College of Arts & Sciences

English Department Newsletter

Photo Credit: George Peabody Library, Johns Hopkins University
Thank you for picking up the English Department Newsletter!

Our English faculty and student collaborators worked hard to make up this edition, and we appreciate you taking the time to acknowledge their hard work.

We hope you enjoy the read!

- Rachel Caruso and Helena Carvalho Schmidt

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A Word From the Supervisor

As the internship coordinator, I want to thank Helena Carvalho Schmidt and Rachel Caruso for creating the English Department’s 2017 spring newsletter. They had a vision for an interactive, engaging format that would highlight both student and faculty work. They truly surpassed my expectations.

I also want to thank Dr. Sarah Sandman for giving them the opportunity to design the newsletter from the ground up as the final project for W364 Editing for Publication. This newsletter truly embodies collaboration in the best sense of the word.

- Dr. Kate White

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Definition of *plate tectonics*

1. a theory in geology: the lithosphere of the earth is divided into a small number of plates which float on and travel independently over the mantle and much of the earth's seismic activity occurs at the boundaries of these plates

2. the process and dynamics of tectonic plate movement; also: a similar process on a body other than earth

Perhaps the title of this Chair’s introduction—“compass”—is appropriate in a way I could not have foreseen when I created it in 2007. I begin this introduction with a definition drawn from Merriam Webster’s Dictionary and would like to expound on it briefly as it applies to the current state of IPFW.

We confront the impending dissolution of the IU and Purdue contract that gave form to this campus in 1964. The shifting plates of our academic missions are requiring the members of this community to step back and contemplate what our vision of this campus will be. Whatever name we adopt—Purdue Fort Wayne, Purdue Northeast, Fort Wayne University of Purdue—the essential functions of what we do will remain firm and enduring, entrenched in the shared values we possess as a university. Writing in 1873 in his *The Idea of a University*, Cardinal Newman discusses the value of a “liberal education” as the prime mover of university curricula. For Newman, this ‘Liberal or Philosophical Knowledge” is the “comprehensive view of truth in all its branches, of the relations of science to science, of their mutual bearings, and their respective values.” IPFW—whatever the appellation will be—is a campus that promotes the “cultivation of mind” that generates an intellect that sees the coherency of all learning. This mission undergirds IPFW, supporting its students throughout their curricula and enhancing a life worth living, advancing learning that is an ongoing, a never-ending process that persists and endures.

Earthquakes occur; tidal waves are spawned; hurricanes blow and bluster. With all unsettling forces, life endures and goes on. Such will be the same with IPFW. Such will be the same for the Department of English and Linguistics: faces change, people come and go, students course through our classrooms. All remain dedicated to a constructive, enriching life that enriches as it itself moves on. Keep in contact and let us know what tectonic plates have shifted and stabilized on your own journeys.
In 2016 post-election America, Trump’s derogative comments towards women and minority groups are considered especially heinous. In Washington D.C., the dedicated protesters who speak up against this vicious discrimination are members of an elite movement know as the Women’s March. These are their stories.

The Women’s March on Washington (ironically) took place around the world. It aimed to publicly advocate for policy-making regarding human rights with emphasis on LGBTQ and women’s rights, as well as immigration and health reforms and other freedoms. Although the manifestation was aimed at the elected U.S. president, Donald Trump, and his statements about women, the movement reached far beyond Washington D.C. Having said that, the event in Washington itself seems to have earned its place in history—as well as in people’s memories. It was a national show of unity and a motion for change towards diversity as diversity united under one umbrella.

January 21, 2017 was a Saturday. On that morning, Dr. Cain and her group of three made their way to the capital through the Metro, while the train cars filled with all sorts of people who shared her destination and purpose. It was a day for shopping and getting personal affairs in order, as she pointed out, but the people around her wore pink hats; there were women bringing signs, rolling on wheelchairs and bringing their children along. She described the sensation as that of finding her own crowd, her “tribe”. That was—as she pointed out—the whole point of gathering: to find people who “share the same passions, concerns, resistance” as you search for belonging and hope for the future.

