

# Writing Notes

## IN THIS ISSUE

Thank you for picking up this Spring 2016 Edition of the Writing Notes Newsletter. In this issue you'll find a wealth of information about the work that Writing Programs has done over the past semester. Much of this work is ongoing or recurring. Nevertheless, it is in a state of transformation as new exigencies and new actors continually remake Writing Programs. In the following pages, Jinjing Zhao highlights how the ASU Composition Conference has transformed into an event with regional appeal, Glenn Newman details how his involvement in the Adopt-a-Family program led to a personal transformation, and Valerie Fazel and Courtney Fowler both recount transforming FYC courses with digital technologies.

Other contributions describe new initiatives that are transforming ASU Writing Programs to be more interdisciplinary, more dynamic, and more intercultural. This includes a recap of the African-American Read-In event that Susan Naomi Bernstein and I organized, and Adam Webb's informative description of the ongoing ProMod project. In these pages you'll also find helpful analysis of two transformations to the infrastructure that enables Writing Programs work: our textbook policy and our website.

In this new format, you'll also notice our regular Kudos feature is now distributed throughout the newsletter, in order to better highlight the many personal and professional accomplishments of our excellent Writing Programs team. Finally, for some variety, we open this newsletter with a more quantitative look at Writing Programs from Assistant Director Gregg Fields.

Enjoy!

-Sean Moxley-Kelly, Writing Programs Assistant Director

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I write for education and to gain acceptance... into Law School  
😊

I write to share my opinions and ideas in an ever changing world, to help change I believe our universe

I write To Convey My Ideas in an accessible medium

أكتب من أجل العلم الذي يبني القلوب

I write to express my Godliness.

I Write Because it's fun!!

I write just for fun and also I write books 😊

I write to build a better world for my family

# I write sometimes for fun and express my thoughts, also I write to memorize my thoughts.

I write to share the community's story from all perspectives

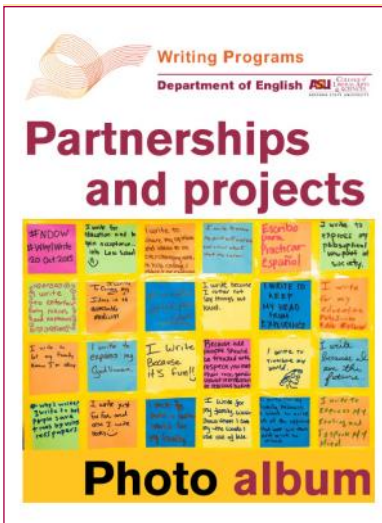
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## PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECTS PHOTO ALBUM

If you are interested in a visual recap of the year in Writing Programs, take a look at the Partnerships and Projects Photo Album I recently produced as a year-end reflection. In it, you'll find an array of images that highlight the work of Writing Programs. If you look closely, you might even see yourself!

To access, [click here](#) or on the image above.

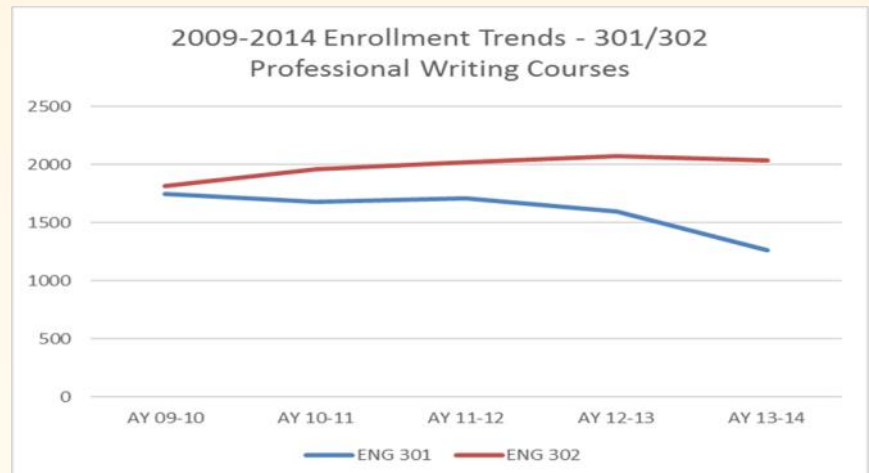
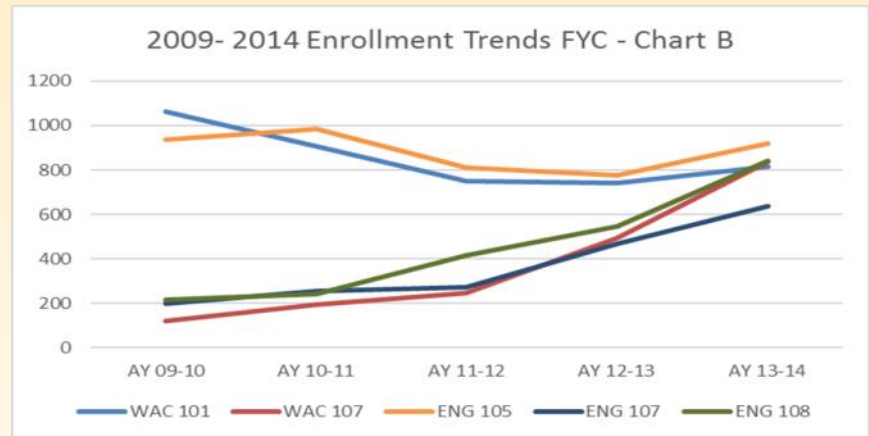
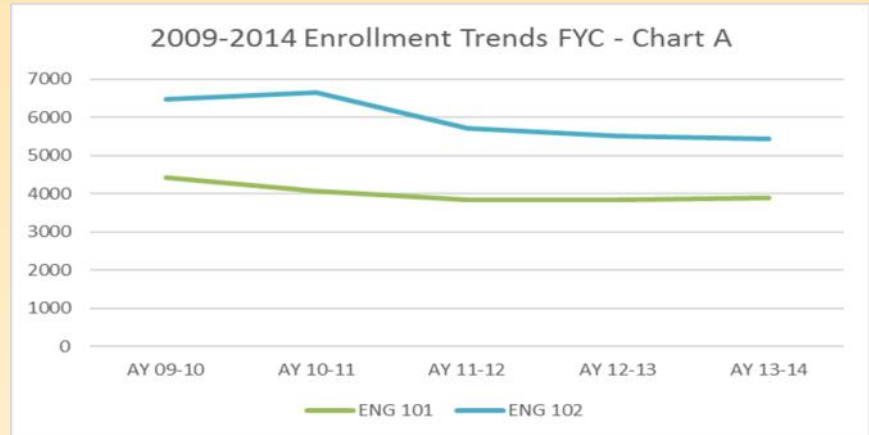
-Sean Moxley-Kelly



