



Alumni Annotations

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

Fall 2016

Message from the Director

We're back in the heart of another fall semester in the Writing Lab: A crush of students coming in to share writing from across the disciplines and ICaP, a new crop of graduate students in the practicum, cohorts of undergraduates in their version of tutor education, and many staffers in the midst of conference season—IWCA, Watson, Second Language. In the flurry of activity of a very typical semester, we continue to pause and reflect on and research how the everyday fits into a rich history of teaching and learning with roots in the Writing Lab.



At the IWCA Conference in Denver, Tammy Conard-Salvo, Elizabeth Geib, Beth Towle, Talisha Haltiwanger Morrison, and I presented on the first research coming out of a year-long celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Writing Lab. I spoke about how my Spring 2016 seminar on writing center theory and administration and our discussions of the need for collaborative and replicable research served as our inspiration. We revisit the work of the Peer Tutor Alumni Research Project (PTARP), amazing research that Brad Hughes, Paula Gillespie, and Harvey Kail conducted at their institutions and published in *Writing Center Journal*. The original article addressed the impact that writing center peer tutoring has on the tutors as they go out into life and made a case for the continued institutional investment into our units as critical sites for teaching and learning as well as writing culture on campus. My co-presenters and I reported on Purdue's institutional context and the history of how the Writing Lab's tutors have been positioned. Our research provides a glimpse at how the Writing Lab's use of graduate students and the OWL complicate and extend PTARP's initial focus on only undergraduates. We showed how that complicated audience gets reflected in how tutors carry forward values differently, how tutoring impacts professional development, and how relationships beyond the Writing Lab with family, partners, and work peers are influenced. We anticipate continuing this work throughout the year, so if you'd like to participate, [click here](#).

This research on our tutor alumni complements the ongoing collaboration we're doing with the Office of Institutional Assessment at Purdue. Many large research university writing centers are exploring the impact of their units on success at college, particularly for undergraduates. At my prior institutions, I explored whether a relationship existed between coming to the writing center and markers of success in college. While we could never argue that a causal relationship exists, at every institution where I have directed, analysis of students' use suggests an impact of writing consultations on grades, retention, and persistence. In its first iteration, that pattern is holding true at Purdue as well: Students who come to the Writing Lab for English 106 (First-year Writing) have better grades than their peers who don't come. Interestingly, that very population who comes in seems to enter the university doing less well on standardized entrance exams (ACT or SAT), yet end up outperforming their peers who do better on those very same tests. Course grades did not turn out to have a significant difference, mainly due to a relative small spread of grades that students get in the course. Our next step is to study whether this impact persists throughout college and whether there are significant differences around retention and graduation.

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Our empirical, quantitative analysis of Writing Lab usage indicates that our traffic in the Writing Lab has been shifting over the years, from majority use by domestic students to an international population, reflecting shifts in admissions and enrollments at the university. With an awareness of the evidence of the efficacy of Writing Lab use, I got the opportunity to speak with pre-departure students in China this summer. I was part of a delegation that visited Beijing, Ningbo, and Shanghai to conduct orientation sessions, to tour partner universities, and to learn about the communities from which our Chinese international students come. Although I have traveled outside the US before, I was struck by the beauty of China as I got the chance to visit typical tourist sites, and I better understand its vastly different cultural and social dynamics. To prepare for the visit, the Global Partnership Program taught me conversational Mandarin and worked to educate the delegation on the history, culture, and politics of China. The trip was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Given my own struggles to communicate and integrate into everyday life in the communities we visited, I have a renewed respect for our international students learning and living in our culture.

Just as I was awed by the majesty of the Bund in Shanghai or the beauty of the Summer Palace in Beijing, walking the hallways of Heavilon and listening to sessions happen around me in the Writing Lab always reminds me of the powerfully rich teaching and learning that happens at Purdue. I look forward to sharing more of the stories in the ever-evolving life of Writing Lab.

