s. Dr. John Paul Montgomery receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.

1987  Dr. Angela Hague is the Director of Graduate Studies (until 1991).
The Homer Pittard Creative Writing Scholarship is created (circa 1987).

1988 Dr. Bene’ Scanlon Cox appointed as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Tennessee Board of Regents (serves until 1991).
Dr. Robert Petersen serves as Director of the Lower Division (through 1993).
Dr. Angela Hague receives the University Honors College Outstanding Teaching Award.
Prof. Robert Herring Receives the MTSU Distinguished Creative Activity Award for his novel Hub.

1989 Dr. William Connelly receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.

1990 Dr. Ayne Cantrell is president of the Association of Faculty and Administrative Women and serves as president of the June S. Anderson Scholarship Foundation (serves until 2005).
Dr. Charles K. Wolfe receives the Award of Merit from the International Bluegrass Music Association.
Dr. Angela Hague receives the University Honors College Outstanding Teaching Award.

1991 Dr. Charles Durham founds The Conference on John Milton. (Originally known as the Southeastern Conference on John Milton.) Dr. Charles Durham and Dr. Kevin Donovan, MTSU Directors, Dr. Kristen Pruitt of Christian Brothers University also is a Director. The first conference convenes in 1992.
Dr. Michael Neth becomes the first person in the department’s history to be awarded the Summer Stipend of the National Endowment of the Humanities for his archival research of Percy Bysshe Shelley at Oxford University.
Dr. Jacquelyn Jackson becomes the first African American to be tenured in the department (later became a Full Professor).

1992 Dr. Jacquelyn Jackson is named Acting Chair of the English Department (1992-1993). She is the African American who chaired the department.
The Dr. Ayne Cantrell Award is founded to honor individuals with outstanding service to the Women’s Studies Program.
Dr. Ayne Cantrell receives the King/ Hampton Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Advancement of Women at MTSU.
Dr. Allen Hibbard is awarded a Fulbright Lecturer position at the University of Damascus, Syria from 1992-1994.
The Virginia Peck Trust Fund is established.
The Heather Uffelman Scholarship is established. (She was a former student in the department.)
Dr. Will Brantley receives the Eudora Welty Prize for his scholarly work *Feminine Sense in the Southern Memoir.*
Dr. Bene’ Scanlon Cox serves as Dean, Tennessee Collaborative Leadership Academy (1992-1998)
Dr. Michael Dunne is President of the Tennessee Philological Association.

1993
Dr. David Lavery is named as Chair of the English Department (serves as Chair until 1997).
Dr. Thomas Strawman receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.
Dr. Ayne Cantrell is Director of the Lower Division (serves through 1996).
Dr. Ted Sherman is Assistant Textual Editor for The John Donne Variorum (until 2006).
Dr. Deborah Gentry serves as First Assistant to the Vice President at MTSU then later as Assistant Vice President in Development and University Relations (until 2000).

1994
Dr. Angela Hague receives the University Honors College Outstanding Teaching Award.
Film Studies Minor begins in the department, Dr. Robert Holtzclaw, Advisor.
Poems and Plays, Volume 1 Issue 1 is published, Dr. Gaylord Brewer, Editor.
The Virginia Derryberry Memorial Scholarship is established.
Dr. Charles K. Wolfe receives the MTSU Distinguished Research Award.
The Freshman Writing Awards are established by the department.

1995
Modern Critical Approaches to Children’s Literature Conference begins (conducted until 2009), Dr. Martha Hixon, Dr. Ellen Donovan, Dr. Jennifer Marchant, Directors.
First Baseball in Literature and Culture Conference, Dr. Ron Kates and Dr. Warren Tormey, Directors.
Dr. David Lavery becomes a Member of the Editorial Board, Studies in Popular Culture.
Dr. Charisse Gendron founds the Feminist Film Series for the MTSU Women and Power Conference.

