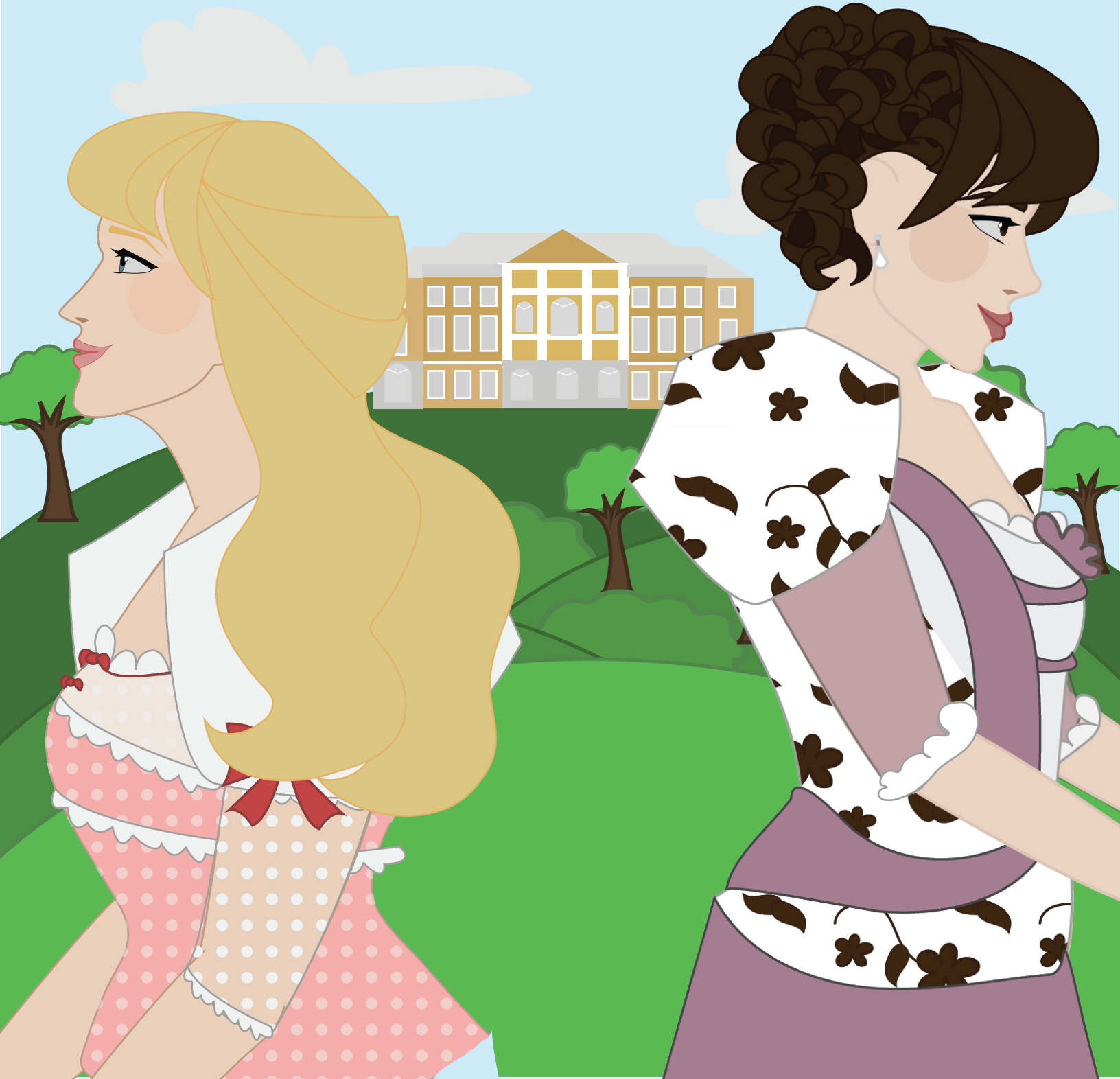


# *The English Aggie*

## November 2024

Honors Student Profiles | English Department Film Series | Gordone Writing Competition  
Aggie Aspiring Educators Club | Science Fiction and Fantasy | Farewell to the Semester



