



Purdue
Writing
Lab

Alumni Annotations

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

Spring 2019

Message from the Director



Spring has arrived on campus. For all of us, we'd like to think that means the return of migrating birds, the increase of temperatures and more sunny days, and perhaps even the appearance of colorful crocuses and tulips across a landscape that was brown for months. In the Greater Lafayette area, the true signs of spring are road crews and an uptick of campus construction. Sure enough, walking and cycling across campus we dodge and detour around new residence halls, research labs, and other academic buildings. Just outside the Purdue Memorial Union, crews are rushing to finish a new entrance to campus at the corner of Grant and State Streets, because that spot is a popular spot to take graduation pictures. With students about to begin donning caps and gowns to celebrate the culmination of their educations, it's also a good time to mark some milestones this year.

Our very own Tammy Conard-Salvo was honored for her 15th year of service to the university as a director in the Writing Lab. Tammy has become a keystone for the unit, combining professionalism, empathy, activism, and a drive to making teaching, learning, and research better for everyone. She has been a valued mentor for undergraduate and graduate students, staff, and faculty throughout her tenure. I remember when I was deciding on whether to leave St. John's for Purdue – Tammy was a major draw because I've respected her leadership and thinking since I first crossed paths with her decades ago, when we were both much more junior in our careers. To channel Purdue tropes, she forges us all into stronger and more flexible material; she "hammers up" a better Writing Lab in ways large and small, for the everyday and throughout our lives.

We also celebrated a new partnership with Chegg, an educational services company, who will license our OWL content, will help us place advertising on the site, and will seek our advice on the development of artificial intelligence writing tools and apps. The agreement also ensures paid internships with the company at their New York City and San Francisco locations. The relationship promises to infuse the Writing Lab with much needed revenue to improve support for our own graduate students, to enable infrastructure improvements, and to foster innovation around the adoption of technology and pedagogy around writing. Our tutors have already challenged Chegg to think about how writing apps need to consider sentence-level error in the context of frequency, severity, and location in writing. They have challenged developers to think about how English changes as students move from one disciplinary community of practice to another and how English is not just one phenomenon but multiple Englishes, that complicate how any student or faculty member approaches assignments, genre, and rhetoric. Watching our tutors respectfully and supportively coach the app developers made me

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proud because they not only showed how many of the best practices and politics they have internalized, but also how well they act as ambassadors for advocating for writing and writing beyond Heavilon.

Both the Chegg deal and Tammy's anniversary testify to the enduring quality and impact of all that happens in the Writing Lab and through the OWL. They both remind me each day that I'm the luckiest person in the world to have the honor to direct this unit through these exciting and challenging times.

Harry Denny
Director, Writing Lab
Associate Professor, English

New Faces around the Lab



Angela Agnew, Natalie Anderson, Natalie Ciresi, Anne Franke, Taylor Hickey, Alyssa Ignaco, Emily Jones, Emma Krutulis, Gentry Lee, Jennifer Lee, Hang Ma, Kelsey Martin, Sarah Merryman, Toni Neckopulos, Chuqing Ni, Gazal Singh, Ximeng Sun

Alumni Profile

Matt Allen, GTA, 2008 – 2013

Becoming a writing tutor changed the trajectory of my education and career. My experience as a tutor continues to influence my work as an ESL program administrator and teacher in the Purdue Language and Cultural Exchange (or PLaCE program), an ESL instructional and testing unit whose goal is to support international students at the university. As I reflect on my tutoring experiences, they fall into two related themes.

Learning with students

As a grad TA, I once worked a double shift for a semester due to a last-minute staffing need. No biggie, I thought. Well, yes biggie. Tutoring that much was draining and I felt burnt out. At some point, I realized that the schedule wasn't the problem. I had become overconfident and complacent in how I approached tutoring. I thought I had it all figured out. I was more going through the motions of a tutorial than really collaborating with students. Granted, I liked my motions, but it was too general and depersonalized.

I re-engaged with tutoring, committing to work with each student as an individual and to learn with them by making

sure they helped set the agenda and that I tried to follow their needs rather than my pre-conceived tools. The tutoring process of real-time inquiry and explanation pushed me to stretch my thinking and articulate my taken-for-granted knowledge about language and literacy. I have become a whiteboard doodler of some renown, and I think I developed this habit in tutorials, where I worked out suggestions and models for students in session notes.

Learning from colleagues

Writing centers go by many names, and one that I would apply is professional learning community. A PLC involves all faculty in a program in a sustained, structured effort to create and share knowledge about how to improve practice in a specific context. I learned much from working with Writing Lab administrators and tutors on a wide range of projects, from developing tutoring strategies, to running Conversation Groups, to writing a Strategic Plan. I continue to be impressed by their work at the time and since, and I am proud to have been part of Purdue's Writing Lab.

Tutor Spotlight

Rachel Antherton, GTA

This semester, I've been tutoring in the Writing Lab's new daytime satellite location in the Hicks Undergraduate Library. This satellite was envisioned as a partnership between Lab tutors and research librarians, where both groups could work together to help direct students to the right resources at the right time in their processes. As with any new service, it's taken us some time to get rolling, but now we are starting to see more writers coming in for help. These writers are generally representative of the variety of writers we see in the main Heavilon Lab space: international students, students in first year composition, graduate students working on extended projects, and a smattering of students writing job documents, grad school application documents, or other class projects. As for myself, I've mainly worked with regular clients who are dissertating. Looking ahead to the future of the Hicks satellite, I'm hopeful that we can continue developing a relationship with librarians and helping writers with their research..

