



ARKANSAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Dear Dean or Department Head,

On behalf of the Directors for the Interdisciplinary Research Series (IRS), I am writing to highlight the importance of the IRS and to ask for your support of the series. The IRS is a campus-wide lecture series that gives faculty and graduate students a vehicle to share their research with the ATU community. Presenters also receive feedback from scholars to further develop their research. In just three semesters of operation, the IRS has achieved the following:

1. Organized 17 talks (including three outside speakers) plus held several informational grant workshops for professional development in collaboration with the Interdisciplinary Research Center (IRC). **Presentations** have been from TEN different disciplines across campus.
2. Attracted a diverse, growing audience. These events have ranged from 18 to over 30 attendees from most departments and colleges. Collectively, we have had over 100 different attendees—faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, including Dr. Abdelrahman and Dr. Bowen.
3. Preserved many of the presentations via an accessible video archive online:
<https://atu.sharestream.net/channel/8a8080b55a03a071015a4cdfc32000f?offset=0&pageSize=20&sortOrder=0>
4. Received recognition from Dr. Abdelrahman in his Spring 2018 all faculty address.

The IRS Series also promotes key university goals, specifically 1.9 and 1.10 of the Human Core Goal of ATU's strategic plan. It also promotes professional development, one of the areas identified as a weakness needing improvement from the Campus Climate survey Dr. Bowen conducted in her first year. Up to now, this program operated on a generous \$1000 contribution from the History & Political Science Department as well as the Behavioral Sciences funding an outside speaker's travel and stipend. The Interdisciplinary Research Center has also pledged \$1000 for speakers. Above is what has been accomplished in 3 semesters with these limited funds. We are asking Colleges do the following:

1. Make an annual pledge to the IRS program. Our **operations budget goal is \$2,000 a year** for funding outside speakers, providing food and beverages for lunch talks, etc. We are grateful for **annual pledges of any amount, but ask for at least \$250 annually from Colleges** to the ESSRW foundation account (for details, see Dr. Rogers at mrogers6@atu.edu or 479-968-0447).
2. Promote the IRS program by encouraging students, faculty and staff to attend talks and submit proposals. We are inclusive and supportive of all types of scholarship and professional development. We are primarily an outlet for research presentations, but next fall we are planning an art presentation by Dr. Neal Harrington at the Norman Hall Art Gallery. We encourage both innovative proposals like this as well as traditional, conference-style talks.
3. Provide recommendations for IRS director positions. We have a 5-member board of directors plus a liaison from the Interdisciplinary Research Center. These positions periodically rotate, and recommendations for filling them are always welcome.

Again, the importance of the IRS in promoting faculty collaboration, recognition of scholarship, and professional development at ATU is invaluable. Please help us continue this important series.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Rogers

Dr. Michael T. Rogers, Political Science
IRS Director, Budget Management

Nate Chapman

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Sociology

Angela Black

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