



Alumni Annotations

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

Spring 2015

Message from the Director

Since the late 1990s, the routines of the academic year for me coincided with telltale signs of fall in New York City: The shuttering of boardwalk shops on Coney Island, crisp morning rides along the harbor, the turning of leaves across the city, and the cheering of marathon runners from my stoop in Brooklyn on the first Sunday morning of November. Campus life also returned with the familiar hum and frenzy of staff meetings, course prep, student advising, and faculty collaboration. This fall marks a homecoming of sorts for me, a return to home in the Midwest where I grew up. I've swapped the daily commuter calculus of getting to St. John's from my Bay Ridge neighborhood with the least traffic resistance for a new world of bike and CityBus transit in greater Lafayette. Breaking up my drive time with long phone calls to my family in Iowa has given way to weekend trips to tackle long honey-do handyman lists for my elderly parents. My urban granny-cart for shopping and laundry has been retired in favor of canvas bags to haul farmer's market bounty.



But coming back to the Midwest also means returning to my undergraduate roots in writing centers. Twenty-five years ago, I was a first-year student enrolled Rhetoric 10-1, the first of a sequence of core communication courses at the University of Iowa meant to bridge students to the discourse conventions of academic expression. I don't recall the content of what my professor asked me to produce, but I vividly remember him and his request that each paper be read aloud and recorded onto mini-cassette tapes that I'd turn into him along with a hard copy ripped from my dot-matrix printer. The professor, a visually-impaired graduate student in the Iowa Writer's

Workshop Program, would have a friend of his write annotations on my papers, and he'd record a spoken response to my writing. Reading my writing aloud would become a common practice for me, both as a writer myself but eventually as a tutor over the years. At some point, he suggested that the writing center on campus might be helpful to me. Ever obedient, I trotted off to meet a tutor, not knowing at the time that I was collaborating with someone in a space that has an important place in the history of writing centers, as Neal Lerner writes about in *The Idea of the Writing Laboratory*.

Flash forward a few more years, I'm doing my first stint of graduate school at the University of Colorado's Colorado Springs (UCCS) campus and getting ready to graduate with an MA in critical sociology and head to Temple University in Philadelphia to study the rhetoric of social movements in a doctoral program. I found out my funding was going to come out of a place called the writing center. At the moment, I vaguely remembered my experience back at Iowa, so my advisor suggested I go to meet the folks who ran UCCS' own writing center to get advice about how to be more informed and educated about what people do in these tutoring spaces. The director squinted her eyes at me, probably suspicious at my breezy audacity ("Tell me what I need to know (in the next five minutes)."), and hands me two books and a pile of handouts to read before I get to Philly. The books were the *Practical Tutor* and Mickey Harris' *Tutoring One-to-One*, and the pile of handouts were a stack of *Writing Lab Newsletters* that came out of Purdue University.

continued, p. 2

Heavilon Hall 226

(765) 494-3723

writing.lab@purdue.edu

Purdue University • College of Liberal Arts • Department of English

cont. from p. 1

Who knew some twenty-two years later, I'd end up back in the Midwest, in the fall, in another writing center, in the Writing Lab, following in the heels of important figures like Mickey and Linda Bergmann and collaborating with amazing colleagues like Tammy Conard-Salvo, Vicki Kennell, Chris Voeglein, Barb Budreau, and all our outstanding undergraduate and graduate tutors? As I start my tenure as faculty director, Tammy, Vicki, the larger crew, and I are hard at work planning, brainstorming, researching, and writing proposals to innovate and reimagine the Writing Lab, keeping it as the gold standard for one-to-one and small group mentoring around writing and as the space for cutting-edge writing center scholarship. To that end, we anticipate rolling out online scheduling and tutoring this year for the Purdue campus community, hosting the Writing Centers Research Project Survey through the Purdue OWL and Purdue Libraries, and collaborating with Purdue's Office of Institutional Research to conduct a longitudinal analysis of Writing Lab use.

The Writing Lab continues its powerful journey of collaborating with writers, fostering institutional research, and advocating for teaching and learning around writing as a venue for social change. I'm humbled and honored to help lead this important community.

Harry Denny
Director, Writing Lab
Associate Professor, English

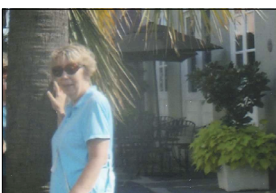
New Faces Around the Lab



New GTAs Beth Towle, Liz Boyle, April Urban, and Talisha Haltiwanger-Morrison (front row) and Mitchell Terpstra, Anthony Sutton, Alex Mouw, and Katie Hummel (back), pictured at left with new Director Harry Denny.

