I received a Summer Faculty Research Grant for the summer of 2012 to work on a proposed article, “Customary Forms: Theorizing Social and Fictional Conventions in *Northanger Abbey.*” The purpose of the article is to demonstrate the overlapping ways in which writers of the late eighteenth century theorized social and narrative form through an analysis of Jane Austen’s early work, *Northanger Abbey.* This scholarly contribution intends to revise the assumption that fiction in the late eighteenth century became increasingly transparent in its engagement with readers by mimicking face-to-face communication; instead, it will work to remind scholars of the extent to which face-to-face communication itself was considered an act of mediation during the period.

The generous support provided by the grant has enabled me to read numerous archival sources such as Austen’s letters, conduct books from the period, and the current scholarship on literary form. In addition, my research has lead me to investigate additional texts in intellectual history such as Henry Homes Lord Kames’ *Elements of Criticism* (1762) and *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774) as well as James Beattie’s *Elements of Moral Science* (1790-93). Since Enlightenment Moral Philosophy is a large field in its own right that spans the disciplines of literature, philosophy, and history, I had to spend some time revisiting and familiarizing myself with additional scholarship in this area.

Despite the large quantity of additional research I encountered, I have completed a draft of the article during the course of summer 2012. The remaining tasks include final revision, editing, and proofing. I plan to use the winter holidays to make progress in these tasks and to hopefully submit the article to a peer-reviewed journal during the Spring 2013 semester.