

# *The Honors School Fall Research Conference 2009*

## *Annual Honors School Research Conference*

**Wilson Auditorium  
Wednesday, December 16th, 1:00 p.m.— 3:30 p.m.**

It is with great pleasure that The Honors School presents its  
Annual Research Conference

Student presenters include research in the fields of:

Anthropology  
Business Economics  
English

Art  
Business Finance  
History

Business Accounting  
Education  
Political Science

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### *Order of Events*

***1:00 p.m. Welcoming Remarks — Dr. William Mitchell  
Dean of The Honors School***

Ashley Hoppe (HP/ED)  
Christopher Covello (BUBE)  
Shane Moore (BUBF)  
Blair Fink (AN)

Lexah Coppotelli (EN)  
Jillian Morrow (BUBF/BUBA)  
Paul Mahajan (BUBF)  
Christina Sce (AR/ED)

**PRESENTERS**

**Ashley Hoppe**  
**Failing Our Democracy: Civic Education in New Jersey Schools**

**Chief Advisor: Dr. Laurel Chehayl**  
**Second Reader: Dr. Joseph Patten**

This project is an examination of civic literacy among recent high school graduates. The author administered surveys to college freshman designed to measure civic literacy. The survey was aligned to New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards to determine if the sample retained the information covered during a Kindergarten to Twelfth-Grade education in New Jersey. Using previous national studies in conjunction with this survey the level of civic education was determined to be below par. Finally, ways to remedy the deficiencies are examined.

**Lexah Coppotelli**  
**"The Marriage of True Minds:" Comprehension of Love in Shakespeare**

**Chief Advisor: Dr. Margaret Del Guercio**  
**Second Reader: Dr. Susan Starke**

Shakespeare's works illustrate the comprehensive love formed on the basis of intellectual and emotional compatibility as opposed to divinely ordained or merely sensual love. He critiques courtly the conventions of love and Platonism through satiric deconstruction in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In addition Shakespeare's romantic comedies to propose that love is a comprehensive process that develops through courtship, specifically illustrated in plays such as *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Comprehensive love illustrates the portrayal of a more rational method of contemplation that foreshadows the Enlightenment Era. This theory of love becomes the new ideal as it illustrates "the marriage of true minds" (1) that is proposed in *Sonnet 116*. It represents a less spiritual and fate-centered love which incorporates the realistic depiction of human complexity that allows the characters control in their own relationships and independent voices, especially for the female characters.

**Christopher M. Covello**  
**Professional Sports Stadiums and their Effect on the Local Economy**

**Chief Advisor: Dr. Patrick O'Halloran**  
**Second Reader: Dr. Karen Schmelzkopf**

The recent surge in the construction of new professional sports stadiums throughout the continental United States has sparked renewed interest in the economic costs and benefits, rekindling interest in researching the economic effect of placing these stadiums in particular locations. This thesis explores how a sports team uses its advantages to gain new amenities from a city without actually working to improve the economic situation of the city they represent. Although these stadiums have little economic impact which is often negative, there is a positive impact in that stadiums bring together the community, encouraging a sense of civic pride. Cost-benefit analysis reveals that these positive non-monetary impacts often outweigh the negative economic impacts. This benefit combined with the monopolistic position of teams in a city influence political decision, explaining why new stadium construction has risen over the past ten years.



**PRESENTERS (cont.)**

**Jillian Morrow**  
**Asset Misappropriation-Larceny, Skimming and Frequent Disimbursement**

**Chief Advisor: Prof. Ralph Evangelista**  
**Second Reader: Prof. Douglas Stives**

Employee theft and fraud is a significant problem for corporations and other firms. This thesis evaluates employee theft, focusing on larceny, skimming and fraudulent disbursement schemes. Furthermore solutions and precautions in evaluating these schemes are offered. This project is important because fraud is found everywhere. Multiple databases show fraud occurs in unexpected workplaces and businesses by various employees in numerous occupations. The American economy is changing and myriads of people are losing their jobs. Because of the recent changes in the economy, this study provides new information on the effects of fraud on firms and workers in the corporate world.

**Shane Moore**  
**Financial Statement Fraud: A look at managerial behavior behind white collar crimes**

**Chief Advisor: Dr. Nancy Uddin**  
**Second Reader: Prof. Douglas Stives**

This thesis examines the behavioral reasons why corporate managers commit financial statement fraud, focusing on the attitude/rationalization side of the fraud triangle. The fraud triangle theory states that motivation, opportunity and attitude/rationalization all need to exist in unison in order for fraud to occur. This paper first provides background information and statistics about the most common types of financial statement fraud schemes and the type of industries where fraud is most likely to occur. Sources will be used to prove that the main motivating factor behind financial statement fraud is behavioral, that attitude/rationalization is the most important aspect of the fraud triangle. This paper concludes with a case study of one of the most famous fraud scandals of modern times Enron. The paper thus provides insight on why this scandal occurred and offers advice on what the corporation could have done to avoid this scandal.

**Paul Mahajan**  
**Midas Touch: How stable is Gold?**

**Chief Advisor: Dr. Andreas Christofi**  
**Second Reader: Dr. Robert H. Scott III**

This research explores the financial return of gold over two business cycles (1990-2009) compared to the return of the S&P 500 and inflation. Utilizing this analysis, the paper examines the possibilities of gold both as a possible stable growth asset and as a value-adding asset during peroids of market volatility.

