The first year of college can have a considerable impact on one’s personal and academic life—put simply, it can be a difficult transition. Thankfully, through the efforts of numerous faculty members, the first-year experience has become much more worthwhile.

Dr. Laurie Cella, associate professor of English and director of first-year writing, explained that introductory courses like the English Department’s Writing Intensive First-Year Seminar (WIFYS) provides incoming students with the opportunity to develop necessary skills in an environment created for students of varied educational backgrounds. By maintaining a small class size where students share their initial time at Ship, participants can begin their college career by comfortably working together and helping each other learn.

Beyond academic content, WIFYS also encourages the study and practice of practical knowledge that will aid students throughout their academic career. Library usage, effective research, critical thinking, and scholarly writing techniques are among the skills taught in these courses. “It’s not all grammatical correctness in this class; it’s really about learning how to join the academic conversation,” she said.

According to Cella, one of the most important skills learned in introductory courses is simply recognizing when to ask for help. By reaching out to classmates through peer review or tutoring, students build upon intellectual foundations and form a community that can follow them throughout their years at Ship. “Part of why these classes are so important is that students don’t have to feel invisible—we want them to feel connected as a member of the Ship family.”

Faculty accomplish this in part through the department-wide use of texts by author Sherman Alexie. By spreading his works, all students who are currently or who have previously been enrolled in a WIFYS class share Alexie as a commonality. In fact, on April 5, 2017, the entire campus can hear Alexie speak during his book reading at the Luhrs Center.

Dr. David Godshalk, professor of history, also believes his introductory courses aid students in mastering college-level skills and forming connections to their university community.

By providing educational coaching and engaging students in a range of academic activities that promote efficient note taking, analyzing evidence, careful reading and writing, speaking, and
Most undergraduate degrees are comprised of a major (or two), a minor (or two), a core program often called general education, and courses designated as free electives. A major allows for deep study within a disciplinary area with the goal of developing expertise. A minor is intended to allow moderate exploration into one or more areas that can add breadth to a major program of study or allow an interest area to be explored. Elective courses also can be used as ways to explore interests or to deepen expertise. The Core, or General Education, program provides breadth of knowledge beyond the major, minor, and elective courses and also is intended to foster and develop vital soft skills such as written and oral communication, critical-thinking, design-thinking, inquiry and analysis, problem solving, information literacy, civic engagement, global perspectives, ethics, lifelong learning, and so forth.

It is interesting to note that the largest single component of an undergraduate degree is the core, or general education, curriculum. Currently at Shippensburg University, approximately 40 percent of the program of study is comprised of this single component. Dedication of such a large component of the curriculum is not without purpose—ergo the soft skills outlined above.

Students often misperceive the General Education program as nothing more than a collection of courses to be ticked off one by one to satisfy a requirement toward degree completion. It is often not until well after graduation that the true value of this program is realized. The very skills at the heart of General Education—the soft skills—are those that employers emphasize the most. As you read through this issue of our newsletter, please take time to recognize how the many aspects of our General Education program shine.
Shippensburg University Foundation

The Shippensburg University Foundation secures funds for the benefit of the students and programs of the university. The College of Arts and Sciences Associates Fund supports activities within the College of Arts and Sciences. These dollars are managed by the dean to support high-impact learning experiences for students as well as faculty development.

According to Dr. James Mike, dean of the college, these funds are the “difference makers” in providing and maintaining the margin of excellence for which the college is known. The fund supports student conferences and competitions, student programs, faculty/academic support, faculty/professional development and conferences, honorariums, awards, and cultural support.

Student programs include a dean's list reception and the SU Chess Team travel support. The Passport to Success Program also is supported by this fund and is the first step on the ladder to professional achievement for CAS students. By attending fairs and participating in workshops aimed at writing a well-written resume and cover letter, discovering successful interviewing strategies, and learning how to represent one’s self to an employer, students learn valuable skills to be successful in their future endeavors.