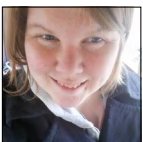
Harry Denny
Director, Writing Lab
Associate Professor, English

New Faces around the Lab



Harry with new GTAs Maryam, Gabriela, Pamela, McKinley, Rebekah, Elizabeth, Eugie, and Rachel.

New Support Staff—Sadie Spencer, Receptionist



I started working in the Writing Lab in early October. I am the mother to a wonderful little boy, and I cherish all the time I get to spend with him. In my spare time I enjoy reading, creating art and teaching my son about the world.

Alumni Profiles

Daphne Hou

UTA 2012 – 2014

After I graduated in the winter of 2015, I started my career as a Human Resources Professional with Cummins Inc. in a small southern Indiana town called Columbus where its headquarters sit. My current role is Talent Management specialist. Together with my team and manager, we support a whole function of employees globally in areas of employee attraction, development, retention, workforce planning and so on. It began with an internship with Cummins in the summer of 2015. After the career fair and two rounds of intense interviews, I got the offer to be a Talent Management intern at Cummins. The three-month internship offered me a great opportunity to work on workforce planning, learning and development, and change management projects. The interesting project topics and supportive work culture made my summer a fruitful and meaningful one, and this helped me make an easy decision to come back full time when an offer was made. That is how I started my first job out of college.



As excited as I am to start this new chapter of life, I also couldn't help but think back and realize how far I have come since freshman year and the rich experience and help I received from so many people at Purdue. My Writing Lab experience surely counts as one of the highlights in my college life. Something unique that the Lab gave me was confidence. As an ESL student, I still remember how I struggled in ENGL 106, a required English Composition Class, compared to my American peers. Luckily, I met a great instructor and mentor who helped me adjust my writing skills to an English language context and also opened the door to becoming a tutor at the Lab. After taking a semester long tutor training course, I was selected to officially become a tutor; not only that, I became an English writing tutor as an international student whose first language is Chinese! You can imagine how thrilled and honored I was to be trusted with this position. Since then, the language confidence barrier has been taken down gradually. In the following two and half years, I have gained so much valuable experience and skills from the Lab that now still serve me at work in many aspects: building rapport, effective communication, providing feedback, and engaging audience, just to name a few. In the interview with Cummins, I answered with scenarios I recalled from the tutoring sessions that were too

vivid to ignore. And I believe the Lab tutoring experience spoke for itself in helping me get the offer. Beyond that, the idea of helping other students improve rooted and grew in me; now working in the space of Talent Management, my belief in people's potential and development has still been a big motivator for me to go to work every day.

In the end, I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Mary McCall, my ENGL 106 instructor, great mentor and friend, and our associate director Tammy, who has trusted and helped me in reaching my own full potential.

Danielle Cordaro

GTA 2007 – 2010

Last September, I had just opened the Digital, Written and Oral Communication (DWOC) Studio at the University of Mount Union. It was the third in a series of identity shifts that took us from a traditional writing center (2004-2013), to a center for writing and oral communication (2013-2015) and finally to the DWOC Studio in the fall of 2015. The changes came fast, and were the result of a major overhaul of our undergraduate curriculum, one that now required writing and speaking in all general education courses. In the new curriculum, students were required to construct ePortfolios to demonstrate their learning at critical points in their career, and we had to be ready to help them. The DWOC Studio was born out of necessity, to create a space where students could work on a number of multimodal projects with an excited, engaged, and trained undergraduate staff.



By the end of September, I was catching my breath. The summer had been spent working with architects on our new space, deciding which hardware and software to purchase, and revising the curriculum for the consultant training course. I was also in the process of writing a sabbatical proposal—finding myself in the position of being an accidental "expert" on multimodal composing, I wanted to spend some time developing materials to teach consultants how to do this new work. As I was finishing the research for my sabbatical proposal, I got an email from Kim Ballard, the director of the writing center at my alma mater, with the subject line, "Gulp: Is it time for Mount Union to Host ECWCA in spring 2016?"

