

ENGLISH FACULTY

Brand, Ashlee

Associate Professor

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Department: English, Women and Gender Studies

Office Location: Westshore Campus, SLT 226F

Education: M.A. in English, Slippery Rock University
B.A. in Literature, Slippery Rock University
B.S. in Writing, Slippery Rock University
A.S. in Math/Science, Genesee Community College

About: Ashlee Brand began teaching at Tri-C's Metro Campus in 2006 and earned tenure in 2011. She currently teaches English and Women's & Gender Studies courses at the Westshore Campus. She holds a national credential in Effective Online Instruction and Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning through the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) and has been recognized for her teaching through multiple awards including Tri-C's Excellence in Teaching Award in Honor of Ralph M. Besse (2010), the NISOID Teaching Excellent Award (2011), and is a three-time nominee for the Ohio Association of Two-Year Colleges Teacher of the Year Award (2011, 2012, and 2023). She was recognized in 2016 as a Woman of Professional Excellence by the YWCA of Greater Cleveland. Her research interests include inclusive teaching practices, online and multimodal instruction, writing assessment, feminist pedagogy, and contemporary literature.

Chandra, Neeta

Associate Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 323R

Education: B.A., Osmania University, India
M.A., Osmania University, India
M.B.A., Cleveland State University
ACUE Credential in Effective College Instruction
ACUE Micro Credential in Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning
Completed 30 doctoral credit hours towards an EDD in Community College Leadership

About: Neeta Chandra has over 25 years of experience teaching English to high school, community college and undergraduate students. She is passionate about teaching and learning. It is her firm belief that education levels the playing field and is the one thing that cannot be taken away from the learner. She encourages equity and inclusion and strives to create a student centered, collaborative and inquisitive environment which leads to and fosters student success.

Cruickshank, Amy

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B219

Education: M.A. in English, John Carroll University
B.A. in English, John Carroll University

About: Amy Cruickshank began teaching at Tri-C in 2000. The courses she teaches include College Composition I and II, Honors College Composition I and Creative Writing. In addition to her work on multiple committees, she supports and participates in the Tri-C Honors Program and volunteers at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank as part of Tri-C's Helping Hands. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with her husband, son and dogs, cooking, reading and volunteering and the Cuyahoga County Animal Shelter.

DiGiampietro, Lorrie

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2109

Education: B.S., California State University
M.A., San Francisco State University

Draviam, Supriya

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2121

Education: B.Ed., English and Social Sciences, Osmania University, India
B.A., English with a minor in Psychology and Philosophy, Osmania University, India
M.A., English, Central University, India
M.S.S.A., Children, youth, and Families, Case Western Reserve University

About: Supriya Draviam enjoys her job and thrives by sharing her academic and life skills with her students. Although she primarily teaches English, she has taught Communications, Technical Writing, Women's Studies, and ESL. She uses English as a platform to discuss various topics and translates academic content to the context of life skills. As an educator, Draviam assists students in rising above self-imposed obstacles and succeeding academically. She encourages and guides students to achieve their lofty goals to become better citizens. Her mission is to improve herself in every aspect of her life and help others to improve themselves to make the community better each day.

Currently teaching English at the Eastern campus, Supriya is also the Coordinator for the English department and the Mentoring Coordinator for the Eastern campus.

Fabrizi, Rhonda

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 323-N

Education: M.A. in English, Louisiana State University
B.A. in English, Baldwin-Wallace College (now Baldwin-Wallace University)

About: Rhonda Fabrizi has worked as an assistant professor in the English department at Tri-C since 1999. Her academic areas of study and interest include reading, developmental education and the impact of trauma upon learning – the latter of which she developed into a 160-page tool kit for educators on her 2019-2020 PIL.

Fales, Valerie

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 323N

Education: Master's degree, John Carroll University
Bachelor's degree, John Carroll University
Associate degree, Lakeland Community College

Fuller, Sara

Associate Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Westshore Campus, SLT 226C

Education: Ph.D. (ABD) in Curriculum and Instruction: Educational Technology, Kent State University
M.A. in English, John Carroll University
B.A. in English, Xavier University

About: Sara Fuller taught seventh through 12th grade English before joining Tri-C in 2014 as an adjunct professor and in 2015 she became a full-time faculty member. She is currently the faculty development coordinator for the Westshore Campus and sits on the Common Reading Committee.

Her research interests are focused on culturally responsive and sustaining education, accessibility and educational technology, as well as online writing instruction. She enjoys teaching writing, African American literature, world literature, British literature and introduction to fiction courses. Outside of Tri-C, she sits on the board of directors for Family Nature Summits.