Dollars also are invested in the etiquette reception and dinner for students who have completed the Passport to Success program. This dinner teaches CAS students to socialize and use proper business etiquette in a non-threatening environment. CAS Advisory Board members and other business professionals attend and provide feedback to students. Students receive a certificate upon completion, which often impresses prospective employers and graduate schools.

Funding for faculty includes relocation support, travel support, academic-related meal expenses, and transportation and registration to conferences. Without donor support, the CAS will not have that extra margin that allows it to continue to improve and serve the region through its seventeen different academic departments. Much of the college’s excellence comes from the support of alumni, parents, friends, businesses, and foundations. If you are interested in supporting the CAS Associates Fund or would like to explore establishing an endowment to support other needs of the college, contact Cindy Yeiser at (717) 477-1377 or clyeis@sufoundation.org.

Advisory Board Profile

Paul Dlugolecki ’69-’73M

Helping to provide Ship students with a quality education in the arts and sciences is why Paul Dlugolecki ’69-’73M keeps coming back to the place he called home.

“There’s a natural—I hate to say the word love—but Shippensburg was part of my life for four years. I lived there. It was kind of like living in my own home.”

After graduating as a history major, Dlugolecki worked for twenty-two years as the executive director of the State Senate Appropriations Committee. He also has been a member of Pennsylvania’s State System of Higher Education Board of Governors and currently is partnered with Brier Dlugolecki Strategies, which offers lobbying services.

Although all majors are beneficial, Dlugolecki said, a liberal arts education offers students something unique—an opportunity to understand the “bigger picture” of the world.

“I think the aspect of a liberal arts education allows you to see a lot more. There are so many faces to a liberal arts education with the arts, with culture, with history, and even throw in a little mathematics and some statistics,” he said.

Dlugolecki may have been a history major, but he expanded his knowledge by taking creative writing, literature, and politics courses. He also participated in Student Senate for two years.

Because of his time with Student Senate, he considers his informal major politics, and it became his career.

“History gave me a lot of background, but the real practical application was my experience with the Student Senate.”

Of course, Dlugolecki said that inside the classroom, he was “blessed” with some incredible professors.

“These guys who taught history at Shippensburg were the crème de le crème. They were dedicated to it, they pursued it, they were demanding, they communicated their love for history in a way that peaked your interest and motivated you to maintain your studies.”

“THE ASPECT OF A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION ALLOWS YOU TO SEE A LOT MORE.”
Reflecting on the ever-expanding demands of the professional sphere, both Ship educators and students believe it’s time for general education to receive the praise it deserves. While major and minor courses prepare students for their chosen careers, general education courses promote the development of invaluable, lifelong skills and necessary knowledge.

According to Dr. Scott Drzyzga, professor of geography and co-chair of the General Education Council, Ship’s general education has become the university’s “signature program,” largely because it caters to the “employers and grad schools that increasingly want people who can think on their feet and handle new opportunities and challenges.” He said that this program allows today’s students to ready themselves for a constantly evolving work environment by encouraging educational diversity.

“We put our students in danger when we let them put all their eggs in one basket. So, every student at Ship completes our General Education Program to prepare them to recognize and blaze pathways into an always changing and uncertain future.”

Drzyzga can attest to this value by speaking from personal experience. As a scientist, he needs a firm comprehension of technology, but the field also requires an understanding of the humanities, cultural awareness, and various philosophies. For example, in order to fully interpret and appreciate the Code of Ethics for GIS Professionals, he needed to recognize references to famous moral philosophies and histories learned in general education courses. Thanks to this extended knowledge, he became a more academically diverse professional.

Ship students like sophomore Abigail Cox share similar attitudes regarding general education. “Gen eds help to make me a well-rounded student. I’m pushed to challenge myself in subjects that aren’t my greatest strengths. When seeking a higher education, why not make the most of it?”

She believes that the most valuable general education courses for which she registered were in history because they helped her to grasp the content taught for her English secondary education major. “This information really helps me when we look at certain literature pieces, because I have prior knowledge that lets me understand the historical context and what the world was like during a particular time period.”