I had known this day was coming—it had been about ten years since Mount Union had hosted ECWCA, but I was

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hoping that the call wouldn't come this year, not when we were still very much in the throes of transitioning to our new space and our new roles. It took a few days, but after some conversations with my staff and with a colleague who had handled the ECWCA conference in the past, we decided to go for it. My staff and I quickly pulled together a conference theme that reflected what we'd been talking about and studying—supporting multimodal writing and speaking. The conference CFP asked participants to consider what things about writing centers would change to meet the needs of multimodal composers, and how we as consultants and directors would also need to change. We were lucky in securing David Sheridan as our keynote speaker, who gave a memorable talk about how multiliteracy centers can support the "anti-curriculum." My staff was energized by David's talk, and by all of the sessions they attended.

Although it was a challenge (sometimes a physical challenge) for this mentally exhausted director to contest with the considerable trial of organizing a regional conference with over 150 participants, I found that it was well worth it in the end. The consultants learned just how big a bite we had taken with our identity shift and space reorganization, and started to understand just how much of an impact they could have on the communication literacies of those around them.

Tutor Spotlight: Online Tutoring

Assem Imangaliyeva, UTA
Anthony Sutton, GTA

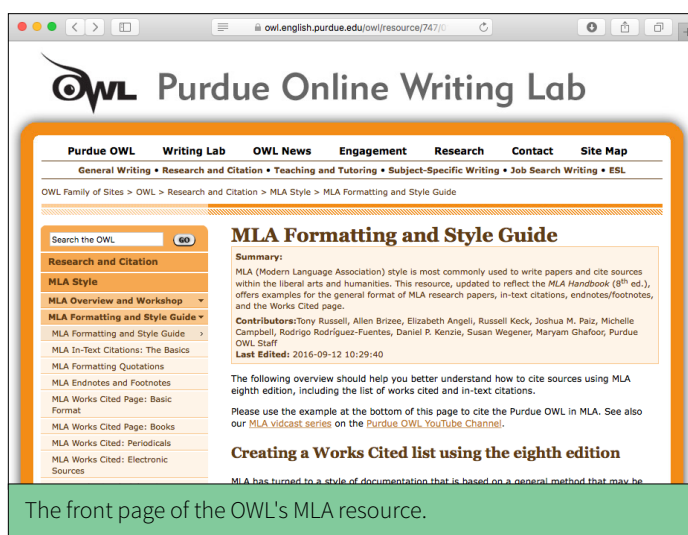
This summer the Writing Lab fully initiated online tutoring sessions. These sessions come in two forms which we refer to as eTutoring (asynchronous) and online tutoring (synchronous). In eTutoring sessions, the client uploads their document and sets the session time for either thirty minutes or an hour, in which the tutor reads and gives feedback in the time allotted. In online tutoring, the sessions occur in real-time where the client is able to chat with the tutor while their document is displayed.

These new tutoring models increase the Writing Lab's accessibility beyond the physical space. One instance is that we can now have sessions with students who are traveling—domestically or internationally. Additionally, students with busy schedules that don't allow them to attend face-to-face appointments are able to use e-tutoring as an additional resource. Current tutors have found that the online sessions encourage them to recalibrate their practices based on the differences between physical and digital interactions.

OWL News

Dan Kenzie, OWL Content Coordinator

One of the OWL's most popular sets of resources is our pages on Modern Languages Association (MLA) Style, and the OWL staff is proud to announce that those resources are current with MLA's 8th edition, which was released earlier this year. The new MLA Style represents more than just a few changes to citation format. Rather than having separate rules for each source type, MLA now presents a flexible, consistent process for developing citations of any source for a Works Cited list, be it a scholarly article or a Flickr image. In practice, the new edition is consistent with past editions in many ways, but there are some significant differences.



