

# Nomination Portfolio Teaching Excellence Award

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Brian Jay Corrigan



\*cover of my forthcoming book, *Playhouse Law in Shakespeare's World*, with new title superimposed



January 9, 2004

Dear Teaching Excellence Award Reviewers:

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to write a letter of nomination for Dr. Brian J. Corrigan, Professor of English, for the FY 2004 Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. I have known Dr. Corrigan since he joined the North Georgia College & State University faculty in 1990.

Dr. Corrigan has the well-earned reputation of outstanding classroom teacher and scholar. He is known across the campus for bringing enthusiasm, professionalism, dedication and expertise to his classes. Although he sets high standards for himself and for his students, he earns outstanding scores on student evaluations. These scores, documented in the portfolio, are, in part, because students sense that Brian truly cares, not just about his subject matter, but about them and their intellectual and personal growth. The letters in Dr. Corrigan's portfolio from colleagues and students, as well as his reflective statement on teaching and learning, paint an accurate picture of a teacher and scholar who gives of himself to his students, inside and outside the classroom, to contribute to their becoming all they can be while at NGCSU.

Dr. Corrigan is recognized by his colleagues for his outstanding contributions in the areas of teaching, scholarship and professional service. He was promoted to associate professor in 1995 and to professor in 2002.

During his career at North Georgia, Brian's teaching has always extended far beyond the classroom. For ten years, he coordinated the university's theatre program, directing more than fifty plays. He is responsible for the existence of North Georgia's student literary magazine, *Mountain Laurels*, and for ten years coordinated its publication. Brian co-founded and, for several years, sponsored Sigma Tau Delta, our English honor society. Other evidence of Dr. Corrigan's teaching-related service and scholarship are documented in his curriculum vitae.

Several years ago, when I was a faculty member in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, I had an opportunity to observe first-hand Brian Corrigan's dedication to NGCSU's theatre program and his desire to take advantage of teaching opportunities outside the classroom. At the time, my son, Jared, was a local high school student, very interested in the visual and performing arts. He was encouraged by his high school art teacher to volunteer to work on some of the behind-the-scenes aspects of the university's theatre projects. Jared contacted Dr. Corrigan and expressed his interest in helping. Brian took time from his very busy schedule to encourage Jared to become involved in that year's projects, and reached out to him to make sure he, as a high school student, felt

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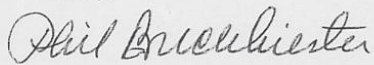
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welcome and comfortable working with and interacting with college students. It was clear that Brian saw my son's interest in theatre as a teaching opportunity outside the classroom and beyond the boundaries of the campus.

An integral part of North Georgia College & State University's mission is the delivery of a quality liberal arts program. I know of no faculty member who contributes more to this university goal than Dr. Corrigan. Because of his passion for his subject matter and for the liberal arts, in general, and his desire to help students reach their potential as individuals and as scholars, it is with great enthusiasm that I nominate Brian J. Corrigan for this year's teaching excellence award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Phil Buckhiester".

Phil Buckhiester  
Vice President for Academic Affairs



December 31, 2003

Dear Reviewers of Teaching Excellence Portfolios,

I write today to nominate **Dr. Brian Jay Corrigan, Professor of English** for a 2004 Board of Regents' Teaching Excellence Award. The term "teaching excellence" means a great deal to me. It means that a teacher can enter a classroom and effectively promote student learning. It means that a teacher enjoys uncommon respect from students and colleagues because he or she lives the life of a scholar-teacher who is always searching for the very best ways for all to learn. Furthermore, it means that a teacher continually demonstrates energy, wisdom, dedication, and determination. While these criteria are stringent ones, **Dr. Corrigan has met and exceeded every standard for teaching excellence** during his fourteen years of service as a faculty member in the Department of Language and Literature. The remainder of his portfolio provides more details about his many notable contributions, but I would like to briefly mention here some of the evidence I have been most impressed by during the seven years that Dr. Corrigan and I have worked together.

First, our English majors speak enthusiastically about Dr. Corrigan's knowledge of Renaissance Literature and his passion for sharing this knowledge with students. Although they may not have read all of the scholarly books and articles he has published, they benefit from his scholarship because of the knowledge he brings to the classroom and the scholarly life he models for them. Students in his composition classes respect him as well. While observing one of his first-year composition classes earlier this semester, I marveled at the rapport Dr. Corrigan had with these students. He allowed them to "turn the tables" by giving him a writing assignment during the class meeting that preceded this one, and they had asked him to write an essay that answered the question, "What do you like about NGCSU?" With care and diligence, Dr. Corrigan completed his homework by writing two drafts, one using an issue approach and one using a personal reflection approach. He brought copies of both essay drafts to this class and allowed the students to read them before responding.

He began the discussion of these drafts by talking through each draft paragraph-by-paragraph, providing a word or two about his strategies for each paragraph before pausing for student responses. At first, I saw the same sort of reticence I have observed when taking my own work into a class and asking students to critique it. Most assume that a writing professor's work is already exceptional and therefore not subject to criticism by students. Nevertheless, a few students entered the early part of this discussion, commenting on the structure, strategies, style, and grammar of the first draft. What followed each response is what made this teaching moment shine. His thoughtful responses to students' comments showed his willingness to have his own work closely examined, questioned, even dissected; and his lack of defensiveness help to ease other students' fears about participating in this review. Professors who teach writing often talk to student writers about the importance of the revision stage of the writing process, but Dr. Corrigan went a step further by demonstrating for students exactly how this process

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Page 2

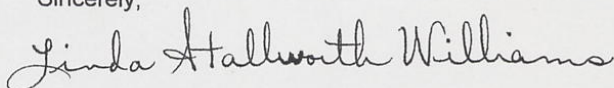
should work. I have taught writing for sixteen years and have tried many different methods for teaching students about revision, but none has worked as well as the approach I witnessed during this class meeting.

