

Summer/Fall 2012

ALUMNI *Annotations*

A NEWSLETTER FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE
PURDUE WRITING LAB

Message from the Director

Fall semester is well under way, and the Writing Lab is usually full and busy. Thanks to the Dean of International Studies, we have two additional graduate tutors (up from our former 15) and an ESL Consultant, Vicki Kennell, Ph.D., who is helping us develop programming for international students. We've had over 550 consultations so far (late September), the three satellite centers are heavily used, and the conversation groups for international students often pack HEAV 224. We've limited in-class workshops to twenty a semester, and the current Workshop/WAC coordinator, Dan Kenzie, continues previous efforts to foster projects in writing in the disciplines. Because the Lab was becoming quite crowded, in-Lab workshops have moved out of the Lab and into other places on campus. Laurie Pinkert, former graduate tutor, is still working closely with us on her Bilsland Strategic Initiative Fellowship project dedicated to determining the kinds of support graduate students need and developing projects to meet them. In late October, I'll be on my way to the International Writing Centers Association conference in San Diego, where I will be speaking in two sessions and co-leading a SIG on the role of writing centers in graduate education. I hope I'll see some of you there!



*Dr. Linda Bergmann, Director
Professor of English*

New Faces Around The Lab



Linda Bergmann with new graduate tutors, on left: Scott Partridge, Sean Mitsein, Slaney Chadwick Ross, Heather Wicks, Rebekah Mitsein, and Dana Rodgers. On right: in back: Juan Meneses, Mary McCall (ICAP Liaison), Linda Bergmann, Gina Hurley, Yubraj Aryal (who is taking 502 Practicum course, not tutoring), Chris Dorn. Right front: Helen Knight, Hwanhee Park and Mary Beth Harris. Not pictured: Aylin Atilgan

ALUMNI PROFILE



Rob Davidson, Associate
Professor of English
Graduate Program Coord.
California State University

In the Purdue University Writing Lab, I learned the art of attentive listening. A session really begins when the student begins to speak, explaining the paper's aims and goals, and how she has tried to meet those goals. Initially, I talk as little as possible, chiming in with follow-up questions, pointing to areas we might need to focus on—but always encouraging the student to speak. It's called steering the ship, and much can be accomplished in just a few minutes of skillful dialogue. Now in my tenth year as a professor of English at California State University, Chico, I use these skills and strategies daily. In the Writing Lab, I also learned the value of community. I remember quite fondly Mickey Harris's open meetings, where no idea ever seemed dumb and people were free to chime in with advice, questions, strategies, concerns. We all knew she was the boss, but it never felt onerous. She had a desk over in the corner, right out in the open conference room. No walls. The very definition of accessible. It was a fun place to work. As Graduate Coordinator of the M.A. in English, I strive to foster a similar environment: fun and open, but also rigorous and engaged. Mickey was all those things, and my colleagues in the Lab—some of whom I am still in touch with—were among the finest people I met at Purdue. Today, it gives me great pleasure when I hear a graduate teaching assistant mention the OWL website and all the fantastic

resources there. When I tell them I used to work there, that in fact I may have written an ancient draft of that MLA worksheet they so love, the students are always surprised. "It's a great website," they say. "What a cool place to work." And so it is.



Rob in the Lab

NEW STAFF

When I finished my doctorate here at Purdue, I never imagined that someday I'd be back. My degree was in 20th-century British literature. Along the way, I had taken the necessary courses to earn what was then called an ESL endorsement (now, I believe, a "graduate certificate") and had taught the international version of freshman composition. In fact, if Purdue offered a composition class for freshmen, I taught it at least once during my years as a grad student (regular, advanced, computer, international . . .). Despite having a literature focus to my degree, I have always enjoyed helping others with their writing, so moving into a writing center position seemed a good fit.

As ESL Specialist in Purdue's Writing Lab, my job will involve a wide range of activities. One of the immediate needs is for more ESL training for current tutors and 106 GTAs. I will be conducting this training via in-house staff meetings, brown bag sessions, and practicum class discussions. These sessions should enable grad tutors and undergraduate tutors to address the particular issues international students bring to the lab. In addition, I will take over the "ESL coordinator" position and continue programs that are already in place, such as the daily conversation groups. The long-range plan for my position involves developing further programs to address some of the specific needs that arise due to the sheer numbers of international students at Purdue and in the Writing Lab. With 73% of Writing Lab uses by internationals, the challenge is set—it remains to be seen how successfully we meet it.



