



Purdue
Writing
Lab

Alumni Annotations

A Newsletter for Alumni and Friends of the Writing Lab at Purdue

Fall 2018

Message from the Director



The midterm elections and Purdue's resurgent football team seem to be the talk of campus this fall. From local municipal contests to the statewide challenges for congressional leadership, roads to and from campus are punctuated with candidate signs. As Purdue's recent upset of Big Ten foe Ohio State might indicate, upsets and dramatic nights could foreshadow what November's elections might bring. Closer to home in Heavilon, the semester has been off to a fantastic start with the wonderful Hutton Lecture Series, so far featuring Neal Learner of Northeastern University and Elizabeth Wardle from Miami University of Ohio. Our tutors and I just returned from a wonderful experience presenting at the annual International Writing Centers Conference in Atlanta (more on their presentations elsewhere in this issue).

This fall, we're engaging in a trial to explore how the Writing Lab might better prime brand new graduate students in English at Purdue for the opportunities and challenges of teaching and learning writing in our unique institutional context. For the next two semesters, our First-Year Fellows will join other graduate tutors in the teaching practicum as well as shadow and lead sessions until they feel confident going solo. They're a great bunch of students from across the English department, including Literature, Theory, Cultural studies; Creative Writing; and Rhetoric and Composition. After a year of getting more familiar with Purdue, our writers, and other institutional variables, the Fellows will then decide to either continue in the Writing Lab or gain other teaching experiences with ICaP, PW, or other partner programs.

Frequent users of the OWL will immediately notice a new look and feel to the famous website. Since the summer before last, we have been collaborating with the College of Liberal Arts to bring the site into compliance with Purdue branding standards and to enable our global population of users to view the site on a variety of devices. Historically, the OWL has been best accessed on a desktop computer, but this past August people also may now pull up the site on smart phones and tablets. We're excited about this development because it enacts a central tenet of writing center work: meet our clients where they are. To date, user feedback has been positive, and our content development staff continue to tweak the site and develop more multimodal content.

As we enter into the last stretch of the semester, leaves are turning and days have finally cooled off. The Writing Lab is busy as ever. The articles in this issue will give a taste to the fabulous programming and terrific staff that continues the Writing Lab's fine tradition. Next spring, we hope to honor and celebrate the 25th anniversary of the OWL.

Harry Denny
Director, Writing Lab
Associate Professor, English

Heavilon Hall 226

(765) 494-3723

writing.lab@purdue.edu

New Faces around the Lab



Left, back: Elise (First Year Fellow), Mattie (FYF), Alejandra (GTA), Allyn (GTA), Mitch (GTA), Caroline (GTA), Steven (GTA), Johnay (FYF), Javan (GTA), Andy (FYF), Esteban (FYF), Kelsey (FYF). Left, front: Isaac (GTA), Carey (GTA). Right, top: Antonia (UTA). Right, bottom: Will (UTA).

Alumni Profile

Natasha E. Jarrett, BWC, 2004 – 2006



During the Fall semester in 2004, I was approached about an opportunity to take English 390B: Tutoring Practicum in Professional Writing. Taking this course was definitely one of the best decisions I made while in school.

As a result of the course work and training within this course, I was not only able to work for the renowned Writing Lab, but I was also able to enhance my communication and leadership skills.

I graduated from the Krannert School of Management in May 2006. I majored in Business Management and had concentrations in Marketing and Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management and held leadership positions in several student organizations.

Currently, I work for State Farm Insurance in Property and Casualty Underwriting on the newly formed Fire Service Request Team, which primarily handles escalated policy transactions. I have now worked for State Farm for over 11 years on multiple project teams, and I enjoy the work I do.

The training from ENGL 390B coupled with my experience in the role of a Business Writing Consultant led to my professional involvement in Toastmasters International. It is an international nonprofit educational organization that operates clubs worldwide for the purpose of promoting communication, public speaking, and leadership skills. Through this club, I have obtained several designations including my Competent Communicator, Advanced Communicator Bronze, and Competent Leader.