“In our fragmented lives,” explained Dr. Cain, “it is difficult to find the spaces that feed our desires to associate widely, freely, and broadly, without fear or anxiety.”

And so, as she took photos of her surroundings, she was moved by the individuals gathering into the collective. Despite the sacrifices made to be there, people were not complaining; mostly what was felt, as per Dr. Cain, was the “joy of anticipation.”

The anticipation bore fruits through the day. Although progress was slow and the steps taken were many, the many walkers did not turn away.

The unity, described by Cain as the “warmth of collectivity,” highlights the importance of the individuals in the larger movement. Although stars like America Ferrera and Scarlett Johansson gave their inspiring speeches, the strength of the movement was in the unnamed mass below the podium: the people, the “everyday us,” coming together towards a common goal. It was Everyone’s March.

“For a moment, the city was ours. The country was ours. The world, yes, even Antarctica, was ours.” – Cain
Meet our highlighted professor: Dr. K!

Dr. Elizabeth Keller (AKA Dr. K) graduated from IPFW in 2009, with her bachelor’s degree from the English and Linguistics department. She pursued her graduate studies at Michigan State University, where she acquired a Masters in Digital Rhetoric and Professional Writing, and earned her PhD in Rhetoric and Writing with a focus in Professional Writing. Her dissertation was on mentoring in workplaces and gender identity, and how writing and communication practices affect how men and women are mentored.

Dr. K returned to IPFW to teach in the summer of 2015, which she thought "was kind of awesome." She is currently an associate professor of the English and Linguistics department, and more recently has closed a deal on her book: *Rhetorical Strategies for Professional Development; Investment Mentoring in Classrooms and Workplaces* (2018).

"I've always been interested in how people work, and what kinds of practices count (or not) as work," Dr. K said. "My book extends current research and scholarship around mentoring and learning theory. It examines the relationship between teaching and mentoring, acknowledges the rhetorical invention of mentoring, and recognizes the intersection of gender identity and mentoring."

Dr. K likes IPFW in particular because she can relate to its less traditional student population. Dr. Keller shared that her first attempt at college did not go well (college 1.0, as she calls it), and when she tried again at IPFW as a returning adult (college 2.0), she not only progressed but excelled.

"The teachers here are wonderful, and I am really fortunate to be educated by them," Dr. K said.

Dr. K is also the writing center’s (WC) liaison. That means that she is the faculty adviser to all things that happen in the WC, and serves as a bridge between the WC and CASA, academic departments, student resources and administration.

In teaching, her areas of specialty include writing center theory (for which she teaches W397 - Writing Center Theory and Practice - every fall semester), technical communication and professional writing. She teaches courses on project management and will be teaching writing for multiple media (W367) in a near spring semester.

Her immediate goals include getting tenure, teaching Intro to Web Authoring (website design and the like), and getting the new English concentration off the ground.

One of her pet peeves is the Project Management class, being offered and taught by her next fall. Although she has taught it in the past, Dr. K wants to push forward to make the class into a new experience. Last fall, the marketing, advertising and events on the Helmke Library’s reopening were created by her students in that class. This fall, she aims to partner with Information Systems (part of ETCS’s computer science), Visual Communication and Design Course (specifically photography and graphic design) to create a class-project that may become a regular, annual thing.

Dr. K stated that it would not be competition for the already existing multiple media outlets on campus, like The Communicator and the Confluence magazine. It would be a magazine, for which they are already scouting other institutions in search of models.

"Think Vogue, think Vanity Fair," Dr. K said, and then 'vogued' - using her hands to frame her face.

So, Dr. K may not correspond to the stereotypical expectations of university professors with suits and austere attitudes, but she commands respect by the sheer quality and scope of her work on campus, encouraging real-world experiences and interdisciplinary engagement in and out of the classroom.
Dr. Suzanne Rumsey
My main research interests center on heritage and cultural literacies that are faith-based, inter-generational, community focused, and/or used by older adults. The big news is that I’m writing a book! The book is based on more than 400 love letters between my paternal grandparents during WWII. The book tells their story through sections of their letters to one another, archival information found throughout the country, and academic historical research. I’ll also be writing ‘inter-chapters’ with strictly academic concepts and theory about letter writing as a genre, archival research in writing studies, and rethinking what activism looks like. I am hoping to finish a whole first draft this summer, and then I’ll begin the book prospectus submission process.”

