

"Juno was the wife of Jupiter and Queen of the Gods. Iris, The Goddess of the Rainbow, was her attendant and messenger." – Thomas Bulfinch

IRIS

HAPPENINGS IN THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AT CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **October 4 @9:30am:** Graduate Open House
- **October 9 @1pm:** Running Man Mural Ribbon Cutting
- **October 9 @5pm:** Banned Books Mocktail Party
- **October 15 @4:30pm:** Inaugural Faculty & Staff Auction
- **October 20:** Midterms
- **October 20 - 31:** Spring 2026 Academic Advising
- **October 22:** Winter Intersession Registration (25-26)
- **October 23 @11am:** Latina Identity Art Exhibit
- **October 26:** Undergraduate Open House (2 sessions: 9am-12pm or 1pm-4pm)
- **October 31:** Spring 26 Registration begins (for matriculated students)

FROM THE DEAN'S DESK

Dr. Gilbert Gigliotti

From This End of the Rainbow

Greetings from Frank J. DiLoreto Hall 303, the Office of the Dean of the Carol A. Ammon College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS)!

I'm the Interim Dean, and I'm thrilled that our office is resurrecting *Iris* for the first time in some 20 years. Named after the God of the Rainbow, this newsletter will bring you all the wonderful news about CLASS faculty and students, and how each day the College contributes to the many successes of Central Connecticut State University.

In my "Dean's Welcome" to family members of new majors in one of our many programs, I discuss how CLASS is central (pun intended) to the University's mission, and, in many ways, encapsulates what it means to be human. Our 15 departments, after all, focus on understanding who we are, and how we (inter)act, as individuals, thinkers, creators, and members of communities (big and small).

In our polarized world, exploring these aspects of the human experience seems all the more pressing, all the more essential. The other end of the rainbow may be a ways off, but each semester students and faculty alike continue the hard work, and the joy, of the journey.

Think of *Iris* as postcards from the road!



THIS MONTH'S SPOTLIGHTS

By: Olivia Tuohy and Emma Farrow



FACULTY: GLORIA EMEAGWALI

As a Professor of History since 1991, Gloria Emeagwali has an impressive resume of research projects, documentaries, and prestigious awards. Recently, Dr. Emeagwali has created an exceptional project, "Artificial Intelligence and African Studies". The project focused specifically on two chatbots - Deep Seek v. 3 and Chat GPT4 - to test their responses to issues related to science-based aspects of African Studies such as Indigenous African Mathematics and Architecture. Dr. Emeagwali studied the chatbots to determine if there was AI bias and hallucination in their coverage and which of the Large Language Models (LLMs) fared better. In her discovery, she noted that it was surprising to discover the wide range of coverage and capabilities of the chatbots in terms of their data base, but equally disturbing to realize their incompetence with respect to bibliographic references - due no doubt, to their dependence on anonymized data. Using the project's findings, Dr. Emeagwali put together a paper that she presented at the 54th Annual ISCS Conference that took place September 10th to 15th at Hallym University, Chuncheon in the Republic of Korea.

STUDENT: ASHLEY CARTER

Ashley Carter is a standout scholar simultaneously completing an accelerated B.A./M.A. in Psychological Science and a B.A. in Mathematics/Statistics, maintaining a near-perfect GPA across both demanding disciplines. As an NSF S-STEM scholar, Ashley expertly applies quantitative rigor to psychological research on emotional intelligence, resilience, and trauma in marginalized populations. Her research excellence has been recognized with a Psi Chi Undergraduate Research Grant for her study, "The Potential for Growth Following Adverse Childhood Experiences," and the Elihu Burritt Library Research Award for her study on emotional intelligence. Ashley is already sharing this work on a national stage, with first-author presentations at the American Psychological Association (APA) conference in Denver, CO and the Eastern Psychological Association (EPA) conference in New York City, NY. The recipient of top departmental awards for both research and service, Ashley is a promising researcher excited to have been selected for a highly competitive psychological science mentorship with Yale University to begin her path in applying to Ph.D. programs.



ALUMNA: EMMA FARROW

Emma Farrow graduated summa cum laude from Central Connecticut State University in May 2025, earning her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology with a minor in Psychological Science. Emma wrote her senior thesis, "Wounds of Inequality: The Intersectionality of Gendered Racism in Healthcare and Autonomy", on Black women's experiences of gendered racism in healthcare. Upon completing her thesis, she submitted it to Alpha Kappa Delta's (AKD), The International Sociology Honor Society, Undergraduate Student Paper Competition. Out of the 57 nationwide submissions, Emma's paper was awarded first place and recognized at the American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting in Chicago this past August. As an additional part of her award, her paper is being considered for publication in AKD's peer-reviewed journal *Sociological Inquiry*. Emma would like to thank her professors, Dr. Fiona Pearson and Dr. Ashley Green, and the entire Department of Sociology for their continued support. After graduating, Emma has started working as a University Assistant in the CLASS Dean's Office and as an Office Administrator for CSU-AAUP (the faculty union on campus), and she hopes to further her sociological education and research by pursuing a graduate degree.