OWL News

Joseph Forte, OWL Content Coordinator

This fall, the OWL celebrates twenty-five years. In one sense, this is an immense amount of time—twenty-five years ago, I could barely write my own name, let alone appreciate the sort of writing help the fledgling OWL might have been able to offer me. In another sense, however, twenty-five years is the blink of an eye. It is only a small fraction of Purdue's history. It is a much smaller fraction of the history of formal writing instruction. This means that, even viewed in the most charitable light, my tenure at the OWL (one year this May) has amounted a very humble contribution indeed.

Thus, even as this report has demanded that I recount some of the projects I've been blessed to oversee in the past year, I've also found value in reflecting on the enormity of the work that yet remains. Doing this, I think, can give a sense for the role the OWL might play in the educational ecosystem on the eve of its 30th anniversary, its 40th, and beyond.

Here's a "greatest hits" version of what we've worked on this year:

- In the Summer of 2018, we did a great deal of editing on our popular citation resources. This included revamping our sample papers, ensuring that our advice was up-to-date, and screening for sentence-level errors.

Congratulations!

This year marks **Tammy Conard-Salvo's** 15th year at Purdue and the Writing Lab!

At this year's CCCC Annual Convention **Harry Denny** received the 2019 Stonewall Service Award for the Conference on College Composition and Communication, which recognizes members of CCCC/NCTE who have consistently worked to improve the experiences of sexual and gender minorities within the organization and the profession.

This semester **Beth Towle** successfully defended her dissertation "It Depends on Who You Talk To": Mapping Writing Program and Writing Center Relationships at Small Liberal Arts Colleges. She will also start a faculty position at Salisbury University in the fall.

- Starting this Fall, our content developers have written a wide variety of resources for the site. In addition to revamping some of the resources we already offer, we've added resources about film writing, argumentation, creative writing, project documentation, and more.
- We introduced a new video essay format for OWL videocasts in the Fall, and we implemented a three-part production process for these videos. This has been a major undertaking, and, moreover, one that has been subject to continuous change. The videos we wrote and filmed last Fall are being released on a staggered schedule, and the videos we are currently filming will air in the coming Summer and Fall.
- We launched a new series of resources called "OWL Conversations." These present thoughts, dialogues, and arguments about writing in a semi-formal narrative format.
- Finally, the content team has worked closely with IT staff here at Purdue and with Chegg personnel around the country to create content that complements the broader site-wide changes the OWL has recently undergone (see, for instance, our new guide to using citation generators responsibly, which will soon accompany ads for these applications on the site).

Here's a tiny portion of the work that remains:

- We're beginning to develop content that acknowledges multilingual writers. We have an introduction to the study of World Englishes written, and we're planning to release it with a video interview of a professor who studies English outside the Anglosphere. We've also begun to translate our citation resources into multiple languages (starting with Spanish), but this is slow going.
- We're aiming to replicate the success of our engineering documentation series for other discipline-specific projects via the contributions of people outside the English department.
- We're looking for ways to involve the talents of a greater number of students in the content development process. Ideally, we'd like Boilermakers with a wide variety of talents and backgrounds to feel a stake in the OWL's success.
- We're thinking about ways to present the content we already have in forms that new user populations will be able to access.
- Soon, I'd like the OWL to be able to offer videos with higher production values. This will require educating developers (and myself) about the myriad tools available to Purdue students.

I'm immensely grateful for the contributions of our graduate content developers in all of these projects. If there is one thing I have learned for certain in the past year, it is that any future version of the OWL will owe its existence to the diligence and intelligence of my fellow students. That is, after all, how we made it to twenty-five.

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

Angela Agnew—Biochemistry
 Natalie Anderson—Accounting
 Will Austin—Health & Disease; Entomology
 Taylor Barnett—Computer Graphics
 Natalie Ciresi—English; Professional Writing
 Elenil Deypalubos—Pre-Athletic Training
 Coby English—Professional Writing; Political Science
 Anne Franke—English Education
 Taylor Hickey—Professional writing
 Elle Huff—Public Relations
 Alyssa Ignaco—Biomedical Engineering
 Emily Jones—Professional Writing
 Emma Krutulic—English Literature
 Caitlin Lee—Psychology; Linguistics
 Gentry Lee—Brain and Behavioral Science
 Amy Li—Accounting; Dance
 Hang Ma—History Honors; English Literature
 Kelsey Martin—Early Childhood Education & Exceptional Needs
 Caroline McMasters—Professional Writing
 Sarah Merryman—Professional Writing
 Katelyn Meza—Professional Writing, Creative Writing
 Antonia Neckopulos—English Literature
 Chuqing Ni—Mechanical Engineering
 Caroline Peterson—Biochemistry
 Gazal Singh—Biology
 Megan Sommerfield—English; Political Science
 Xinmeng Sun—Computer Science
 Eliza Van—English; Human Services
 Liz Walker—English; Professional Writing
 Chloe Weber—Communications; Human Resource Development
 Shuting Yang—Aeronautical & Astronautical Engineering
 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 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

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