The front page of the OWL's MLA resource.

Writers and educators can find the OWL's MLA 8 resources at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. In addition to updating our many citation examples, these resources include a new page explaining the current process for developing Works Cited citations, an updated Frequently Asked Questions page, and a page comparing the 7th and 8th editions. A video comparing the two editions will join our [YouTube channel](#) very shortly, and a full suite of videos about MLA 8 will follow in December 2016. Many thanks to OWL developers Susan Wegener and Maryam Ghafoor for their work on the new pages and to our friends at Pearson for lending support. Thanks also to developers Ryan Buss, Eliza Gellis, Derek Sherman, Christina George, and OWL Video Content Mentor Daniel Liddle for their work on the new videos.

A final thanks to our users around the world for keeping the Purdue OWL one of the premier writing resources on the web. To be alerted about new resources, please subscribe to the [Purdue OWL News](#) RSS Feed.



This semester we held a meeting that included the entire Writing Lab staff for the first time. We provided food and everyone participated in a fun activity sharing their Writing Lab experiences.

At left, from top: Harry and Sadie, BWCs Eliana and Jasmin, GTAs Hadi and April. At right: Everyone!

Presentation and Publications

Harry Denny. "Most Served, Least Served, Best Served?: Writing Center Assessment as Advancing Social Justice Dialogue." Presentation, CCCC Convention, April 2016.

Harry Denny, Stacy Nall, Micholas Marino, Jeffery Gerding, and Tammy Conard-Salvo. "Slow and Lasting Change: Microshifts and the Development of Activist Writing Centers and Writing Programs." Panel discussion, CCCC Convention, April 2016.

Harry Denny. "Visualizing the Labor of Writing Center through RAD Research: Toward the Materiality of the Everyday Work of Teaching and Learning for Students,

Staff, and Professionals." Panel discussion chair, CCCC Convention, April 2016.

Elizabeth Geib. "The Appropriation and Uses of Time: Shifting Through Identity in Writing Center Sessions." Presentation, NEXUS 2016 Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference: Alt + Shift: Unlocking Alternative Methodologies and Marginal Positions, March 2016.

Beth Towle. "Tutoring as (Hard) Labor: How Assessment Makes Writing Center Work Visible to Institutions." Presentation, CCCC Convention, April 2016.

Current GTAs

Rachel Atherton—Rhetoric & Composition
 Hadi Banat—Second Language Studies
 Pamela Carralero—Theory & Cultural Studies
 Amy Elliot—Victorian Literature
 Gabriela Garcia—Fiction
 Elizabeth Geib—Rhetoric & Composition
 Maryam Ghafoor—Poetry
 Talisha Haltiwanger—Rhetoric & Composition
 Carrie Kancilia—Theory & Cultural Studies
 Alex Mouw—Poetry
 McKinley Murphy—Poetry
 Eugie Ruiz—Rhetoric & Composition
 Rebekah Sims—Rhetoric & Composition
 Julia Smith—Theory & Cultural Studies
 Anthony Sutton—Creative Writing
 Mitchell Terpstra—Rhetoric & Composition
 Beth Towle—Rhetoric & Composition
 April Urban—Theory & Cultural Studies

Current UTAs

Mackenzie Chapman—Biology; Spanish
 Assem Imangaliyeva—Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences
 Logan Mahoney—Speech, Language, & Hearing Sciences
 Isha Mehta—Brain & Behavioral Science
 Ashish Patel—Aeronautical & Astronautical Engineering
 Zach Riddle—Mass Communication
 Martin Tuskevicius—Computer Science
 Sydney Vander Tuin—Psychology; Creative Writing

Current BWCs

Jasmin Osman—Political Science; Professional Writing
 Ellen Teske—Management
 Grace Winn—English; Professional Writing
 Eliana Yu—Professional 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 as 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 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.