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## From Dante to Hogwarts: IWU to host MUSE Undergraduate Literature Conference

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From Dante to Hogwarts: IWU to host MUSE Undergraduate Literature Conference  
September 27, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University will offer 35 students from 19 academic institutions the opportunity to present undergraduate work in literature during the third annual MUSE Undergraduate Literature Conference on Saturday, Oct. 6, with registration beginning at 8 a.m. and the first of three sessions to begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Center for Natural Science (CNS) (201 Beecher St., Bloomington).



Wendy Wall, chair of Northwestern University's Department of English, will deliver the keynote address titled "At Home with Shakespeare" at 12:30 p.m. in CNS E101.

The conference, which is free and open to the public, is sponsored by IWU's Alpha Eta Pi chapter of the international English honor society Sigma Tau Delta (STD) with the assistance of Illinois State University's Lambda Delta chapter of STD and IWU's Department of English.

Expanding significantly after its first two years, MUSE features students from IWU and ISU in addition to students from as near as Knox College and St. Francis University to as far away as the University of Pittsburg and the University of Montenegro.

Students will present works of literary analysis and criticism at MUSE that range from classic ("Stolen Rolls' and Different Souls: An Examination of Plato's Theory of Forms in the Lives of Levin and Oblonsky") to contemporary ("What's Wrong With Hogwarts?") to seemingly bizarre ("A Backward Glance' at The House of Mirth: How Future-consciousness is Necessary for the Creation of Fictional Memory").

The conference will also feature a panel devoted to post-graduation options for literature students, including information on professional and graduate school opportunities, as well as careers in education.

MUSE's guest speaker, noted Shakespearean Wendy Wall, received her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, specializing in early modern literature and culture. Her publications include *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance*, and *Staging Domesticity: Household Work and English Identity in Early Modern Drama*. Lecturing in conjunction with the Chicago Shakespeare Theater and the Newberry Library in Chicago, Wall has also served as a trustee of the Shakespeare Association of America. A display of Wall's works, coordinated by Sigma Tau Delta, will be available for viewing beginning Friday, Sept. 28 in The Ames Library (1 Ames Plaza, Bloomington).

IWU's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta was awarded the title "Outstanding Chapter" last year. In addition to organizing MUSE, the chapter has recently begun publishing "The Delta," a compilation of student essays examining literature, and has continued its tradition of hosting student and faculty research colloquia, bringing authors and literary critics to campus, coordinating book club discussions, holding a campus book drive, and promoting student participation in regional and national conferences.

Sigma Tau Delta was founded in 1924 at Dakota Wesleyan College by Judson Q. Owen, a 1913 graduate of Illinois Wesleyan. STD invites the membership of outstanding students of the English language in undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies. Illinois Wesleyan's Alpha Eta Pi chapter was founded in 1998, and currently has 14 active members. Co-Presidents Valerie Higgins and Jessica Wiley have high hopes that the chapter will continue to flourish with the induction of new members next semester.

For more information about MUSE, visit the MUSE Web site (<http://www.iwu.edu/~sigmatd/conference/>), contact Megan Ames at [muselitconf@gmail.com](mailto:muselitconf@gmail.com), or the English Department at (309) 556-3333. To learn more about Sigma Tau Delta, contact co-Presidents Valerie Higgins ([vhiggins@iwu.edu](mailto:vhiggins@iwu.edu)) or Jessica Wiley ([jwiley@iwu.edu](mailto:jwiley@iwu.edu)).

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