



learn which essential oils the bees prefer and to learn more about feeding behavior in general. Many beekeepers believe that honeybees are attracted to certain essential oils and that others might be important in keeping colonies and hives healthy. Students will present their findings at the 2017 undergraduate research symposium, as they did last year. One of last year's students, Hannah L. Smith, went on to a summer internship at Georgia Tech to help maintain their campus colonies and to continue researching the antibacterial characteristics of honey. As a side project, students learn to make lip balms, hand creams, etc., from hive products such as bee's wax and honey. They have also been making candles from the wax. "Our work is helping to educate students and the community about the importance of

# BIOLOGY

assisted by students in his Biology Directed Studies classes. [Dr. Thomas Hancock](#), assistant professor of Biology, recently began a study focused on the life history strategy of *Hydrocotyle bonariensis* (dune pennywort) at Fort Fisher State Recreation Area. Fort Fisher is a barrier island system located along the southeastern coast of North Carolina. Barrier islands are considered a physically controlled, harsh environment with blowing sand, high substrate temperatures, low nutrient availability, high sunlight, salt spray and salt water overwash via storm waves. Only a small, select suite of plants can tolerate this harsh environment.

To address a set of specific research questions, Hancock and his students established a series of five transects along a 12 kilometer stretch of Fort Fisher perpendicular to the shoreline. Along these transects, multiple random one-meter square samples were taken four times over the course of a year in each of four habitat areas. Hancock and his students collected *Hydrocotyle bonariensis* plants (roots, shoots, leaves and reproductive structures) for lab analysis.

Among many other things, they looked at whether *Hydrocotyle bonariensis* is an important component of the barrier beach environment at that specific location and to what extent they use asexual versus sexual reproduction in establishing and maintaining themselves there.

“A better understanding of native dune plant survival and adaptation to current conditions provides insights into how barrier island ecosystems might respond to future stresses such as development and climate change,” Hancock says.

Hancock presented results at the 2016 Botanical Society of America conference. His students presented results at the 2017 North Carolina Academy of Science annual meeting and are submitting findings to the *Journal of the NC Academy of Science*.

## BUSINESS

Psychologists call it “confirmation bias” when people are more likely to notice comments that confirm their beliefs and less

likely to notice contradictory information.

**Dr. Carol Springer Sargent**, associate professor of Accounting, develops learning materials that help both students and auditors to improve their ability to notice disconfirming data better, leading to more balanced judgments of overall audit evidence. “Learning to see both sides of an argument clearly helps to develop better thinking and judgments help improve decision-making,

not just in the auditing field,” says Sargent. Sargent’s micro cases teaching participants to tease out the confirming and disconfirming evidence translates into innovative teaching methods to help her MGA Accounting majors learn how to audit and improve the quality of their thinking.

Starting in 2017 the CPA exam includes business simulations, leading many students to try to complete the exam before those requirements begin. Sargent’s students need not rush as they have been completing business simulations in their senior level classes as a course routine. Much of her research developing business simulations and tracking how they improve downstream course performance has been published in *Issues in Accounting Education* and resulting in a national award for outstanding research in accounting

Sargent has coached four MGA teams in the statewide internal audit case competition, which have reached first, second and third places in different years. As a result of consistently placing, MGA was invited to serve on the Academic Relations Board of the Atlanta Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors and to apply for certification from the Internal Auditing Education Partnership program.

## ART

Artists and creators have always had to adapt to new technologies. But now, modern digital technologies threaten to turn original works into commodities by endlessly echoing and extending them through the hypersphere of the Internet. “We need to ask ourselves as artists what defines the nature of our work now that the digital image has become the standard, as we have moved away from hand-processed images and embraced software,” says **see Simmons**, assistant professor of Art.

With those challenges in mind, Simmons and other faculty members at MGA – **Shannon Riddle** and **Dr. Keith Hamon** – worked with Craig Coleman of Mercer University to install an interactive performance piece and present it at the

2017 Southern Humanities Conference. Using modern digital technology and a light show, the presentation explored the nature of the digital work as a hyperobject – a four-dimensional (4-D) object existing nowhere and accessible anywhere and everywhere – instead of as a physical object existing only in one place and time.

