Greetings from the Department Chair

As you will notice in this latest edition of our newsletter, there is a lot happening in and beyond the classroom. Faculty continue to publish articles and books, as with Bob Schmuhl's biographical memoir of Father Ted, and Introduction to American Studies again has even more students enrolled. But we don't restrict learning to the classroom: class trips, summer internships, and study abroad enrich our majors' educational experience. We hope this newsletter provides a glimpse of all that.

Beyond the Classroom

The American Studies Club hosted its annual Meet and Greet with Faculty on August 29 at the Morris Inn Fireside Terrace. The American Studies Club hosts the event every year, but this year's event was larger than ever before. Many students came and went, and over 50 faculty and undergraduates spent the night discussing the major and enjoying the Morris Inn's delicious food. Current and prospective majors alike conversed about the American Studies major, the Gallivan Program, issues in American Studies, and life in general.

Professor Bob Schmuhl published his newest book, Fifty Years with Father Hesburgh: On and Off the Record, on August 25, 2016. In this "biographical memoir," Schmuhl chronicles the personal and professional relationship he developed with Fr. Hesburgh, drawing on decades of articles, interview notes, and taped conversations. The book has been warmly received, with praise from Ted Koppel, Condoleezza Rice, and Senator Joe Donnelly, among others.

The Department of American Studies encourages its students to participate in Notre Dame's study abroad programs, especially in East Anglia and Dublin, which offer American Studies courses. This fall, junior Tessa Bangs is studying abroad at the University of East Anglia (pictured above). Bangs recently reflected on her experience, noting, "It's fascinating to study America from an international perspective alongside similarly fraught cultural and political tensions in the current European and British landscapes."

Co-Sponsored Events this Semester

Sustainable Wisdom Conference, September 11-15
"We All We Got" Screening and Discussion, September 21
Mental Illness Awareness Week, September 30 - October 8
The Poet Laureate @ Notre Dame, Juan Felipe Herrera, October 5
"Framing Los Angeles 1960: Case Study House #22 and the Architecture of Whiteness," October 5
Staged Reading: "It Can't Happen Here," October 27
Professor Cummings took her "Catholics in America" class to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on campus for a tour with the rector of the Basilica, Fr. Peter Rocca, C.S.C. Students in the course are required to make use of University resources and study "holy spaces" on campus.

Professor Gurel took her "Islam and America" class to the Islamic Society of Michiana for a visit in September. The class will make another trip to the Islamic Society in December. After observing the Friday sermon, the class will meet with Imam Sirajuddin and community members for discussion.

Professor Coleman and her "American Wilderness" class traveled to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore for a day of hiking and exploration. The course focuses, in part, on how the idea of "wilderness" has developed across different locations and times.

Artist Ralph Helmick spoke to students in Professor Doss' "Public Art and Memory in America" class in September. Helmick has been involved in numerous public art projects across the country such as *Rara Avis* in Chicago's Midway Airport, *Jurisprudents* in St. Louis, and the Arthur Fiedler Memorial in Boston.

South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg joined Professor Schmuhl's "American Political and Media Culture" class for a discussion about his career in politics, his interactions across government agencies, and the 2016 election. Mayor Pete, who has been profiled in the *New York Times* and other national publications, shared his unique perspective on local and national politics and media.

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