

The 2017 Association for Core Texts and Courses (ACTC) conference began on the evening of March 3<sup>rd</sup> and concluded on the evening of March 4<sup>th</sup>. The organization paid for all expenses except travel, including conference fees, hotel charges, most meals, and transportation to and from the airport. On the night of arrival, all presenting students, hosts, and sponsors shared a dinner together in a Concordia University conference room.

Panels began the next day at 9 a.m. The students presenting were divided into 8 panels of 4-6 speakers, and during each panel, the students would read their papers aloud one by one and then discuss them for 30-45 minutes. Those who were not scheduled to present during that block could choose a panel to attend, watch the paper presentation, and participate in the discussion. Some papers presented topics such as how Nietzsche's and Dostoyevsky's views of nihilism differ, how Robert Frost's poetry inspired a young woman to journey into self-discovery, and how social problems can either be worsened or critiqued by literature.

My paper on the importance to engineers and scientists of engaging in discussion about literature was in a panel with other papers on the topic of "STEM and the Humanities." I read my paper aloud to a room of others who wrote about how science and the humanities coexist and also clash and answered questions from my peers and the audience alike. Some of the questions raised include "What are your thoughts on Artificial Intelligence (A.I.);" "Who determines when science crosses into morally gray areas?" or "Beyond research, what is a scientist's role in society?" I was delighted by the discussions in every panel.

On Saturday evening, students were shuttled to their choice of either the shopping mall Spectrum in Irvine or Downtown Disney in Anaheim to end the conference with a fun excursion. The next morning, I was shuttled to LAX where I began travelling back to Starkville.