

# Academic & Creative Excellence Festival 2025

## Master Schedule and Participants

### Wednesday April 16

#### A Conversation with David Williams, author of *When the English Fall*

##### Faith and Meaning When Our World Falls Apart

Wednesday, 10:15-11:15 am, Lehman Auditorium

Rev. Dr. David Williams will read from his postapocalyptic novel from the perspective of an Amish family, followed by a conversation with Dr. Marti Greene Eads, professor of English, about keeping faith in a world of political instability and climate disasters, and about the role of the arts in making meaning.

Following this event, drop by the East Dining Room over lunch for additional, informal conversation with David Williams, from 11:30 am to 1 pm.

Find more information about David Williams on the [ACE Festival keynote speaker page](#).

2 Engage points available (for the event in Lehman Auditorium only).

### Thursday April 18

#### Pediatric Nursing Toy Display

Thursday, 8:30 am - 3:30 pm, Martin Chapel foyer

Students in the Nursing Care of Children course were assigned to design and build a toy for a specific age, utilizing easily accessible materials. The toy was to be designed with knowledge of the gross and fine motor skills, social skills and cognitive skills for an infant or child of the assigned age, and to engage each of these areas of development through play. In addition, safety considerations were to be incorporated in the design so that the toy poses no risks for the child; or if there are safety risks these are identified and risk mitigation guidance provided.

This is an informal display: no Engage passport stamps offered.

Presenter	Toy Project Title
Odesa Elezi	Mystery sensor box
Elijah Spicher	Busy board pediatric toy project
Abigail Foltz	Toy project for 9-month-old
Gabriella Seal	Nursing 325 toy project

## **Arts Club Exhibition**

**All day Thursday, University Commons 177 (Old Common Grounds)**

This exhibit will feature 2-D and 3-D works, made by students in the Arts Club.

This is an informal display: no Engage passport stamps offered.

## **Additional Displays**

**All day Thursday**

The following displays can be viewed throughout the day; for Engage credit, passports will be stamped ONLY during the related events in the schedule below.

Posters on display - Suter Science Center, upper and lower levels

Senior Art Exhibition in the M.M. Gehman Gallery (UC179)

EMU Authors' display (9:30 am-3:30 pm) - University Commons Hall of Nations

## **Navigating Research Ethics: An Introduction to the Institutional Review Board**

**Thursday, 8:45-10:00 am, Campus Center 226**

Curious about how research involving human participants is reviewed and approved? Join us for a presentation from EMU's Institutional Review Board (IRB), where we'll demystify the ethical principles and review process that ensure research at EMU is conducted with integrity and respect for participants. Whether you're a student, faculty member, or staff interested in research, this session will provide valuable insights into submitting proposals, obtaining approvals, and understanding the importance of ethical research practices.

Members of EMU's Institutional Review Board: Sara Halteman, Jenni Holsinger, Carol Hurst, Danny King, Hongtao Li, and Tim Seidel

1 Engage passport stamp available.

## Oral Presentation Session A

Thursday, 8:45-10:00 am

(Nursing session starts at 8:30 am)

1 Engage passport stamp available

<b>Honors Presentations: Spotlight on EMU</b> Moderator: Mark Sawin	<b>Campus Center 105 (Strite Conference Room)</b>
Anne Marie Cornelius	Promoting EMU: Marketing EMU to the students of tomorrow
Evan Kauffman	Collective Tapestries: visual stories of the EMU community
<b>Navigating Research Ethics: An Introduction to the Institutional Review Board</b> Moderator: Jenni Holsinger	<b>Campus Center 226</b>
	See description above.
<b>Environmental Research and Experience</b> Moderator: Doug Graber Neufeld	<b>Suter Science Center 104</b>
Sierra McVey	Florida Keys education and internship experience
Ethan Neufeld, William Bartel	Synthesis of (R,E,E)-alpha-farnesene oxide
Grace Eye Nick Arnold, Nate Lehman, Sierra McVey, Levi Myers	Composting survey and demonstration
<b>Engineering Projects</b> Moderator: Daniel King	<b>Suter Science Center 106</b>
Adam Hoover, Mariana Acosta	Pedestrian bridge design for the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community
Adam Stoltzfus Laura Benner, Hellena Gebremedhin, Micaiah Landis, Canyon Penner, Lleyton Stutzman, Rebecca Tezazu	Eastern Mennonite University planetarium projector renovation and improvements
<b>Nursing: Caring for Needs of the Vulnerable</b> <b>Start at 8:30 am</b> Moderators: Kate Clark and Laura Yoder	<b>Martin Chapel</b>
Halie Mast Mary Kate Bomberger, Rachel Hermosillo, Jenna Weaver	A rock and a hard space: Barriers to escaping the cycle of homelessness
Mild Butsridoung ML Lormejuste, Floribella Mendoza, Yeana Park	The role of food pantries in serving limited English proficiency populations