Also joining the tutoring staff this semester are BWCs Mary Beth Deitz and Eliana Yu and UTA Vinh-Hoa Ngo (at right).

New Support Staff—Barb Budreau, Receptionist



I started working full-time at the Writing Lab in October 2015, before that I worked at McCutcheon High School in the Media Center. I graduated from Purdue in Child Development. I am originally from a rural area in northwest Indiana. In my spare time I love to listen to music, sing, cook, bake, read, hike and take long walks. I also enjoy volunteering and spending time with my family and friends.

Alumni Profiles



Lizzie Berkovitz

UTA 2011–2013

As an English/Spanish major in an economy where people were known to struggle finding jobs, I was fully aware that I needed to have some meaningful experiences on my résumé to land a good job post-graduation. I was a UTA and UTA Coordinator at the Writing Lab from 2011 to 2013. My experience at the Writing Lab quickly became more than just a few lines on the résumé. I found many mentors in Tammy and the community of wonderful GTAs, who were always there to talk through career options, resumes, grad school, and more. I'll never forget Mary McCall's delicious baked goods, either.

Since graduating, I moved to Washington, D.C. and work for a large management consulting firm. My work has focused on digital and customer experience work for government agencies. I often hear this is an untraditional path for an English major, however, I find I use just about every skill I learned in college and at the Writing Lab in my day to day work. We are often presenting ideas to clients, spending hours working on presentations that have client-friendly language. We are analyzing the root causes of client issues daily, much like I spent many hours analyzing Shakespeare's deeper meanings in his couplets. Many times, we even draft emails for clients to send, and it's hard to argue that an English major doesn't come in handy with a task such as that. As I continue my career in the corporate world, I often think how I miss the environment of the Writing Lab. It will always remain one of my favorite college experiences.



Scott Peters

UTA 2002–2006

I was an UTA and the UTA Coordinator from 2003 – 2006. This was really a perfect experience for me since I was, at the time, training to be a secondary English teacher. Although I never ended up with a job as a traditional English teacher, I did go back to grad school and ended up earning my PhD in Educational Psychology. I'm now a Professor of Educational Foundations at the University of Wisconsin-White-water. There's no doubt that all of that time spent working on writing with students helped me both in my own writing and also in the writing instruction I do with graduate stu-

dents. Every year I work with students as they begin their research thesis or graduate capstone experience. This includes counselors, teachers, and school administrators, and always they struggle with the writing. The feedback I provide still holds to all of the things learned and practiced in my days in the Writing Lab. I wrote my first scholarly article while a UTA (with Tammy Conard-Salvo and Janet Alsop) about the benefits of the tutoring experience for pre-service teachers. That kicked off my interest in research and scholarly writing that led me to publish my first book in 2013, and I have two more under contract. Writing is a huge part of my professional life and there's no doubt in my mind that my time in the Writing Lab is the reason why.

Tutor Spotlight

John Bomkamp, UTA

This past summer, I worked with Tammy Conard-Salvo to write an article for the *Writing Lab Newsletter*. As UTA Coordinator last year, I suggested the Purdue Writing Lab take advantage of a web platform created on campus called Passport, which allows UTAs and BWCs to earn digital badges for their accomplishments and work with the Writing Lab. I discovered this platform after using it in some of my courses in pharmacy school. I found the experience of writing a journal article as a UTA rewarding and unique compared to my pharmacy coursework. Usually, I spend most of my days studying medications, molecules, and treatment algorithms. So, writing an article for a journal dealing with writing center scholarship was truly outside of my comfort zone. Participating in the processes of drafting, revising, and submitting a piece of writing are all experiences few, if any, of my pharmacy colleagues have been a part of while at Purdue. In addition, publishing an article has led to new conversations with fellow writers and UTAs, which allows me to form connections with new people. As I prepare to begin my rotations as a PharmD candidate in the coming year, I know I will use this experience to improve patients' lives. For example, the publication process gave me the chance to collaborate with a colleague, Tammy. This will benefit me as a student pharmacist. Patients are cared for by a healthcare team, and being able to work with others is critical in making sure patients receive the best possible care. In conclusion, I hope more UTAs will take advantage of the opportunities that come along with publishing a piece of writing.