## WRITING PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS by Gregg Fields

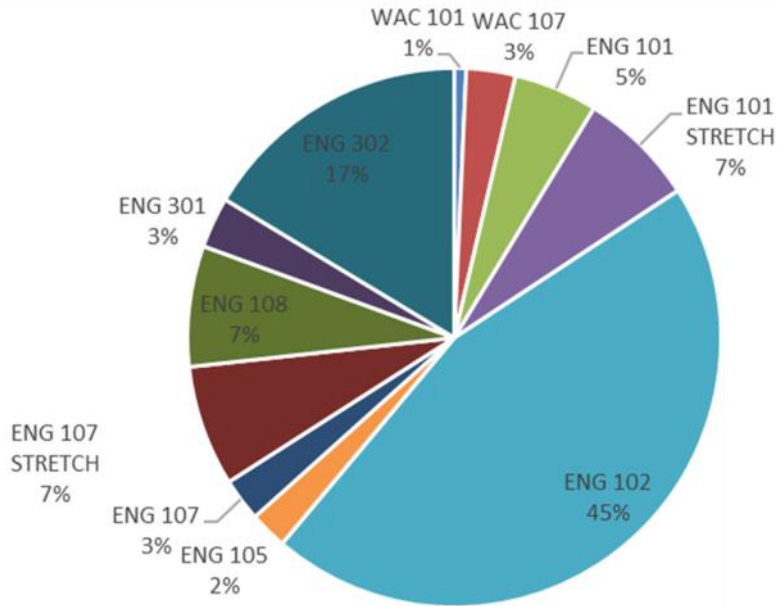
While we often try to pride ourselves on our value of one another—of this writing community of teachers, students, and scholars—it can also be a healthy method of reflection to examine ourselves by the numbers. As I prepared some of the data below, I was amazed not only at the sheer quantity of students that Writing Programs has served in recent years but also at the substance and variety of ways WP teachers have assisted in the growth and learning of ASU students.

*Continued on page 3...*

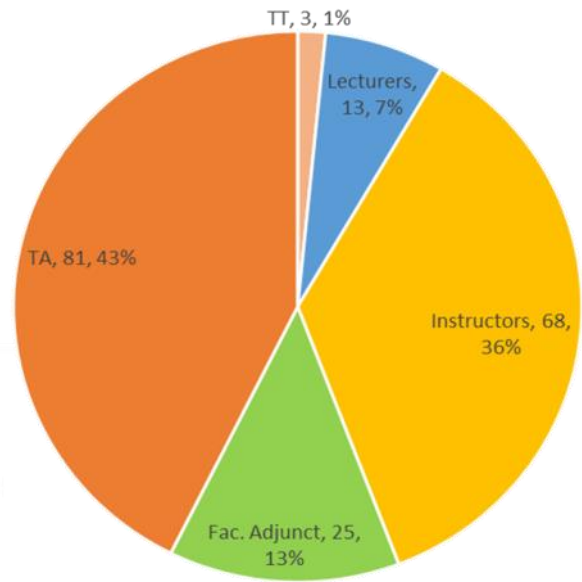


## WRITING PROGRAMS BY THE NUMBERS, CONT.

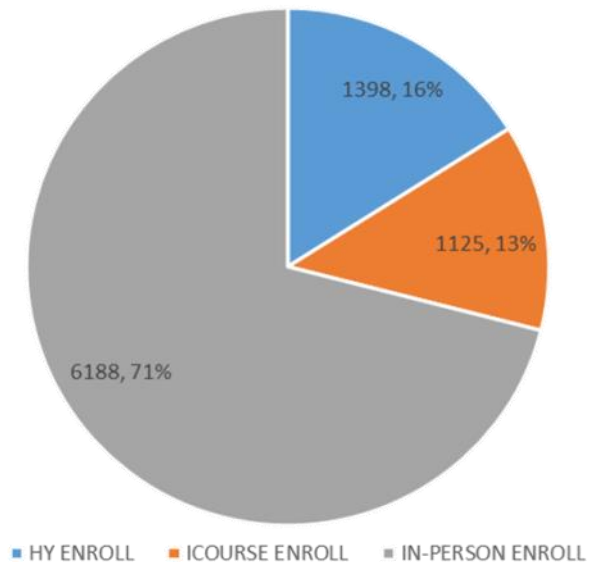
For instance, in Writing Programs alone, nearly 200 teachers taught approximately 11,000 students in the Fall of 2015 and over 8,000 students this Spring. Almost one third of these Spring courses were taught in an online or hybrid format.