Because general education has proven to be so valuable, the state aims to give these programs a facelift to stay current. By 2018, courses will focus even more closely on employable skills and specific learning outcomes including oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis, technological competency, information literacy, and intercultural knowledge. The goal of these general education programs has been and will continue to be to create generations of well-rounded students who are prepared for a diverse and evolving workforce.

“General Education prepares them to blaze pathways.”

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS continued from page 1

participating in meaningful conversations, he aims to “help them become more effective learners.”

“The freshman year is the period of time in which students establish many of the attitudes and habits that are going to serve as the cornerstones of their future success,” he said. “It is absolutely vital that professors make students feel welcome on campus, and that we’re committed to doing everything we can to support this success.”

Godshall works to achieve this goal by providing his students with the Dine Through Times program with Ship Dining services. Each month, a multicultural/historical themed meal is served on campus for students and faculty alike to enjoy. These meals directly relate to the topics currently taught in their history courses—often including unfamiliar foods such as roast goat, tabbouleh salad, mussels in broth, cassava fufu, flavored teas with tapioca balls, and exotic coffees. These dinners have proven to be a highlight among professors and students.

“The dinners help to break down barriers between students and faculty members and encourage the kinds of informal contacts and interactions that help provide both groups with a sense of community and belonging.”
Holly Harrar ’16 may have entered her advisor’s office freshman year as shy and timid, but she certainly didn’t graduate Ship that way. She left with an Emmy®.

At the 2016 Mid-Atlantic Emmy® awards, Harrar won a National Academy of Arts and Sciences Student Production Award for her broadcast, “Inclusion in Action: GMU Life.”

“She migrates to that kind of story, that sort of personal triumph story, and those are the ones that really resonate with her,” Harrar said.

She said even when it comes to her own story, she doesn't become discouraged by challenges. At Ship, Harrar said she often was intimidated by what was asked of her at SUTV, but she wanted to prove that she could do it. And she did. Through her accolades, she is helping current students see the rewards of hard work.

“I think it sets a nice precedent for SUTV and gives the students something to work for. I think people work a lot harder when there's something at stake,” she said.

Harrar didn’t walk into her college career the same way she walked out, donned in a blue cap and gown.

“I do remember when she first came here. She was this shy, timid little thing who wasn’t really sure what she wanted to do,” Garris said.

Harrar remembers that day, too. When she walked into Garris’ office for some direction, she knew what she wanted to do, just not how she wanted to accomplish it.

Telling stories has always been important to people, Harrar said, but she wasn’t sure how to find the “common ground” that connects people.

After graduating, Harrar used her disability studies minor as a student’s personal assistant at Pottstown High School, her alma mater. Soon after, she was hired as a reporter at Blue Ridge News 11 in northern Lebanon County, living her dream to tell the stories that drive her as a reporter.

“I can’t wait to see ten years from now where she is,” Garris said.
Leadership Class Nominates Organization for Nobel Peace Prize

An honors class hoped to impact international human rights issues by nominating a group for the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

Dr. Steven Burg, professor and chair of the Department of History/Philosophy, nominated Maiti Nepal, an organization that fights human trafficking, to the Norwegian Nobel Committee on behalf of students in his fall honors seminar.

As a full professor teaching history at a university, Burg meets the Nobel Foundation criteria to make a nomination. The choice of Maiti Nepal was the culmination of weeks of research by students in his Leadership, Social Changes, and History class.

Students studied leadership theory, the work of past Nobel winners, and groups working on social justice issues, Burg said. “Ultimately they had to decide, did we think that any of these groups had a solid enough case to actually nominate them?”

Maiti Nepal is a nonprofit organization that protects girls and women in Nepal and India from domestic violence, human trafficking, child prostitution, and other crimes and forms of exploitation. Founded in 1993 and based in Kathmandu, Maiti Nepal has helped save 30,000 girls and women and achieve the convictions of 1,200 traffickers. The group also provides education, housing, medical treatment and other services.