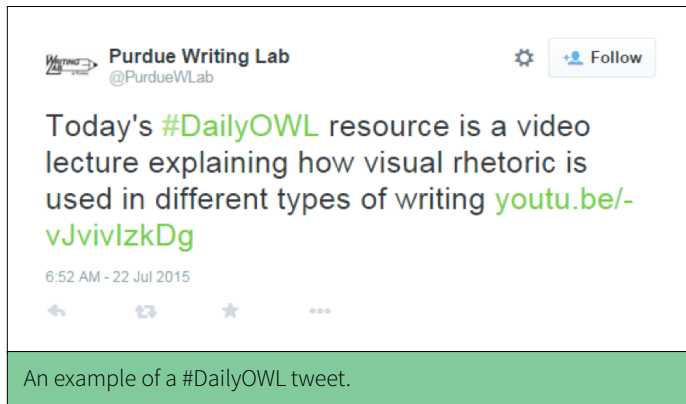


continued, p. 4

cont. from p. 3

Jeff Gerding, GTA

In summer 2015 the Writing Lab's official Twitter account ([@PurdueWLab](#)) launched a new hashtag, [#DailyOWL](#). The idea behind the hashtag is to let our followers know about a useful or interesting OWL resource every single day. In ad-



dition to raising awareness about the sheer variety of content and features on the OWL, the [#DailyOWL](#) hashtag also creates a centralized way for our followers to see which resources we have featured in the past. By clicking [#DailyOWL](#) on an individual tweet, Twitter users are taken to a page showing any Tweet containing the hashtag. In the future we will continue to use [#DailyOWL](#) to get the word out about the terrific resources created by our content developers. Keep an eye out for [#DailyOWL](#) and Tweet at us if you have suggestions for content that should be featured!

Mary Beth Deitz, BWC

Alyssa Fanara, UTA

Each year, 40 to 50 students participate in the Purdue London Internship Program, gaining experience in their fields and learning about British culture. We had the privilege of interning for two months at two different publishing companies in central London, Cutting Edge Press and Reaktion Books. Although the companies specialized in producing different types of books, we found that our experiences were relatively similar.

The majority of our work consisted of PR tasks such as creating flyers to be distributed to book sellers, developing a blog tour marketing strategy, and assembling informational packets to be sent to sales representatives. However, we also performed non-PR oriented tasks such as writing book summaries, updating content on the company's website, and researching relevant bookselling trends.

We found that we worked in different office environments during this time. Reaktion Books had ten to fifteen employees, making for a close-knit office environment. Cutting



Alyssa and Mary Beth on an excursion in Scotland.

Edge Press was even smaller in comparison, with interns working right alongside the company's publishing director. Despite these environmental differences, we both found the British charming to work with, and we are now struggling with our newfound tea addictions.

Throughout our respective internships, we got to observe the lifecycle of a book, from the editing phase to the promotional phase to actually publishing the book's first edition. We experienced this final celebratory stage by attending two official book launches, which involved author signings, a movie screening, speeches, wine, music, and networking.

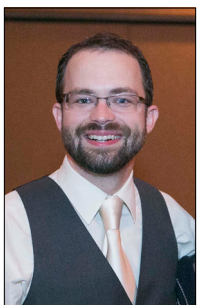
Overall, we believe our internships taught us a lot about the global publishing industry and what it's like to work in a different culture. We can't wait to travel back to London to visit the contacts and friends we made in this beautiful, wacky city. Cheerio!

OWL News

Daniel Kenzie, Content Coordinator

This is an exciting time for the OWL. Our big news this year is our all-new staff, in myself and the new Technical Coordinator, Fernando Sánchez. Before we introduce ourselves, I'll talk about a few other developments over this summer and fall. Traffic has gone up more than 40% in the last year (345,983,269 page views in 2014-5 compared to 246,338,576 in 2013-4). Furthermore, we have just hired several developers to create videos for the Purdue OWL YouTube Channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/OWLPurdue>) on topics as diverse as typography, thesis statements, grammar, and literary criticism. These developers will participate in multiple training workshops with the OWL's Video Production Mentor, Dan Liddle, and will help take the OWL's multimedia resources to the next level. Subscribe to the OWLPurdue Channel with your YouTube account or follow the Purdue OWL News (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/purdueowlnews/>) for updates about new videos.

In addition to videos, the OWL is also expanding its resources on writing in the disciplines, including fields such as health sciences, art history, and film studies. While we are primarily hiring developers from the English department with connections to these fields, we have also begun to hire outside of English, as well.



