

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

2026 INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CONFERENCE



Friday, April 17, 2026
11 AM - 3 PM

Livingston Student Center
Rutgers University - New Brunswick

Showcasing



**INTERDISCIPLINARY
HONORS THESES**



**INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH TEAMS**

For more information, please contact
honors@sas.rutgers.edu



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK
School of Arts and Sciences
Honors Advising

School of Arts and Sciences Interdisciplinary Research Conference

Friday, April 17, 2026
Livingston Student Center

MORNING SESSION

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Interdisciplinary Honors Theses: Panel A
LSC, Room 202BC

LUNCH BREAK

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

LSC Gathering Lounge

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

1:00 – 2:00 PM

Interdisciplinary Honors Theses: Panel B
LSC, Room 202BC

2:00 – 3:00 PM

Interdisciplinary Honors Theses: Panel C
LSC, Room 202BC

1:00 – 3:00 PM

Interdisciplinary Research Teams
LSC Collaborative Learning Center

Interdisciplinary Honors Theses
11 AM – 12 PM

Panel A: Mechanisms, Models, and Interdisciplinary Inquiry | Chair: Kathleen Sadowsky, Assistant Dean, SAS Honors Advising

Shikha Agarwal, *The Metabolic Effects of Nitrogen Mustard and Differentiation by Ca²⁺ and FK866 on Murine Epidermal Keratinocytes*

Advisors: Jeffrey D. Laskin (Environmental & Occupational Health) and Raymond C. Rancourt (Pharmacology & Toxicology)

Denis Parfilko, *A Charitable Reaxiomatization of Leibniz's Systemics*

Advisors: Martin Lin (Philosophy) and Vladimir Retakh (Mathematics)

Interdisciplinary Honors Theses
1:00 – 2:00 PM

Panel B: Economic Governance and Organizational Perception | Chair: Neeta Chandrashekhar, Assistant Dean, SAS Honors Advising

Reya Brahmabhatt, *United States Customs Receiverships in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Haiti in the Early 1900s*

Advisors: Michael Levine (German, Russian, and East European Languages and Literatures) and Colin Campbell (Economics)

Anna Ninashvili, *Mining Psychological Contract Breach in Naturally Occurring Employee Discourse: An LLM-Based Text Classification of Employee Job Reviews*

Advisors: William Kane (Human Resource Management) and Michael Luvalle (Statistics)

Interdisciplinary Honors Theses

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Panel C: Creativity, Perspective, and AI | Chair: Amanda Ackerman, Assistant Dean, SAS Honors Advising

Prakrati A. Kadekar, *Designing a Generative AI Writing Revision Tool to Preserve Student Critical Thinking*

Advisors: Carla Caponegro (English- Writing Program) and Matthew Stone (Computer Science)

Jack R. Hulme, *Constructing a Multi-Perspective Script*

Advisors: Mike Duffy (English-Writing Program) and Virginia Sharpe (Philosophy)

Interdisciplinary Research Teams

1:00 – 3:00 pm

Session One: | Chair: Jenevieve DeLosSantos, Associate Teaching Professor & Director of Special Projects, SAS Office of Undergraduate Education

Voter Mobilization in Healthcare & Other

Advisor: Katherine McCabe (Political Science)

Team: Hannah Ferrer, Nicholas Armeli, Dhara Sheth, Jaylin Forte, Arnav Kumar, and Alina Chen

Basketball's Three-Point Rule Origins, Effects, and Significations, Competitive and Social

Advisor: Larry Scanlon (English)

Team: Myles McDonald, Claire Purdue, Kelsey Shaw, and Autumn Taver

Break: 5 minutes

Session Two: | Chair: Jenevieve DeLosSantos, Associate Teaching Professor & Director of Special Projects, SAS Office of Undergraduate Education

Manny the Mastodon and His Travels: Bringing Science, History, Art, and Education Together Through Storytelling

Advisor: Lauren Neitzke Adamo (Earth & Planetary Sciences)