In addition to observing his teaching, I have reviewed student evaluations of his classes, and these evaluations are exemplary. For example, a student in an Irish and Celtic Myths class described it as "the best college course [she'd] ever taken." Students in a first-year composition class commented on this "professor's enthusiasm and ability," his "passion for what he does," and his ability to relate "this class to life." In another course, students said, "He really knows what he's talking about," he's "an awesome professor," and he "made literature interesting and fun." Perhaps the highest compliment comes from a student in Dr. Corrigan's World Drama class who said, "I learned to think for myself."

Dr. Corrigan is a master "teacher of teachers" as well. Because of his strong teaching ethos, both junior and senior faculty members seek his advice, and they value his judgments when curricular matters are discussed. One vivid example of his contributions to colleagues is a Teaching Circle presentation Dr. Corrigan made about two years ago. Our English faculty had decided to adopt a new anthology for our first-year composition II course. The new anthology included *Othello*, a play not included in the previous anthology, so Dr. Corrigan shared with us a number of useful strategies for teaching this play. Every time I have taught *Othello* since that Teaching Circle, I have used the notes from his presentation and the detailed handouts he provided. In this way, he contributes every semester to the learning of students in a number of composition classes at NGCSU. When complete, the CD-Rom project he is currently directing, *The Compendium of Renaissance Drama*, will contribute to the learning of students, scholars, and teachers around the world.

For many reasons, then, Dr. Corrigan deserves the recognition that accompanies a Board of Regents' Teaching Excellence Award, and I recommend him with great enthusiasm. Please contact me if you would like any additional details about his outstanding record.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Stallworth Williams".

Linda Stallworth Williams, Ph.D.  
Department Head (Acting) and Associate Professor of English



January 4, 2003

To Whom It May Concern

Letter of endorsement for Dr. Brian Corrigan,  
nominee for the BOR Teaching Excellence Award

Dear Members of the Award Committee:

Dr. Corrigan is the senior faculty member of the English faculty at North Georgia College & State University, now in his fourteenth year of service to the University. In my role as department head from 2000 to 2003 (and now as his colleague), I have had a unique vantage point from which to observe his teaching. Dr. Corrigan is not just a knowledgeable and dedicated professor, but indeed a consummate teacher. His scholarship and his service, remarkable in themselves, have always enhanced his teaching and earned him the respect of his students (documented in unusually high numerical evaluations and complimentary written comments) as well as his colleagues (evidenced in his nomination for this award and the supporting portfolio). In describing Dr. Corrigan's qualities as a teacher, I want to focus on his professionalism, his innovation, and his leadership as a teaching colleague.

Dr. Corrigan's professionalism is evident in the high yet always appropriate challenge he offers his students. He regularly invests his Composition classes and his surveys with the same enthusiasm and care as his upper-division classes in World Drama, Renaissance Literature, and Shakespeare. Consistently receiving high marks from one's students over a period of many years is truly an accomplishment, the more so when these high marks are combined with comments about the intellectual challenge presented in the individual's classes. Yet Dr. Corrigan delivers such evaluations year after year. These evaluations speak both to his pedagogy and to his knowledge of the discipline. Compared to the rest of the department, Dr. Corrigan has consistently obtained one of the top averages in student evaluations. In the last three years--the only years of which I have records--he has ranked in the upper 15% of a large department. My yearly visits to his classes from 2000 to 2003 bore out the praise bestowed by the students: To participate in a Renaissance or Shakespeare class with Dr. Corrigan is to be in the presence of a master teacher. Dr. Corrigan wears his scholarship lightly, he does not intimidate his students, yet manages to convey substantial information in a short time. When I observed him teaching Shakespeare in 2002, I was impressed with his manner of acquainting the students with the vicissitudes of Early Modern English, Shakespeare's idiom. Drawing on mnemotechnic devices, Dr. Corrigan cleared away the dust from the forbidding personal pronouns of Shakespeare's time and coaxed students into being excited rather than intimidated by the Bard's formidable power of expression. Dr. Corrigan's examples were stringent, logical, and evident. Throughout the class,

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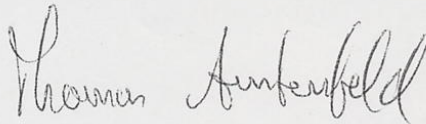
his attention to the staging of plays—and the authorial intention of production rather than silent reception—helped ease students' fears of the complexity of a language they perceive as alien.

Although a seasoned educator, Dr. Corrigan is nonetheless an innovative teacher. He has devoted several years of scholarly activity to the production of a major Renaissance-era research tool on CD-ROM, yet it is his use of this CD in the classroom that impresses me the most. Students may learn about the London of Shakespeare's time both visually and haptically by employing the electronic tool furnished by Dr. Corrigan. All those who participate in an upper-division class taught by Dr. Corrigan experience the CD; in addition, several students used it to fashion their Honors Day presentation in April of 2003, bringing their classroom—and with it Dr. Corrigan's tutelage—to a larger audience. About three semesters ago, Dr. Corrigan taught a specially designed class on "Shakespeare in Love" in electronic cooperation with a colleague and students from Rowan University, giving our NGCSU students additional opportunities to discuss and learn in conjunction with peers from a major institution in the Northeast. In his use of electronic resources, Dr. Corrigan is a model of innovative teaching.

In a University that boasts many outstanding teachers, Dr. Corrigan is further distinguished by the collegial manner in which he contributes to the overall teaching atmosphere in the department, thus fulfilling an important leadership role. When he served as director of the North Georgia College Theatre Project until 1999, Dr. Corrigan used the theatre as a teaching lab. In the spring of 2003, Dr. Corrigan compiled and submitted a report to the BOR Office of International Studies in which he documented the high degree of internationalization achieved in the department's curriculum by highlighting the teaching efforts of his colleagues, both in English and in the foreign languages. His effective presentation of his own and his colleagues' work earned the department the honor of being cited as one of "Most Internationalized Units" in the University System and a substantial cash award. In departmental faculty meetings, particularly in matters of composition, Dr. Corrigan unfailingly helps to steer and focus discussions and projects towards the eventual goal of improving the learning of all students entrusted to our care.

By virtue of his professionalism, innovation, and collegial support as a teacher, Dr. Corrigan is truly a worthy nominee for the BOR Excellence in Teaching Award.