Dr. Lachlan Whalen
Dr. Whalen focuses on the writings of Irish political prisoners and has published a book entitled Contemporary Irish Republican Prison Writing (2007) on the subject. He is also interested in minority languages such as Gaeilge (Irish Gaelic), their development and growth. He studied Irish Gaelic at Ulster University in the mid-1990’s during the first cease-fire and witnessed various critical socio-political movements in Northern Ireland. Although he is currently unable to visit Ireland as frequently as he used to, he is able to continue his research through copious amounts of documents procured while in Ireland. The texts he studies are authentic manuscripts written by prisoners, often on scraps of smuggled cigarette and toilet paper.

Dr. Lewis Roberts
“I am currently working on a monograph on the rise of computer-animated children’s movies in the past quarter century. Little scholarly attention has been paid to these movies, particularly from the vantage points of children’s literature and material culture studies. To date there has been no sustained critical analysis of the rise of the computer animated children’s movie, its role in the larger commodification of children’s lives, and its representations of modern and postmodern subjectivities. My project seeks to address this lack of academic work on arguably some of the most technologically innovative and widely-influential children’s stories of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.”

Dr. Bischoff
“My research and training have been in the areas of morphology and syntax from formal, computational, and anthropological perspectives. In addition, I have worked on the development of digital resources for endangered languages. The lesser studied languages that I tend to work with are either endangered and/or minority community languages. In the case of Coeur d’Alene, I have found that many of the digital and computational tools that I have created for my own research can be quite useful in the relevant format to the Coeur d’Alene community in terms of their language revitalization efforts. Students, a group of colleagues, and I have developed an online dictionary of the Coeur d’Alene language for use in the community’s language revitalization and maintenance program.”
Dr. Curtis Crisler

Dr. Crisler recently presented his research for Playbook for an Urban Midwestern Sensibility: Crafting Work Cross-Genres at the 2017 Library Scholars Grant Recognition Luncheon at Purdue. He says that, “Urban Midwestern sensibility’ examines the black migrant’s past, present, and future.” Using grant money, he traveled to Detroit, Washington D.C., New York, and Chicago to conduct interviews at various Midwestern African American museums. He has been working on this project for roughly three years. Dr. Crisler is also in the process of publishing several of his other books. The Grey Album [PoeMS] will be available in 2018, as will Indiana Nocturne(s): Our Rural and Urban Patchwork, a book co-written by Dr. Crisler and Kevin McKelvey.

Dr. Rachel Hile

“My current project is a book developing a theory of allegory based on cognition rather than formal or rhetorical elements. That is, instead of looking at textual features or at what an author might be using allegory to communicate, I am more interested in how allegorical meaning is conveyed and understood. I became interested in the topic while working on my book Spenserian Satire: A Tradition of Indirection, because indirect satire works through the allegorical transfer of meaning, and so I became curious about how it is that readers can read between the lines to recognize that, say, a powerful nobleman is being mocked, when all that the text includes are indirect clues.”
Looking Ahead: What’s After Graduation?

Because of the uncertainty many college graduates feel surrounding their careers and futures, we chose to reach out to recent IPFW alumni who are pursuing graduate degrees and employment in the field of English. We corresponded with three IPFW alumni: Jonathan Brownlee, Tim Leonard, and Kris Frye.

First and foremost, we wanted to know how these alumni chose to pursue a graduate degree. In Jonathan’s case, he said that he just genuinely “loves to learn, and graduate school is a great place to do just that.” Tim’s response echoed Jonathan’s, emphasizing the importance of broadening his knowledge of his field. In Kris’s case, she came to the decision of attending grad school after spending time in the workforce. After landing a clerical job at IPFW, she knew she would need a graduate degree in order to “climb the ladder.”