Gromek, Theresa

Assistant Professor

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Department: English, Humanities

Office Location: Westshore Campus, SLT 229A

Education: M.A. in English Literature, John Carroll University
B.A. in English and Communications, John Carroll University

About: Theresa Gromek grew up in a west-side suburb of Cleveland and migrated to the east side to attend John Carroll University. Graduating amidst a national recession, she decided to stick around for another degree, which led her to teaching. In addition to teaching at the Westshore Campus, she is heavily involved in the College's Common Reading program, Faculty Senate and the Mandel Scholars program.

Hall, Brian

Associate Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 101

Education: B.A., Mount Union College
M.A., Youngstown State University
M.F.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison

Heer, Sunita

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Department: English, Women and Gender Studies

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Education: B.A., Baldwin Wallace College
M.A., Cleveland State University

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Department: English, Women and Gender Studies

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2217

Education: B.A., Cleveland State University
M.A., Kent State University

Hnat, Margaret

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Department: English

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Education: B.A., California State University
M.A., Cleveland State University

Kanieski, George

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Education: B.S., John Carroll University
M.A., John Carroll University

Kazmier, Rachel

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B218

Education: B.A., California State University of Fullerton
M.A., California State University of Fullerton

Kriner, Bridget

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Department: English, Women and Gender Studies

Office Location: Westshore Campus, SLT 226A

Education: Ph.D., Urban Education, Cleveland State University
M.A., English, Cleveland State University
B.A., English, Cleveland State University
Graduate Certificate, Philosophy (Bioethics), Cleveland State University
Graduate Certificate, Urban Studies (Nonprofit Management), Cleveland State University
Graduate Certificate, Women's and Gender Studies, University of Toledo

About: Bridget Kriner is a professor who is passionate about community college teaching, as she began her college education at Lakeland Community College. She has been teaching at Tri-C since 2010 and earned tenure in 2022. Dr. Kriner teaches a variety of courses in the

disciplines of English and Women's & Gender Studies. Her recent scholarly publications have focused on feminist pedagogy in online classrooms, reading in academic disciplines, and placement in two-year colleges. She actively participates in NWSA (National Women's Studies Association), where she serves as the Community College Caucus Chair. In addition to her scholarly work, she is also an actively publishing poet whose work has appeared recently in Rattle, Thimble Literary Magazine, and Variant Literature. She is an alumna of the Tupelo Press 30/30 Project and the Sewanee Writer's Conference.

Laferty, Matt

Assistant Professor

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(216) 987-5587

Department: English, Humanities

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B218A

Education: M.A., Radford University

About: Matt Laferty teaches a broad range of composition, literature and humanities courses. He teaches often in the Mandel Scholars Academy. He has ongoing interests in art, travel, literature (both traditional and experimental) and in a broad spectrum of recorded popular music since the 1920s.

Lowell, Jeffrey

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B112

Education: B.A., Gettysburg College
M.A., The Ohio State University

Mericsko, Athena

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, B-139

Education: M.A. in English Literature, Cleveland State University
B.A. in Writing, University of Mount Union

About: Athena Mericsko always says the two best aspects of her job are that she's never been bored a day in her career, and every year, she has the opportunity to get to know about 200 more individuals through her classes.

Mericsko has been a proud full-time member of the English department since 2008. During that time, she has taught a variety of courses, from 0960 through upper-level literature classes. Each semester, she enjoys

seeing students connect with a variety of texts. She especially finds it gratifying when a student tells her that they were not initially excited about taking a particular course, but to their surprise, they were inspired by the readings and discussions.

Aside from teaching and grading, she also enjoys running in charity races with her family. Her favorite season is fall.

Milam, Lindsay

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 223Q

Education: M.A. in English Language and Literature, University of Toledo
B.A. in French and English, Baldwin Wallace University

About: Lindsay Milam has been teaching at the Metro Campus since 2004. Her main concentration as a student at the University of Toledo was on Ernest Hemingway, but Jane Austen, Langston Hughes, Edgar Allan Poe and Alice Walker also top her long list of favorite authors. She mostly teaches ENG-1010 and ENG-1020, the ALP (co-requisite with ENG-1010), American Literature II and Introduction to Drama.

Milam loves engaging students in the classroom and schedules as much time as she can in Metro's Studio 101. In 2019, she won the Excellence in Teaching Award in Honor of Ralph M. Besse. She serves on a number of committees, including the English Placement Committee and the Collegewide Green Team. She also volunteers once a month at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank with a group of Tri-C faculty. She lives in Willowick with her husband, teenage son Nathan and rescue dog Molly.