## Coffee break

Thursday, 10:00-10:30 am

Campus Center Martin Greeting Hall

Suter Science Center upper level foyer

Stop by one of two locations for coffee and fellowship.  
(No Engage passport stamp available.)

## Oral Presentation Session B

Thursday, 10:30-11:45 am

1 Engage passport stamp available

<b>Danger and Dissent in/of Stories</b> Moderator: Heike Peckruhn	<b>Campus Center 105 (Strite Conference Room)</b>
Joyce Beachy	More or less human: The lure of technological innovations in Shelley's <i>Frankenstein</i> and Ishiguro's <i>Klara and the Sun</i>
Lydia Longacre	Feathers and Faith: Contrasting case-studies in fact and fiction
Miranda Beidler	Book bans target LGBTQ+ stories and sex
<b>Self Reflection and New Awareness: Toward Safe Spaces and the Healing of Harm</b> Moderator: Aundrea Smiley	<b>Campus Center 226</b>
Skylar Stevens Melly Davis, Arnayja Parker, Saniyah Smith	Who we are as educators? Reflective practice as identity formation
Jeremy Fuller	Apathy kills. . . but who cares: Peace and reconciliation through the lens of moral injury
<b>Research in Health Sciences</b> Moderators: Kris Schmidt and Hongtao Li	<b>Suter Science Center 106</b>
Angel Hines	Comparative analysis of FoMO and mental health as key drivers of substance use among college students
Ethan Neufeld	RNA-Seq meta-analysis of gene expression and exon usage of the <i>Caenorhabditis elegans</i> immune response
Kaden Schrock Bethel Abiy, Chidubem Ekoh, Hollyn Miller, Ethan Neufeld, Roumany Sefin	Can virtual Qigong exercise "Eight Pieces of Brocade" be effective as the in-person practice?
<b>Nursing: Trauma-informed Care</b> Moderator: Kate Clark and Laura Yoder	<b>Martin Chapel</b>
Jordan Kerr Liza Churchill, Daniela Espinoza, Aixa Warren	Trauma-informed Care

## Poster Session A

Thursday, 10:30-11:45 am

Suter Science Center upper level

1 Engage passport stamp available

Engineering Project Demonstration

Discovery Room (SSC101)

<b>Presenters and Co-Authors</b>	<b>Project Title</b>
Adam Stoltzfus Laura Benner, Hellena Gebremedhin, Micaiah Landis, Canyon Penner, Lleyton Stutzman, Rebecca Tezazu	Eastern Mennonite University planetarium projector renovation and improvements

Engineering Posters (and project demos)  
Suter Science Center room 103

Presenters and Co-Authors	Project Title
Mariana Acosta, Levi Stutzman	Bridging communities: Constructing a suspended footbridge in Eswatini
Zander Armstrong Nick Arnold, Renae Benner, Carter Cashin Benjamin Huyard	Bicycle power generator
Isaac Greenleaf Dylan Diener, Micah Mast, Noah Sanderson	Pancake printer
Adam Stoltzfus	Acoustic Tweezers: levitation through sound
Lleyton Stutzman Micaiah Landis, Adam Stoltzfus	Design and control of a low-cost inverted pendulum system
Levi Stutzman Ivan Betancourt, Myles Dixon, Ben Friesen Guhr, Sean Swartley	Low-cost small scale vertical axis wind turbine

Psychology Research Posters  
upper level west

Presenters and Co-Authors	Project Title
Amiah Carter Isabelle Fraher, Jayla Gray	Mindfulness and goal setting on stress among STEM students
Gracie Conner, Hayden Winston	How do parenting styles influence academic motivation?
Libbie Derstine Natalye Graham, Morgan Leslie, Alex Palizzi	The impact of athletic competition on stress and anxiety levels
Sarah Peak Iris Anderson, Daisy Hamsher	Emotional regulation, bullying, and mental health: Exploring the interplay and outcomes in college students
Sarah Peak Ella Brubaker, Dante Flowe, Joe Hatton Alaiyis Jasper	Transgression is in the eye of the voter: Understanding voter response to political candidate transgression
Samantha Simek Furtuna Abraha, Rebecca Nordseth	Does mindfulness meditation improve the cognitive function of memory?