Regarding how they chose their area of study, the answers the alumni gave were varied. Jonathan admitted that choosing his degree was a “complicated process,” namely because he claimed that he has “always been interested in a variety of academic fields.” He chose rhetoric because it was a “perfect intersection” of all of the fields he was most interested in. Kris also struggled with finding a well-rounded degree path, and she ultimately her decision was based on economics, location, and past experience. Tim’s choice of major was more straightforward, as a Master’s degree in Library and Information Science allowed him to continue and expand his research and previous studies.

When asked about the biggest differences between undergraduate and graduate school, the alumni all noted that the biggest difference was the amount of work and time expected from the student. Tim noted that, in his experience, “the professors expect more from you” and they are “looking for students to be more unique, especially with research.” Despite the different challenges that grad school presents, each alumnus also had several favorite aspects of attending. For Jonathan, the best part of his grad degree thus far has been “being able to read profoundly intelligent books and articles … whom I might not have encountered [otherwise].” Tim emphasized the aspect of “working more one-on-one with professors.” He claims that these relationships are particularly helpful and symbiotic, as students get the opportunity to “aid in their research, as well as strengthen your writing in your own research.” Kris also asserted the importance of relationships in her graduate studies, both with professors and peers.

Finally, we asked the alumni to give any advice they could to undergraduate students who are considering applying to a graduate program. Tim stressed the importance of asking copious amounts of questions, both to current professors and potential ones, emphasizing that “each graduate program is unique and requires the student to adapt.” Jonathan’s advice was simple yet profound: “Research the workload. If the pros outweigh the cons, go for it.” Kris stressed the importance of being secure in one’s decision, saying, “It’s not just more of the same—it’s better in a million little ways and more difficult in a million more. It’s not a decision to be made lightly!”
Looking Ahead:
“What Can You Do With an English Major?”

When interviewing IPFW’s English & Linguistics professors, we asked all of them the question, “So, what can you do with an English major?”

We compiled their responses in the graph below. The responses varied, representing the diversity of opportunities available after graduation. The numbers on the right end of each bar correspond to the amount of times each career option was suggested.

You can also check out some of the responses shared by the professors below.

“Anything that requires the following skills: ability to demonstrate empathy/compassion, ability to communicate effectively in writing and spoken English, understanding of other cultures and ability to work with others, and ability to work well under pressure, think creatively, and communicate complex ideas in clear concise fashion.”

- Dr. Bischoff

“The B.A. in English - all concentrations - prepares one to think, write, and read critically, giving one the tools to adapt in complex, ambiguous work or post-graduate environments. It is also true that a B.A. - all concentrations - prepare one to act humanely in the world.”

- Dr. Kopec

“The ability to read about, analyze, synthesize, and concisely write about a topic is valuable in all workplaces. If there is a company whose products, culture, or ethos you admire, even if they have not posted a job ad “seeking an English major,” approach them with the attitude that you have something valuable to offer them, because you do.”

- Dr. Hile

Did you know?
If Dr. Rumsey could live anywhere in the world, she would live in Indiana. “I love Indiana. I was born in Goshen and my family is still there. My husband’s family is just south of Indianapolis. We’re in the ideal location to be close (but not TOO close) to family. A favorite location to live has more to do with who is with me than the location itself.”
“My daughter recently made me create a Pottermore account so that I could take the Sorting Hat quiz. Apparently I’m a Hufflepuff, which is not cool... but she’s a Hufflepuff, too. My son is a Gryffindor. The fact that I can write the previous three sentences despite having read only one of the books and seen maybe four of the movies says something about the global success of the franchise.” - Dr. Hile

[Regarding the movie adaptations]:
“...There is always something that is going to be lost because of the length. It bums me out that they cut out details. It’s a testimony to the power of writing that all these awesome actors got involved. Literature doesn’t have to be the cult of difficulty. Young adult books may be so popular because they can speak to every person on the street but deal with politicized issues.” - Dr. Whalen

Have you read Harry Potter?

