

Citings

DEPARTMENT OF RHETORIC AND WRITING STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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Faculty and Staff



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

New Chair's Message



Glen McClish

It's a great pleasure to assume the chair of the DRWS at San Diego State University.

Aside from the weather upgrade

and the proximity to family, I took this position because I wanted to work with such a dedicated, effective group of teachers. When I visited SDSU in March, I was genuinely impressed by the DRWS faculty, particularly the no-nonsense, can-do attitude of this group. While many writing programs become mired in theoretical arcana and endless infighting, this group modestly, yet expertly handles the largest and most important job of the entire Uni-

versity: championing and enhancing literacy. I really enjoyed my twelve-year adventure teaching communication at a private liberal arts college in Texas, but my heart has always been back in California, in public education, and in rhetoric and composition. It's good to be home again!

I hope you've noticed that I keep my office door open as often as I can. Of course I must close it now and again to finish a batch of papers or prepare a report that's just about to be late, but for the most part I'll make myself as available as I can. I hope you'll communicate with me when you need to. It's fine to make an appointment through Jo, but you're also welcome to stick your head in and see if I'm busy.

See "Chair" on page 2

DRWS Launches M.A. Program

This semester, DRWS launched new graduate courses that form the core of the new M.A. Program in Rhetoric and Writing Studies. Ellen Quandahl is teaching RWS 600, Writing, Knowledge, and Culture, a new graduate course that is an introduction to the study of rhetoric at the graduate level. Next semester, Glen McClish is going to teach RWS 601, History of Rhetoric, a successor course to the old RWS 741, Classical Rhetoric. We have six students who are provisionally enrolled in our graduate program, which we hope will become official next Fall, when it is finally approved by the CSU Chancellor's office.

The new M.A. program in Rhetoric and Writing Studies is a 30-unit course of study (with at least 15 units of 600- and 700-level

courses), which offers students an opportunity to examine the relationship of written discourse to various aspects of culture and to diverse fields of knowledge and professional practice. Besides the general program, students can choose two specializations: The Teaching of Writing and Technical and Professional Writing. Each specialization consists of a Rhetoric and Writing Studies requirement (or 15-18 units and interdisciplinary electives (12-15 units). Each specialization includes an internship. DRWS will collaborate with a selected group of faculty in affiliated departments (Communication, Education, Educational Technology, English and Com-

See "New Program" on page 3

Fall Conference a Success

Once again, our department began the fall semester by attending the DRWS Fall Conference. The annual four-day event takes place the week before the start of classes and offers TAs, Lecturers, and T/TT faculty an opportunity to come together and discuss the teaching of reading and writing. This year's event was notable in the large number of lecturers in attendance.

Workshops focused on topics of concern to new teachers, such as course planning and syllabus design, as well as issues and research in the field of writing. Two roundtable discussions by DRWS faculty addressed current issues in Rhetoric and Composition. And on Friday, guest speakers Professor Linda Brodkey of UCSD and Holly Bauer, a SDSU alumna, gave an interactive presentation on teaching argumentation.

Thirteen new TAs have begun teaching for the department this semester. As part of their first semester program, they will be attending weekly meetings and workshops to discuss their common syllabus project.



New TA's (L to R)

Back Row: Patty Krisher, Joanne Spiegel, Kevin Bessenbacher, David Menchaca, Cynthia Fillmore
Middle Row: Christopher Fell, Matt De La Pena, Mark Bayhurst, Patrick Ranahan
Front Row: David Morris, Melissa Williams, Jeffrey Johnson
Not Shown: Kerri McKeand

Chair

Continued from page 1

Chances are we can talk on the spot.

Let me say that I'm honored by the trust the DRWS has placed in me. At times, your expectations for me seem a little scary, but I'll do my best to meet them. I don't bring any special wisdom or experience to this job, but I do promise to dedicate my professional energy to serving the Department. I'll make my share of mistakes, particularly in these early months on the job, and I'm counting on you to gently but directly call these errors to my attention. I'm looking forward to working with the faculty to employ and support the finest writing teachers in San Diego, to establish further connections among the Department's diverse academic components, to focus and refine the Department's goals, to launch our new graduate program, and to enhance our reputation across campus and throughout the state.

Cezar is Back

DRWS's own Cezar Ornatowski returned from an 8-month senior scholar Fulbright research grant in Poland, where he did research on rhetoric and political change as a guest of the Institute for the Study of Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw.