Business and Leadership Posters  
Suter Science Center room 109

Presenters and Co-Authors	Project Title
Abenezer Abebe Yishake Abate, Adelyn Soriano	Sleep deprivation among college students
Furtuna Abraha Claire Koontz, Anisa Sharhabeel	Understanding the perception of spaces among commuter students
Damien Fisher Pierce Donnelly, Tyler Thompson	Physical activity and effects on student well-being
Emanuel Habte	Bravo Cleaning Services: finalized strategic blueprint
Ben Knutsson Ariam Addisu, Chris Polymeropoulos	The effects of energy drinks on physical activity
Levi Myers Isaac North-Sandel, Aidan Weaver	Strategic plan for Weaver's Floor Covering
Garrett Nyce Grant Leichty, Chris Polymeropoulos	Strategic plan for Richter Total office
Eli Ours Jean Betancourt, Isaac North-Sandel	Reimagining the EMU Core
Dimas Portillo Anne Cornelius, Tre Uzzle	Social Media's double edge sword on EMU athletes.
Josh Rudd Dalton Rocke, Erik Wilkinson	Determining the usage patterns of AI among EMU students.

## Music Department Student Recital

Thursday, 12:00-12:50 pm, Lehman Auditorium

Join the students of the EMU Music Department as they present a noon time concert for all to enjoy.

Program available at the event. 1 Engage passport stamp available

## Oral Presentation Session C

Thursday, 1:00-2:15 pm

1 Engage passport stamp available

Narratives of Understanding: History for Community Moderator: Martha Eads	Campus Center 105 (Strite Conference Room)
Ella Brubaker	Repatriation at Eastern Mennonite University: Learning from the past and seeking a collaborative future
Jason Dwyer	Power to the People: Reimagining the lens on American populism
Zoey Mongold	History of ecotourism and community involvement in West Virginia

<b>Creative Writing</b> Moderator: Chad Gusler	<b>Suter Science Center 104</b>
Joyce Beachy	Rescue
Alexis Lewis	Senior thesis: Love as Disgusting Bug
Keiry Martinez-Guevara	A Gladiolus Flower
<b>Understanding Settler Colonialism, and Reaching for a Better World</b> Moderator: Benjamin Bergey	<b>LA025 (Lehman Recital Hall)</b>
Sofia Garcia Pini Jacob Sankara, CatiAdele Slater, Getachew Temare	Settler coloniality in South Africa, Palestine, U.S. & Argentina
Reah Clymer	Liberation through song: Our musical creation of a better world (music lecture recital)

**Poster Session B**  
**Thursday, 1:00-2:15 pm**  
**Suter Science Center Lower Level**  
**1 Engage passport stamp available**

Biology and Environmental Science Independent Research Posters  
lower level concourse

<b>Presenters and Co-Authors</b>	<b>Project Title</b>
Ruth Abera	The effect of Zingerone on <i>Bactrocera jarvisi</i> (Diptera: Tephritidae)
Abigail Forrest Maria Longenecker, Elaine Miranda Perez, Marciella Shallomita	Knockdown of Cox6b (Complex IV) and ATPsyn $\beta$ L (Complex V) of the electron transport chain in Glutamate Neurons increases sleep and lifespan of <i>Drosophila</i>
Aja Laun Kai Peachy-Stoner, Ella Richer	Improved methods of eDNA detection of salamanders using probe-based qPCR analysis
Marciella Shallomita Abigail Forrest, Elaine Miranda Perez	Loss of the <i>Drosophila</i> serotonin transporter (sert) increases total sleep, disrupts daytime sleep, and provides starvation resistance

Advanced Human Physiology Posters  
lower level west

<b>Presenters and Co-Authors</b>	<b>Project Title</b>
Mina Adu-Newman, Cora Cozia	Reactive oxygen species (ROS) production in white blood cells (WBCs)
Logan Darrow Andrew Arledge, Maggie Groetsch	Effects of temperature, caffeine, and Escitalopram Oxalate on gastrocnemius muscle contraction of a <i>Lithobates Pipiens</i>
Gracianne Hall, Sierra McVey	Stress and sugar: How cortisol affects Hypoglycemia and glucose recovery in <i>Danio rerio</i> .