“It is not enough to wish the problem away or leave the fight to someone else. It is not enough to send the victim home or encourage them to stay silent,” Burg and the students told the Nobel committee in their letter. “Maiti Nepal is a unique organization because it faces [human trafficking] head on.”
Indian pulp-fiction is an area of literature that very few give any merit to, according to Dr. Richard Zumkhawala-Cook, a professor in the English Department. His fascination with this popular phenomenon earned him a Fulbright to study the genre in India.

Right now in India, there is a booming market for these paperback books that are written in English and intended for an Indian readership, he said. Billboards display popular books, and mobs of fans greet the authors at Indian literary festivals where even celebrities, politicians, and Bollywood stars flock, he explained.

“**I’m really curious how I’m going to be schooled by these students.**”

Zumkhawala-Cook wants to discover why people love pulp fiction, how it’s marketed, how it’s valued, where people buy pulp fiction, and what makes them pick up a book in the first place.

“I don’t enjoy reading them for reading, but I enjoy reading them to know that someone likes this, someone is using this to make sense of the world in this way. I may not like it, but I can still find it interesting. So it’s more scientific,” he said.

Zumkhawala-Cook will not only be researching, but also will teach at the Maharaja Sayajirao University. He may know the material—American texts such as *Catch 22*—but Zumkhawala-Cook is prepared to be unprepared for his students to throw him off of his feet.

“**I’m really curious how I’m going to be schooled by these students.**”

Richard Zumkhawala-Cook takes a selfie with his son, daughter, and wife.

**Capstone Class Challenges, Enriches, and Prepares Students**

*An Essay by Natalie Eastwood ’17*

As a print journalist, I write. I write so much that it’s like breathing under water without struggling for air. That’s what Ship’s journalism program has done for me—it has turned me from an air-suckling freshman to a water-breathing journalist.

There were times when I didn’t want to leap off the cliff and into the water. My professors pushed me. The people forcing me to do things I was too scared to do were the same people who had my back the entire way. I’m finding this true more than ever now that I’m in my senior capstone class as a communication/journalism major.

My capstone continues to challenge me the same way that my first three years at Ship did. Every single semester, my professors asked me to do things that I had never done before, and I did it all, badly, haltingly, three-times over—but I did it and learned how to do it better the next time.

My capstone class is exactly the same. Our web package is made up of four projects: a written story, photographs, an audio element, and video footage. Dr. Michael Drager, the professor overseeing my capstone, adds a “bell and whistle” to each element of each project.

It feels like my professors continue to find higher and higher cliffs in which to shove me from. And I love them for it. I picture Dr. Drager cliff diving beside me and several other students, screaming directions on how to incorporate B-roll into our videos while he eats a Nature Valley protein bar.

By the time we all hit icy water, we sink to the bottom until we can find a way to swim to the surface. Eventually, we’re all bobbing along like corks in the water, Dr. Drager and all of our professors bobbing right along with us. And they’re all saying, “See, we knew you could do it.”

When I graduate, I know that it’s not one single leap, but a series of cliffs. I’m ready to jump from them willingly, because I know I will fall. I know I’ll fall into deeper and deeper water that will challenge me to become a stronger swimmer. And I’m ready for that. My professors didn’t just teach me how to be a journalist, they taught me how to fail, to adapt, to learn from mistakes, and to measure success by levels of improvement.

This May, it is with absolute terror and complete confidence that I will step off of one of the many cliffs in my life. I plan to fly like a fish and swim like a journalist.
The College of Arts and Sciences Advisory Board is composed of alumni, friends of Shippensburg University, and faculty emeriti of the college. Its purpose is to share professional and personal perspective on matters relating to academic philosophy and practice, internships and cooperative learning opportunities, and professional development for faculty; to provide financial assistance; and to become involved in the curricular and extracurricular programs of the college. With thanks, we recognize the current members of the board:

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Ms. Tracy Boak  
Dr. Jack Brenizer Jr.  
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Mr. Paul Dlugolecki  
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