His project is to write a "rhetorical history" of the political transition in Poland through the 1980s and the fall of Communism in 1989 to the first decade of post-communist democratization. He brought back 60 lbs. of materials (mostly speeches and political documents from elections, plus flyers, posters, even video), and 11 boxes of books (sorry guys, all in Polish).

Along the way, Cezar served as a consultant to the Polish Ministry of Education on education reform, gave many guest lectures at universities and various education forums, and dined with leading politicians and rhetoricians. He also appeared on Polish national television.

Crisis Carnival This Weekend

The 7th Annual Crisis Carnival will take place on Friday and Saturday, October 8th and 9th in the Aztec Center. The faculty panel is scheduled for 11:00 in Council Chambers where issues of employment in the academy will be discussed. Five student panels with papers from all over the college have been organized and will be presented throughout Saturday beginning at 10:00 am (downstairs in the Aztec Center).

Media/Internet Artist and UCSD professor Adriene Jenik will open the event at 7pm on Friday in Casa Real. She will discuss her art in addition to the goals and ramifications of the introduction of techno-education into our colleges and universities.

On Saturday at 1:45 in the Backdoor, SDSU MFA graduate and DRWS lecturer Ryan Griffith, will perform vignettes from his series "The Mid-

night Pharmacy," which has aired on KPBS'S "The Lounge." Some people find solace in a bottle of gin. From the characters in "The Midnight Pharmacy," it's more likely to be found in a child-proof capped bottle.

At 3:30 pm on Saturday in the Backdoor, Oliver Mayer and Steve Park will close our event with a performance. Mr. Mayer is the author of twelve plays, including "Blade to the Heat," "Land of the Desolate," and "Young Valiant." Mr. Park, LA actor, is best known for his performances in "Fargo" and "In Living Color."

Please support our efforts to bring the disciplines of The College of Arts and Letters together by attending and encouraging your students to attend this fun, interesting and educational event.

Crisis Carnival Co-Chairs

IC Program is Fifteen

In Fall 1986, under the leadership of Ann Johns, we first offered an innovative, across-the-curriculum freshman success program to EOP freshmen from underrepresented backgrounds who, according to entrance exam scores, were at risk. The program was designed to enable the students to succeed in making the transition from high school to the University. Each student enrolled in a linked package of courses: a GE course, a writing/reading course, a GE study group, and an academic seminar. That fall, the program served 250 students in 10 packages.

Since then, the program has expanded to include nearly 800 students in 36 packages, each linking a GE class to a writing class, a study group and a University Seminar. (IC also offers 17 packages in the sciences that don't include writing.) Since the early 1990's, all incoming freshmen have been encouraged to enroll in the program, which has been proven effective in raising the GPAs,

reducing the probation rate, and increasing the retention rate of freshmen.

Teaching the writing component of a package can be both exciting and challenging. Linking the writing curriculum of RWS 92A, 97A, or 100 to the GE class in an IC package requires creativity--and time. We would like to thank those instructors who teach IC packages, and we invite new instructors to join us next fall.

Elise Miller
IC Co-coordinator

New Program

Continued from page 1

parative Literature, History, Linguistics, and Women's Studies) in supervising students' theses.

We are also continuing, by agreement with the English Department, the Graduate Emphasis in Rhetoric and Writing Studies for students enrolled in the M.A. program in English. Students in the Emphasis may choose to switch to the M.A. program in Rhetoric or remain in the English M.A. program.

Cezar Ornatowski
Graduate Program Director

Tech Writing Program Has New Head

Linn Bekins is the new Director of the Technical and Scientific Certificate Program. She comes to the DRWS with a Ph.D. in Educational Studies, with specialization in Rhetoric and Composition, from the University of Utah. She has teaching experience in composition theory and practice, computers and writing, technical and scientific writing, managerial and business writing, educational theory, social science research methods, project management, discourse analysis, and English literature.

Linn publishes in areas of technical,

scientific, and business communication, media literacy, and disciplinary rhetoric. In addition to her academic experience, she has significant work-

place experience working as a technical communicator in the pharmaceutical and financial industries.

Linn's plans for the program include developing the internship program, designing a program brochure, proposing several new tools-based courses, and

performing a needs assessment of past and current Certificate Program students.



TA Applications

DRWS invites graduate students across the disciplines to apply for Teaching Associateships. Applications and information about the program are available in the DRWS Office, NH 227, from Phyllis Cohen. The application deadline for positions in the spring semester, 2000, are due no later than October 29, 1999.