Respectfully,



Thomas Austenfeld, Ph.D.  
Professor of Language and Literature

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J. ALVIN WILBANKS  
SUPERINTENDENT

DONALD W. NUTT  
Principal

19 December 2003

To Members of the Excellence in Teaching Committee:

Putting down into words and bringing to life on paper what Dr. Brian Jay Corrigan means to me will be no simple task but one which I am extremely honored to write. He is, without question, an extraordinary professor who is an exemplary role model both in and out of the classroom. I only hope that my words here will do justice to a man I consider to be the embodiment of excellence in teaching.

I met Dr. Corrigan when I began my Master's degree after nine years of teaching. Little did I know that my life and my teaching would never be the same after I walked into his classroom. My first vivid memory of Dr. Corrigan revolves around a comment he made on my first rough draft of a paper for him. Quite simply he wrote, "Let's talk about style." I was initially devastated. Yes, it had been ten years since I had last written a paper, but after all, I taught English, and I taught writing – surely I knew how to write. During my fifty-minute drive home, I cried! Once I got home, and looked up what "style" included, however, I stopped crying and realized I had much to learn from this man, and from that pivotal moment on, he inspired me in ways too numerous for words. In short, Dr. Corrigan changed the way I approach my life and my teaching. He taught me that literature is not to be read in isolation but in the company of the music, art, and history of each literary period. He taught me the intricacies of truly understanding and appreciating literature and the craft of writing. He taught me what it means to love literature in a way that goes beyond mere words on the pages and into the very heart and soul of the reader. His impact was so great that today, in my classroom, I daily aspire to instill in my students this same love and appreciation for literature and writing. Now, after nineteen years of teaching, I can honestly say Dr. Corrigan is the one teacher who has made and continues to make a difference in my life. Through his encouragement and support, he allowed me to discover my untapped abilities. He taught me that a professor could be a friend as well as a teacher and a mentor, and, most importantly, that while what we teach is important, how we teach is much more crucial.

Several years later, when I found out I would be teaching Advanced Placement English, I called Dr. Corrigan in a panic. Once again my security blanket had been removed, and I was filled with questions: How could I teach this course? What would I teach? What should my expectations be? I felt I wasn't prepared to teach a college level course. Dr. Corrigan graciously invited me to his home, prepared a lovely meal, and patiently spent the entire afternoon helping, guiding, and advising me in the appropriate choices for my curriculum. His serenity in the face of my panic was like a soothing balm to the poison ivy of my fears, and once again he empowered me with his quiet confidence to anticipate with joy rather than fear the new teaching adventure I was

about to embark on. Dr. Corrigan made me realize that I was ready to teach this course. I left his home that day feeling a new sense of confidence and enthusiasm thanks to his patient guidance. I will remember that day as the one day that changed my view on the role a teacher can play in the life of a student.

Once I began teaching Advanced Placement English, I quickly discovered that my students constantly asked what, to many, is one of the most difficult questions asked by students regarding literature: "Why?" As one of his students, Dr. Corrigan always encouraged me to always ask why. Now, when my students ask the question of me, just as he applauded me for doing the same thing, I applaud them for daring to think and question. For new teachers and even veterans, facing this simple "why" can be daunting, but Dr. Corrigan taught me that opening the classroom for this interplay of ideas is what teaching is really about.

One of the additional joys of my association with Dr. Corrigan has been the pleasure of taking my students to several of his dramatic productions at North Georgia. I will never forget leaving a performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream when a student of mine, Greg Green, who really had no love for Shakespeare, said, "I never realized Shakespeare was so cool." I thought, "How many other people leaving Dr. Corrigan's productions have been moved to new heights of understanding and appreciating Shakespeare?" Yet his productions drew us into the performance, and when it was over, my students always were newly aware of the power of seeing Shakespeare rather than simply reading the words. What a gift to give to an audience! His productions moved my students into the comfort zone that Shakespeare is not to be feared but enjoyed and embraced. I now teach Shakespeare to my students as he taught me: not to simply look at the plays as words on a page, but as life lessons with characters much like the people of today. With this knowledge at hand, I can help guide my students' understanding of Shakespeare's plays in a more powerful and relevant way.

To his great credit, no matter how much e-mail my students and I send to him asking questions about Hamlet or King Lear, he is always patient and understanding and his answers help us explore new ground. He still, eight years after I finished my degree, is my teacher and my mentor. I know that I can count on him always to help. He makes me a better teacher and person for having known and worked with him. Often, in the back of my mind, I think, "What would Dr. Corrigan do? How would he approach this subject? What would he say?" Frankly, I am a better teacher because he made me aware of exactly what learning should and can be. He has my utmost respect for he is the quintessential professional.

His former students constantly reiterate the powerful impact he had on them in college and give him credit for their success in the teaching profession. Dr. Corrigan's teaching and research has been a two-way street with his students. He not only teaches students but also includes them and their work as part of his own growth as a teacher and scholar. Dr. Corrigan often sends teachers our way, and I am grateful for his intense loyalty to his students. I am so confident in Dr. Corrigan's judgment that I have hired three of his former students at Dacula High. One of those teachers is Dorie Hutfilz, a veteran teacher of seven years, a student of Dr. Corrigan's, and an actor in his plays had the following to say about Dr. Corrigan:

"Dr. Corrigan taught me what it means to be truly passionate. He made me excited about literature when I sat through his lectures, and he encouraged me to rise to the

occasion in both performing and learning. He influenced me most through his love of Shakespeare. I teach with such enthusiasm when I get the opportunity to share what I have learned and retell moments and lessons I learned while "growing up" in the theatre. If it had not been for him, I would have never believed I was talented enough to be an English teacher. He recognized my writing and my love for literature and encouraged me. Most importantly, he taught me to accept all the things about me that make me unique."