DEPARTMENT: SOCIOLOGY

As a branch of the social sciences, sociology allows students to understand how we interact with each other, the impact of social norms, and the social factors that influence both our individual and collective experiences. Both students and professors in Central's Department of Sociology work to do exactly that.

Dr. Heather Rodriguez, the department's **new chair**, is particularly excited about some of the new things coming to the department. Perhaps one of the most exciting developments is the return of **study abroad courses** being offered by the department in collaboration with other departments and faculty. In January 2026, Professor John Mitrano will be joining a group of students and Professor Robbin Smith on a study abroad adventure in Bonaire, exploring the region's environmental challenges, focusing on environmental sociology. And, in May 2026, Professor Fiona Pearson will be joining a group of students and Professor Michael Bartone on a study abroad excursion in Norway, learning teachers' historical roles in social movements and protest during World War II.

Additionally, the department has an exciting course opportunity for students: SOC 490, **Community Internship**. Offered in the spring, the internship course allows students to immerse themselves in community-based organizations for course credit, often being offered employment at the organization upon completing their internship. This course is available for sociology majors and minors. The application for this course closes on Halloween- don't miss out! Students can contact Dr. Rodriguez with more questions (hrodriguez@ccsu.edu).

The Department of Sociology will also be hosting an art exhibit on **October 23 (11am to 3pm)** in the Latin American, Latino, Caribbean Center, which will feature art created by students enrolled in the Latina Identity & Empowerment course. The hope for this exhibit is to put together about 25 pieces related to the course content that make students feel recognized and welcomed on campus.

The new department chair is also excited to be hosting a "Drop-In Hour" for students to get assistance with graduate school applications and to ask any questions on **October 6 from 11am to 12pm**.

For more information on the department & faculty, go to our webpage: www.ccsu.edu/class

"As the new Department Chair, I am looking forward to strengthening our partnerships with community organizations and various departments across campus in a way that will provide meaningful and innovative opportunities for students and create solidarity."

**- Dr. Heather Rodriguez,
Department Chair & Professor**



scan to check
out the
department
online!



FOLLOW ON SOCIAL MEDIA:



@ccsusociology
@ccsu_sociology_club



CCSU Department
of Sociology





INTERESTED IN GIVING TO CLASS?

**TEXT 3300 TO 41444 OR
SCAN THIS QR CODE!**



Your donations support students' attendance to various conferences and events, fund scholarships, and supports classroom equipment needs. We are grateful for your support!

CLASS LIVING & LEARNING COMMUNITY

CREATING A FIRST YEAR: A SEMESTER OF CREATIVITY

Here at Central, each college is tasked with creating a living and learning community to bring together departments, students, and faculty. For CLASS, the community provides resident students with a dedicated space to explore their creative passions with others who share a desire to immerse themselves in the world of arts. The Living and Learning Community also prioritizes exchanging ideas with your peers while understanding the cultural significance of artistic expression.

This Month's Living and Learning Community Events:

- **October 13 from 4:30pm - 6:00pm** - The Button Lab: Design It, Wear It, Share It
 - **Where:** James Hall (3rd floor)
 - Express your voice, your style, or just something fun with the Art & Design Department
- **TBA** - Dean's Lunch



OCTOBER CLUB MEETINGS & EVENTS!

SGA Senate: October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

- **When:** 3:00pm to 4:00pm
- **Where:** RVAC Travelers Room (105)

United Caribbean Club: October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

- **When:** 6:30pm to 7:30pm
- **Where:** Africana Center (Marcus White)

Japanese Culture Club: October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

- **When:** 7:30pm to 9:00pm
- **Where:** CCSU AAPI Center

Political Science Club: October 6, 20

- **When:** 3:00pm to 4:00pm
- **Where:** Blue & White Room (Student Center)
- **Voter Registration Drive: October 9**
 - 3:00pm to 5:00pm

Africana Students Organization: October 6, 13, 20, 27

- **When:** 7:00pm to 9:00pm
- **Where:** Africana Center (Marcus White)
- **Annual Fashion Show Tryouts: October 28, 29, 30**
 - 7:00pm to 9:30pm

Black Student Union: October 7, 14, 21, 28

- **When:** 6:00pm to 7:00pm
- **Where:** Clock Tower Room (Student Ctr)

Criminal Justice Club: October 8, 22

- **When:** 3:15pm to 4:15pm
- **Where:** RVAC 209

Devils Den @10: October 2, 9, 16, 30

- **When:** 10:00pm to 12:00am
- **Where:** Student Center