Vicki Kennell, ESL Specialist
The Writing Lab



Josh Paiz, Purdue OWL
Coordinator

Greetings! My name is Joshua Paiz, new content coordinator for the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL). The Purdue OWL is a very large resource utilized by people all over the globe, and I am both honored and humbled to be a part of the Purdue OWL staff—to be responsible for assisting in overseeing the OWL’s maintenance, development, and continued growth over the coming year. I’m also thrilled to get to interact with Purdue OWL users from all over the globe, and even more excited to get to work with the bright, dedicated Purdue OWL content developers—the people responsible for creating the resources that our users love and appreciate so much.

Again, I’m rather excited to be part of the Purdue OWL staff. It allows me to gain scores of new experiences, but it also allows me to call on long dormant skills. Before entering academic work three years ago, I held a number of management and supervisory positions in both the retail and the entertainment industries. I believe that these skills—planning, implementing, training, and supervising—will be key to having a successful year at the Purdue OWL.

Academically, I come out of second language studies (SLS) programs focusing on English as a second language (ESL) teaching and learning—I hold a master of arts degree from the University of

Toledo (Go Rockets!) in this area, and I am currently pursuing my Ph.D. in this field here at Purdue University (Boiler Up!). Given the myriad contexts in which the Purdue OWL is utilized, I feel that this background in SLS/ESL will be key in helping the Purdue OWL to grow its resources geared towards teachers and learners in contexts where English is being learned as an additional language.

The Purdue OWL: Recent History and Future Directions

Recent History

Things have been quite exciting at the Purdue OWL over recent months. In April 2011 we launched our YouTube channel, OWL@Purdue. This channel hosts a number of Vidcast lectures on some of the hottest writing topics. While the OWL@Purdue YouTube channel is still very young, it is already home to 22 videos, has almost 600 subscribers, and over 75,000 views, at the time of this writing. The Purdue OWL’s static resources also saw over 213,000,000 hits on its static resources, with much of this traffic coming from outside of North America.

The summer development cycle at the Purdue OWL, and my inaugural season at the Purdue OWL’s content development helm, was one filled with activity and learning. The Purdue OWL staff launched development on a whole new section of resources focusing on graduate school applications. The resources in this section focus on applying to graduate school, writing up profiles of graduate programs, creating graduate school personal statements, and etiquette for requesting letters of recommendation from professors and workplace superiors. We’ve also begun an aggressive expansion of our ESL writing resources. Our hard-working content developers have created resources discussing plagiarism in a manner that is geared towards an ESL audience and that is informed by second language writing theory. They have also created a “style” guide to North American academic writing and revision guide.

Future Directions

One of my favorite parts of this position is helping to set the direction of the Purdue OWL going forward. And, while the day-to-day may be business as usual, the Purdue OWL has an exciting stretch of road ahead of it. We have some really bang up resources that will be coming online over the coming weeks. These include the aforementioned ESL revision and “style” guides for writing in North American academic writing. We also have new APA Vidcasts focusing on the basics—and on the finer details—of references lists, which will be coming to the OWL@Purdue YouTube page in the coming days. While we’re on the topic of Vidcasts, our first ever Vidcast targeted specifically at second language writers is being developed as you read this.

There’s been quite a bit of talk about the new ESL resources which are either in the works, or that will soon be developed, but that doesn’t mean that the general Purdue OWL resources are being left out. We’re currently developing a new resource for students transitioning from high school to undergraduate study. This new resource will include items that address matters like the ins and outs of planning undergraduate applications, and a resource dedicated to tackling the undergraduate application essay. This new set of resources will also include advice from admissions officers to undergraduate applicant. We hope to have these resources prepared by end of year 2012.

Outward Bound

In closing, I’d like to mention one of the larger and rather exciting projects that we at the Purdue OWL are currently engaged in. Earlier, I mentioned the 213,000,000 hits that the Purdue OWL received last year. I also mentioned that a decent number of these hits come from outside of North America. In order to make sure that the Purdue OWL maintains relevance to its users, particularly to our international audience, we have recently launched a research survey to examine Online Writing Lab usage and attitudes in what has traditionally been defined as the English as a foreign language (EFL) context. That is, in places where English is not used as the primary language of government, business, schooling, and daily life. It is hoped that the data gathered through this research can lead to, at some future point, the creation of a section of the Purdue OWL dedicated to EFL users—both teachers and students.

The Purdue OWL is continuing its lifelong process of growth and evolution—striving to be relevant to our users—to meet them where they are at with resources that meet their needs. We look forward to continuing to serve our users in the coming year.