# Honors Student Profiles



## Hope Ash

“Only in Suffering: Examining Motherhood in The X-Files”

My name is Hope, and I’m an English and History major, also enrolled in the 3+2 English Master’s Program. I’m from San Antonio, Texas, and I was the fourth person in my immediate family to get an Aggie ring--we’re all about traditions! I love analyzing popular media and thinking critically about texts, which is why I decided to do my senior thesis on The X-Files, a cult-classic show from the 90s. I’m extremely grateful to have been able to work under Dr. Grace Heneks for the past year, and her guidance as I read through existing scholarship on The X-Files and as I was developing and refining my concept was invaluable.

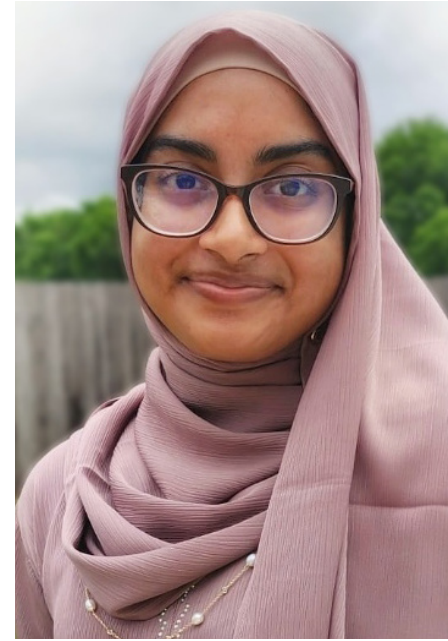
My thesis is all about examining one of the main characters, Dana Scully, specifically her changing relationship with motherhood and reproduction and how these themes impact the series as a whole. Simply put, The X-Files is torn between the obsession of making her a mother while not knowing how to write her as one. This results in a process of making/unmaking of mothers that is emblematic of the televisual representation of motherhood throughout the 90s and into the present day, highlighting some of the difficulties of female representation that have continued despite

## Arifa Zaman

“The Gothic, Grief, and Gateway to Truth: Grief and Dual-Truth Through Liminal Space in Contemporary Gothic Children’s Literature”

My name is Arifa Zaman and I am from Houston, TX. I have always been interested in Gothic literature and I enjoy studying children’s literature. I wanted to combine my two interests and explore the multiple fascinating components of the literature for my project. In my free time, I love making art! I have a cat who is my muse and love, so she is my primary painting subject!

My project is titled “The Gothic, Grief, and Gateway to Truth: Grief and Dual-Truth Through Liminal Space in Contemporary Gothic Children’s Literature”. In my project, I focus on contemporary Gothic children’s literature, specifically books that involve death. I rhetorically analyze how grief is presented and the realization of a complex truth through the Gothic liminal space using two books, A Monster Calls by Patrick Ness and City of Ghosts by Victoria Schwab. For my process, I read a variety of Gothic children’s books and noted common themes. I also researched about the subject area with guidance from my wonderful advisor, Dr. McCoul. Overall, the process was fun and rewarding! I feel like I have learned so much about the subject area and the process of writing a thesis paper.



## Vivian Lewis

My name is Vivian Lewis and I am from Dallas, Texas. I became interested in my thesis topic through advocacy and just a general interest in poetry. A fun-fact about me is that I double majored in English and French.