Spring 2016 Enrollment by Course



Spring 2016 Faculty Distribution by Rank



Spring 2016 Enrollment by Course Delivery Format

### KUDOS

**Keith D. Miller delivered a presentation** titled "Rethinking Malcolm X: Archives Demonstrate that the National Memory is Wrong" at National Communication Association Conference in Las Vegas in November 2015. In January 2016 he **gave a talk** titled "Martin Luther King and Unsung Pioneers of the Civil Rights Movement" at A.T. Still University (Osteopathic Medical School) in Gilbert. Also in January 2016, along with Rev. Warren Stewart, he **was interviewed** by Ted Simons on Channel 8 about King's 1964 speech at ASU. In February 2016 he brought Rene Billups Baker from Birmingham to ASU and to South Mountain Community College, where he **introduced** her for talks titled "Charles Billups, Martin Luther King, and the Miracle March in Birmingham." In March 2016 he also spoke **on a panel** in Downtown Phoenix following the screening of a PBS documentary on the Freedom Rides. He is **assisting** Rene Billups Baker with her memoir, which is under review at a university press, and is currently **researching and writing** two books--*Is The Autobiography of Malcolm X Bogus?* and *Rethinking The Civil Rights Movement: Why The National Memory Is Wrong*.



## WE CAN ALL GIVE A LITTLE BIT by Glenn Newman

We can all give a little bit...

When I first read the suggestion in Karen Dwyer's November email asking me to donate money to our annual English Adopt-a-Family Christmas charity, I took immediate umbrage. I thought, "Why am I, a poor student, being asked to give some of the little money I make, when I, too, have needs for things?" When the time came to donate, I hesitantly gave a little bit, which set in motion a life-changing experience.

It began mid-December when the announcement came out that we had been assigned our families by the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Volunteers shopped for gifts for five families. Each child was to receive a toy and an article of clothing, each adult an item of clothing. The money, donated by faculty and staff from the English Department and Writing Programs, covered the toys and clothes, some Fry's grocery gift cards, and a little extra to help one family with their rent, which would allow them to stay in their home instead of being evicted.

*"As we were invited in, the aroma of freshly-steamed and hot tamales wrapped in corn husks swirled around us. The woman at the stove bade us welcome and gave each of us of a plate of her delicious food."*

### KUDOS

**Maureen Goggin** is currently **Fulbright teaching** at the University of Graz and doing research at the Volkskunde Museum in Graz and in Prague. As part of this work, she **has given invited talks, lectures, and keynotes** like "Understanding Fem-inisms: Rethinking the Limits of Gender through Intersectionality" in Austria, Romania, Albania, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

**Alice Hays** recently **presented** at the American Education Researchers Association along with several colleagues from the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. Additionally, Alice Hays is the **2016 recipient** of the Teachers of Excellence Award from GPSA.

As we loaded up our cars with food, the others who had agreed to help us deliver Christmas cheer arrived. We drove to our destination, the Chaparral Mobile Village on Baseline. It was a cold afternoon, and we all pulled up to the first stop, a dingy trailer. Several of us walked up the rickety stairs towards the front door; we knocked, and a small woman answered the door. As we followed her into the darkened room, I looked over and saw that all the gas burners on the stove were turned on, flickering blue and yellow. It hadn't occurred to me that people in my city lived without heat and other comforts that did not seem like a privilege to me. I realized then that even in my poorest hours I was rich compared to so many other people, local people, these people. For a moment I felt a little ashamed for my earlier selfishness, but was quickly distracted back into focus, as our next destination was not far. *Continued on page 5...*



*Food boxes provided by the Saint Vincent de Paul pantry.*

## WE CAN ALL GIVE A LITTLE BIT, CONT.

We got out of our cars and began walking towards a door that had been decorated with cheap, but gaily-colored holiday decorations. The door opened, and a crowd of children, not dressed for the weather, ran out, so happy to see us and dancing around. As we were invited in, the aroma of freshly-steamed and hot tamales wrapped in corn husks swirled around us. The woman at the stove bade us welcome and gave each of us of a plate of delicious food. She didn't speak English, but through the smiles and laughter of so many people present, we all came together in gratitude. The kids helped us carry in their Christmas bounty, as well the banana boxes of food, and I, warmed by the tamale and the experience of both giving and receiving in the same few moments, joined my friends as we walked back to our cars. "Next year," I thought, "I'll give more!"



*From left to right, back row: Glenn Newman, Cheyenne Black. Front row: Dominique Sandler, Kevin Sandler, Kristen Larue-Sandler, Adelheid Thieme, Coral Sue Black, Karen Dwyer.*

I saw a meme on January 1st on Facebook that said if, every day, I put into a jar the number of pennies that equals the day of the year, by the end of the year I would have hundreds of dollars. I've started my savings jar and will give a much larger donation this year. Maybe, with my bigger donation, we can take on another family, as there are so many people in need.

You can help us this upcoming holiday season as our disciplinary communities come together, once again, in delivering Christmas glee to people so much less fortunate than us. In addition to donations of money, we also need shoppers, wrappers, deliverers, and supporters to help us. Obviously, any kind act in the name of ASU's English Department and Writing Programs reflects brightly on all of us, so please join us next year in your generosity. The more money we have, the more families we can include; it's as simple as that. And as you make your holiday plans, remember this gracious event, and join me, and join us. Your feelings of gratitude will stick with you, I promise.

It's really true: We can all give a little bit, and together it makes a lot.

## KUDOS

**Sarah Snyder was married** to Shawn Clavell on August 8th 2015! Sarah was **awarded** the "Inclusiveness Award and Travel Grant" from the Writing Program Administration Graduate Organization, the "Arijit Guha Outstanding Research Award" from the Arizona State University Graduate and Professional Student Association, and the "2015 College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Student Leaders" from ASU. In addition, Sarah **published** the article "Grammar Agreements: Crafting a more finely-tuned approach to corrective feedback" with Katherine Daily O'Meara and Ryan Shepherd in the Journal of Response to Writing. Sarah **presented** "Rethinking Teaching and Learning Practices for Diverse Populations in the University: A Roundtable on Taking Pedagogical & Administration Action" with Norah Fahim, Greer Murphy, Katherine Daily O'Meara, Brooke Ricker Schrieber, and Shawna Schapiro at CCCC in Houston, Texas on April 2016. She also **presented** "L2 Writers in Professional Writing Classes" with Tonya Eick, Gregory Fields, and Kevin Kato at the Arizona State University Composition Conference in Tempe, Arizona on February 27, 2016.



