

Alumni Annotations

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

Fall 2014

Message from the Director

Typically, these messages to our alumni are sunny and upbeat. We have much to be proud of here in the Purdue Writing Lab, and we are making great strides within the university, as well as continuing our national and international presence. Both the Writing Lab and the Purdue OWL continue to be the models for writing centers and online writing labs around the country. Our Spring 2014 issue celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the OWL, which is receiving more hits (in the millions) than ever.

Nevertheless, I must acknowledge that we are still recovering from the passing of Professor Bergmann earlier this year. While preparing to write this semester's message, I read through Linda's message from last year. I couldn't help feeling sad about not having her here with us. We all miss her experience, enthusiasm, and knowledge about writing and writing centers. We especially miss her friendship. Of course, I'm proud to step in as the Interim Director, knowing full well that I can only do my best to pick up where she left off.

These are interesting times for the Writing Lab. Purdue is undergoing a significant transformation under the presidency of Mitch Daniels. He has asked all parts of the university to improve the "value" of a Purdue degree by keeping costs down, focusing on student growth, trimming non-essentials, and strengthening our support to students. Fortunately, these changes play to our strengths in the Writing Lab, so we are looking quite good. Last year, I invited President Daniels to visit the Writing Lab, and he came away impressed by what we do here. In fact, he often specifically mentions the Writing Lab when he talks about what works well here at Purdue. Also, this is my second year serving on the President's Budget and Affordability Committee, which means I have plenty of opportunities to sing our praises directly to the President. I stress the importance of the Writing Lab for retaining students, supporting ESL writers, working with graduate students, and much more.

What's new? This fall we've expanded our main location in Heavilon Hall to an adjoining room that we can use for our in-lab workshops, ESL conversation groups, and of course tutoring overflow space. We have hired two new staff members, Chris Voeglein (secretary) and Laryn Morgan (receptionist). We continue to work on expanding our satellite locations and improving our online outreach. We are looking for opportunities to support Writing Across the Curriculum, especially with the growth of the College of Engineering. We have also begun planning the next generations of both the Writing Lab and the Purdue OWL since within a decade we will likely be moving out of Heavilon Hall. Perhaps most importantly, we are searching for a knowledgeable and experienced Director of the Writing Lab who will take things from here.

We're putting up our sails. My hope is to do our best to fulfill Linda's vision for the future of the Writing Lab.

Rick Johnson-Sheehan
Interim Director

Alumni Profiles



Lindsey Crane
Communications Consultant
School District U-46
Elgin, Illinois

I tutored at the Purdue Writing Lab for two years beginning in spring 2007, and my experiences as an Undergraduate Teaching Assistant are some of my greatest memories as a student at Purdue. Working at the Writing Lab offered several opportunities for my professional development from co-presenting at the NCPTW and ECWCA conferences to mentoring undergraduate staff as the UTA Coordinator to answering OWL Mail. However, the Writing Lab also became a personal haven – a place to study, a place to network with others who shared my passion for tutoring writing, and

a place to make friends. As I continue to pursue my own studies in professional writing, I must credit my experiences at Purdue's Writing Lab with shaping my writing process and how I teach writing to others.

I graduated from Purdue in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in English Education. I taught English at Crown Point High School for

three years before relocating to Illinois. As a high school English teacher, I taught a number of courses in the department, but my favorite to teach was a dual-credit advanced composition course through Purdue University Calumet, a course that enabled me to apply the lessons and skills I developed as a writing tutor at Purdue. Designed to teach writing as a process by enabling students to practice, evaluate, and revise their writing through workshops, the collaborative nature of the course mimicked a writing center environment.

Currently, I am a communications consultant for School District U-46 in Elgin, Illinois, and I am working on my master's degree in rhetoric and professional writing at Northern Illinois University. As a graduate student, I tutored in the University Writing Center in the spring, and this fall I am teaching first year composition. As a new English 103 instructor, I am enrolled in a teaching practicum to learn about composition pedagogy. In this course, I have had the opportunity to share with my colleagues my beliefs about the teaching of writing, which has been heavily (and positively) influenced by my experiences at the Purdue Writing Lab. Just as engaging students in a conversation about their writing, tailoring feedback to their individual concerns, and watching them grow as writers makes teaching English 103 truly enjoyable, it is also what I loved most about tutoring at the Purdue Writing Lab.

