



# DISCOVER

ETHICS, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY AT VITERBO

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## WELCOME

Welcome to *Discover*, a newsletter of the Ethics, Culture, and Society (ECAS) department at Viterbo University. Our interdisciplinary program of study combines courses in history, philosophy, and art, with an emphasis on collaborative problem-solving. Students in ECAS chart their own pathway and participate in service learning, internships, research, and study abroad. This issue of *Discover* highlights recent community engagement activities and travels of ECAS faculty and students.

ECAS DEPARTMENT  
NEWSLETTER

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# TRUTH, BEAUTY, AND GOODNESS

ECAS 100

Rooted in a commitment to doing "scholarship for social change," this course uses a case-study approach to explore historical and contemporary social issues.

On a recent walking field trip to Poage Park in South La Crosse, ECAS 100 students learned about the role of public art in recovering histories of marginalized peoples in our community. The statue depicts George Coleman Poage, the first African American to medal in the Olympic Games. Poage spent his formative years in La Crosse.



Photo: Jude Wagner, ECAS



# RESISTANCE AND RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

ECAS 305

South Africa stands witness to the power of social movements. In ECAS 305, students learn how South Africans have drawn on religion, music, and global justice movements to resist and rise from violence, epidemics, climate change, and economic inequities.

Professors Matthew Bersagel-Braleay and Erin Jerozal returned with V-Hawks to South Africa in May 2023 after a five-year pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These 15 students, pictured to the left and featured on the cover atop Table Mountain, now join the 50 VU alumni who have made the 9,000-mile journey to the "Rainbow Nation."



## PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

PHIL 244

Professor Jason Howard's Phil 244 course explores the philosophical views behind different theories and methods of education, and the value of philosophy for K-12 education.

Using the illustrated chapter guidebook *Xperiment* by Sharon Kaye, his students have been exploring an innovative philosophy curriculum with fourth and fifth graders at Hamilton Elementary School near the Viterbo campus. *Xperiment* introduces philosophies about human nature, civilization, and justice in the context of real-world situations.



Above: Gretchen Cortez displays her travel-inspired artwork.

## CULTURAL STUDIES ABROAD

SPAN 301

Faculty in the ECAS Department support study abroad programs and internship opportunities, facilitating students to experience other cultures from a broader perspective.

Gretchen Cortez, ECAS art major, visited Zamora, Spain, on a four-week Viterbo study abroad immersion program co-led by Professors Jesús Jambrina and Vickie Holtz-Wodzak. Besides honing her Spanish language skills and exploring her family's Hispanic ancestry, she sketched the natural surroundings of the city for a larger painting project on family, memory, and history.

# FIND YOUR INSPIRATION IN ECAS

## ARTS

Students from the ECAS Drawing Design and Painting classes visited Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison, Wis. in October 2023. While there, they spent time exploring the outdoor gardens and studying botanical life through drawing in Olbrich's Bolz Conservatory, a glass pyramid filled with exotic plants, a waterfall, fragrant orchids, and resident birds. Afterwards, the group moved on to take in the fine art at the Chazen Museum on the UW-Madison campus.

Right: Kira Peters, ECAS art education faculty, and Gretchen Cortez, ECAS art major, pose for the camera in the Olbrich Botanical Gardens Conservatory.



MORE ABOUT ECAS



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