## KUDOS

**Rebecca Robinson** has been hired as an assistant professor of English at Brigham Young University-Idaho; she earned her Bachelor of Arts from BYU-Idaho in 2007 and is thrilled to be returning home.

**Sarah Jackson Young** and Chad Young welcomed Baxter Young to the family on January 1st and have enjoyed reading the little guy *Waiting for Godot* as a warm up for Tolstoy.

**Shirley Rose** had a book chapter published this Spring: "Understanding Accreditation's History and Role in Higher Education: How It Matters to College Writing Programs" in *Reclaiming Accountability: Improving Writing Programs through Accreditation and Large-Scale Assessments*. She also co-presented with Mark Hannah, Susan Naomi Bernstein, and Dawn Opel on "Preparation for 21st-Century Knowledge Enterprises: Alternatives for ASU Graduate Students" at the Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition. Professor Rose also presented at the Biennial Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference on "Choosing and Sharing Adventures: Knowledge-Making with/in a Digital Archive of Suffrage Cartoons" in October of 2015. As a final note, she also co-led the CCCCs workshop on "Consulting for Writing Programs: Developing Effective Practices" in March.

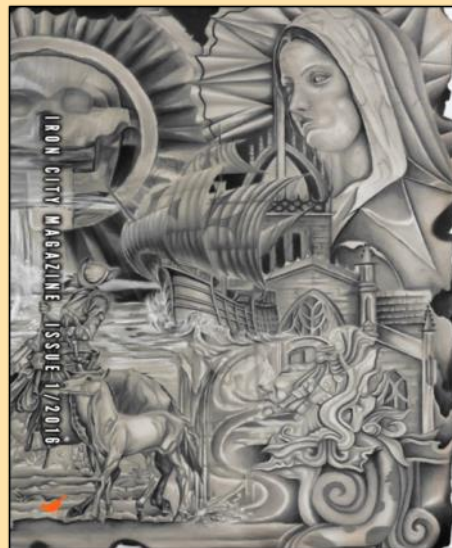
## WRITING PROGRAMS AND STRETCH PROGRAM HOST FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN READ-IN by Susan Bernstein

In February, ASU Writing Programs and the Stretch First-Year Writing Program hosted the [African American Read-In](#), an event established in 1990 by the [Black Caucus](#) of the National Council of Teachers of English to make literacy a significant part of Black History Month. Organized by Stretch Program co-coordinator and English Department lecturer Dr. Susan Naomi Bernstein and ASU WP Assistant Director Sean Moxley-Kelly, the African American Read-In invited participants to read aloud their favorite pieces by African American writers, and to share their thoughts through discussion. The Read-In featured participation from students, faculty, and community members who read excerpts from [Ain't I a Woman](#) by Sojourner Truth, [Soul on Ice](#) by Eldridge Cleaver, [Sula](#) by Toni Morrison, and [Letter from a Birmingham Jail](#) by Dr. Martin Luther King.

Dr. Bernstein's students in a second semester Stretch course read aloud from *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, and continued their study of the Letter in class, culminating in a complet-

ed essay for a major writing project of the semester. One student reflected on the process of writing about the Letter, saying "When writing about King, you need to find a way to make your writing sound as powerful as his writing was. You need to move the audience like he did." Dr. Bernstein wrote about the students' work with the Letter for a post published recently on her [Bedford Bits blog](#).

ASU Writing Programs and the Stretch Writing Program look forward to hosting the African American Read-In again next year. Everyone is encouraged to attend and experience the power of these texts first-hand.



*Iron City Magazine*

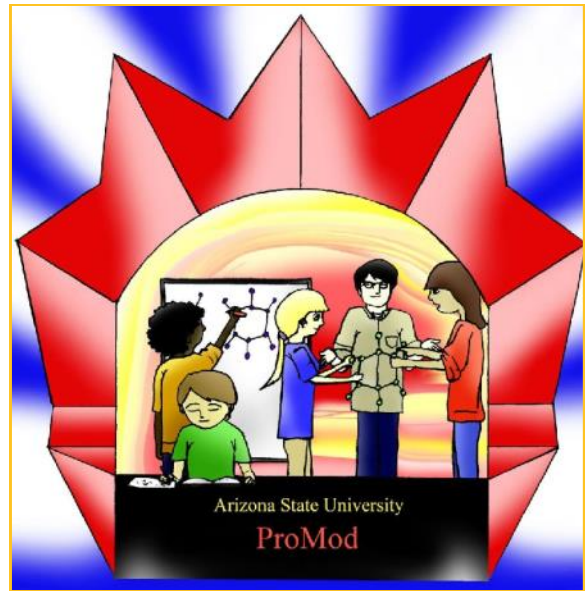
## KUDOS

**Corri Wells** launched *Iron City Magazine*, *Creative Expressions by and for the Incarcerated*, in print and [online](#). This project was a collaboration with other members of Writing Programs and undergraduate **Natalie Volin**, who participated as part of her Barrett Honors thesis and was interviewed by [Niche Magazine](#). Corri also was **faculty advisor** to PEAC, the student organization responsible for the successful 5th annual Prison Education Conference on March 19th (available [on Vimeo](#)).

## WORKING TOGETHER TO LEARN: ENGLISH'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROMOD PROJECT

By Adam Webb

ProMod is Arizona State University's new project-based modular learning program. It provides an interdisciplinary pedagogy in which instructors from different schools coordinate their goals, objectives, and outcomes in order to create a shared curriculum, including a shared syllabus and projects. Before the semester starts, each team of three ProMod instructors develops a driving question that encourages their students to think critically about their projects. Students participating in ProMod enroll in all three interlinked courses. Instructors and students use class time to work on their projects, ask questions, and solve problems pertaining to their projects. The approach emphasizes inquiry and teamwork.