Luz Hernandez Rosario, Dulce Shenk Zeager	Capsaicin spice consumption on metabolic function: Cardiovascular and urinary measures
Christina Hilaire Taylor Daniel, Angelica Escano	The effects of regular exercise on cardiovascular health and cortisol levels in young adults
M Lashway, Ben Perkin	Effects of <i>D. stramonium</i> on <i>C. elegans</i> behavior and motility
Tiffany Lear, Hothiafa Abusamra	White blood cell count, subtypes, and resting heart rate: A comparison of athletes and non-athletes
Maria Longenecker Alex Belisle, Kate Stutzman	Physiological response to pain: Male and female pain tolerance under cold stress
Arianna McDonald Priscilla Asiedu, Kaitlynn Hammond	Anticipation vs. ambush: Investigating stress responses to expected and unexpected tasks
Trinity Washington, Andre Mills	Relationship of temperature and drugs effect on frog cardiac physiology

General Chemistry Posters  
lower level east

Presenters and Co-Authors	Project Title
Rin Akinotcho, Donovan Glymph	Is extra strength liquid gel Advil as good as advertised?
Ephrata Amare, Melissa Miller	How does the pH of a beverage affect ibuprofen dissolution?
Sebastian Clemente, Ricardo Fernández	Antioxidants in different Arizona drinks
Bennett de Tenley, Emily Donovan	Comparing the antioxidant capacity of store-bought vs farmer's market fruits
Dante Flowe, M. Lashway	FRAP analysis of O2 oxidation in CyanthOx antioxidant solution
Ryan Gimbel, Cole Jordan	Tylenol liquid-gel versus regular strength dissolution rates
Holand Girmay, Maryam Jaf	The difference in dissolution between a newly formulated drug and one past its expiration date.
Apekshya Karki, Isaac Miller	Race to relief: Which tablet dissolves faster-gel or firm tablet?
Maggie Mayhew, Abigail Fitzgerald	Melatonin dissolution showdown
Farah Mohammed, Sarkawt Hamad	Dissolving rates in chewable vs. effervescent Vitamin C tablets
Sophia Nguyen, Dulce Shenk Zeager	Effects of storage temperatures on dissolution rates of Advil tablets
Claire Reichenbach, Kai Peachey-Stoner	Comparing the antioxidant levels of energy drinks
Shayleigh Sims, Jade Davis	Green tea antioxidants levels among popular tea brands
Trinity Washington, Skylar Stevens	Comparing acetaminophen dissolution in soda-simulated and water solutions



Other Biology, Chemistry, and Education Class Posters  
lower level concourse

Presenters and Co-Authors	Project Title
Ruth Abera Bethel Abiy, Elaine Miranda Perez	Integrating genomic and Bioinformatics approaches to identify gene-drug interactions in pancreatic cancer
William Bartel	Exploring the particle in a box model with cyanine dyes
Belen Hernandez Rosario Angelica Escano, Jennifer Perera	Using transcriptomics to understand chronic infections in the Nematode <i>Caenorhabditis elegans</i>
Adesola Johnson, Catherina Krabill	Can the human podocyte be regenerated?
Elaine Miranda Perez Seungmin Cha, Whitney Showalter	Analysis of homemade kombucha.
Ethan Neufeld	Using applied genomics to understand lymphocyte function
Vian Ozic Karim Frazier, Aneisha Moore	Using applied genomics to better understand innate immunity in <i>C. elegans</i>
Shayleigh Sims	Transforming STEM education with universal design for learning

## EMU Authors' Reception and Award Presentation

**Thursday, 2:15-3:30 pm, University Commons  
Hall of Nations and Student Union**

Join us for a celebration of academic achievement at the 16th Annual EMU Authors Reception and Award Presentation! This event, hosted by the Provost's Office, is a special opportunity to honor the remarkable achievements of our university community. We'll be recognizing and celebrating:

- Winners of the Excellence in Teaching Awards
- Recipients of student academic awards
- EMU faculty, staff, and students who have published scholarly works in the past two years

The event will begin with a gathering in the Hall of Nations, featuring live music and refreshments. During the reception attendees will have an opportunity to meet our accomplished authors, browse their published works, and celebrate their incredible contributions to scholarship - followed by the formal program where we will highlight our award recipients.