Philip Cate, the drama teacher and director here at Dacula High, said of Dr. Corrigan's influence in his life:

"Dr. Corrigan touched my life in all aspects from personal to professional. In our initial meeting as my college advisor, he helped me come to the understanding that I would only find happiness in a profession that I truly love. He not only led me to a career in education, but he helped place me in my first job. After taking me under his wing, he acted not only as my mentor, but also as a father figure. His example as a director is one that I attempt to emulate in each show. His performance in the classroom and presence as an intellectual is incomparable to any that I have ever experienced. Moreover, his model of a husband is one that I strive to follow in my marriage. Years after graduation, Dr. Corrigan is still available for information, advice, or just coffee. He gives his all to his job because he lives and teaches by example and he too knows that you can only find happiness in a profession that you truly love."

Dr. Kelly Leach Cate, another former student/performer of Dr. Corrigan's, recalls the profound impact he had on her:

"I only had the opportunity to be in one class taught by Dr. Corrigan; however, he is one of the most influential persons in my life. He has encouraged me to pursue my intellectual as well as my creative passions, and I strongly believe his devotion to teaching and mentoring helped me to achieve the majority of my life goals. He is always open to assisting and advising students, and he has set a flawless example intellectually, ethically, and creatively. He is the embodiment of teaching excellence, as evidenced in his life-changing and life-long impact he had on my life, having only been my teacher for one quarter."

I can think of no greater honor than to recognize Dr. Brian Jay Corrigan for his excellence in teaching. His love of learning permeates everyone he comes in contact with, both personally and professionally. He is an amazing teacher, scholar, mentor, and friend--- and when a student can call a professor a friend, that person is extraordinary in every sense of the word. I consider Brian Corrigan my friend, and I feel so fortunate to have had my professional life touched and impacted by such an incredible, caring man.

Sincerely,

*Jamie W. Lovett*

Jamie W. Lovett  
English Department Chairperson, Dacula High School

Carol Malcolm  
152 Cloudland Rd. S.  
Dahlonega, GA 30533  
January 6, 2004

Teaching Excellence Committee

Dear Teaching Excellence Committee:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Brian Corrigan for the Excellence in Teaching Award. I have known Dr. Corrigan for over four years, and have been in four of his classes.

My first classroom experience with Dr. Corrigan was an undergraduate Special Topics course on The Mystery Novel. The class was conducted as a seminar with student-led discussions. For many in the class, this was the first experience of this type of course, and the confidence-building aspect of the format quickly became evident. With Dr. Corrigan's guidance, students learned to articulate their thoughts and to do so without apprehension of what the reaction from the rest of the class might be. In addition to the innovative design and format of the course, the content was original and unique. This class remains at the top of my "favorites" list.

Dr. Corrigan's Shakespeare course will forever hold a special place in my college experience: the knowledge, enthusiasm, and humor he brought to the course were both impressive and infectious. A lifelong fan of Shakespeare previous to the class, I reveled in the chance to learn so much from someone who truly loved the material and was an expert in the field.

The next course I took with Dr. Corrigan was not a requirement for me; I took it simply to be in his classroom again. This undergraduate survey course was also conducted with the expectation of significant student participation, a somewhat unusual approach for a course at this level.

Finally, I most recently took Dr. Corrigan's Renaissance Literature course at the graduate level. The class was conducted as a combination of seminar and lecture, a very effective format for the material. Students were encouraged and expected to lead class discussions. This course made extensive use of The Compendium of Renaissance Drama, a CD-ROM program developed and designed by Dr. Corrigan that contains significant contributions from students in a previous course entitled Shakespeare in Love. Believing that research and learning are interactive and organic, Dr. Corrigan teaches his students and at the same time learns from them, using the classroom experience to enhance both his research and future instruction.

Aside from a wealth of literary content, a lesson I learned from Dr. Corrigan is that as a scholar, follow where your research leads you. In the very first class I had with him, I was distressed over a project that didn't seem to want to go in the direction I thought it should be headed. Dr. Corrigan pointed out to me that I should not worry but should just let the

research take me in the direction it was going. He was right, of course, and that piece of advice has been invaluable to me in all of the other courses I've had. Dr. Corrigan encourages students to ask for help at any time, whether if only to clarify a point or to discuss possible paper topics, and always answers email questions promptly.

Brian Corrigan is an excellent teacher, motivator, and scholar. His courses comprise a memorable portion of my college career, and I consider myself fortunate to have had the opportunity to be in his classes and to become acquainted with him. Brian Corrigan deserves this Excellence in Teaching Award in recognition of his dedication to his students and his field.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Malcolm". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Carol Malcolm

## REFLECTIVE STATEMENT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

*Only a world worth living is a world worth teaching.*

We are, all of us, tunnels from the past. We ramble through the present, it seems, focused only upon that future light ahead. But there is also light at the back of the tunnel. Teaching occurs at the intersection of that once and future light, and through it the present glows brightly.

Early in each freshman English class I ask students to answer what seems a simple question: why are you in college? Several times each semester I buttonhole a promising student and ask my own question: have you ever considered majoring in English? The usual response revolves around employment: *I want a good job*, or, *What job would an English major get me?* These are reasonable, practical responses, and I encourage them—but only so far. When the worth of education devolves solely into making human machines for a better work force, the final goal of life and learning is vanquished.

The final goal of life and learning is to achieve personal and interpersonal satisfaction. The final goal of education might best be termed humane contentment. It is a contentment that springs from self-discovery, yes, but also from something far greater and more powerful: the development of self-discipline, personal and world philosophy, art, beauty, science, and the sweep of social history that, taken together, might fairly be called understanding. This is much more than the mere development of skill sets. It is the blossoming forth of the complete individual. In another world, at another time, this was called breeding the cultivated being.

To be fully self-aware and happy in oneself is to engage life. This is how I live. This is what I teach. The works of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, Middleton, Bacon, Montaigne, Da Vinci, Donne, Erasmus and the others merely provide an excellent vehicle for this lesson.

Ms. Kristi Ingram, a student of mine in one of my first British literature courses, asked whether writing was a talent we are born with or develop. I agonized over that question. Of course we must learn the skill sets of language, alphabet, vocabulary, spelling, and grammar, but the ability to place words on paper does not make one Charles Dickens or Jane Austen. There is a human alchemy that turns skill sets into pleasure, pleasure into drive, drive into genius. But where does that alchemy originate? From the realization of that answer, I discovered my philosophy of teaching: we are all born talented, but most of us forget or fail to nurture our talent.