*“Peter, Darya, and Andrew are teaching their first-year Mechanical Engineering students concepts and problem-solving with Rube Goldberg machines.”*

Since the program began in Fall 2015, collaboration between instructors has taken a variety of forms. For example, this Spring semester Dr. Peter Wegner is cohering his English 102 course with Physics and Mechanical Engineering courses taught by Physics Lab manager Dr. Darya Dolenko and Physics & Astronomy Graduate Assistant Andrew Svesko. Dean Kyle Squires in the College of Engineering is acting as coordinator for their ProMod team. Together Peter, Darya, and Andrew are teaching their first-year Mechanical Engineering students concepts and problem-solving by using all three subjects to develop Rube Goldberg Machines for the students' physics class. The machines serve as topics for students' project-based learning papers and a focus for assignments in both their English 102 and Physics 122 Lab.

In order to facilitate learning of English 101, 102, and 105 core concepts, ProMod English instructors are developing learning modules. The learning modules include a combination of text, visuals, and videos that educate students on how to analyze and apply concepts such as ethos, pathos, and logos as well as address rhetoric, audience, authorial intent, genre, and argumentation strategies. In order to

learn more about ProMod English instructors' approach to their learning modules, please view them here at [ASU English instructors learning modules](#).

Students in all of the ProMod teams this Spring semester displayed their final projects on ASU ProMod Project Day, April 25th, in Old Main's Carson Ballroom from 2-6 PM.

ASU ProMod will continue in the Fall of 2016, and Writing Programs will again be a key part of the project. One of the goals of the ASU ProMod project is to involve more disciplines and create more sections. If you are interested in learning more about the ASU ProMod project, please visit our wikisite at [asupromod.pbworks.com](#).

For more information, contact Adam Webb at [awebb7@asu.edu](mailto:awebb7@asu.edu).

*Below: Peter Wegner's English 102 students working on their Rube Goldberg Machines in their Physics 122 Lab .*

*Image design: Adam Webb, 2016  
Photo credit: Dr. Peter Wegner, 2016*



## NIGHT OF THE OPEN DOOR RECAP

### by Sean Moxley-Kelly

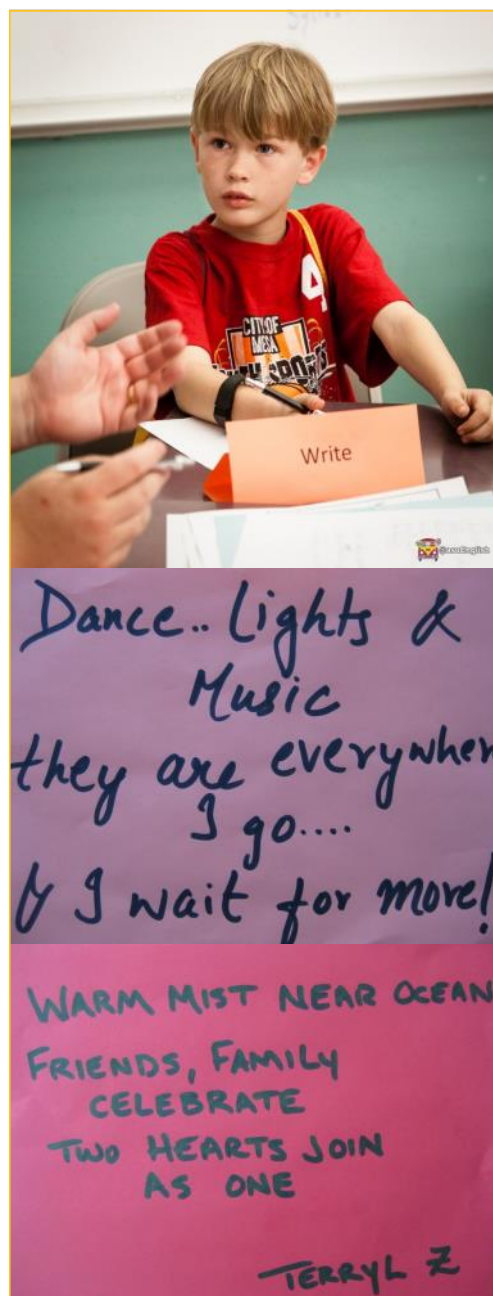
On February 27th, Writing Programs members teamed up with the Department of English to deliver exciting, engaging workshops at the ASU Night of the Open Door.

Night of the Open Door is ASU's yearly community engagement event. For one evening at each campus, ASU throws open its doors and invites children and adults to learn about the University through exploration and play. Departments across the University set up activities and demonstrations that are both fun and educational. Thousands of community members participate every year!

This year WP Assistant Directors Gregg Fields and Sean Moxley-Kelly represented Writing Programs with the "Your Life in Haiku" workshop, in which participants developed short autobiographical poems. Sean and Gregg coached dozens of participants through the full writing process—from prewriting to drafting and revision, and finally to publication on the Wall of Fame. Each step in the process had its own table, presenting opportunities to discuss a variety of writing practices (such as brainstorming and genre conventions) that we value in Writing Programs. Children and adults produced brief verses about their favorite stuffed animals, romantic evenings, doing homework, and watching Star Wars. Sean and Gregg's favorite submission read, "Strawbear'y is soft / quiet, She lives in my bed / My teddy bear is pink." You can check out more of these poems in this [slideshow](#).

In addition, Writing Programs teachers provided their expertise by delivering a variety of events. Jason Griffith helped people write and perform original songs in the 12-Bar Blues format. In "What's all the Buzz(feed)?" Allegra Smith explored social media by helping participants design and create digital comics. Robert LaBarge and Tina Santana played greeter by hanging out in the LL Lobby and helping people complete a giant crossword puzzle. And Elenore Long worked with Kristen LaRue to help organize all of these events.

Without a doubt, all of these participants helped make Night of the Open Door a great success!



Some of the haikus written by workshop participants.

