

DR. SWENSON (LEFT) WITH DR. KATE SHEPPARD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, IN ITALY THIS PAST SUMMER.

letter from the chair

As I write this note, I remember that it will not reach its intended readers—you—for several months from now. Imagining the future is something that many great writers, from Thomas More to Margaret Atwood, have performed for us as a sort of magic trick to help us to contemplate not only the possibilities of our lives but how those are built upon our past and present.

Given recent history, so full of unpredicted and unpredictable surprises, I'm wary of speaking as if from the future. But let me say a few things about the present and recent past in the Humanities and Social Sciences building at Missouri S&T. 2022 has been an exciting and busy year for the English & Technical Communication Department, as the pages of *Panoply* will attest.

We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Ryan Cheek to our ranks, a specialist in political technical communication who has published work on political campaigns, superheroes and masculinity, and the rhetoric of the CDC's preparedness campaign. Dr. Cheek is an experienced and awarded university teacher who will contribute to our growing Speech and Media Studies focus in the department; he is offering a course in Video Design and Editing this spring, which I'm sure will be very popular.

Dr. Trent Brown published a new book, *Roadhouse Justice*, about a self-defense killing in 1950s Mississippi. Dr. Eric Bryan, our medievalist, was promoted to full professor in 2022, and Dr. Sarah Hercula, our linguistic specialist, received tenure and promotion.

Dr. Josselyn Larson, who specializes in composition pedagogy, has been named Director of Foundational Speech and Composition in the department, and has also moved over to the tenure-track in recognition of and in order to promote her scholarship.

And Dr. Thu Tran of the university's Intensive English Program has joined us on the top floor of HSS in order to contribute to our ESL program.

You'll see other faculty and student news in this edition of *Panoply*, including profiles of alums and current students, upcoming events in the department and on campus, and the teaching and research we're pursuing. We're excited to share all of this news with you and hope that you'll return the favor by sharing your news with us—via email or Facebook or LinkedIn or visits to the department. Let us hear from you!

Meanwhile, best wishes for a happy 2023, even if we can't quite predict what it will bring. In the words of the great science fiction writer, Ursula K. Le Guin, "The only thing that makes life possible is permanent, intolerable uncertainty: not knowing what comes next."

Dr. Kristine Swenson
Chair, English and Technical
Communication