

# Helping to Make Students Better Citizens

**Dr. Rachel Schneider**, associate teaching professor of English, has a passion to create a better tomorrow. Not only is she politically active in the community, but she is also politically active on campus. She wants to help students express themselves politically.

“Students can be responsible citizens, knowledgeable citizens who learn to advocate for their political positions and beliefs. I think the communication and writing skills we teach here are part of that work.”

In her current role as faculty advisor of College Democrats, a political organization for S&T students, Schneider offers mentorship, encouragement, and advisement, and sometimes attends executive board meetings and general meetings. She takes pride in seeing students engage on political issues and carry their enthusiasm beyond the campus.

“Students active in College Democrats at the campus level have become involved with the organization at the state level and even, in one case, the national level,” she said. “I certainly can’t take credit for their leadership skills, but I did what I could to support them.”

Through her encouragement, one S&T student in the College Democrats became active in the Associated Students of the University of Missouri, an organization that advocates on behalf of the 76,000 students of the UM System. The same student later became active in a state-level effort to bring ranked-choice voting to Missouri.

Schneider is committed to being a strong pillar of support for students as they navigate their way through school. “It can be very difficult to be a student here. The class work is very challenging. And students sometimes need support from people who are not just their teachers but mentors to try to encourage them to perform well. So I think I have been able to do some of that and certainly provide encouragement for them in terms of pursuing opportunities.”

Schneider earned a BA with distinction in English language and literature from the University of Virginia in 2005, an MA in English from The University of Texas at Austin in 2008, and a PhD in English from the same school in 2014. At S&T, she teaches classes on writing and research, graphic novels, and British Literature.