### KUDOS

**Katherine Daily O'Meara** successfully defended her dissertation, *A Community of Second Language Writing at Arizona State University: An Institutional Ethnography* on March 22, 2016. In addition, she published an article "Grammar Agreements: Toward a More Finely-tuned Approach to Corrective Feedback" in the *Journal of Response to Writing* with ASU PhD student Sarah Elizabeth Snyder and ASU alumnus Dr. Ryan Shepherd on April 1, 2016. She presented on the panel "Rethinking Teaching and learning Practices for Diverse Populations in the University: A Roundtable on Taking Pedagogical and Administrative Action" at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Houston, TX on April 7, 2016. In addition, Katherine received the 2016 Outstanding Paper on Second Language Writing Award from the ASU CLAS and Department of English, for her paper "Training and Support for Second Language Writing Teachers: Promoting Specialization Within the Writing Program." Finally, she accepted a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition and Director of Composition at Emporia State University in Emporia, KS, to begin July 2016.



## NEW WRITING PROGRAMS TEXTBOOK POLICY

by Katherine Heenan

At the January 27, 2016 Writing Programs Committee meeting, Kurt Myers proposed a change the existing textbook policy. His proposal read in part:

“Educators who have either more than three (3) years teaching experience at ASU in Writing Programs courses, or nine (9) or more graduate-level hours of rhetoric/composition courses (including the TA Seminar) may choose their own textbook or forgo a textbook with the understanding that the educator will supplement instruction with public domain works (US Govt. and pre-1923 works) or open access works (works available online without license, password, or technical restrictions).”

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*In today’s educational environment, textbooks, while valuable, are just one of many ways to facilitate learning.*

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There was an interesting and informative discussion of this proposal, which touched on the following concerns and values with regards to textbooks:

- Teacher agency
- Teacher accountability and transparency
- Teacher level of experience (applicable to individual courses)
- Teacher flexibility
- English Department and Writing Programs goals/requirements and values
- Individual, differentiated course goals/requirements
- Requirements mandated by CLAS, ASU, and external accreditation organizations used by CLAS or ASU
- Existing copyright laws (Fair Use Act, etc)
- Students who purchase and use course textbooks
- Diversity of classroom environments
- Cultivating diversity
- Local exigencies and current events
- Technologies supporting teacher and student access to instructional materials
- Sustainable use of resources

The consensus was that more information and a more fully developed proposal were needed. Therefore, an Ad Hoc committee was formed, with a charge to draft a textbook policy that incorporated these key values and concerns as discussed by the Writing Programs Committee during both the October 2015 and January 2016 meet-

ings. The committee was also asked to establish key facts regarding ASU and CLAS textbook policies/requirements; to establish key facts regarding Fair Use and copyright laws; to draft a comprehensive textbook policy that does not conflict with these key facts and meets with the approval of the Writing Programs Director and Writing Programs Committee; and to draft a brief rationale for the policy.

The Ad Hoc Textbook Policy committee convened in early 2016 to draft a new and consistent textbook policy. This committee included Katherine Heenan, (chair), Elizabeth Ferszt, Sean Moxley-Kelly and Sarah Snyder.

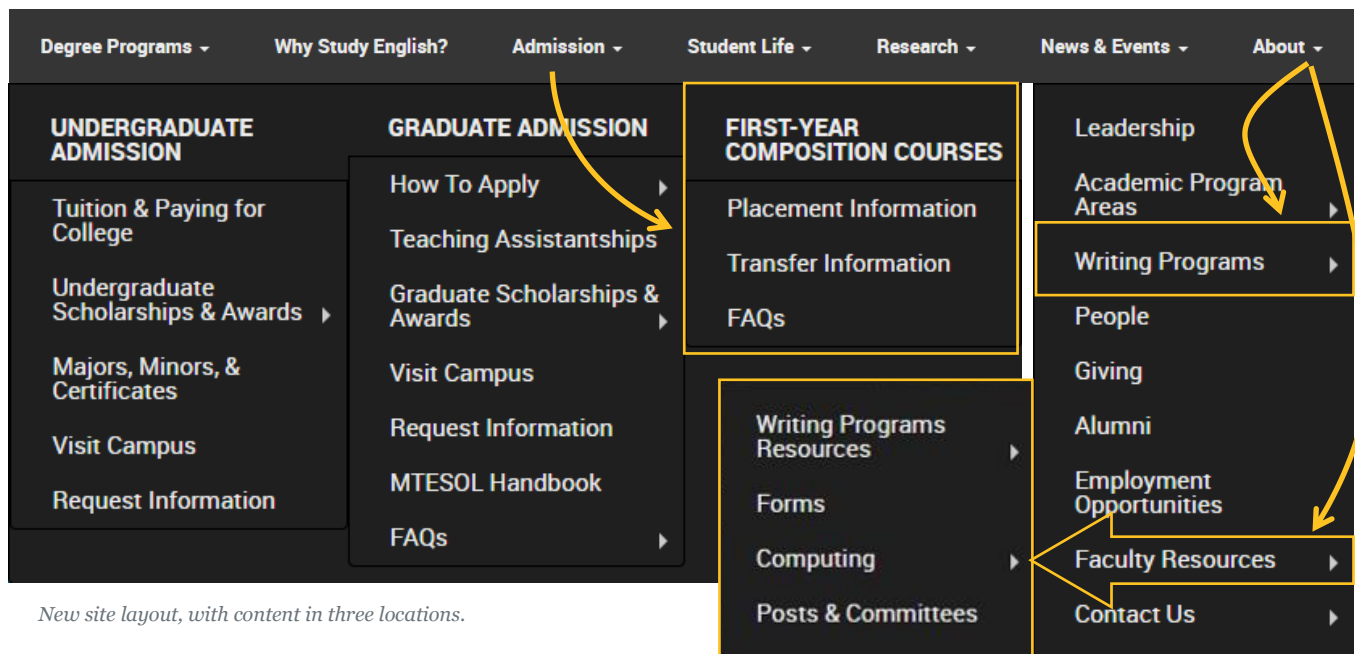
Based on the committee’s extensive research and deliberations, we developed a draft policy we believed addressed the needs of all ASU Writing Programs stakeholders; supported new teachers through their period of acculturation to Writing Programs goals and mission by providing a “Writing Programs Textbook List”; respected the knowledge and experience of teachers who wish to select other textbooks or customize material to meet the needs of their students; and responded to the needs of students, who benefit from the structure provided by pre-determined course materials but may struggle with the burden of rising textbook prices.

