

ISSUE

09

February

2016



Richard Haynes and Jessika Coon, above, are two GGC History students who are "Non-traditionally aged." Read their comments below.

This Issue

Non-Traditionally Aged Students P. 1

Ex Libris: Dr. Fang Zhou P. 2

Faculty Focus P. 3

Alumni/ae and Student News P. 4

Non-Traditionally Aged Students Add to GGC But Face Unique Challenges

Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC) contains a truly diverse student body. Not only is it diverse in ethnicities, races, religions, and linguistic backgrounds, but it is also diverse in another way: its students range in age from mid-teens to students who are older than the "traditional" college student demographic of 18 to 22 years old. According to GGC's "Fast Facts," over 31% of the college's students are over the age of 22 years old.

Georgia Gwinnett College's History Faculty have enjoyed teaching students who are sometimes their own age or older. "I have found that non-traditionally aged students often have remarkable insight to share from their own life experiences," said Patrick Zander, Assistant Professor of History. "During class discussions they can help bring history to life and remind the younger class members of the relevance of history by sharing those life experiences."

Many "non-traditional" students face challenges that eighteen-year-olds living in the dorms do not have to face. They juggle

jobs, child care, running a household, and sometimes the care of an elderly parent. Their motives for returning to school vary widely. Some are returning to earn a bachelor's degree as they "reinvent" themselves. Some are pursuing a lifelong dream delayed by other challenges. Others are crossing off an item on their personal bucket list. Still others were literally downsized out of a job and are retooling. Their responsibilities frequently leave them with little to no free time.

Despite this fact, non-traditional students have earned the reputation of being diligent students. "They have typically reached the point where they are definite about their life and career objectives and are pursuing their studies with a particularly strong sense of responsibility." Zander said. While every story is different, we have asked two students to comment on why they came back to school and how the experience feels to them. *Story by David Mason and Richard Rawls.*

In Their Own Words: The Realities of Being A Non-Traditionally Aged History Student at GGC

Jessika Coon: "I often tell my kids to learn from the mistakes of their parents and go directly to college after high school because I want my kids to have a simpler life than mine. However, having started college a bit later provided me with unforeseen benefits. I have gained a curiosity about the world I did not have before. The stacks of reading that I may have perceived as tedious in my younger years I find exciting. As a thirty-something student I have this specific understanding of life lived without higher education and it drives me forward each day. Even when the deadlines and papers pile up, I know that at the end of it all is a life I have yet to experience."

Richard Haynes: "If you've taken any Western Civilization classes at GGC, there's no doubt you've read that the Oracle of Delphi proclaimed Socrates to be the wisest of all the Greeks. Similarly, you're aware that Socrates responded by saying that the only thing he did know, was that he knew absolutely nothing. Herein lies the chief benefit of being a "nontraditional" student. Life has a way of teaching you that you have a lot to learn."

Dr. Fang Zhou, right, earned his Doctorate and Master's degrees at the Georgia Institute of Technology, and his Bachelor's degree at the University of California, Berkeley.



Ex Libris: From the Bookshelves of GGC Historians

Dr. Fang Zhou has taught History at GGC since Fall 2010. In addition to survey courses on World and US History, he teaches classes on the history of Asia. His research agenda focuses on the historical development of China's transportation system. He discusses both strategies and reminders for gaining admission into graduate school.

Since they began graduating, GGC history graduates have been accepted to graduate schools at various universities throughout the country. Each semester the GGC History Club has organized "Graduate School Preparation" presentations to inform and prepare GGC history majors about their graduate school options. GGC history faculty members have joined these presentations to discuss their experiences and offer guidance to current GGC students.

The professors of history at Georgia Gwinnett College have highlighted various aspects of the graduate admissions process in informative presentations to the History Club. It is important for prospective graduate students to start preparing early in order to maximize their chances for success. Here are some helpful tips and advice from GGC history faculty:

1) *Research what type of graduate programs you want to enter.* For example, do you want to earn an M.A. or Ph.D.? Which specialization do you want to focus on: American, European, or World History?