Making our Scholarship Visible

Writing Lab Establishes New Digital Repository

Writing center activities and scholarship are rarely available in digital form but are in high demand, especially as post-secondary institutions seek to improve their resources for writing support. With this in mind, the Writing Lab is collecting Lab-related scholarly materials to be added to Purdue's digital institutional repository, known as e-Pubs (<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu>). Since the project began last spring, over 25 dissertations, conference presentations, and published articles by current and former Writing Lab tutors and staff have been added to e-Pubs.

Through the Writing Lab's digital repository, we hope to change what counts as writing center research as well as help demonstrate the scholarly nature of writing center work. We also aim to provide a national resource for writing program administrators

and faculty who are interested in building or improving upon their own writing centers. By including information that is not accessible elsewhere—for example, workshops, training materials, and assessment documents—this repository will provide tangible materials for writing center development.

We are continuing to gather published and unpublished scholarship from Writing Lab tutors, staff, and alumni, and we hope to hear from you. If you have published or presented writing center research while a student at Purdue, please fill out our online submission form at <http://goo.gl/forms/4WWI5t65KU>.

Stacy Nall
Graduate Teaching Assistant

OWL News

The OWL News article took a brief hiatus while we were working on our OWL 20th Anniversary Retrospective Special issue of *The Alumni Annotations*, but we're back this fall. Since our Fall 2013 update, we've been rather busy expanding the Purdue OWL and partnering with some amazing professors and students here at Purdue. Here are some of the highlights.

Throughout the Spring and Summer of 2014, the Purdue OWL had completed a number of projects including an expansion of

our 7-12 grade writing resources, and the creation of resources focusing on video résumés and writing press releases. During the Spring of 2014, we partnered with Dr. Margie Bern's ESL Curriculum Development class. This allowed us to tap talent who we may not have been able to draw on otherwise. Her students developed a number of resources, some of which have already gone live. For example, one group of students added significantly to our second language (L2) writing vidcast series with the creation of a three vidcasts on citation written specifically for an L2

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audience. Another group of rather design-savvy students created an entirely new resource type—the classroom mini-poster. We have toyed with posters in the past, but this group of student-developers brought a whole new take on it. The posters that they have developed focus on one issue at a time, and come in either a mini-wall poster size, or in a binder size. These will be launching in a few weeks, and we will continue to pursue new methods of utilizing this new resource type.

This fall, we welcomed five new content developers to the Purdue OWL family. They'll be focusing on projects that range from writing donation requests to breaking down writing prompts for L2 writers to understanding MLA formatting for high school writers. Also this semester, we are partnering with Dr. Michael



Salvo's Advanced Professional Writing class. This partnership is geared towards helping us to plan and to spin up our next round of usability testing. This testing will inform design and revision decisions at the Purdue OWL that should

make our site more easily usable for our end-users around the globe. Needless to say, it's going to be a very exciting semester at the OWL's nest.

If you missed our special retrospective issue, you can access it through the following URL: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20140419120045_991.pdf

Joshua Paiz
OWL Coordinator

New Faces around the Lab



At left: New GTAs Amelia Chesley, Allison Layfield, Heejung Kwon, Park Parkison, Meghan Buckley, Brittany Biesiada, and Director Rick Johnson-Sheehan. At right: Rick with new GTAs Julia Smith, Priya Sirohi, Erin Cromer, and Carrie Kancillia.

Rick Johnson-Sheehan, Interim Director

Many of you know me already, but I'll give a somewhat formal introduction. This is my eleventh year as a professor at Purdue, and I was a professor at the University of New Mexico for nine years. My background includes directing the Rhetoric and Writing program at UNM and the ICaP program at Purdue. My research interests are rhetoric of science, technical communication, environmental rhetoric, classical rhetoric, and ancient Celtic rhetoric. I have published in all those areas. I am probably best known for my books, which include *Writing Today*, *Technical Communication Today*, *Argument Today* (you're sensing a theme, I'm sure), and *Writing Proposals*. I teach courses in classical rhetoric, medical and environmental writing, writing program assessment, proposal writing, editing, and nature and science writing. Directing the Writing Lab is an unexpected challenge, but I'm enjoying working in a whole new area of writing studies.



Laryn Morgan, Writing Lab Receptionist

I started working full time at the Writing Lab in September 2014 after being a Work Study Receptionist. I recently graduated from Purdue in May 2014 with a degree in Retail Management. I am from Indianapolis, IN. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends and volunteering.

Chris Voeglein, Writing Lab Secretary

I started at Purdue developing a website for the Department of Technology Leadership & Innovation in July of 2013, and I joined the Writing Lab in March of this year; before that I worked for several years in communications at the National Academy of Science. It's been both pleasant and stimulating to work with all of the talented folks in the Writing Lab, and I look forward to continuing to support the Lab's important work.