The ways in which I continue to utilize all of this training and experience include, but are not limited to, the following: resume and cover letter critiquing; business plan evaluations; individual and group presentations; and mentoring and developing others, just to name a few.

In summary, we all have opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others and this experience definitely created one of many opportunities.

New programs for graduate writers

During the summer of 2018, my position in the Writing Lab changed from ESL Specialist to Associate Director for Graduate Writing and Multilingual Writing. As a result of that change, we are in the process of developing new programs for supporting graduate writers on campus. Three projects have already been started: Intensive Writing Experiences (IWE) for Dissertation Writers, Writers' Rooms, and a Graduate Writer Faculty Guide that is meant to complement the Multilingual Writer Faculty Guide produced several years ago. The Faculty Guide and the IWEs were supported with funding from the Graduate School. Multiple tutors worked on each of the three projects at various times and in various capacities. In the paragraphs below, you can read about each project from the perspective of one of the tutors who worked on it.

–Vicki Kennell

Intensive Writing Experiences for Dissertation Writers

by Mitch Hobza

Over the summer, I worked as a consultant and co-leader of our first four iterations of Purdue Writing Lab's Intensive Writing Experience for Dissertation Writers. Each iteration was three days long; two sessions were designed for writers who were still in the drafting process, and the other two were designed for writers who were in the final revision stages. Each IWE was a mixture of mini-lessons on topics such as paragraph organization and large chunks of time for the writers to work on their writing and meet with consultants. We structured our workshops around the concept of goal-setting. Each writer was given a goal-setting journal at the start of the week and encouraged to set practical, tangible writing goals for each writing session. Our overall goal was that this was a behavior that writers would continue to practice once the week was over, as clear goal-setting can shape writing tasks into achievable goals.

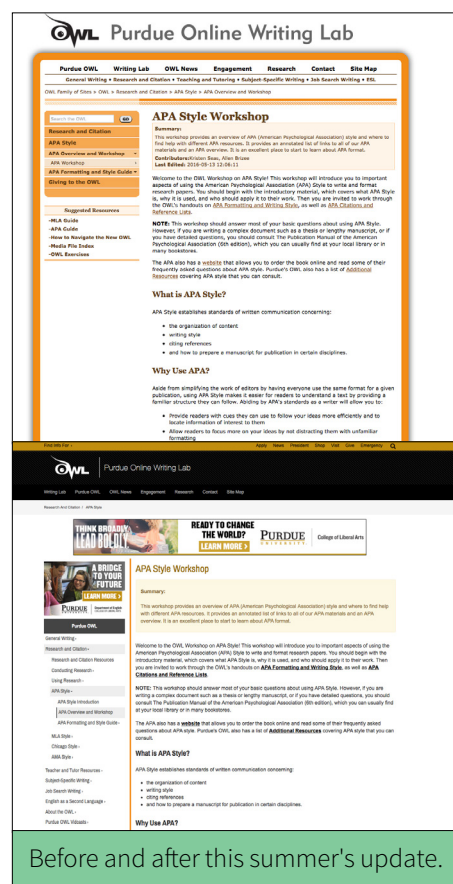
As a writing consultant, being a co-leader in the sessions really helped me understand what graduate writing can look like across the disciplines, and it helped me to continue developing strategies for responding to graduate writing. As a graduate student, it helped demystify the dissertation writing process for me. It no longer seems like this foreboding, nebulous task in my distant future. Most of the writers reported that they met many of the goals they set for themselves. Many noted they completed more work than they could have in twice the time on their own and expressed gratitude for having writing programming specifically designed for their needs. Overall, I think IWE was productive for almost everyone involved, and it has an exciting future as we continue to develop the experience for graduate writers.