THE WRITING LAB AROUND CAMPUS



Linda Bergmann at the New Graduate Student Info. Fair



Hwanhee Park, GTA, at Latino Heritage Month Opening Ceremony

The Boiler Gold Rush Resource Fair was on August 15 and was held around the Engineering fountain, giving students easier access to all booths. Our booth was well staffed this year by Juan Meneses (GTA), Lizzie Berkovitz (UTA) and Alissa Berger (UTA), who welcomed new freshman and discussed the Writing Lab benefits.

New Faculty Fair was held on August 16. Slaney Chadwick Ross (GTA) and Linda Bergmann were there to introduce the Writing Lab and welcome new faculty.

The New Graduate Student Information Fair was held on August 17 and was staffed by Helen Knight (GTA) and Linda Bergmann, Director of the Writing Lab.

The Latino Heritage Month Opening Ceremony at the Latino Cultural Center was on September 14th, and was attended by our GTA Hwanhee Park. Hwanhee was able to tell everyone about our services to students, as well as make known our satellite location in the Latino Cultural Center.

On September 20, we participated in the Purdue Employee Resource Fair where Ashley Watson (GTA) and Heather Wicks (GTA) led a booth showing what the Writing Lab can offer to staff as well as students.



Linda at the New Faculty Information Fair

CONGRATULATIONS

- ◆ Matthew Allen, former Writing Lab GTA, won the Writing Lab's 2012 Tutor of the Year Award along with Rebecah Pulsifer, former GTA, who won honorable mention.
- ◆ Kelli Barnett, former UTA, won Best Overall in the 2012 Professional Writer's Showcase, *Professional Writing in Japan: Surveying the Earthquake Aftermath*.
- ◆ Jacqueline Borchert, former Writing Lab UTA, won the 2012 Tutor Leadership Award from the East Central Writing Centers Association.
- ◆ Tammy Conard-Salvo was a leader at this year's 2012 IWCA Writing Center Summer Institute in Seven Springs, PA on July 29-August 3.
- ◆ Elise Crane, former Writing Lab BWC, won the Writing Lab's 2012 Outstanding BWC Tutor for spring.
- ◆ Cris Elder, former Writing Lab GTA received the 2012 Graduate School's Teaching in Excellence Award. Committee for the Education of Teaching Assistants Excellence in Teaching Award recipients are selected by each academic department for their commitment to undergraduate education. Departments may select one recipient for every 50 graduate teaching assistants they support.
- ◆ Megan Kee, former WL UTA, was one of the English Department's, Outstanding Seniors 2012 in English Education.
- ◆ Sung Jun Ma, former Writing Lab UTA, won the Writing Lab's 2012 Outstanding UTA Tutor for spring.
- ◆ Adam Watkins, former WL GTA, has a new book, *Dear Companion*. <http://home.comcast.net/~jpdancingbear/DC.html>

Literary Award Winners 2012:

- ◆ Lizzie Berkovitz, WL UTA—English Department, Literary Award Winner, Second Place, Kneale Award (Shakespeare).
- ◆ Mary McCall, WL GTA— English Department, Literary Award Winner, Second Place, Babcock Award (Shakespeare).
- ◆ Juan Meneses, WL GTA—English Department, Literary Award Winner, First Place, Kneale Award (Literary Criticism).
- ◆ Rebekah Mitsein, WL GTA—English Department, Literary Award Winner, Second Place, Kneale Award (Literary Criticism).
- ◆ Hwanhee Park, WL GTA—the Thomas Ohlgren Award for Best Graduate Student Essay in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.
- ◆ Patricia Poblete, former WL GTA—English Department, Literary Award Winter, First Place, Johnson Award (ESL).

On May 9, the APSAC Excellence Award was presented to Tammy Conard-Salvo, Associate Director of the Purdue Writing Lab. The annual award recognizes a full-time administrative or professional staff member from the West Lafayette campus who demonstrates excellence by showing initiative, leading by example, showing exemplary customer service, acting as a University ambassador and being a high performer.

Nominators stated that Conard-Salvo has been instrumental in shaping the Writing Lab into a modern and productive place to work and learn. They cited her initiative in developing the lab's mission statement and strategic plan, her leadership in mentoring tutors and supporting their research and development, and her exemplary customer service skills. Also, Conard-Salvo regularly acts as a University ambassador nationally and internationally, and she consistently achieves exemplary performance evaluations, nominators wrote.



TUTOR DEVELOPMENT FUND

Muriel Harris Tutor Development Fund

The 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.

How to give to any of our funds:

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution, 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

If you're not receiving the Alumni Annotations as an email PDF file, and would like to, please contact Denise McKnight, secretary for the Writing Lab at dmcknig@purdue.edu