1996
Forty-four faculty members teach in the English Department.
Tennessee Williams Scholars Conference is established. Dr. Robert Bray, Founder and Director.
Dr. Elvira Casal creates English courses for international students.
Dr. Gaylord Brewer receives the MTSU Distinguished Creative Activity Award.
Dr. Robert Bray serves as Director of the Lower Division (through 1998).
Dr. Margaret Ordoubadian is named as the Director of the University Writing Center, located in Peck Hall 326 (serves until 2001).
The William R. Wolfe Writing Award is established.
1997  Dr. William J. Connelly is named as Chair of the English Department (serves as chair until 2005).
Dr. Linda Badley with Dr. Charisse Gendron and Dr. Clare Bratten co-chair the Feminist Film Series for the MTSU Women and Power Conference. (continues to the present)
The Writing Minor is established, Dr. Julie Fesmire, Advisor. Later Advisors include Dr. Ron Kates and Dr. Maria Clayton.
Dr. Sheila Otto is the Coordinator of the Developmental Writing Program (1997-2006).
Dr. Martha Hixon is named the editor of the Children’s Literature Association Newsletter (1997-2000).
Dr. Michael Neth is a Contributing Editor to The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley (Johns Hopkins Press).
Dr. Larry Mapp receives the South Atlantic Modern Language Association’s Outstanding Teaching Award.
The Director of Upper Division position includes responsibilities of Associate Chair of the Department.

1998  Dr. Robert Holtzclaw is Director of the Lower Division (serves until 2001).
Dr. Elvira Casal is the English as a Second Language Coordinator.
Dr. Robert Bray becomes the Founding Editor of The Tennessee Williams Annual Review (1998-2002).
Dr. Maria Clayton offers the first online English course.
Dr. John Paul Montgomery is named as Dean of the Honors College (serves until 2004).
Dr. William Badley is appointed as Director of General Education (serves until 2010 and also serves as Assistant Vice Provost and Interim Vice Provost).
Dr. Alfred Lutz establishes the English Department’s Intramural Soccer Team.

1999  Dr. Robert Petersen is recognized as Outstanding Advisor, MTSU College of Liberal Arts.
Dr. Elyce Helford is named the Director of the MTSU Women’s Studies Program (serves until 2008).
Dr. Allen Hibbard is Director of Graduate Studies (serves until 2004).
Dr. Maria Clayton receives the University College Distinguished Educator Award in Distance Learning.
Dr. Rebecca King receives the Dr. Ayne Cantrell Award for Outstanding Service to the Women’s Studies Program.
Dr. Charles K. Wolfe receives the Ralph J. Gleason Award for A Good Natured Riot: The Birth of the Grand Ole Opry.
Dr. Phillip Phillips co-edits Carmina Philosophiae: Journal of the International Boethius Society.
Dr. Deborah Gentry chairs various committees for the annual convention of the South East Region of the Council of the Advancement and Support of Education (through 2003).
Dr. Michael Neth serves as President of the Tennessee Association of Scholars (1999-2006).

*Country Music Annual* Vol. 1 is published, Dr. Charles K. Wolfe and Dr. Jim Akenson, Editors.

Dr. Maria Clayton is Advisor to the Minor in Writing Program (serves until 2004).

Dr. Pat Bradley receives the Eleanor Clark Award from the Robert Penn Warren Circle.

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**2000**

Dr. Maria Clayton receives the MTSU Foundation’s Outstanding Achievement in Instructional Technology Award and the Tennessee Board of Regents Distance Education Committee Innovations Award.

Dr. Elyce Helford becomes Director of the Women’s Studies Program. (2000-2008)

Dr. Charles K. Wolfe receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Recorded Sound Collections.

Dr. Angela Hague receives the University Honors College Outstanding Teaching Award.

Dr. Marion Hollings receives the Dr. Ayne Cantrell Award for Women’s Studies at MTSU.

Dr. Ted Sherman is the Editor of *Mythlore*, a publication of The Mythopoeic Society (2000-2005).

The Great Books Minor is approved, Dr. Michael Neth, Advisor.

Dr. Michael Neth is named Associate Editor of *The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (Johns Hopkins Press).

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**2001**

Dr. Robert C. Petersen receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.

Dr. Kathleen M. Therrien receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.

Dr. Ellen Donovan is Director of the Lower Division (serves until 2006).

Dr. David Lavery is the founding Co-editor of the journal *Slayage: The Online International Journal of Buffy Studies* (now known as *The Journal of Whedon Studies Association*).