Teaching Associates are hired to teach one or two General Education and/or Developmental Writing courses, designed to introduce SDSU undergraduates to the work of writing in the university. The TA Program is enriched by the work of instructors from a variety of disciplines, and qualified graduate students are encouraged to apply.

Ellen Quandahl
TA Program Director

Web Technology Class is a Hit

RWS 596, *Technology and the Writing Classroom*, is well underway in its pilot run. Acting as an elite cadre of four TAs and ten lecturers, we're hacking a trail through the web, expressing ourselves artistically with web pages, regressing to our teenage selves with chat groups, and learning about all the hidden technological resources on

campus. The general reaction / consensus is "I never knew there was so much stuff out there I could use in my classroom." This class will be offered again next semester 5-6:15 Mondays and Wednesdays. Hope to see you there.

Terry Williams
CAI Coordinator

Faculty News

Lorie Miller Bale has been selected to present her work about Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth* on the British literature panel at the October Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association (RMMLA) convention in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Linn Bekins presented a paper, "Articulating, Producing, And Negotiating Knowledge: Examining The Role Of Collaboration In Scientific Writing" in April at the annual American Educational Research Association Conference, Montreal, Canada.

Jane E. Hindman's article "Inventing Academic Discourse: Teaching (and Learning) Marginal Poise and Fugitive Truth" has been accepted for publication in the Fall '99 issue of the *Journal of Basic Writing*.

Also, *Pre/Text* (vol 17, 1-2) will include Jane E. Hindman's article "[Mis]Recognizing Awesome Bodies: Gender and Publishing in Rhetoric and Composition Studies."

This June, **Ann Johns** presented at two conferences held in China, a conference on "Research in English for Academic Purposes" at the City University of Hong Kong and "Second Language Teaching: Reading, Writing, and Discourse" at the Guangdong University of Foreign Studies.

Jim Musgrave's novel, *Russian Wolves*, is being published by Ebooksonthe.net and was recently reviewed online (http://www.ustimesbestsellerlist.com/best_and_reviews/stories/wolves.html) and by the editor of the Swedish edition of *Playboy*.

Joyce Nower recently traveled to China where she presented slide lectures on contemporary American poetry to Chinese students. You can read about her trip and view great photographs on the New Works Review website: <http://www.new-works.org>

Newsletter Returns

We hope you like the look of the new resurrected DRWS newsletter. Thank you to Jane E. Hindman for suggesting the new name and to all of you for your suggestions.

We're going to try to publish at least twice a semester. Using the on-campus publishing facilities will allow us to include photographs.

Thanks to everyone who submitted and please help us by continuing to submit news of important events, announcements, program updates, etc.

Peter Manley

Online Journal

If you are interested in interdisciplinary perspectives on communication across the curriculum, check out the new online journal, "academic.writing." It has an impressive board of directors and the editors are seeking contributions. You can find it at: http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/WAC_journal.

Linn Bekins

Book Review

J. Cynthia McDermott's book *Beyond the Silence: Listening for Democracy* is a collection of chapters highlighting specific facets of the democratic classroom; issues covered include implementation of shared power, consensus and decision making, reflections, building trust, self-evaluation and social responsibility. Each chapter is a balance of theory, teacher practice and student response providing concrete applications and examples for the reader.

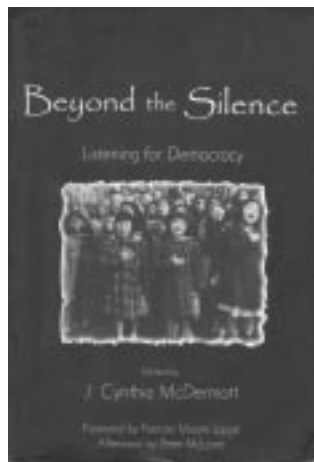
This book is a must read for any teacher who has wondered, "Why am I the only one talking here?"

Beyond the Silence advocates shifting

the power and control back to the students by using "reflection, self-evaluation, counseling community building and consensus building, authentic projects and intrinsic practices." Each chapter begins with pedagogy that opens the door to a more democratic class. Be warned: this book asks difficult questions like: What is a democratic class? How do I run one? How do I evaluate without judgment?

Ask the students.

This is an abridged version of a longer review by Sabrina Youmans, Stacy Goldblatt, and Sam Patterson



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