And now a little about me: I'm a PhD student in Rhetoric and Composition with specializations in Professional Writing, Writing Program Administration, and Public Rhetorics. In addition to working on the OWL, I teach healthcare writing and work as a contract technical writer, and my research focuses on the discourse around traumatic brain injury.

I am happy to be back in the Writing Lab after previously tutoring there for three years and working as Business Writing Coordinator and Workshop & WAC Coordinator. As OWL Content Coordinator, I look forward to developing our video content and resources on disciplinary writing as well as prioritizing accessibility in all content development.

Fernando Sánchez, Technical Coordinator

I'm a PhD candidate in Rhetoric and Composition with specializations in Professional Writing and Writing Program Administration. Before coming to the OWL, I had served as a consultant and webmaster for the writing center at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and for the Graduate Student English Association here at Purdue. In addition to serving as the webmaster for the OWL, I have

taught courses in business, technical and healthcare writing, along with the first-year writing courses.

I am interested in researching how professional writing can contribute to conversations of usability and access beyond the areas of document and web design. My current project examines how designers in such fields as architecture and urban design conceptualize users as they create renderings for public discussion in communities. In both my research and my work at the OWL, I keep conversations of accessibility in mind, paying attention to how professional writers can help in these interactions between experts and non-experts. I am currently on the job market this year so my time as the webmaster for the OWL will be brief, but I hope to continue the work of my predecessors of keeping OWL resources usable and up-to-date.



ESL Corner

Tutors Talk About Working With International Students — Vicki Kennell, ESL Coordinator

Rather than use this space to explain (yet again!) the services we offer for international students, I thought you might enjoy hearing directly from some of our tutors themselves. Here's what they have to say about working with international students in the Writing Lab.

On Tutoring.

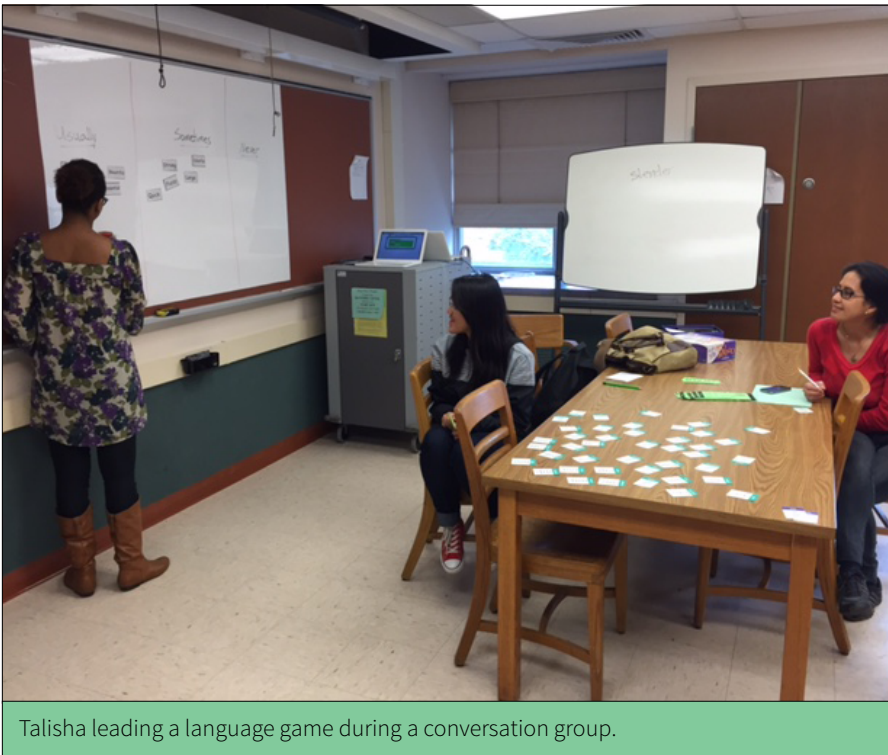
Amy: *I worked with one student in the Writing Lab who was trying to figure out how to say "smog environment" and [he] explained that there is a single word that means this in Chinese but not in English and he didn't know how to express it.*

Patrick: *In some respects, non-native speakers are like every other client because they present unique needs for tutors to respond to. However, their needs require, in many ways, more rethinking of methods than working with a typical native English speaker.*

Jeff: *One thing that surprised me [...] was that many international students frequently asked questions about the expectations of instructors [...] After a few months it became clear to me that the Writing Lab is often seen as a neutral area or safe space that can be much less intimidating than going directly to an instructor for help.*

continued, p. 4

cont. from p. 5



Talisha leading a language game during a conversation group.