Morgenstein, Ben

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B223

Education: M.A. in English, University of Tennessee
B.A. in English and Psychology, University of Michigan

About: Benjamin Morgenstein started teaching as an adjunct in 1997, as a lecturer in 2002, and tenure-track in 2002 and enjoys class discussions (both in person and online) and helping students with writing. He was part of the Mandel Leadership Development program during the 2021-2022 academic year and was nominated three times for a Ralph M. Besse teaching award. Morgenstein coordinates the Western Campus Writing Center and sometimes fills in. Morgenstein finds one-on-one writing assistance gratifying and especially helpful for students.

His other activities at Tri-C include — or have included — being part of the Common Reading program (including presenting about the program in Fall 2022 for the Community College Humanities Association), the Gateway Courses committee and teaching honors and FYE classes. His academic interests include creating textbook-free courses using widely

available resources, visual analysis, contemporary drama and trauma-informed learning. He enjoys creating and listening to music and going to concerts.

Mullin, Jason

Associate Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus

Education: B.A., Cleveland State University
M.F.A., Cleveland State University

Neel, Paul

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, C215

Education: B.A., Towson University
M.A., Case Western Reserve University
Ph.D., Kent State University

Okocha, Christie

Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 223

Education: B.Ed., University of Ibadan, Nigeria
M.A., Cleveland State University
J.D., Cleveland Marshall College of Law

Panza, John

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2125

Education: M.A. in Creative Writing, University of Hull in England
M.A. in English Language and Literature, John Carroll University
B.A. in English Language and Literature, John Carroll University

About: John Panza has been a full-time professor at Tri-C since 2000 and has been with the College since 1997. He teaches courses in honors

composition, poetry and British literature. He currently serves as the honors coordinator at the Eastern Campus.

An academic and writer by trade, his creative outlet is music. He plays drums in multiple projects, owns a recording studio, produces albums for other bands and is president of a local music foundation. When not working or playing music, he enjoys spending time with his wife, daughter and their two cats.

Pegman, Andrew

Professor

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(216) 987-2360

Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2122

Education: Ed.D., Community College Leadership Program of the Roueche Graduate Center, National American University
M.A. in English, Cleveland State University
B.A. in English, John Carroll University
Post-Graduate Certificate in College Teaching: Kent State University
Executive Leadership Program: League for Innovation in the Community College
AACC Roueche Future Leaders Institute
Mandel Leadership Program

About: Andrew Pegman worked as a journalist before receiving his master's degree in English and earning a doctoral degree in Community College Leadership and a certificate in College Teaching.

Pegman is an award-winning outdoors writer whose stories reflect a lifelong passion for fishing, birding and exploring the wilderness. He has been a contributing writer for *National Geographic*, *Field and Stream*, *Outdoor Life*, *American Angler*, *The Drake*, *In-Fisherman*, *Kayak Angler*, *Paddling Magazine*, *The Plain Dealer*, *Outdoor News*, *The Ohio Cardinal* and many other publications. He is the author of *Outdoor Tales of Northeast Ohio*.

He was recognized nationally with a Distinguished Faculty Award in 2021 by the American Association of Community Colleges. Pegman also won the Excellence in Teaching Award in Honor of Ralph M. Besse.

In addition to his teaching duties, Pegman was the district director of Leadership, Enrichment and Development (LEAD) and served in many other leadership roles at Tri-C.

Piero, Michael

Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Westshore Campus, SLT 229B

Education: Ph.D. in English, Old Dominion University
M.A. in English, John Carroll University
B.A. in Secondary Education: AYA Integrated Language Arts, University of Akron

Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts, Tri-C

About: Mike Piero teaches courses in writing, literature, game studies and the humanities. He studies how popular cultural forms like video games, literature and film deploy dominant ideologies at the intersection of race, gender, sexuality, class and religion. He is author of *Video Game Chronotopes* and *Social Justice: Playing on the Threshold* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021) and is co-editor of *Being Dragonborn: Critical Essays on The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* (McFarland & Co., 2021). His academic work has appeared – or is forthcoming – in *The European Journal of American Culture*, *CEA Mid-Atlantic Review*, *Eludamos: Journal for Computer Game Culture*, *The Popular Culture Studies Journal*, *Transnational Literature*, *MediaTropes* and elsewhere. Piero's short fiction and poetry have appeared in *Moveable Type*, *Midway Journal*, *Oak Tree Journal* and *Impost: A Journal of Creative and Critical Work*. Learn more at mikepiero.org.

Rankins, Michelle

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2221

Education: B.A., Kent State University
M.A., Cleveland State University

Reyes, Suzanne

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 323P

Education: M.A. in English, John Carroll University
B.A. in English, John Carroll University

About: Suzanne Reyes has taught college English for over 30 years, beginning as a teaching assistant in her M.A. program at John Carroll University and as a full-time faculty member at another college for 17 years before joining Tri-C as an assistant professor in 2008. She has taught a range of composition, literature and business/technical writing subjects over the years. She has also served as the Metro Transitional Reading and Writing coordinator, Metro Honors Program coordinator and will serve as the Metro English coordinator beginning in the 2023-2024 academic year.

