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Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications and Moore, Mallory, "Students at Gardner-Webb Take on Month-Long Writing Challenge" (2017). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 479.

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Students at Gardner-Webb Take on Month-Long Writing Challenge

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Office of University
Communications

December 5, 2017

English Honors Society Hosted Writing Groups for National Novel Writing Month

By Mallory Moore '18, Intern for Communications

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—November is one of the busiest months for Gardner-Webb University students, filled with papers, projects, and deadlines. Some students added to their full schedule this year by participating in National Novel Writing Month.

NaNoWriMo logo

“NaNoWriMo,” as it is called, is an annual event that challenges people to write a 50,000-word novel in 30 days. To encourage Gardner-Webb students to try this creative challenge, the English honors society Sigma Tau Delta hosted a NaNoWriMo writing group that met twice a week.

Gardner-Webb students past and present have found that NaNoWriMo is a motivational challenge that helps them to finish a project which might have otherwise taken many months. Brianna Crump ('17), who studied creative writing at Gardner-Webb, was able to complete nine novels during her time in college, several of which were NaNoWriMo novels. Anna Francis ('18), also an English major, enjoys the chance to focus on writing. “NaNoWriMo is a structured time to work on our writing and collaborate with each other on ideas,” she stated. “Sigma Tau Delta did a great job of setting up a time for us to all meet and work together in a focused environment.”

Sigma Tau Delta has been sponsoring NaNoWriMo writing groups at Gardner-Webb each November for about six years. The faculty sponsor, Dr. Shea Stuart, provided snacks and books on writing to inspire students to meet their daily word goals and push through writers' block. “Students and others who participate write words they would not have written otherwise,” she explained. “The quasi-competitive nature of NaNoWriMo pushes students to make time to write and to get words on paper that wouldn't exist without that nudge.”

Anna Francis took the challenge of writing a 50,000-word novel during November.

A small event that began in 1999, NaNoWriMo became an official nonprofit organization in 2005. Participants can register on the official website and keep track of their word count, find useful planning tools, participate in forums with other writers, and receive

encouragement from staff and published authors. The challenge is open to everyone of any age and skill level, even those who have never tried to write a novel before. This year, NaNoWriMo expected to have about 400,000 participants. While some write for fun, others go on to revise, edit, and publish their books. Several well-known novels began as NaNoWriMo projects, including Sara Gruen's "Water for Elephants."

For more information on NaNoWriMo, visit nanowrimo.org.

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