On Leading Conversation Groups:

Beth: *This semester is my first time ever doing something like conversation group, and it has been immensely rewarding. Just this week, four of us—all from different countries—talked about voting rights, and all of us at the end could not believe how much we had learned from each other in just an hour.*

Talisha: *I really enjoy leading conversation groups. We usually have a great time. But one time I brought in a quirky card game that I thought was fun and different and offered opportunity for new vocabulary. Unfortunately, the vocabulary was so unfamiliar that it made the game extremely difficult, and, I'm afraid, not all that enjoyable for the students present that day. Lesson learned!*

Writing Lab Publications and Presentations

Tammy Conard-Salvo and John Bomkamp. "Public Documentation of Tutors' Work: Digital Badges in the Writing Center." *WLN: A Journal of Writing Center Scholarship*. September/October 2015.

Tammy Conard-Salvo, Jeffrey Gerding, Stacy Nall, and Harry Denny. "Shantay, you stay!: Lessons from a Case study in Partnering with an On-Campus LGBTQ Center." Roundtable, IWCA Conference, October 2015.

Tammy Conard-Salvo, Andrew Yim, Joshua Paiz, and Michael Salvo. "UxD and Online Writing Labs: Meeting the Needs of a Changing Global Audience." Presentation, Computers and Writing Conference, May 2015.

Harry Denny. "Growing Writing Center Communities Online: New Avenues for Research, Collaboration, and Support." IWCA Conference, October 2015.

Harry Denny. "Bean-counting Evolved: Understanding and Using the National Census on Writing and IWCA WCRP Survey to Foster Research Inquiry." Presentation, IWCA Conference, October 2015.

Harry Denny, Cara Messina, and Michael Reich. "Embracing the Challenges of Conventional Practices, Program Inquiry, and New Media in Writing Center Theory and Research." *Composition Studies*. Fall 2015.

Harry Denny and Robert Mundy. "No Homo!: Toward and Intersection of Sexuality and Masculinity for Working-Class Men." *Class in the Composition Classroom*, Bill Condon and Genesee Carter (eds.), Utah State University Press. In press.

Harry Denny, Lori Salem and John Nordlof. "Understanding the Needs and Expectations of Working-Class Students in Writing Centers" Panel, IWCA Conference, October 2015.

Vicki Kennell. "To Correct or Not to Correct: The Ethics of Addressing Grammar in Writing Center Tutorials." Presentation, ECWCA Conference, April 2015

Patrick Love and Beth Towle. "Using Policy Statements in the Writing Center." Presentation, IWCA Conference October 2015.

Current Graduate Teaching Assistants

Elizabeth Boyle—Literary Studies
 Amy Elliot—Victorian Literature
 Jeffrey Gerding—Rhetoric & Composition
 Talisha Haltiwanger—Rhetoric & Composition
 Katherine Hummel—Literary Studies
 Carrie Kancilia—Theory & Cultural Studies
 Heejung Kwon—Second Language Studies
 Sean Mitsein—Rhetoric & Composition
 Alex Mouw—Creative Writing
 Shawn "Park" Parkison—Victorian Literature
 Ellery Sills—Rhetoric & Composition
 Priya Sirohi—Rhetoric & Composition
 Anthony Sutton—Creative Writing
 Mitchell Terpstra—Rhetoric & Composition
 Beth Towle—Rhetoric & Composition
 April Urban—Theory and Cultural Studies

Current UTAs

John Bomkamp—Pharmacy
 Bridget Carey—Public Relations & Strategic Communications
 Sarah Claucherty—Professional Writing; Women's Studies
 Alyssa Fanara—Biology; English
 Carter Gerard—Industrial Design
 Kathryn Lilegdon—Strategic & Organizational Management
 Logan Mahoney—Speech, Language, & Hearing Sciences
 Vinh-Hoa Ngo—Economics
 Zach Riddle—Mass Communication

Current BWCs

Mary Beth Deitz—Professional Writing
 Kaitlyn Neis—Professional Writing; Interdisciplinary Science
 Halley Williams—Health Sciences - Preprofessional
 Eliana Yu—Professional Writing

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 here to view campus, college, school and university-wide gift funds," then select "Other." Specify The Writing Lab, OWL (Online Writing Lab) or Muriel Harris Tutor Development Fund in the appropriate box.

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.