Most anyone can instruct a child in the alphabet and how to read or spell, punctuate, and set ideas onto paper. Only a teacher can perform the wizardry that unlocks human talent. Through this revelation of ability flows humane contentment.

Through the years, I have explored with my students the role of talent in their lives. When the college needed a theatre program, I drew upon my former profession and began one. In ten years I directed over fifty plays. Teaching acting, directing, technical theatre, and playwriting proved little different from teaching Renaissance literature, Shakespeare, poetry, and essay writing. Designing and building hundreds of eighteenth-century costumes for *School for Scandal* or developing a lighting grid for *The Tempest* or rehearsing music for *Twelfth Night* allowed students the opportunity of self expression as surely as did writing a research paper or mastering

Spenserian verse. Through these activities they earned recognition and learned again to value hard work and discipline towards a goal.

Likewise, I founded and for a decade ran the college literary magazine, *Mountain Laurels*, with a view towards celebrating student creativity. Through it, scores of students have learned that they can indeed be published in a peer-reviewed journal. Moreover, dozens have learned the satisfaction of evaluating, editing, and publishing the works of others. They have learned that to be celebrated is a joy, but to celebrate others is equally fulfilling.

For this reason, I also co-founded and for over a decade sponsored Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honors society at NGCSU. STD not only recognizes and appreciates literature both classic and contemporary, it also celebrates student achievement. Six of our students have, through STD, been given the experience of competing in national writing contests and presenting their papers at national and regional conventions.

Additionally, I have sponsored students in four of the past five Honors Day presentations. Ms. Dannie Chalk presented a paper comparing Shakespeare's Cleopatra with Scarlet O'Hara, both strong women seeking to survive in an occupied land. Ms. Virginia Cook presented her findings on the Renaissance playhouse another year. Ms. Christine Taylor explored the early modern playing companies. Finally, Ms. Sarah Ballew led a panel examining why Shakespeare holds his place in English letters.

There have also been, under my sponsorship, nine poetry readings in the past seven years, five staged readings of plays and short stories, and five panel discussions—all developed and run by students. The poetry readings mostly evolved from the literary magazine, the readings from theatre, and the panel discussions from classes I have taught. The special-offerings classes I have developed in the Murder Mystery, Classical Greek and Roman Drama, Irish-Celtic Mythology, and a course called *Annotating Shakespeare in Love* have all concluded with open-forum student panels to discuss findings and make presentations.

Although generous administrators have often offered me release time to run the theatre program or literary magazine, or else to work on a book under contract, I have never taken release time. During the quarter system I often taught six and even seven courses in a term, and since semester conversion I have taught overloads five of twelve terms. I have always accepted summer course work and, where appropriate, independent study students. It is vital for a teacher to teach.

My own research is often in the direct service of my students. Whether it be in WebCT instruction or illustrative books and articles or my contributions to dictionaries and encyclopaedias, the aim is to increase both understanding and delight in my discipline. For the past ten years I have been engaged in a project I both devised and developed; I am currently editing a CD-ROM database of all known facts regarding the English Renaissance drama. Over eighty scholars in twelve countries have contributed to *The Compendium of Renaissance Drama*. This database has thousands of files, three complete dictionaries (one alone is 3.5 million words long), interactive maps, videos, graphic animations, timelines, finding lists, and the synopses of all 613 extant Renaissance English plays. I have used this CD-ROM database in all of my

Shakespeare and Renaissance courses even during its development, and from it students have created scores of presentations for both the classroom and campus-wide panels.

As I write this I am engaged in a community-and-college project. On the weekend of 13–15 February 2004, Dahlonega will host its first annual Literary Festival. I am on the planning committee and will be acting as liaison to the college. Students from freshman to graduate level will help organize and, along with literary professionals, participate. They will rub elbows with published writers, literary agents, and publishers. They will write and read from their own works. They will share their favorite published works, both contemporary and classic, in a day of readings, discussions, and literature-themed fun that will include dressing as authors and characters from literature and interacting with visitors on the town square—celebrating writing and living literature in a very real sense. I will also participate as judge in the statewide *O Georgia!* literary competition hosted by Humpus Bumpus Books of Cumming.

In every case, whether it be classroom-oriented, research-driven, or extra-curricular, the aim remains the same: focus the student upon personal growth, delight, and achievement and the lifelong lessons take care of themselves. The light at the end of the tunnel, and the light at the back, meet forever in the present.

## TRUNCATED CURRICULUM VITÆ

**BRIAN JAY CORRIGAN**, Professor, Department of Language and Literature, North Georgia College and State University Dahlonega, GA 30597 Phone: 706/864-1963

[bcorrigan@ngcsu.edu](mailto:bcorrigan@ngcsu.edu)

### EDUCATION:

- Ph.D. Tulane University (Renaissance Literature/World Drama) 1990.
- M.A. Tulane University (Renaissance Literature/World Drama) 1987.
- J.D. Tulane University School of Law (Legal History) 1986.
- B.A. with honors University of Missouri at Kansas City (English) 1983.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

- Professor, Renaissance Literature, North Georgia State University, awarded 2002.
- Associate Professor, Renaissance Literature, NGCSU, 1995-2001.
- Assistant Professor, Renaissance Literature, NGC, 1990-1995.
- Instructor, English, St. Edwards University, Austin, Texas, 1989-1990.

**COURSES TAUGHT (1989-present):** Freshman Composition I & II; British Literature Survey I & II; World Literature Survey I & II; Theatre History; Greek and Roman Drama\*; Eighteenth Century Drama\*; World Drama\*; Modern Drama\*; Introduction to Shakespeare; Shakespeare I: Histories/ Comedies\*; Shakespeare II: Tragedies/Romances\*; Renaissance Drama Exclusive of Shakespeare\*; English Renaissance Poetry\*; English Renaissance Prose\*; Annotating *Shakespeare in Love*\*; The Murder Mystery\*; Irish & Celtic Myth & Folklore\*; Creative Writing; Play Writing; Acting I & II; Technical Theatre; Theatre Design; Play Directing.