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OWL News

Joe Forte, OWL Content Coordinator

This May, I joined the OWL as its new Content Coordinator, and did so with great honor. In retrospect, however, this was a little like joining a crew of seasoned astronauts on a rocket bound for Mars. With big changes around the corner in the way of a site-wide remodel, we were all about to head into uncharted territory, but I didn't even know how to drive yet.



How lucky I am, then, that my new coworkers have been such patient teachers and guides over the past few months. As I continue to learn, the main goal I see for my work is to create new ways for our readers to enjoy, learn from, and—yes—even contribute to our educational resources. If I

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Writers' Rooms

by Steven Dawson

The Writers' Room is a space for graduate students to work on their academic projects. While most of the students' time is devoted to independent writing, graduate tutors are present to answer brief, specific questions related to the writing process. While my experience working as a graduate tutor in the Writers' Room is limited, I have observed directly the benefits of writing in such a space. During our first event, every graduate student who attended seemed to be quite productive, spreading out their work across their stations and immediately engaging with it. Even students who attended in groups were not talkative or disruptive in any way to students at other tables. Although the attendees at that first meeting were few, I foresee that same productive mode holding for larger groups.

As a tutor, I was only approached twice in my two-hour block: once for a question about APA-specific formatting and once for help with organizing an abstract. These writing concerns both fall within the genre of science writing, and I believe—based on the visible textbooks, charts, and data spread across the tables—this represents the majority of students who attended. I'm looking forward to continued work with this crowd of diligent students, and I imagine, as numbers grow, they will ask more questions from helping tutors.

Faculty Guide for Working with Graduate Writers

by Elizabeth Geib

Working on the faculty guide was an unfamiliar experience that provided amazing insight into the life of graduate students and faculty. As a graduate student who wrote a master's thesis not too long before I started conducting research, I really had a sense for the institutional pressures associated with thesis-writing. At first, however, I had a hard time relating to the ins and outs of PhD dissertations and how faculty members coach their graduate students. After talking with Harry, I realized that I know a lot more than I originally thought. I started asking myself some questions: What are graduate students bringing into the Lab? What are they struggling with? What do students say about the feedback they receive? What resources are graduate students using to learn thesis/dissertation writing in their specific discipline? After reflecting on these questions and looking into what graduate students are asking for help with, I was able to infer quite a bit.

I gained a new level of respect for faculty members as I read through the struggles that they also face. I did realize, however, that the disciplinary conventions of dissertation/thesis writing were often a complicated or misunderstood topic. There seemed to be a need for faculty members to coach their writers on the tips, tricks, and standards of their field. Overall, I truly enjoyed learning about other disciplinary practices. Reading online forums and dissertation how-to-guides provided insight for what other disciplines are struggling with and what methods they have created for effective writing practices.

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can help forge connections to the OWL that wouldn't otherwise have existed, I'll consider my tenure as Coordinator a success.

Speaking of new ways to connect to the OWL: this summer, our new site went live, and with it, a new host of opportunities, joys, and challenges were born. In addition to the brand-new design, the new OWL site boasts features that make our content more accessible to our readers. For instance, the site now adjusts to fit smaller screens, allowing users on phones and tablets to access our site much more easily. However, despite these changes, each page's content remains almost identical to the version on the old site. This means that, while we're trying to make lots of new connections with our users, we are not trying to fundamentally change our content—just make additions to it.

The beginning the 2018/2019 school year has seen our Content Developers begin to make some of these additions. These few months have seen our writers busy making new pages on topics as abstract as the Toulmin model for argumentation and as quotidian (though no less useful) as the art of writing effective memos. We've also refined the process for video production in a way that separates the various parts—writing, performance, and editing—so that developers can specialize and thus work more efficiently. Look for new vidcasts from the OWL soon.

In all of our current projects, we're trying to center the needs of users like you. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns about this new adventure.

Presentations and Publications

Rachel Bremer and Harry Denny. "Understanding the Needs of Fraternity, Sorority, and Cooperative Learning Students." Presentation, IWCA Conference, 2018.