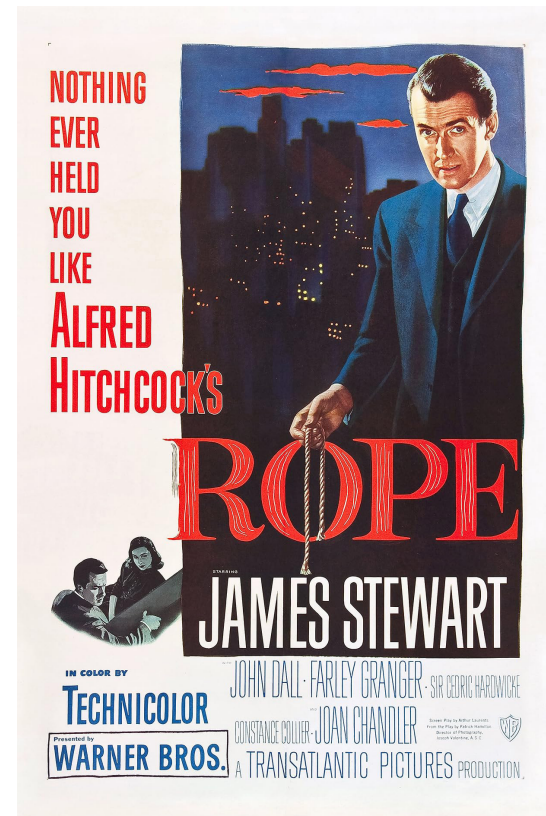
My thesis project is a narrative poem, or a narrative-in-verse, that explores the Asian-American Identity and proximities to whiteness, the illusion of America and the American dream, and the repercussions of using AI in art. It was very cool preparing for this thesis; the first semester was spent reading different poets and researching different poetic forms and then this semester was used to draft the actual project. This is my first time ever writing a narrative poem, so growing in that way as a writer has been very eye opening. The process was very much just writing whatever came to my mind and then revising it after and revising it enough until it became a cohesive story.

## Film Series

By **Dr. James Francis** and **Dr. Apostolos Vasilakis**

The plan for the film series is to curate a selection of films that hold critical cinematic value regarding their visual and narrative storytelling. Although film is a visual medium, it is considered a valuable segment of literature in the broader spectrum of texts that convey a story to audience. We are seeking to showcase celebrated works—stateside to international—that elevate the field through effective directing, writing, editing, cinematography, composition, acting, and all other aspects that make it a collaborative artform. From our inaugural screening of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope* (1948) this semester, we obtained audience feedback and that—going forward—will be a great source of direction for the series to ensure we are providing viewers films that will resonate with them as a diverse student, staff, and faculty population.

Dr. Vasilakis and I were having similar thoughts about starting a film series. We had a brief meeting one day, and when I expressed to him the idea of the department creating a series, he told me that he had already been thinking about developing one, so it was a great coincidence that our minds were on the same wavelength. We both share a genuine appreciation of cinema as art, and that made it simple for us to start planning everything. Film is a form that brings people together from all backgrounds, and at TAMU I think it will work great to connect populations from all the different colleges, departments, and majors.



## Favorite Movies

### Dr. James Francis:

My favorite film genre is horror; I grew up watching horror films and now as a professor I get to teach about the subject matter. I recognize horror as my personal favorite because it represents a blend of almost all film genres all the time. During a really good horror film, you can find yourself on the edge of your seat with anticipation, anxious by the tension, frightened by a scary image or sound, emotional if a beloved character doesn't survive, and laughing from a character making a bad decision like running into the attic or basement where there is no escape. I don't have one specific favorite film in horror or any other genre, but Paul Thomas Anderson's *Magnolia* (1999), Danny Boyle's *Sunshine* (2007), Sidney Lumet's *Deathtrap* (1982), and Pedro Almodóvar's *All About My Mother* (1999) are my current Top-4 on Letterboxd, and any of those would be great for the series. I will definitely make sure we get at least one horror film in the series, but it will have to be entertaining and educational—nothing just for shock value.

### Dr. Apostolos Vasilakis

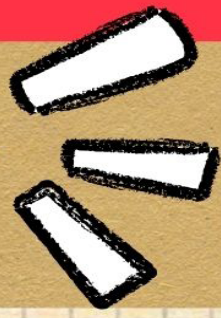
My favorite genre is film noir and my favorite movies are *Out of the Past*, *Blade Runner*, and *Seven Samurai*. We hope to screen at least one of them in the spring.

Check out the English film series next semester!