Team: Silas Batty, Em Mai, Jack Lehan, Demetria Glennon, and Jack Lau

The Classroom on Trial: Student Perceptions on Experiential Learning

Advisors: Douglas Cantor (Political Science) and Stacey Greene (Political Science)

Team: Katie Castles, Yara Badawi, and Dina Abdelfattah

Conference Participants

Dina Abdelfattah (IRT) is a junior at Rutgers University majoring in Public Policy, with minors in Data Science and Critical Intelligence Studies. She currently works as a court clerk at the Middlesex County Surrogate's Court and previously interned with Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, where she contributed to the Advisory Committee on Immigration Reform. At Rutgers, Dina serves as the Legislative Affairs Chair for the Rutgers University Student Assembly, is a Talking Across Difference Student Leader with the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and teaches a FIGS seminar on law and leadership. After graduation, she plans to attend law school and pursue a career in family and immigration law, focusing on domestic violence and human rights advocacy. In her free time, Dina enjoys weightlifting, following Formula 1, and reading.

Shikha Agarwal (IHT) is a senior in the Honors College majoring in Economics, with a minor in Biological Sciences, on the pre-medical track. She plans to attend medical school following her time at Rutgers. Shikha has served as a Teacher Intern (TI) for the General Chemistry department for the past three years. She is also the Co-President of the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) and a staff writer for the Rutgers Economics Society, roles she has held for the past two years. Within the Honors College, she is actively involved as an ambassador, peer tutor, and peer mentor. Since her freshman year, Shikha has been deeply engaged in research, earning three Aresty Fellowship Grants and presenting her work at the Aresty Undergraduate Research Symposiums in 2024, 2025, and 2026. Outside of academics, Shikha works as a Medical Assistant at an endocrinology clinic and is also a lifeguard, coach, and swim instructor. In her free time, she enjoys building LEGO sets and swimming.

Nicholas Armeli (IRT) is a junior at Rutgers University majoring in Political Science, with minors in Statistics and Data Science. He

plans to pursue a career in research, with a focus on polling, public opinion, and emerging trends in American politics. He is currently involved in interdisciplinary research on voter registration in healthcare settings and serves as a research assistant on projects analyzing AI-generated outputs from social media posts. In his free time, Nicholas enjoys playing guitar, writing music, playing chess, and reading about history and politics.

Yara Badawi (IRT) is a Political Science and History dual major with a minor in Arabic at Rutgers University, where she is a Dean's Scholar in the Honors College. As an aspiring lawyer, Yara has gained professional experience as a Legal Immigration Intern with the American Friends Service Committee, participated in a fellowship with Andy Kim's Senate campaign, served as a writer for *The Daily Targum*, and presented her work at the Undergraduate Research Writing Conference. Outside of academics and professional work, Yara enjoys playing guitar, baking, and going to the movies.

Silas Batty (IRT) is a junior at Rutgers University majoring in Geological Sciences. He plans to pursue a master's degree in paleontology and hopes to work in museums, focusing on research, exhibit development, and educational tours. In his free time, Silas enjoys crocheting and exploring other fiber arts.

Reya Brahmabhatt (IHT) is a senior at Rutgers Business School majoring in Finance, with a minor in Economics. She currently works with the Rutgers University Endowment as an Investment Analyst Intern, a role she has held since May 2023. At Rutgers, Reya is actively involved in the Road to Wall Street program, the Student Managed Fund, and the Gujarati Student Association. She is also a recipient of the Vito A. Cardace Endowed Scholarship. Outside of Rutgers, Reya participates in the Girls Who Invest program. In addition to her co-curricular experiences, Reya enjoys spending time outdoors with friends and family, as well as watching and performing dance. After graduation, she

plans to join Rothschild & Co. as an Investment Banking Analyst in New York City.