I moved to Lafayette from Baltimore about a year ago with my partner, who is working on her PhD in the Biology Department. In my spare time I like reading, bicycling, and playing the drums (poorly).

Current Graduate Teaching Assistants

Brittany Biesiada—English Literature
 Meghan Buckley—Literature
 Amelia Chesley—Rhetoric and Composition
 Erin Cromer—Rhetoric and Composition
 Amy Elliot—Victorian Literature
 Karen Feiner—Theory and Cultural Studies
 Jeffrey Gerding—Rhetoric and Composition
 Trey Gorden—Medieval Literature
 Carrie Kancilia—Theory and Culture Studies

Heejung Kwon—English/Second Language Studies
 Allison Layfield—American Literature
 Patrick Love—Rhetoric and Composition
 Sean Mitsein—Rhetoric and Composition
 Stacy Nall—Rhetoric and Composition
 Park Parkison—Victorian Literature
 Priya Sirahi—Rhetoric and Composition
 Julia Smith—Theory and Cultural Studies

Current UTAs and BWCs

Mary Adkins—English & Professional Writing/Global Studies
 Colin Baker—Pharmacy
 John Bomkamp—Pharmacy
 Ariel Callahan—Accounting
 Bridget Carey—Public Relations and Strategic Communications
 Sarah Claucherty—Professional Writing/Women's Studies
 Shannon Israelson—Physics

Katie Martin—History/American Studies
 Nisha Nagarajan—Professional Writing/Computer Graphics
 Technology
 Haley Sands—Political Science
 Amberly Simpson—Psychology & Creative Writing/Dance
 Rebekah Thomas—Elementary & Special Education
 Koda Witsken—Honors History

Conference Presentations & Publications

"ESL Training for Writing Center Tutors," Vicki Kennell, *Academic Exchange Quarterly*.

Conference on College Composition and Communication 2014

"Centering Our Stories: Applying Spatial Metaphors to Writing Center Publicity," Stacy Nall. [Read at Purdue e-Pubs »](#)

"Expanding Audiences for Online Writing Labs: Owls in the English as a Foreign Language Context," Joshua M. Paiz.

"The Stories We Tell: Narratives, Institutional Discourse, and the Public Documents of Writing Centers Part III," Tammy Conard-Salvo. [Read at Purdue e-Pubs »](#)

East Central Writing Centers Association Conference 2014

"Increasing Writing Center Visibility: The Political Rationale," Ellery Sills. [Read at Purdue e-Pubs »](#)

"Soaring into the Future: The Purdue OWL and Supporting the Next Generation of Writers," Tammy Conard-Salvo, Caitlan Spronk, & Joshua M. Paiz. [Read at Purdue e-Pubs »](#)

8th Intercultural Rhetoric and Discourse Conference

Encouraging the Growth of OWLs Worldwide: Utilizing Intercultural Rhetoric to Inform Best Practices," Joshua M. Paiz.

13th Symposium on Second Language Writing

"Encouraging OWLs to Grow: Content Development Best Practices," Joshua M. Paiz

2014 TESOL Developer's Showcase

"Online Writing Labs: Resources for Second Language Writers," Ghada Gherwash and Joshua M. Paiz

Muriel Harris Tutor Development Fund

This fund was established in honor of Muriel "Mickey" Harris, who founded the Writing Lab in 1976 and retired in May 2003. The fund recognizes the groundbreaking work Mickey achieved in building an international writing center community. Your tax-deductible gift to this fund enables tutors in the Writing Lab to pursue professional development, and helps foster Mickey's longstanding philosophy of encouraging both undergraduate and graduate tutors to participate in conferences, presentations, and workshops.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Harris Fund, to the Writing Lab, or to the OWL, please make checks payable to the Purdue Foundation, with either The Writing Lab, OWL (Online Writing Lab) or Muriel Harris Tutor Development Fund in the memo line. Checks should be mailed to the following address:

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

You can also give online at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/986/01>. When prompted to choose a fund, select "Click to view additional funds," then select "Other." Specify The Writing Lab, OWL (Online Writing Lab) or Muriel Harris Tutor Development Fund in the appropriate box.



GTAs Trey and Karen at work in the Writing Lab.

Our Alumni Annotations newsletter is published and emailed 2-3 times per year. If you are not receiving the Alumni Annotations newsletter as an email PDF file, and would like to or would like to contribute to our publication, please contact our secretary Chris Voeglein at cvoeglei@purdue.edu.