FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ECU’s Whichard Professor to Give Public Lecture

GREENVILLE, N.C. (Jan. 17, 2013) — Dr. Gary A. Stringer, scholar of English Renaissance Literature and visiting professor at East Carolina University, will give a free, public lecture at 7 p.m., Feb. 7, in room 1031 of the Bate Building. He will discuss “The Making of the 1633, ‘Poems, by J. D. with Elegies on the Author’s Death,’ An Illustrated Detective Story.” A reception will follow in the foyer of the Bate Building.

During his lecture, Stringer will describe the circumstances under which the first collected edition of John Donne’s poems came into being. The volume was published two years after Donne’s death and is considered one of the most important volumes of poems ever published in English. Stringer will highlight the condition in which Donne left the poems at his death, the print environment out of which this volume of poems emerged, the credentials of the publisher, the obscurity surrounding the origins of the publication venture and identification of the various manuscripts used in assembling the collection. Visuals of 17th Century books and manuscripts will be used to illustrate each of Stringer’s main points.

Stringer joined the ECU faculty in 2011 as a visiting professor in the Department of English, and as the David Julian and Virginia Suther Whichard Distinguished Professor in the Humanities, housed in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences. The Whichard Professorship, which Stringer now holds for a second academic year, is an endowed professorship made possible through a generous donation by the Whichard family in honor of David Julian and Virginia Suther Whichard of Greenville.

“Being at ECU over the past year and a half has just been terrific for me, and holding the Whichard Professorship has been a great honor,” said Stringer. “My wife Mary Ann and I have made many new friends within the university and in the community at large, and we’ve never been involved with more congenial, helpful and interesting people. The English Department couldn’t have been more welcoming, and working with the Dean’s Office in Harriot College on the various Whichard activities has been an unalloyed pleasure.”

The Division of Research and Graduate Studies also have been “wonderfully supportive” in helping Stringer manage his National Endowment for the Humanities grant in support of his “Donne Variorum” project.

Because the NEH grant provides much of the support Stringer needs for his own research, he said he has been able to redirect some of the research funds provided under the terms of the Whichard endowment to other humanities projects within Harriot College.
“By the time my two years are up, Whichard funds will have supported in whole, or in part, visits to ECU by six outside scholars, three creative writers, three filmmakers and the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities,” said Stringer. “I’m grateful to have had the opportunity to help support endeavors like these, which contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of the community.”

Stringer received his Ph.D., M.A. and B.A. degrees in English from the University of Oklahoma. Throughout his nearly 50-year academic career, he has held faculty appointments at the University of Oklahoma; Oklahoma State University; Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA; the University of Southern Mississippi; and most recently, Texas A&M University. He has received faculty service awards and research grants from many of the institutions where he has taught, and he has been awarded more than $1.5 million in grant funding from the NEH.

For additional information about Stringer’s lecture, contact Denise Miller in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences’ Dean’s Office at 252-328-6053. Individuals requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should call 252-737-1016 (voice/TTY) at least 48 hours prior to the event.

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