Alina Chen (IRT) is a Cell Biology & Neuroscience and Political Science double major at Rutgers University–New Brunswick on the pre-law track. She is passionate about advocacy and the intersection of STEM, politics, and legal studies. Alina works as a pharmacy technician and EMT, serves as University Chair for the Rutgers University Student Assembly, and previously interned as a Clemency Intern with the New Jersey Governor's Office. Outside of academics, Alina enjoys salsa dancing, visiting the beach, and spending time with friends and family.

Demetria Glennon (IRT) is an Honors College student majoring in English, with a minor in Creative Writing, and is part of a 5-Year Master's program with the Graduate School of Education to study Elementary Education and K–12 English. In addition to her work with the Interdisciplinary Research Team in collaboration with the Rutgers Geological Museum, Demetria serves as an Honors College Student Leader, is a member of the TEDxRutgers team where she leads the Speaker Team, and is a member of the Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society. She also teaches a FIGS course through the CSE Department. In her free time, Demetria enjoys crocheting, completing word search puzzles, cooking and baking, writing, listening to music, and watching TV shows and movies.

Hannah Abrielle Ferrer (IRT) is a junior at Rutgers University, double majoring in Political Science and Labor Studies & Employment Relations, with a minor in Statistics. She hopes to use her experience in the IRT program to pursue a career in political research and analysis across both the public and private sectors. Hannah is the founding Vice President of Bridge Rutgers and is an active member of NJPIRG Students, the Rutgers Association of Philippine Students, and the Honors College. Outside of her studies, Hannah enjoys music, dance, traveling, and completing puzzles.

Jaylin Forte (IRT) is a senior majoring in Biological Sciences with a minor in Psychology. She plans to pursue a Master of Public Health followed by medical school, with the goal of advancing health equity and serving underserved communities. On campus, Jaylin serves as president of the community service organization Bluefoot Print Project and is on the executive board of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She has also organized community voter registration drives and has volunteered for over a decade at St. Michael's Medical Center. Her interests include psychology, health advocacy, and creative projects, including running her crochet business.

Jack R. Hulme (IHT) is a Philosophy major with minors in Creative Writing and Psychology. He is currently interning at Medallion Care. Jack enjoys screenwriting in his spare time and plans to pursue a career in counseling after graduation.

Prakrati A. Kadekar (IHT) is a fourth-year Honors College and Douglass student at Rutgers University, double majoring in Cognitive Science and Computer Science. She is passionate about the intersection of cognition, design, and technology. She serves as the Logistics Director of Creative X, where she helps organize CreateRU, a 24-hour UX/UI designathon at Rutgers. She has also worked as a Product Design Intern at Nike and as an Aresty research assistant at the Rutgers Writing Centers. In her free time, Prakrati enjoys drawing in her sketchbook, reading, and coding. After graduation, she plans to work as a UX designer and researcher in New York City.

Arnav Anil Kumar (IRT) is a senior at Rutgers University–New Brunswick pursuing a B.S. in Computer Science and Mathematics. He has experience in software development, data analysis, and research-driven projects, and is actively involved in student organizations at Rutgers. After graduation, Arnav plans to pursue advanced study or research in computer science or a related field, with long-term goals of working on impactful, interdisciplinary problems.

Jack Lau (IRT) is an Honors College student at Rutgers University–New Brunswick, majoring in Biomedical Engineering and minoring in Chemistry. He is an undergraduate researcher in the Vazquez Lab and plans to pursue a Master of Science in Biomedical Engineering after completing his undergraduate studies. Outside of academics, Jack enjoys reading, cooking, and staying active. He is also the current president of the Rutgers Wushu Club.

Jack Lehan (IRT) is a History and Art History major at Rutgers University and is graduating in 2026. He plans to pursue a master's degree in library science, building on his passion for cultural preservation and public history. During his time at Rutgers, Jack has worked at the Geology Museum, where he contributed to exhibit research and development. In his free time, Jack enjoys collecting music CDs and older video games.

Yash Maheshwari (IRT) is a Data Science major with a Political Science minor at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. He intends to pursue law school after graduating in December. He has compiled research on the competitive impact of the NFL's 17th game as well as the state of AI policy internationally and is currently working with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture through the Rutgers MBS program. Outside of academics, Yash enjoys lifting, poker, and fantasy football.