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er rst full-length manuscript of poems, *The Disappearing Act*, won the 2016 Adrienne Bond Award for Poetry. “The poems in this collection explore the role of memory in shaping one’s identity,” says Sara Pirkle Hughes, lecturer of English. “In particular, the title of the book refers to a recurring idea in the book that time is a magician, and every moment of life that passes pulls a disappearing act. In attempting to preserve these moments in poetry, I am trying to complete the illusion that time has begun: the reappearance after the disappearance.”

The book will be published by Mercer University Press in 2018. Hughes has other poetry published in national and international literary journals. Here is her poem “My Father Holding His

## BUSINESS

One of the current projects of [Dr. Simone T. A. Phipps](#), assistant professor of Management, examines the business of black beauty and whether it can be considered social entrepreneurship or a contributor to social injustice. “One of the pros of the black beauty industry is the creation of employment opportunities,” Phipps says. “One of the cons is the potential loss of identity as individuals try to conform to a standard of beauty that may be very different from who they naturally are.”

Phipps is examining the black beauty industry from a historical perspective by researching two of its early entrepreneurs, Annie Turnbo-Malone and Sarah Breedlove (Madame C.J. Walker). She has presented her research at the Academy of Management Annual Conference, and it is currently under review for journal publication.

## HEALTH SCIENCES

[William “Bill” Hervey](#), professor of Health Sciences, presented “Epidemiological criminology (Epicrim): A theoretical framework for domestic and global terrorism research and analysis” at the Society for Terrorism Research’s 10th annual international conference held at The Hague, Netherlands.

Epidemiological criminology is already being used by Hervey and others in several real-life projects, including interventions for youth gangs in a number of large cities, as well as for prison gangs. It is the subject of a number of books, including two for which Hervey has provided chapters.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

[Dr. Kevin Floyd](#), chair of the School of Information Technology and Master of Science in IT coordinator, is conducting quantitative research to examine the psychometric properties of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The results of the study will help identify what types of leadership are demonstrated in higher education. “This could help institutions to prepare appropriate leadership development or training programs for new administrators,” Floyd says. “It will also add to the existing research that has been conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the MLQ.”

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# MEDIA, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Examining metabolites – the end products of biological processes – is a core part of

have the roles of professional media and “citizen” journalists impacted the way some people perceive the Black Lives Matter movement? Dr. Andre Nicholson, assistant professor of New Media and Communications, said the movement began to raise awareness of patterns in law enforcement’s treatment of minorities but is now considered by many to be an anti-police group.

“The conversation has not addressed the actual role of media and citizen journalists in the portrayal of images we witness of police and their interaction with African-American men,” Nicholson says. “My research examines what role those issues play in the ongoing contentious relationship between law enforcement and African American men and in shaping perceptions of the movement.”

Nicholson is scheduled to present his findings this spring at the Popular Culture Association national conference.

“Norman Mailer: Works & Days” is a digital humanities project for Mailer scholars and literary critics. The first major initiative of Project Mailer, which is an ongoing initiative to promote the legacy of one of the 20th century’s most prolific writers, “Works & Days” assembles Mailer’s major primary and secondary works and events in a searchable, multimodal database. This project is co-written by J. Michael Lennon, Mailer’s official biographer, and built by [Dr. Gerald Lucas](#), professor of English.

“Not only is this project for Mailer scholars, it is publicly accessible, allowing for the students and enthusiasts an introduction to Mailer studies and a key component for research,” Lucas says.

Lucas has presented his work at the Norman Mailer Society annual conference. See “Works & Days” at <http://worksdays.projectmailer.net>.

## MEDIA, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

## PSYCHOLOGY

“Testing,” says [Cory Smith](#), Psychology lecturer, “is how we get insight into an individual’s behaviors, thoughts, intellect, achievement, and even competence.” His workbook, currently under development with Kendall-Hunt Publishing, will provide students with anecdotes and vignettes from his 10 years’ experience in psychological testing, as well as activities designed to assess their understanding of the concepts. “These stories bring concepts to life and offer students an opportunity to experience the field from an applied perspective,” he says.