We then developed the following rationale:

In today’s educational environment, textbooks, while valuable, are just one of many ways to facilitate learning. Through the Internet, teachers and students now have access to a multitude of educational tools, activities, and resources. This includes electronic versions of the textbooks many teachers value, as well as interactive content that many believe engages students and encourages them to explore reading and writing beyond the traditional alphabetic text. Furthermore, using online resources can help students gain digital literacies important to 21st century writers.

The draft was discussed at the February 24, 2016 Writing Programs Committee meeting, voted on, and passed.

To see the full policy, rationale, and the form for submitting custom materials, [click here](#).



New site layout, with content in three locations.

## WELCOME TO THE NEW WRITING PROGRAMS WEBSITE

by Gregg Fields and Sean Moxley-Kelly

Many of you have surely noticed that the English Department debuted its new website design and structure in early January. This design was University-mandated and is required for all schools and departments at ASU. In addition to modernizing the look and layout, the update necessitated a restructuring of the site content in order to align with University priorities. Specifically, the new mandated design prioritizes current and prospective undergraduate students as users.

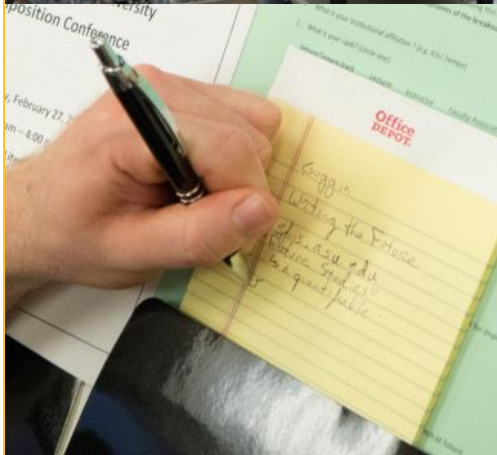
The transition to this new design initially created a few challenges for Writing Programs faculty and staff. Much of the Writing Programs' most necessary web content and resources had been decentered and shifted to a variety of locations across the English Department site's larger structure. This gave the impression to some that our information had become, at best, difficult to access and, at worst, lost completely. Thankfully, this is not the case: All of the information from the previous site still exists and can be located. In fact, one of the key advantages of the new site is its enhanced search functionality, both through Google search and through the site's search tool. So, if you are looking for a file or piece of information that you know existed on the site, consider first searching for it using these two options.

Your assistant directors have also been working alongside Bruce Matsunaga to make Writing Program's content more visible and accessible. Writing Programs information can be found in three places, and we have attempted to make this structure more visible while creating links between these locations.

- Information about First-Year Composition courses that *students* would need can all be found under the English Department's **Admission** menu. This includes FYC course descriptions, transfer information, and placement options.
- *General information* about the Writing Programs' Mission, Goals and Partnerships can be found on the Writing Programs section under the **About** menu.
- Information that is primarily of interest to *Writing Programs faculty*--WP Policies and Procedures, the Teacher's Manual, or Writing Programs committee representatives--can be found under **Faculty Resources**-->**Writing Programs Faculty Resources**, also through the **About** menu.

This transition has faced some challenges, but it has also stirred up generative conversations about what our web content should look and feel like. The Writing Programs Administration team will continue to make this content more responsive to your needs. As a final note, if you have any suggestions for improvement, please email one of us at [gdfields@asu.edu](mailto:gdfields@asu.edu) or [smoxleyk@asu.edu](mailto:smoxleyk@asu.edu) or use the [Digital Suggestions Box](#).

Below: an assortment of pictures from the conference



## 2016 COMPOSITION CONFERENCE RECAP by Jinjing Zhao

The 2016 annual ASU Composition Conference was held in the Language and Literature building on ASU's Tempe campus on Saturday, February 27. Most of the participants were teachers from composition courses offered on the four ASU campuses, yet several composition teachers joined us from the University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, and other regional colleges, suggesting that the conference, originally an event for teachers at our own campus to share ideas and connect with each other, is growing into a regional conference attractive to composition teachers outside ASU Writing Programs.

The conference included talks on several topics, ranging from the role that writing and rhetorics play in Future Studies, to the use of creative writing techniques in First-Year Composition classrooms, to emerging technologies for writing courses and teacher education. In response to the growing number of multilingual and international students, teachers from the Second Language Writing Program shared research-based ideas for accommodating this student population in both first-year composition and in professional writing classrooms.

Emerging technologies and creative composition seemed to be a recurring theme in this year's conference. Not only did several talks focus on the application of podcasts, social media, and digital gaming in writing courses, but the winners of the Excellence in Teaching Awards, Valerie Fazel and Courtney Fowler, also incorporated emerging technologies in First-Year Composition classrooms. One of the two winning assignments was created by Valerie Fazel, who asked her ENG 107 students to use Twitter throughout the semester. Writing in two drastically different genres - academic essays and tweets - allowed students to see how writing is shaped by purpose, audience, stance, and medium. The other winning assignment was created by Courtney Fowler, whose students were engaged in a semester-long group project to produce podcast episodes. The class collectively decided on a podcast story, then split into teams responsible for different aspects of the production. The podcast was launched at the end of the semester. You can read more about these projects in the feature articles in this newsletter.

The success of this conference depended in large part on the excellent cooperation of numerous volunteers. Special thanks to Adelheid Thieme and Jinjing Zhao, Co-chairs of the conference, and all who assisted them: Nathaniel Bump, Kurt Myers, Elizabeth Ferszt, Susan Flores, Samantha Ruckman, Gregg Fields, Sean Moxley-Kelly, Sophia Martinez, Sam Front, and Bruce Matsunaga.

German pastries at breakfast, a keynote by Professor Peter Goggin, presentations from composition teachers from around the region, lots of good talk over a tasty lunch, and presentations from Valerie Fazel and Courtney Fowler, as well as the beautiful weather of early spring in Arizona—all added up to a great day.