Rodriguez, Ryan

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B150

Education: M.F.A. in Creative Writing, Kent State University
M.A. in English, Iowa State University
B.A. in English, Hiram College

About: Ryan Rodriguez is a student and instructor of language arts. He has a background in environmental education, documentary film work and creative writing. He is married and the father of two children. He is passionate about teaching and forwarding conversations in the creative arts and humanities.

Schlueter, Luke

Associate Professor

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Department: English, Humanities

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B225

Education: Ph.D. in English, Kent State University
M.A. in English, University of Dallas
B.A. in English, Franciscan University of Steubenville

About: Luke Schlueter is an associate professor of English, specializing in literature, creative and academic writing and the humanities. He is the coordinator of the Honors Program at the Western Campus and is deeply involved with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Humanities Center at Tri-C.

Schlueter earned his Ph.D. in 2000 after writing his dissertation on the ecological and domestic visions of two contemporary American poets, Gary Snyder and Wendell Berry. He continues to present on these poets and others and is a published poet himself. In his teaching and speaking engagements, Schlueter addresses the role of the humanities in human existence and the importance of reading, writing and civil discourse for engaging with the most challenging problems facing individuals and societies in today's world.

Sierk, David

Assistant Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2218

Education: B.A., Cleveland State University
M.A., Cleveland State University

Skop, Jennifer

Associate Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, WLA B218E

Education: M.S. in English, Youngstown State University
Literature for Children and Young Adult Graduate Certificate, Youngstown State University
M.F.A. in Creative Writing, North Eastern Ohio MFA Program/Kent State University

About: Jennifer Skop has taught a full range of English courses over the last two decades of her career. Her specialties are developmental composition, creative writing and children and young adult literature. All of her courses emphasize critical and creative thinking.

She has served as a faculty advisor for Intersvarsity Christian Fellowship, the Creative Writing Club and *Breakwall*, Tri-C's literary journal.

Stansberry, Patrick

Assistant Professor

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Department: English, Humanities

Office Location: Metropolitan Campus, MLA 223E

Education: M.A. in English, Cleveland State University
B.A. in English and Anthropology, Cleveland State University

About: In 1999, fresh out of grad school and searching for his second career, Pat Stansberry came to the Tri-C Metro Campus to talk about teaching a class. He was in the classroom a week later. He mostly teaches English courses, from college composition to technical writing to literature, and sometimes teaches humanities classes for the Mandel Scholars Academy.

Between working on comma splices and sentence fragments, Stansberry also does a little writing. His short plays have been performed at the Ingenuity Festival and the Eight-by-Eight Festival of Short Plays. His writing has appeared in *Pivot Magazine*, *Whiskey Island Magazine*, *The Plain Dealer*, *Strange Horizons*, *Potomac* and *Daily Science Fiction*.

Mostly, though, he teaches in an office 10 feet away from where he sat for that first interview.

Coin-Sweeney, Casandra

Associate Professor

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Department: English

Office Location: Eastern Campus, ESS 2123

Education: Ph.D. candidate in Cleveland State University's Urban Education program, with a specialization in Adult, Continuing and Higher Education

M.A. in English, DePaul University

B.A. in Psychology, Cleveland State University

About: Casandra Sweeney's passion for teaching and learning is contagious. She enjoys learning with her students and seeing them grow into stronger academics and citizens. When she isn't working or studying,

she is co-chair of the Northeast Ohio Climate Reality Project and enjoys time outdoors with her family, practicing yoga and petting her many cats.

Williamson, Gayle

Associate Professor

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Department: English

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Education: B.A., Adrian College
M.F.A., Bowling Green State University

Wilson, Kenneth

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Education: B.S., Slippery Rock University
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Yates-Konzen, Kirsten

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Department: English

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Education: A.A., William Rainey Harper College
B.A., University of Iowa
M.A., University of Cincinnati

Zagata, Melissa

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Department: English

Office Location: Western Campus, B145

Education: M.A. in English, John Carroll University
B.A. in English, John Carroll University

About: Melissa Zagata joined the Tri-C English department as an adjunct in the fall of 1997 and then became a full-time faculty member in 1999. In addition to teaching college composition courses, she also enjoys teaching Introduction to Fiction, Creative Writing, and American Literature. She is currently on the Mandel Faculty Advisory Committee for Mandel Scholars and serves as a mentor to Honors Program Fellows.

She has also participated as a judge in the League for Innovation Literary Contest for the past few years. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family, running, and reading. Her favorite types of books are contemporary literary fiction and memoirs.

Zelevnik, Theresa

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