Myles McDonald (IRT) is a sophomore at Rutgers University and an aspiring journalist and writer. He is currently pursuing majors in Journalism and English, with the goal of building a career in writing, reporting, or column writing. Myles enjoys reading, creative writing, and following sports. He is also involved in several organizations, including the Creative Writing Club, RUFH, and *The Rutgers Review*.

Em Mai (IRT) is a senior majoring in Earth and Planetary Sciences and plans to pursue paleontology after graduation.

She has worked with the Rutgers Geology Museum as a collections intern and manages social media for the Geology Club. Em has been drawing since she could first hold a crayon. She also has a crested gecko named after a winner of *RuPaul's Drag Race*.

Anna Ninashvili (IHT) is a senior at Rutgers School of Arts and Sciences pursuing a B.S. in Data Science. She recently completed a co-op at Johnson & Johnson, where she worked as a data analyst supporting reporting for senior sales leaders of the five largest customers of Johnson & Johnson MedTech. For the past two years, Anna has been an active member of Rutgers GlobeMed, a student-run nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing global health equity through partnerships with local and global grassroots organizations. She is passionate about using data to describe, predict, and prescribe human behavior to improve business outcomes. After graduating from Rutgers, Anna intends to work full-time as a data analyst while pursuing an M.S. in Data Science at Rutgers as a part-time student.

Denis Vadimovich Parfilko (IHT) is an Interdisciplinary, Honors College Scholar, and student leader at Rutgers University. He completed four majors at Rutgers—Philosophy, Mathematics, History, and Mathematical Finance—and is an inducted member of Phi Beta Kappa. His academic work includes research on prime-generating algorithms and liminal architecture, as well as current interdisciplinary research on the reaxiomatization of Leibniz's systemics as a Paul Robeson Scholar. He has also worked with the Zimmerli Art Museum to improve accessibility for Eastern European Russian-speaking communities in the New York metropolitan area. Denis served as Chief Exchequer for The Voice Acting Network and Collective of Entertainers (V.A.N.C.E.), where he helped organize major Rutgers creative events including Scarlet Showcase and Sakura Fest. Professionally, he works as a Sound Designer, Editor, and Writer for Half & Half Studios, contributing to the indie game *Erratum*, and continues to develop his own game project, *Ivory Tower*. In his free time, Denis enjoys painting, writing, and making amateur films.

Claire Purdue (IRT) is an Information Technology & Informatics and English major at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. She is passionate about the intersection of the humanities, technology, and education and intends to pursue graduate study to further explore how technology can be used to enhance learning in the classroom. Outside of academics, Claire enjoys reading and is an avid thrifter.

Kelsey Shaw (IRT) is a sophomore at Rutgers University majoring in English, with a minor in Data and Communications in Media. She is a member of the Rutgers Modeling Team and F.A.C.E. Outside of academics, Kelsey interns at a marketing agency. She enjoys reading and playing guitar and plans to continue building her experience in marketing after graduation.

Dhara Sheth (IRT) is a Biological Sciences and Psychology major at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. She plans to pursue a career in medicine and apply to medical school after graduating in 2027. She previously conducted research through the Aresty Research Program, where she studied student mental health and awareness among grades 6–9. In her free time, Dhara enjoys attending concerts, hiking, and spending time with family and friends.

Autumn Tarver (IRT) is a Criminal Justice major at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. She plans to apply to law school next semester with the goal of pursuing a career in criminal and constitutional law. She has completed an activism internship with a nonprofit organization, where she learned about the importance of democratic and civic engagement, further strengthening her passion for social justice. Outside of academics, Autumn enjoys pottery and is a member of the Rock-Climbing Club on campus.



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Thank You

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- The IHT and IRT faculty advisors
- Research Workshop
- Alan Grossman for his generous support of the Interdisciplinary Research Teams
- The SAS Honors Advising staff
- SAS Office of Undergraduate Education

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