Valerie Fazel

## EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD WINNERS PAGE 12 AND 13

### TEACHING WRITING GENRES USING TWITTER by Valerie Fazel

To help students better understand the nuanced features and literacies that distinguish composition genres, I added a semester-long Twitter exercise to the writing assignments and contexts my ENG107 English language learner (ELL) students experience over the course of the semester.



*“Twitter exemplifies how brief, abbreviated writing invokes rhetorical appeals and how situated language use is coded with various meanings”*

#### KUDOS

**Casie Moreland and Keith Miller's co-authored chapter** "The Triumph of Whiteness: Dual Credit Courses and Hierarchical Racism in Texas" will be published in Krista Ratcliffe, Tammie Kennedy, and Joyce Middleton's forthcoming edited collection *Rhetoric of Whiteness: Post-racial Hauntings in Popular Culture, Social Media, and Education* through Southern Illinois University Press.

**Dawn Opel** (PhD WRL '15) will be **joining the faculty** of the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures at Michigan State University as tenure-track Assistant Professor of Digital Media and User Experience.

Writing in 140 characters or fewer might seem antithetical to the goals of academic essay writing, particularly with ELL students where form and explication are important aspects of well-written academic essays. But in balance with other, lengthier writing methods included in the course, Twitter exemplifies how brief, abbreviated writing also invokes rhetorical appeals. Additionally, Twitter demonstrates how situated language use is coded with various meanings and how different discourse communities develop generic literacies in order to communicate. The use of Twitter also prepares students new to public digital communication tools for the experience of writing on Digication, a platform that shares their work with people unknown to them. Finally, recent studies (Cheever et al, 2014) suggest that people who are habitual users of handheld devices often begin to feel restless and anxious to check their email, texts, etc. after an absence of 20 minutes. I encourage students to use their handheld devices in class for translation, vocabulary meaning, and research, but I require they tweet a message or link about the resources they discover.

As part of their semester process, students are graded for their Twitter use. Each tweet that includes the course hashtag (#eng107vf) is worth three points for a maximum value of 100 points. I update students' Twitter grades three times a semester, although a minimum of once a week I generate and share with students a Storify log, a collection of all tweets using our course hashtag, itself a rich example of how writing, when it is assembled in different contexts, evinces generic shifts and rhetorical impact.

Overall, Twitter has been a fun and interesting writing assignment; I enjoy witnessing how liberating it seems to be for students to write with few restraints. There have been some remarkably astute (and sometimes humorous) critical connections between what they learn in the classroom and what they witness in their outside world. At the end of the semester I will require students to tweet in response to a prompt (under development) that might offer insight to how Twitter use helped them better understand writing genre.



# THIS AMERICAN LIFE

Courtney presenting her work at the ASU Composition Conference

## TURNING THE COMP CLASSROOM INTO A PRODUCTION COMPANY by Courtney Fowler

I have regularly used “This American Life” as a text for English 101 because of the engaging and beautiful way it explores complicated issues in our culture. In the Fall of 2015, I wanted my students to engage in the telling of these kinds of stories—in chasing and shaping and producing something for a real audience. So I designed the following assignment sequence rooted in Writing Programs’ learning outcomes for 101 and project-based learning pedagogy:

First, I formed my three sections of English 101 into a production team. After studying the genre of the “pitch,” students composed a well-reasoned and informative pitch to the class on their idea for a story to produce. Last semester, many of my students were Business Sustainability majors, so pitch ideas included rags-to-riches stories of a successful relative, the predatory nature of the Verve energy drink pyramid scheme, and farm-to-table initiatives in Phoenix. They end up doing a short individual podcast on their own pitch, so lots of stories are told.

Students then read all of the pitches blind. We discussed feasibility and potential and then voted on one story to produce as a class.

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*“I wanted my students to engage in chasing and shaping and producing something for a real audience”*

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Then we split into teams based on their interests: The **Story Team** drafted the story arc, including initial ideas about who will be interviewed, and com-

municated tasks to the **Recording Team**, who interviewed and created recordings. Once a draft was together, the Recording Team and the Story Team communicated the trajectory of the podcast with the **Marketing team**, who planned artwork, a title, a press release, and looked for audiences for the podcast. The **Research and Clearances** team began fact-checking and looking for interesting or relevant background information. Once a reasonable draft was produced, the whole class came together to listen and edit the segment, attending particularly to the cohesiveness of the three segments. Once the draft was cohesive, the Creative and Marketing team wrote the press release and sent it to the identified audiences with a link to the podcast. Throughout the process, the **Historian** documented the work via photography, video, scrapbooking, journaling, etc, and the **Liaison** managed inter-team and inter-class communication. I acted as “Project Manager” and helped set weekly goals. Because the podcast had a “launch” date and was going to be publicly accessible, there was motivation to complete it on time and groups were compelled to work together. At the end of the semester, we had a big episode launch and reviewed and celebrated our work.

This laborious composition process was extremely rewarding last semester. What I love about the project is that it makes tangible all of the important outcomes of 101, like audience and quality of research. The enthusiasm for the project exceeded my expectations and I just generally enjoyed my job. You can check out the multi-section, multi-segment [podcast here](#). If you’d like more information on logistics, get in contact with me. I can’t wait to run another production in the Fall!

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS, FALL 2016

Writing Notes again seeks contributors for the next issue.

We invite **book reviews** of approximately 500 words on pedagogical texts of interests to the Writing Programs. We also ask for 150-word submissions on “**Classroom Strategies that Work**,” a continuing segment devoted to sharing the practices we employ in our own classrooms with other Writing Programs teachers.

Have any article submissions or suggestions? Please share them with us. And don't forget to submit your Kudos during the next semester.

Want to discuss what you've read in this issue? Visit any of our media outlets, including the Writing Programs Blackboard site, to provide your feedback and commentary.



*Get ready for Convocation on August 15, 2016!*

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## WRITING PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL MEDIA



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