



**Kayla Theis**

## **Circleville High School teacher named an Ohio University Communication Fellow**

By Sarah Roush

ATHENS, Ohio — Kayla Theis, an English III and American literature teacher at Circleville High School, was one of the nine teachers selected for the third annual Communication Fellows program in Ohio University's Scripps College of Communication. Focusing on curriculum development in communication across PK-12 levels of instruction, the program provides funding and mentorship support. Participants develop and implement a communication-related classroom project over the one-year course of their fellowship.

"It is a vital goal of our college to foster communication education among the state's youth and support teachers in innovative and dynamic projects relating to communication. My hope for the Communication Fellows program is to increase our impact on the state by bolstering the communication expertise of PK-12 teachers and enriching the education of their students," said Scripps College of Communication Dean Scott Titsworth.

Theis earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and theatre and a Master of Education with a focus on integrated language arts from Ohio State University.

"I applied for the Communication Fellows program because I'm always looking for new exciting methods to bring into my classroom," Theis said. "I am thrilled to learn how to incorporate podcasts in my English curriculum in order to increase student engagement."

Communication Fellows attend a half-week summer residential experience at Ohio University's main campus in Athens and receive free tuition for a graduate-level online course, a \$1500 stipend and \$1000 classroom stipend. Fellows also work with college faculty mentors and college leadership to achieve their project proposals. *The COVID-19 crisis may necessitate adjustments to the residential experience for the 2020 cohort.*

Theis plans to enhance her English class by giving students the opportunity to create podcasts for class assignments.

"Students struggle to know how to properly form and communicate their ideas," Theis wrote in her project proposal. "Argumentative writing is one of the core standards for English, and by creating content for a podcast, this would help students form arguments in a way that is applicable to the real world. By building podcasts into my curriculum, the

students' engagement will increase, and they will see how these skills can transfer to different jobs or skills needed in the future."

Each year, up to 10 fellows are named, with five from rural Appalachian districts and five from urban districts in the state of Ohio. This program was established as part of the Scripps College of Communication's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2018.

For more information about the Communication Fellows Program, [visit the program's webpage](#). The Scripps College of Communication at Ohio University consists of five schools, each offering a variety of majors and programs for students who want to pursue communication-related careers. For more information, [visit our website](#).

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