\*indicates a graduate or mixed graduate/undergraduate course

**COURSES DEVELOPED:** Theatre History, Greek and Roman Drama, World Drama, Introduction to Shakespeare, Shakespeare I, Shakespeare II, Renaissance Drama, Renaissance Prose, Renaissance Poetry, Annotating *Shakespeare in Love*, The Murder Mystery, Irish/Celtic Myth and Folklore, Creative Writing, Play Writing, Acting I, Acting II, Technical Theatre, Theatre Design, Play Directing.

**UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GUIDANCE** (1990–present): Average per year of 80 freshmen, 80 sophomores, and 40 upper-class students.

### PUBLICATIONS:

BOOKS, NOVELS, CHAPTERS AND COMPUTER DATABASES (selected from 8):

- The Moon Under Water*, Double award-winning novel, forthcoming from Thomas Dunne Books, division of St. Martin's Press in early 2005.
- The Compendium of Renaissance Drama*. General Editor. CD-ROM database.
- Playhouse Law in Shakespeare's World*. An examination of drama and law during the English Renaissance. Forthcoming from Fairleigh–Dickinson University Press in early 2004.
- The Misfortunes of Arthur: a critical, old-spelling edition*, Garland Press, 1992.  
An exploration of the 1588 play presented before Queen Elizabeth I.

ARTICLES (selected from 37):

- “The Repertory of the London Playhouse, Part I–V: A five-part series of articles for *Discoveries*, *South-Central Renaissance Conference News and Notes*. (Fall 2002—Fall 2004).
- “The Stagecraft of John Marston in *Antonio's Revenge*.” *Discoveries, South-Central Renaissance Conference News and Notes* 19:1 (Spring 2002) 5-8.
- “Of Dogges and Gulls: Sharp Dealing at the Swan (1597) . . . and Again at St.

Paul's (1606)." *Theatre Notebook* 55:3 (2001) 219-229.

"Middleton, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, and Crisis Literature." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 38:2 (Spring 1998) 281-295.

**CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION (selected from 10):**

Leader: *Using the Compendium of Renaissance Drama in the Classroom*. 31<sup>st</sup> annual Shakespeare Association of America workshop, Victoria, B.C., April 10–12, 2003.

Specially invited speaker, "Renaissance Stages." Symposium held at University of Georgia, Athens, March 28–29, 2003. Fran Teague, organizer.

Specially invited speaker, "Electronic Resources in Shakespearean Research." 30<sup>th</sup> annual International Shakespeare Conference, Stratford-upon-Avon, August 18–23, 2002. Leader: Jim Shaw, Librarian, Shakespeare Institute.

**GRANT ACTIVITY:** Wrote award grant that won the department recognition as one of the "Most Internationalized Units" in the Georgia system: (2003: \$2,000).

**REPRESENTATIVE LISTING OF SERVICE (selected from 20):**

Interim Department Head, Language and Literature, 2002.

Chair: Promotion and Tenure, 2000.

Chair: Departmental Hiring Committees, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2003.

NGCSU Graduation Marshal: 1997–present.

THEATRE: Designed, Directed, and Produced over fifty productions for NGCSU, 1990-1999.

Co-Founder/Advisor: Sigma Tau Delta English Honors Society, 1992-2002.

Co-Founder/Advisor: *Mountain Laurels* literary magazine, 1993-2002.

**HONORS AND AWARDS (SELECTED FROM 14):**

Josiah W. Bancroft Novel Award, first place, 2001.

Florida First Coast Writers Award, novel division, first place, 2001.

Cited as Outstanding Teacher by graduating seniors (Academic VP certificate), each year, often in each term, 1993–2003.

NGCSU Presidential Recognition of Outstanding Service, 2001.

NGCSU Recognition of Outstanding Service, 2000.

Who's Who Among America's Teachers, 1998.

President's Award for Outstanding Service, 1995.

Institutional Teaching Commendations, 1990-1991, 1993-1995, 1997-2003.

SGA Teaching Appreciation Recognition, 18 terms from 1990-2003.

Rookie of the Year Teaching Award, SGA, 1991.

**CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS:** International Shakespeare Conference, Shakespeare Association of America, Society for Theatre Research, Renaissance Society of America, Dramatists Guild (professional playwrights), Authors Guild (published novelists).

**EVIDENCE OF TEACHING SUCCESS**

**1. Success of the Students:**

CPR data on our English majors indicates a steady rise in majors from 75 in 1998 to 124 in 2003. We graduate on average 16 English students each year. Although the institution and department does not keep records of where our graduates go, I have kept up with many of my own students and can attest to their individual successes as follows:

- a) The following received advanced degrees or training and most have entered the teaching profession themselves: Ms. Holli Smith (1993 graduate/became teacher); Ms. Melissa Towner (1994 graduate); Ms. Deborah West (1994 graduate/became teacher); Ms. Linda

McFarland (1995 graduate/became teacher); Mr. John Alderman (1995 graduate/became teacher); Ms. Dorie Estes (1996 graduate/became teacher); Mr. Richard Church (1998 graduate); Ms. Andrea Connaro (1998 graduate); Mr. Philip Cate (1999 graduate/became teacher); Ms. Laurie Vaughn (1999 graduate/became teacher); Ms. Kristin Leonard (1999 graduate); Ms. Kelly Leach (2000 graduate/became teacher).