Coby English. "Serving the "T": Space and Access for Transgender Students and Tutors in University Writing Centers." Presentation, Hoosiers Out Together Conference, 2018.

Elizabeth Geib. "Understanding the Relationship of/ between Academic & Non-Academic Writing Center Spaces." Presentation, IWCA Conference, 2018.

Mitch Hobza. "Using Tools from World Englishes in the Center to Challenge Assumptions about English Usage." Presentation, IWCA Conference, 2018.

Beth Towle. "Understanding (and Advocating for) Peer Tutor Labor through Empirical Research." Presentation, IWCA Conference, 2018.

Isaac Wang. "Decolonizing Metaphor: Moves Towards an Indigenous Writing Center Praxis." Presentation, IWCA Conference, 2018.

Current Tutoring Staff

Graduate Tutors

Rachel Atherton—Rhetoric & Composition

Carey Compton—Creative Writing

Steven Dawson—Creative Writing

Javan DeHaven—Creative Writing

Elizabeth Geib—Rhetoric & Composition

Eliza Gellis—Rhetoric & Composition

Mitch Hobza—Rhetoric & Composition

Caroline Jennings—Rhetoric & Composition

Lindsey Macdonald—Rhetoric & Composition

John Milas—Creative Writing

Heather Murton—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Alejandra Ortega—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Allyn Pearson—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Adrianna Radosti—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Eugie Ruiz—Rhetoric & Composition

Beth Towle—Rhetoric & Composition

April Urban—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Isaac Wang—Rhetoric & Composition

Undergraduate Tutors

Will Austin—Health & Disease; Entomology

Taylor Barnett—Computer Graphics

Parker Beckman—Brain & Behavioral Sciences

Rachel Bremer—Accounting

Bridget Cavanaugh—Aerospace Engineering

Colleen Denunzio—Computer & Information Technology

Elenil Deypalubos—Pre-Athletic Training

Sydney Dolan—Aerospace

Erin Dubin—Biology/Pre-Dental

Coby English—Professional Writing, Political Science

Elle Huff—Public Relations

Caitlin Lee—Psychology, Linguistics

Amy Li—Accounting, Dance

Nathan McBurnett—Anthropology, Philosophy

Caroline McMasters—Professional Writing

Katelyn Meza—Professional Writing, Creative Writing

Elizabeth Murray—Law & Society

Caroline Peterson—Biochemistry

Ruben Ramanathan—Supply Chain Management

Antonia Roach—Psychology

Megan Sommerfield—English, Political Science

Austin Steinman—Mechanical Engineering

Eliza Van—English, Human Services

Liz Walker—English, Professional Writing

Chloe Weber—Communications, Human Resource Development

Shuting Yang—Aeronautical & Astronautical Engineering

Sherry Zheng—Professional Writing

Alyssa Zook—English

First-Year Fellows

Mattie Bruton—Rhetoric & Composition

Johnay Hall—Creative Writing

Esteban Meneses—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Andy Nellis—Creative Writing

Elise Robbins—Literature, Theory, Cultural Studies

Kelsey Wort—Creative Writing

40th Anniversary Fund & Other Gifts

In 1976, the Writing Lab was founded as a one-room space with only three consultants. Since then, we've expanded our space and our services and served as a model for an international community of writing centers and composition scholars. Your tax-deductible gift will help us better serve Purdue students on campus and beyond, as well as serve our global friends online who use the OWL (Online Writing Lab).

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Writing Lab 40th Anniversary Fund, or to the OWL, [click here](#).

You can also make checks payable to the Purdue Foundation, with either "Writing Lab 40th Anniversary" or "OWL (Online Writing Lab)" in the memo line. Checks should be mailed to the following address:

Purdue Foundation
403 West Wood Street
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2007

Our Alumni Annotations newsletter is published and emailed 2-3 times per year. If you would like to receive this newsletter as an emailed PDF file, or if you would like to contribute to our publication, please contact our secretary Chris Voeglein at cvoeglei@purdue.edu.