2) *Determine the undergraduate coursework that best prepares you.* Various history faculty have emphasized that a prospective graduate student who wants to focus on World History needs to have strong language training. Students need to take foreign language courses as well as courses for their history major to become competitive applicants.

3) *GRE tests* remain a requirement for most, but not all history graduate programs. Start preparing for GRE early by taking practice tests. GRE verbal scores are an

especially important part of graduate school admissions.

4) *Do not forget letters of recommendation.* Most graduate programs require three letters of recommendation. GGC history professors are all more than willing to write recommendation letters for students. But students need to prepare an application portfolio consisting of their personal statement, c.v., list of schools they are applying, and

"Make sure you tailor your personal statement for the graduate school to which you are applying."

deadlines for each application to give to their professors at least several weeks in advance. Follow up with your professors and give them reminders of when the deadlines are. Letters of recommendation are crucial as professors who know you well and who can comment on your academic potential are your strongest advocates.

5) *The personal statement* is your opportunity to shine! Make sure you highlight and emphasize why you want to go to graduate school and why this particular university or program would be a good fit for you. Proofread your personal statement. Your history professors can help you revise your statement. Make sure you tailor your personal statement for the graduate school to which you are applying.

Graduate admission in history is definitely competitive. Well-prepared GGC history graduates have done well and have been admitted into excellent programs. Reach out to GGC alumni who are currently attending graduate school to learn about their experiences. Graduate school is a wonderful and exciting intellectual journey. Choosing the right school, department, and advisor are key factors to your future success. GGC history professors have all gone through this process before, and we want to wish you the best of luck as you prepare for this endeavor. Best wishes and Go Grizzlies!

Standing Ovations! History Faculty News & Accomplishments

Brian Etheridge



Brian Etheridge (Director, CTE) published *Enemies to Allies: Cold War Germany and American Memory* (University of Kentucky Press, 2015). The book tells how Germans and Germany went from an enemy of the USA to allies almost overnight.



Lectures at GGC and Lithuania Simultaneously

On Tuesday, November 9, two institutions of higher ed met for lectures at the same time: one at GGC, and the other at Vytautas Magnus University, in Lithuania. Political Science Professor, **Dovile Budryte** (below, left), arranged the unique occasion. **Ellen Rafshoon** (History) lectured on the historical "Realism" of the American Political Scientist, Hans Morgenthau. After a period of questions from both Lithuanian and American students, **Giedrius Česnakas**, Political Science Faculty and Vice Dean (pictured, center, in photo above), Vytautas Magnus University, lectured on the energy policy of the Lithuanian government.

Richard Rawls published "The Visigothic Kingdom" in the *Wiley Encyclopedia of Empire*."

Michael Gagnon published a book review of Shepard W. McKinley, *Stinking Stones and Rocks of Gold; Phosphate, Fertilizer, and Industrialization in Postbellum South Carolina*, in the *South Carolina Magazine of History* Vol. 115 No. 4 (October 2014), pp. 330-332. He also commented on the retrospective of Robert C. McMath's scholarship at the Southern Historical Association conference in November 2015. He presented a paper entitled, "Hostile Takeovers and Modern Corporations in Antebellum Georgia," at the American Historical Association's conference in January 2016. Also, on January 25, 2016, Gagnon gave a public lecture at the Gwinnett Historical Society on Gwinnett's Role in Cherokee Removal.

Lia Schraeder chaired a panel and presented a paper on "Teaching the World II Survey Through the Lens of Revolutions" at the World History Association 2015 conference in Savannah, GA.

Axel Corlu published a book review: *Foodways and Daily Life in Medieval Anatolia* by Nicholas Trepanier, in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

Michael Gunther published "'Crumbling to Dust': British Military Engineering Efforts in the Hudson-Champlain Corridor in the Seven Years' War, and its Aftermath," in Luengo-Gutierrez and Smith, eds., *From Colonies to Countries ...* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016); and book reviews of Steven Jaffe, *New York at War: Four Centuries of Combat, Fear, and Intrigue in Gotham* (New York, 2012), in *New York History* (Winter 2015), and Robert Lifset, *Power on the Hudson: Storm King Mountain and the Emergence of Modern American Environmentalism* (Pittsburgh, 2014), in *The Sixties* (Nov. 2015).

