

Undergraduate Student Spotlight: Millie Dawson

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Undergraduate Millie Dawson, an English major with a teaching emphasis, has spent time discovering her interests in the English Department. As a senior, she has found a clear winner: Shakespeare.

"Shakespeare's canon is something I feel that I could talk about forever," she says. This interest has taken her across the department. In Spring 2025, she worked with Professor Phebe Jensen in her English 5300 class, Magic and Astrology: Shakespeare's Interconnected World. The class studied early modern science, and how Shakespeare's work drew from those ideas. Over the semester, Millie and other students gathered rare books and manuscripts into an exhibit in the Merrill-Cazier Library Special Collections.

She has also presented on the topic of Shakespeare with Sigma Tau Delta, USU's chapter of the National English Honor Society, at the 2025 conference in New Orleans. She presented a paper she wrote on queer intimacy in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Additionally, she participated in roundtable research, looking into the book *Salvage the Bones*, by Jesmin Ward, with other honor society members.

"It was a neat experience, and a wonderful way to connect with fellow English enthusiasts from around the world," she recalls.

Moving into her senior year, though, she found herself wanting more. "I have taken far too many Shakespeare courses at USU, and — as a senior — I've reached the point where it would have set me back to have taken any more this semester. I was worried that I would experience some serious Shakespeare withdrawal if I went without it for another semester!"

So, this year, she is introducing USU's new Shakespeare club. "I wanted to create a community at USU where Shakespeare's body of work can be read, watched, performed, discussed, and celebrated together," she explains. "It's my belief that Shakespeare is meant to be experienced with friends. I'm excited to make more this year!"

Currently, the club plans to hold monthly, impromptu plays for the community, as well as movie nights and book clubs. For September, they performed *Twelfth Night*, and plan to read *Macbeth* in October. Later, they are looking to involve guest speakers, or possibly field trips.

"The ultimate goal, however, is to draw students from across varied disciplines and departments together in a shared excitement for Shakespeare," she states.

Millie is grateful not only for her department, but the supportive community surrounding it. "I love the people in the USU English program. The faculty is deeply invested in the success of every single student, who are in turn passionate, curious, and committed. Being in a relatively small program means you get to know almost everyone, and I'm yet to have a classmate or professor I didn't learn from!"