- b) The annual NGCSU English award, the Desmond Booth award, has been won by students who have taken more than three of my upper division courses every year since 1993.
- c) The annual freshman composition award, The Inman award, has been won by my freshman student twice in the four years it has been offered—including the inaugural award.
- d) Ms. Dannie Chalk (1999 graduate) was accepted into the MA program in English at University of Colorado at Boulder and will enroll in a Ph.D. program this year.
- e) Mr. Philip Cate (1999 graduate) directed *Of Mice and Men* at Atlanta's Seven Stages Theatre.
- f) Ms. Jamie Lovett (graduate student) is now Head of English at Dacula High School.
- g) Ms. Kimberly Kennedy (1999 graduate) is currently teaching English with the Peace Corps in Romania.
- h) Ms. Kimberly Hallyburton (1997 graduate) survived a debilitating stroke last year and is again teaching.
- i) Captain John Alderman (1995 graduate) has had several articles published in *Armor*, the national journal of the US Army Reserve Tank Corps, on the history of warfare.
- j) Mr. Richard Church (1998 graduate) has published many of his poems in literary journals both popular and underground in Georgia, New York, and Arizona. He also established a New York underground literary magazine, *In Other Words*, in 2000.
- k) Mr. Judson Wright (current student) has published his poetry in local magazines, including *Mountain Laurels*, and has had two of his one-act plays presented at The Holly Theatre, Dahlonega.

**2. Course Syllabus:** each syllabus is different depending upon individual class goals. The following format is an example of the methodologies I employ in all courses (incorporating in-class participation, oral presentation, written response, and researched writing and presentation):

**Course Title and Number:** Introduction to Shakespeare (ENGL 4435)

**Semester and Year:** Spring 2002

**Professor:** Brian Jay Corrigan

**Text:** *The Annotated Shakespeare*, W.W. Norton, 2001. (required)

*The Compendium of Renaissance Drama* CD-ROM database (loaded on the college system and available through login procedure given in class).

**Course Description:** The study of the dramatic and poetic work of William Shakespeare. This course includes detailed study of the language, style, and approach of Shakespeare in addition to the topography, architecture, history, art, and music of his world with an investigation into the modern archaeological discoveries of Renaissance London.

**Course Status:** Required of all English majors/minors and English Education majors.

**Prerequisite:** Successful completion of an English 2000-level course.

**Attendance and Participation:** This course requires your active attendance (that is, you must be prepared to participate) and your participation in discussions and presentations. The institution's 14% rule will be enforced as outlined in your Student Handbook. Besides, the class is fun.

**Goals:** This class will explore the comedy, history, tragedy, romance, and verse (both narrative poems and sonnets) covering the full range of Shakespeare's professional career *circa* 1591–1613.

- Through comedy will you learn what it is to be young.
- Through history will you learn respect.
- Through tragedy the importance of life.
- Through romance its joy, and
- Through verse its beauty.

**Objectives:** When you have finished this course you will be able to do the following:

- Classify the subgenres of Shakespearean and Renaissance drama and verse
- Understand the structure and meaning of early modern English
- Discuss how the Tudor Myth functions to manipulate history for political and social ends.
- Develop a timeline of early modern literature as it pertains to the life of Shakespeare.
- Say truthfully that where once there was perhaps only fear and loathing, there is now a genuine love for Shakespeare.

**Course Structure:** This course meets twice each week. On the first meeting of each week, the student will be given a speech from the assigned play and asked to respond to its significance (a handout, discussion, and demonstration on the first day of the course will describe fully what is expected in this exercise). This in-class examination will take 20 minutes. The remainder of the first day will be taken up in lecture wherein the student will discover the place of the play and the importance of its general structure, characters, background, and critical reception. Each second meeting of the week will begin with each student writing at least one question on the board before the start of class. The second meeting will revolve around your questions, your discussion, and your observations (a handout on the first day of the course will outline the type of question that will be appropriate and your responsibility to presenting and being prepared to discuss your question).

**Audiovisual Support:** The CD-ROM database, *The Compendium of Renaissance Drama*, is loaded into the classroom computer. Login information supplied on the first day of the course.

**Assignments:** The student will be required to write a midterm and final paper on one of the topics listed on the handout (or some other related topic with prior approval). The midterm will be in the form of an annotated bibliography or survey of criticism (both concepts to be covered on the first day of the course), and the final will be a paper relying upon the research done in compiling the midterm paper.

**Examinations:** Besides the weekly in-class responsive examinations, each student will sit for a midterm examination and a final. These tests will be in the form of essay and short-essay responses to quotations from the works studied.

**Grading:** The final grade will be calculated from the average of the two papers, two examinations, the aggregate grade of all in-class examinations along with your participation grade. These six grades will be averaged together for your final grade. Where letter grades are given they may be calculated as follows: A+=100 A=95 A-=92 B+=88 B=85 B-=82 and so forth. 90-100=A 80-89=B 70-79=C 60-69=D 0-59=F

Please note: A final average of 89.499 is still a B, but 89.5 will be rounded up to an A (and so forth).

**Makeup Examinations:** Allowed only with a valid and documented excuse for the absence or else with prior approval for a valid reason.

**Extra Help:** My office hours are posted both on this syllabus and on my office door (Dunlap 319-A). If those hours are inconvenient, you may set an appointment with me either after class or by telephone (x1963) or email ([bcorrigan@ngcsu.edu](mailto:bcorrigan@ngcsu.edu)). You may use my office library for research.

**Final Presentation:** The class will present a panel discussion in which the material of the course will be presented. You may invite friends, roommates, and family to watch. Pizza and soda reception to follow panel.

### 3. Evaluation of Student Performance and Grading

The foregoing syllabus is typical. There is no curve in any course I teach. Students are graded on their solid knowledge of the text, history, and critical reception as presented in class and outside reading. In my class C represents average work. The grade of B represents effort of a superior quality while an A represents excelling achievement.

### 4. Examinations

Examinations and papers are part of every course I teach. The lower-level courses have more and shorter papers to write (9-10 papers of approximately 2-3 pages, many with at least one evaluated draft before a final paper grade is given) while the upper-level classes have fewer and longer papers (2 or 3 papers of 8-15 pages) combined with more examinations. In every case, however, my classes focus upon making literature and written expression an integral part of students' lives. We focus upon a) logical reasoning; b) reading comprehension; c) analysis; d) evaluation of correspondences through a body of work; e) the history of ideas; and f) synthesis of ideas both written and spoken.