The Great Books Minor begins in the department, Dr. Michael Neth, Advisor.

Dr. Jimmie Cain is named the Interim Director of the University Writing Center (serves until 2003 and then again from 2006-2009)).

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**2002**

Dr. Allison Smith is named as Co-ordinator of Teaching Assistants (2002-2005 and 2006-2008).

Dr. Rhonda McDaniel receives the CARA-Leyerle Award from The Medieval Academy of America and The Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto.

Dr. Claudia Barnett receives the MTSU Distinguished Research Award.
Dr. Martha Hixon receives the Outstanding Honors Faculty Award.
Dr. Sara Dunne serves as the President of the Tennessee Philological Association.

2003 The Ph.D. Program is established and the first Ph.D. degree is granted to Beverly Renee Lewis (Dr. Allen Hibbard, Major Professor).
Dr. Martha Hixon is named Board Member of the National Children's Literature Association.
Dr. Gaylor Brewer receives the MTSU Distinguished Creative Activity Award.
Dr. Trixie Smith serves as the Director of the University Writing Center (serves from 2003-2006).

2004 Dr. Rhonda McDaniel receives a National Endowment for the Humanities award for an NEH Summer Seminar at the University of Cambridge, England.
Dr. Allen E. Hibbard receives the MTSU Distinguished Research Award.
Dr. Charles Durham serves as President of the Milton Society of America.
Dr. Elvira Casal receives the Dr. Ayne Cantrel Award in Women's Studies for 2004-2005.
The English Graduate Students Organization is founded; Katherine Haynes is the first EGSO President (2004-05) and Dr. Philip E. Phillips is the Faculty Advisor (through the fall of 2005).
Dr. Ron Kates serves as Advisor to the Minor in Writing.

2005 Dr. Larry Gentry serves as President of the Tennessee Philological Association.
Dr. Linda Badley serves as a General Editor (with R. Barton Palmer) of *Traditions in World Cinema Series* at Edinburgh University Press.
Dr. Tom Strawman becomes the Interim Chair of the English Department.
Dr. Angela Hague serves as Interim Associate Dean, Honors College (through 2006).
Dr. Elyce Helford receives the TBR Distance Learning Innovations Award.
Dr. Will Brantley receives the Outstanding Honors College Faculty Award.
Dr. Aleka A. Blackwell receives the MTSU Outstanding Teacher Award.
Dr. David Lavery receives the MTSU Distinguished Research Award.
Dr. Jimmie Cain serves as Associate Chair and Director of the Upper Division (through 2006).
Dr. Trixie Smith is named Co-ordinator of Teaching Assistants.

2006 Dr. Tom Strawman is named as Chair of the English Department (serves to the present time).
Dr. Elvira Casal is named Associate Chair of the Department and
Director of the Upper Division.
Dr. Kathleen Therrin is Director of the Lower Division (through 2009).
Dr. David Lavery is the Founding Editor of Critical Studies in Television.
Eighty-five faculty members teach in the English Department.
The John N. McDaniel Excellence in Teaching Award is established.
Dr. Allen Hibbard is named as Director of the Middle East Center/Studies Program.
Dr. David Lavery is invited to teach at Brunel University in London, England (2006-2008).
Dr. Claudia Barnett receives the Bob Womack Distinguished Faculty Award.
Dr. Gaylord Brewer receives the MTSU Distinguished Creative Activity Award.
Dr. Marion Hollings receives the Award for Outstanding Mentoring from Disabled Student Services at MTSU.
Dr. Jimmie Cain is Co-editor of a special issue of Critical Studies in Television, 1.2.
Dr. Allison Smith serves as Co-ordinator of Teaching Assistants (2006-2008).

