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Four Students to Present Papers at Annual Literature Conference

March 14, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Four Illinois Wesleyan University students will present academic papers at the 16th annual Undergraduate Conference on English Language and Literature (ELL) at St. Francis University in Joliet, Ill. on March 16 and 17.

Over the last 16 years, more than 125 colleges and universities from across the nation have participated in the event. This year's ELL conference will feature 65 student paper presentations in 18 sessions, with topics ranging from medieval literature to post-colonial readings and literary theory, and a keynote address by poet Martin Espada.

First-year student Andrew Dorkin of Elk Grove, Ill. will present "The Divinity of Earthly Love in the Lais of Marie de France," which examines the new notion of romantic love that this collection of 12th-century short romances presented to French audiences of the time. Dorkin argues that the medieval author of the *lais* establishes and justifies this new kind of love by emphasizing its roots in Christianity.

Amanda ReCupido, a senior English writing major from Hoffman Estates, Ill., will present "The Fight to Stay Alive: *AVA* and the Creative Process." The paper explores how Carol Maso, the author of the novel *AVA*, uses an unusual writing style and structure to convey the fleeting thoughts and memories of a protagonist facing impending death.

Rachel Shulman, a senior English and history double major from Vernon Hills, Ill., will read "Resolution, or Lack Thereof, in *Twelfth Night*," arguing that one of Shakespeare's most popular comedies in fact lacks the harmonious, happy ending that a traditional comedy requires.

Rachel Slough, a senior English and Hispanic Studies double major from Charleston, Ill., will present an English translation of her Hispanic Studies Research Honors Project, "Traveling through Disenchantment: Manuel Vazquez Montalban's *The Southern Seas*." The project reveals how travel motifs in a popular Spanish detective series reveal the national frustration prevalent in Spain's Transition period, as the government moved from dictatorship to democracy in the late 20th century.

Because of her interest in literature written in Spanish, Slough is particularly looking forward to the conference keynote address by poet Martin Espada. Slough, who owns one of Espada's books, said that Sobeira LaTorre, assistant professor of Hispanic Studies at IWU, is teaching his works on campus this spring. An expert on the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, Espada has published 13 books as a poet, editor and translator and has won multiple awards and fellowships, most recently a 2006 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundational Fellowship.

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