# GORDONE AWARDS COMPETITION



**WINNERS WILL RECEIVE  
A \$500 PRIZE AND  
SHARE THEIR WORK AT  
A PUBLIC READING.**

**APPLICANTS CAN  
ONLY WIN IN ONE  
CATEGORY**

**HONORABLE MENTIONS  
ALSO INVITED TO  
SHARE THEIR WORK  
AT THE PUBLIC  
READING.**

**MARCH 14TH, 2025  
@ 11:59 PM**

## **GENRES**

### **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS:**

- **POETRY, FICTION, CREATIVE NONFICTION.**

### **GRADUATE STUDENTS:**

- **POETRY AND NARRATIVE (BOTH CREATIVE NONFICTION AND FICTION). *\*\*ONLY ONE ENTRY FOR EACH GENRE CATEGORY IS ALLOWED***

### **BOTH:**


- **SCRIPTS (STAGE PLAYS, FILM, AUDIO) WITH ONE PRIZE OFFERED FOR THIS CATEGORY.**



Texas A&M University  
English



**\*ONLY CURRENTLY ENROLLED  
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE TEXAS  
A&M STUDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE\***



ARE YOU AN ENGLISH  
MAJOR INTERESTED  
IN BECOMING A  
TEACHER?

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THROUGH SOCIALS,  
RANGING FROM  
STUDY SESSIONS TO  
CRAFTING FLOWER  
BOUQUETS!

MAKE SURE TO SIGN UP FOR THE SPRING  
SEMESTER!



# Science Fiction and *Fantasy*

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## Creative Writing Contest

Open to all enrolled Texas A&M undergraduate students.

**Submit any form of Speculative fiction**

Winners will have the chance to win cash prizes and perform their pieces at a public reading!

Submit up to 3000 words by **February 10th, 2025**

<https://forms.gle/BcS5etyFAWas3XHAA>



Presented and funded by:



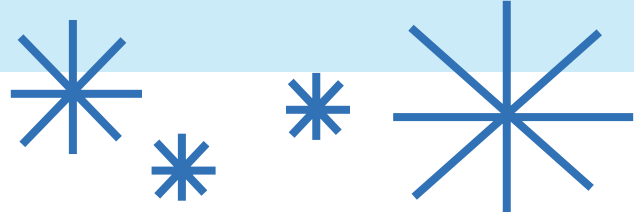
and



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# Farewell to the Semester!

Howdy English Aggies!



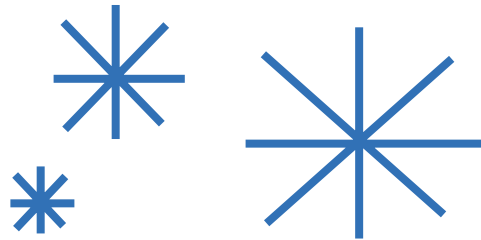
I hope everyone has had an amazing semester.

I took all English courses this semester, which was a lot of fun! I love how English courses have the unique capability to be multidisciplinary. For example, in my romantic literature course this semester we created a digital textbook based on what we learned this semester. In my science fiction course, we are constructing our own fictional world to play Dungeons and Dragons! There is so much to explore as an English major at Texas A&M, and I hope everyone is taking full advantage of the unique courses offered in our department!

Good luck with final papers and exams! This semester will be a breeze, and then it's the holiday season! We'll soon be listening to Sabrina Carpenter's *Fruitcake* on repeat while playing *The Sims* and drinking a vanilla latte (at least I will be). I hope everyone gets the books they are wishing for this holiday season!

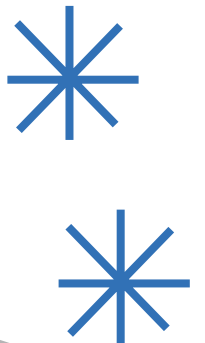
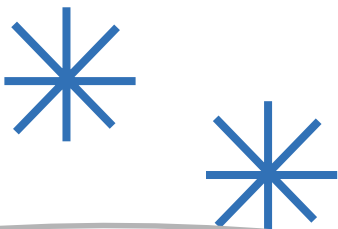
Sincerely,

Allie Blue



Editor

The English Aggie will see you next semester!



# Share Your Story!



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@Texas A&M English Department

Submit your story!

If you would like your short story, poetry, or student organization to be featured, email us at [englishaggiestories@gmail.com](mailto:englishaggiestories@gmail.com)

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Texas A&M Department of English  
Editor: Allie Blue '26



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Department of  
English