1 Engage passport stamp available.

### Featured musician

Jaydon Harley, Saxophone

[List of featured publications](#)

## 2025 Faculty Authors

<b>Kirsten Eve Beachy</b>	Associate Professor of English Program Director - EMU Core Curriculum
<b>Benjamin Bergey</b>	Assistant Professor of Music
<b>Peter Bunton</b>	Adjunct Faculty, Leadership & Organizational Management
<b>Martha Green Eads</b>	Professor of English
<b>Paula Facci</b>	Assistant Professor of Peacebuilding Academic Program Director - Center for Justice & Peacebuilding
<b>Ryan Good</b>	Associate Professor of Urban Studies Program Director - Washington Community Scholars' Center
<b>Benjamin Guerrero</b>	Assistant Professor Music
<b>Jim Leaman</b>	Associate Professor of Business Program Director - Business and Leadership, undergrad and graduate
<b>Gaurav Pathania</b>	Assistant Professor of Sociology and Peacebuilding
<b>Heike Peckruhn</b>	Associate Professor of Religious Studies
<b>Mark Sawin</b>	Professor of History Program Director - History & Political Science, Honors Program
<b>Timothy Seidel</b>	Associate Professor of Community & International Development
<b>Ron Shultz</b>	Associate Professor of Elementary Education
<b>Andrew Suderman</b>	Affiliate Associate Professor of Theology and Religion
<b>Paul Yoder</b>	Associate Professor of Education Program Director - Graduate Teacher Education
<b>Mary Ann Zehr</b>	Assistant Professor of Rhetoric & Composition Program Director - Writing and Communication

## 2025 Student Authors

**Nataly Almendarez Funez** - First-year Writing Award winner  
**Luke Buckwalter** – First-year Writing Award, second place  
**Leah Blough** – First-year Writing Award, third place

## EMU Phoenix 2024 Authors and Artists

Contributors to the Phoenix, Edited by Alexis Lewis  
Photo Editors Alexis Lewis and Cassidy Walker

## Oral Presentation Session D

Thursday, 3:30-5 pm

1 Engage passport stamp available

<b>Honors Presentations: Bots and Censorship</b>	<b>Campus Center 105 (Strite Conference Room)</b>
Moderator: Mark Sawin	
Mariana Acosta	Using Python and math to build a Wordle Bot
Adesola Johnson	Exploring the effects of censorship on student learning

<b>Exploring Issues of Injustice Around the World</b> Moderator: Timothy Seidel	<b>Campus Center 226</b>
Réka Bordás-Simon, Mukarabe Makinto-Inandava	Conservation or colonization? Unpacking NGO influence in Hawai'i and Mozambique
Diego Crespo Guido Hannah Gilman, Leslie Meija	Imperialism and resource exploitation in Central Africa, the Middle East, and Central America
<b>Challenges and Hope in the World of Nursing</b> Moderators: Kate Clark and Laura Yoder	<b>Martin Chapel</b>
Lydia Lee Taylor Chandler, Trinity Price	Impacts of nursing shortages
Rachel Wheeler Ginny Miller, Ava Shenk	The art of Spinning Babies® and its impacts on pregnancy and birth outcomes

## Senior Art Exhibition Opening

**Thursday, 4-5 pm, M. M. Gehman Gallery (University Commons 179)**

This exhibition showcases the capstone projects of VACA Digital Media majors. During the opening reception in the Margaret Martin Gehman Gallery, visitors will hear each artist give a talk, followed by time for questions and comments. Refreshments will be provided. This exhibit will remain on display from April 17 through May 2.

1 Engage passport stamp available.

### Senior artists

Zack Furr  
Noussaiba Garti  
Oslyn Mejia Gomez