2007  Dr. Aleka Blackwell founds the Linguistics Olympiad, which as grown from 12 participants in 2008 to 98 in 2011. See www.mtsu.edu/linguisticsOlympiad.
Dr. Elyce Helford is named to the Editorial Board of The Journal of Science Fiction Film and Television.
Dr. Claudia Barnett’s play Feather is produced by the n.u.f.a.n. Ensemble.
Dr. Philip E. Phillips becomes the Founder and Director of the Teaching Great Books program in three Middle Tennessee prisons through a partnership between the Great Books Foundation, the Tennessee Department of Correction, and MTSU (continues to the present time). In addition, Dr. Laura Dubek and Dr. Rebecca King work in this program.
Dr. Philip Phillips receives the MTSU Distinguished Research Award.
Dr. Martha Hixon becomes the Vice President then the President (in 2008) of the national Children’s Literature Association.
Dr. Carl Ostrowski receives the Eliza Atkins Gleason Book Award for his scholarly work Books, Maps, and Politics: A Cultural History of the Library of Congress 1783-1861.

2008  Dr. Alfred Lutz serves as the Faculty Senate President.
Dr. Kevin Donovan is named Director of Graduate Studies.
Dr. Newtonia (Tina) Johnson is named the Director of the MTSU Women’s and Gender Studies Program (to the present date).
Dr. Elyce Helford is named as an Editorial Board Member for The Journal of Science Fiction Film and Television (serving to the present day).
Dr. Philip E. Phillips receives the Boston Athenaeum Mary Catherine Mooney Research Fellowship.
Dr. Julie Mynatt is named the Co-ordinator of Teaching Assistants.

2009

Dr. Maria Clayton receives the MTSU Award for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Technology.
Dr. Laura Dubek is named the Director of Lower Division.
Dr. Allison Smith is the Co-editor of Teaching in the Popular Culture Zone.
Dr. Claudia Barnett writes No. 731 Degraw-street, Brooklyn, or Emily Dickinson’s Sister while she is the Playwright-in-Residence at the Tennessee Repertory Theatre.
Dr. George (Wes) Houp is named the Director of the MTSU Writing Center.
Dr. Mischa Renfroe is an invited participant in the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute “The Rule of Law: Legal Studies and the Liberal Arts” in Biddeford, Maine.
Dr. Randy Mackin founds the “Tennessee Literary Project,” in which students will research the lives of Tennessee writers, compose biographies and bibliographies, and conduct interviews with the state’s authors. The work will be available online through a partnership with the Tennessee Humanities Council.

The William J. Connelly Writing Award is established.
The Great Books in Prison Program includes Dr. Rebecca King, Dr. Philip Philips, Dr. Patricia Gaitely, Dr. Rhonda McDaniel, and Dr. Warren Tormey.

2010

Dr. Amy Kaufman edits the 2010 issue of The Year’s Work in Medievalism.
Dr. Michael Neth is awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for his work on Shelley’s poetry.
Dr. Claudia Barnett’s play Another Manhattan is included in the 2010 Page-to-Stage Festival as the Kennedy Center is Washington, D.C.
Dr. Patricia Baines serves as Liaison and Assistant to the English Writing Programs.
Dr. Will Brantley becomes Editor of Fiftieth Anniversary Edition of Lillian Smith’s Now is the Time.
Dr. Philip E. Phillips is named to the Editorial Board of the Edgar Allan Poe Review.
Dr. Allison Smith is the Series Editor for the Fountainhead Press X Series for Professional Development in composition and pedagogy.

2011

Dr. Mohammed Albakry receives a Fulbright Fellowship to Morocco.
Dr. Philip E. Phillips is named the Interim Associate Dean of the College of Honors at MTSU.
Dr. David Lavery is the Founding Editor of Series/Season/Show: An Online Journal About Television Texts, and he is the editor of Intensities: The Journal of Cult Media.
Dr. Claudia Barnett is Resident Playwright at Chicago’s Stage Left Theatre, where
she is working to develop *Witches Vanish*.

Dr. Bene’ S. Cox establishes the English Department Colloquium.

Dr. Jid Lee won one of the ForeWord Book of the Year Awards given to distinguished books published by independent presses for her book *To Kill a Tiger*.

The English Department has 154 instructional faculty members. There are 94 full time faculty (tenured, tenure-track, and full time temporary positions, including one minority dissertation fellow). The tenured/tenure-track faculty comprise only 52 of the 94 faculty who are employed.

There are 24 adjunct faculty and 36 GTA’s who teach in the department.

One hundred students are enrolled in the department’s graduate programs.