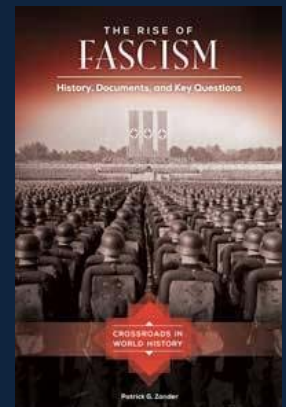
Nik Ribianszky was a commentator at the American Historical Association. "Disorderly City: Race, Gender, and Social Transformation in Civil War-Era New Orleans." Atlanta, GA, January 2016. She was also a panelist at the AHA, "'To Be Licensed to Remain in This State': The Shifting State of Freedom Among Free People of Color in Antebellum Natchez, Mississippi." Atlanta, GA, January 2016.

David Cason presented with GGC History Major, Heather Hawlik, "Textbooks in U.S. History: Past, Present and Future," at the Georgia Council on Social Studies Annual Conference, October 2015.

Eugene Berger, Patrick Zander, Nathan Orgill



Patrick Zander (center) published a book: *The Rise of Fascism: History, Documents, and Key Questions*. Published by ABC-CLIO, it included essays from GGC historians Eugene Berger (left) and Nathan Orgill (right). "It is an introduc-



tion to the subject for undergraduate students," Zander said. "It includes an historical overview of the "Fascist Era" from 1919-1945, a timeline of the events of that age, and an encyclopedia section with in-depth entries about the key people, ideas, events, and documents associated with the Rise of Fascism." Orgill wrote "Conquest and Territorial Expansion were Fundamental Objectives of Fascism." Berger wrote "Racism/Antisemitism were not Essential parts of Fascist Ideology, but restricted to particular cases."

Alumni/ae and Student News.

Alumni News

Justin Carlyle ('15), was hired at Discovery High School where he currently teaches World History and World Geography. He is also a defensive line coach and defensive coordinator for the 9th grade football team.

Katheryn Nikolich ('13), below middle, earned her M.A. degree in History from Georgia State University. Her thesis was titled, "Gwinnett County, Georgia, A Sunbelt Community: The Invention of a Postwar Suburb."

Vesna Kurspahic ('12), below right, earned her MPS degree in Political Management from George Washington University.

Paul Amato ('15), was admitted to the University of Nebraska's MA program in History.

Whitney (Puckett) Herrington ('13), below left, earned the MLIS degree from Valdosta State University.

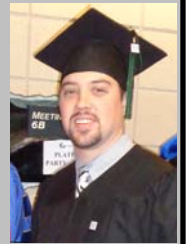
Heath Wallace ('15), is working at Apalachee High School in the SPED Department.



Commencement December 2015



Duluth, Georgia. GGC held its Fall Commencement ceremony on Thursday, December 17, 2015 in the Infinite Energy Forum at the Infinite Energy Center (formerly the Gwinnett Center). Six History Majors received their degrees. The picture, above, shows (top row from left): Patrick Heiser, Dr. Richard Rawls, Dr. Michael Gagnon, Dr. Lia Schraeder, Dr. Andi Knecht, and front row from left, Joshua Wright, Caitlyn Hanrahan, and Antonieta Mackoul. In addition to the four students pictured above, Drew Swick is pictured, top right, and Britton Carroll, below right. Georgia's Secretary of State, Mr. Brian Kemp, gave the commencement address. Kemp congratulated the students on their achievement. GGC's history faculty congratulates the graduates and wishes them well on the next steps in life!



Below: GGC's historians at the Fall 2015 Commencement, from left: Drs. Richard Rawls, Lia Schraeder, Andi Knecht, Michael Gagnon, Brian Etheridge, and Nik Ribianszky.



CONTACTING GGC & HISTORY DISCIPLINE

History Point of Contact:

Dr. Seth Kendall: skendall@ggc.edu

GGC HISTORY Editors:

Richard Rawls: rrawls@ggc.edu

and Patrick Zander: pzander@ggc.edu