**5. Interaction with Students Inside the Classroom:** In freshman composition we discuss together outcomes and strategies; the needs of the student, the professor, the writer, and the reader are all discussed. In sophomore courses students have ample opportunity to make Powerpoint and oral presentations: British Literature requires graded student presentations over *Beowulf* and *The Faerie Queene*; World Literature requires the same over *The Odyssey* and *The Divine Comedy*. Upper division courses usually conclude with a panel presentation. In every case, the student is actively encouraged to teach, not merely present, the material we are exploring. By placing myself under their podium, my students come to view their professor as an active and interested learner, not merely the repository of facts that will turn up on a test some day. Through this form of interaction, we all learn to discover the text together.

**6. Interaction with Students Outside the Classroom:** I have organized international travel to London in order to introduce students to the milieu of British literature. As chairperson in some terms and member in others of the Curriculum Committee, I have assisted in dividing our majors into two tracks: Writing and Literature—better to meet the individual needs of our students. I have helped revise the academic calendar to allow an institutional meeting time each Tuesday and Thursday, allowing one and three quarter hours during the lunch hour to enhance opportunities to form clubs and societies.

For my freshman students, I set up each semester intramural mentoring and peer-review strategies that help them to help each other. Long ago I discovered that most writing and research takes place when the professor is simply not available—between 8:00 p.m. and midnight. It is therefore vital that students have the necessary skills to assist one another when I cannot. It is essential to teach good study and mentoring skills because most people learn better and faster when they are called upon to explain or even teach a subject.

I am faculty advisor to the Student Activities Board (SAB). In this capacity I bring a lifetime of theatrical background to the many events—cinema, study breaks, fall and spring festivals, concerts, cultural events, lectures—that the SAB sponsors every term.

Because I am a lawyer, published novelist and professional actor and director as well as a professor, students regularly seek my advice on entering these professions as well as the related professions: lawyer, editor, literary agent, screenwriter, and publisher. It is, I think, invaluable for students to have a resource with practical knowledge in their fields of interest.

#### **7. Student Evaluation of Instruction (2000–2003) (Selected, averaged, rounded, ordered):**

		<b>Fall 00 N=86</b>	<b>Spr 01 N=80</b>	<b>Su 01 N=32</b>	<b>Fall 01 N=86</b>	<b>Spr 02 N=91</b>	<b>Fall 02 N=110</b>	<b>Spr 03 N=86</b>	<b>3-yr Avg.</b>
Enthusiastic about his subject	Mean Med/SD	4.85 5.00	4.81 5.00	4.86 5.00	4.83 5.00	4.90 5.00	4.83 5.00	4.88 5.00	4.85
Knowledge of course content	Mean Med/SD	4.82 5.00	4.81 5.00	4.83 5.00	4.78 5.00	4.97 5.00	4.83 5.00	4.80 5.00	4.83
Makes good use of examples	Mean Med/SD	4.59 5.00	4.63 5.00	4.86 5.00	4.72 5.00	4.73 5.00	4.631 5.00	4.75 5.00	4.70
Encourages class participation	Mean Med/SD	4.77 5.00	4.46 5.00	4.39 5.00	4.75 5.00	4.57 5.00	4.57 5.00	4.78 5.00	4.61
Supplemental course materials	Mean Med/SD	4.55 5.00	4.49 5.00	4.80 5.00	4.54 5.00	4.77 5.00	4.53 5.00	4.65 5.00	4.60
Presentation of course material	Mean Med/SD	4.57 5.00	4.49 5.00	4.64 5.00	4.66 5.00	4.47 5.00	4.57 5.00	4.70 5.00	4.58
Interest in student's learning	Mean Med/SD	4.50 5.00	4.50 5.00	4.64 5.00	4.55 5.00	4.57 5.00	4.30 5.00	4.60 5.00	4.52
Clearly stated course objectives	Mean Med/SD	4.46 5.00	4.30 5.00	4.52 5.00	4.74 5.00	4.07 5.00	4.27 5.00	4.45 5.00	4.52
Helps students outside class	Mean Med/SD	4.75 5.00	4.39 5.00	4.1 5.00	4.66 5.00	4.56 5.00	4.40 5.00	4.43 5.00	4.46
Effective use of class time	Mean Med/SD	4.59 5.00	4.29 5.00	4.45 5.00	4.69 5.00	4.13 5.00	4.57 5.00	4.35 5.00	4.44
Amount learned in course	Mean Med/SD	4.55 5.00	4.1 5.00	4.42 5.00	4.56 5.00	4.43 5.00	4.20 5.00	4.58 5.00	4.40
Reasonable grading	Mean Med/SD	4.34 5.00	4.29 5.00	4.25 5.00	4.71 5.00	4.23 5.00	4.23 5.00	4.40 5.00	4.35

**SD= Standard Deviation; N= Number of Students responding to SOS/IAS questionnaire**

In my entire service at NGCSU my SOS and IAS evaluations have been extremely good. It is perhaps of interest to note that my lowest average (4.10) is well within the “very good” range. My lowest three-year average (4.35) reflects grading, indicative of the fact that these students are not awarding high marks to the professor because they received high grades; they are least satisfied with grades (though still attesting to the professor’s fairness—the averages remain high in the “very good” range). Eight of the twelve criteria (2/3) fall above the 4.5 (“excellent”) mark. Student comments regularly cite my enthusiasm and sense of humor as factors contributing to

their overall positive experience in my class. The most typical written comment I receive, and my favorite, may be paraphrased thus: “Dr. Corrigan is very hard, but he is also very fair. I learned a lot, but mainly learned how much more there is to learn.”

Students know that I enjoy their company, that I like them, but they also know we have important work to do and that I take that work seriously. This is always reflected in their evaluations of my teaching. I owe them my best not because they pay for instruction but because the discipline is valuable, it is worth knowing, and they are interested. I do them, myself, and the literature a disservice if I do not give them my best every day.

In addition, my faculty evaluations have always been very strong. My average over 14 years of administrative evaluation places me in the top 15% of the department. When one considers we have had between nine and eleven English faculty over those years, this average means that I am approximately number 1.5 in the department—this is a remarkable accomplishment when one considers that four different department heads have evaluated me over the years. I work with a group of talented, dedicated, collegial, and intelligent colleagues, and I am proud of them all. To be considered among the best in this exceptionally fine group of teachers is indeed gratifying.