Did you know?
Dr. Hile’s spirit animal is a squirrel.
“I love squirrels. Squirrels are energetic, cheerful, and usually busy, but they also know how to lie stretched out on a warm tree branch on a sunny day.”
What Does Success Smell Like?

How do I figure out what I want to do?

“Students interested in graduate school should ask a LOT of questions, and ask them early. Think about what is most important to you. Talk to professors whom you admire about where to apply. Polish up writing samples. Figure out what your goals are so you can write a good personal statement.”

“[To join the job market] I strongly recommend doing an internship while you are still a student. Jobs aren’t always obvious for English majors. There are LOTS, but they often require experience. Why not gain experience AND college credit by doing an internship?”
- Dr. Rumsey

How can English majors prepare for the job market?

1. Create a portfolio of work which showcases a variety of skill sets
2. Do an internship
3. Take professional writing classes
4. Take digital media classes
5. Reach out to recent English graduates

- Dr. White

How do I prepare for graduate school?

“Start researching your potential schools the summer before your junior year: screen programs, professors, fellowships, scholarships, TA/GA positions, educational exchange possibilities, travel, etc.”

“When entering the job market, it can be rough and disheartening, but you must be vigilant about what you want. But know your market! Realize too, that with English degrees, many times you’ll have to locate to where the jobs are.”

- Dr. Crisler.
Honors Recognition

Honorary Mentions

We would like to take a moment to recognize achievements by some students in the department, such as scholarships, awards and honors recognitions.

On April 20th 2017, we held the 30th annual IPFW College of Arts and Sciences Honors Banquet, celebrating our students’ accomplishments.

Vickie J. Gray
Ethics in Linguistics award: Recognition of potential to promote nonviolence and understanding through linguistics.

Sara K. Paris
1. Henry Kozicki Graduate Writing Award: Best scholarly essay on literature, linguistics, rhetoric, or folklore written by a graduate student.
2. Rodney Farnsworth English Award: Graduate student with 3.0 GPA who excels in comparative literature studies. Nominated by faculty.

Rachel L. Caruso
Georgiana Krzyminski Scholarship: Recognizes academic excellence of juniors and seniors in the department, evaluated through written samples submitted upon faculty nomination.

Graduating with distinction: (GPA of 3.8 or higher)
- Elise Cobb
- Jennifer M. Dumford (English & Psychology)
- Josie Lowe-Meyer

Graduating with Highest Distinction: (GPA of 3.95)
Aaron C. Thieme (Philosophy, Women’s Studies, Mathematical Sciences and Math Research Certificate)

Joseph C. VanBuren
Avon Crismore Award: Undergraduate returning adult who excels in composition and rhetoric.

Paige K. Hill
Rainn McPhail Memorial Scholarship: Student selected by Undergraduate Studies and Assessment Committee and the Graduate Studies and Assessment Committee on the basis of a project that demonstrates strong interdisciplinary or interdisciplinary merit submitted to the committees.

Gloria J. Diaz
Beverly Hume Memorial Award: Student in the humanities whose research reflects their strong engagement with the study of cultural, gender, or environmental issues.

Alexandria L. Rairigh
Hollander Scholarship: Best portfolio of professional writing, judged by a committee of English writing faculty.

Matthew F. Danielson (Double major in English and Political Science)
1. Outstanding English Major Award.
2. 2. Sylvia E. Bowman Award: Best essay on literature or the teaching of literature.
3. He also presented in the Honors Showcase this year, “Literary Ideas of the Warner Brothers Cartoons from 1952”, and will be awarded his Honors Medal upon graduation!

Helena Carvalho Schmidt (Double major in English and Communications)
1. Georgiana Krzyminski Scholarship: Recognizes academic excellence of juniors and seniors in the department, evaluated through written samples submitted upon faculty nomination.
2. Excellency in International Studies (excellency in international studies)
3. Honors Pin!

Matthew F. Danielson (Double major in English and Political Science)
1. Outstanding English Major Award.
2. 2. Sylvia E. Bowman Award: Best essay on literature or the teaching of literature.
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Seth A. Gick
Psi Iota Xi Award for Writing: Best short story by undergraduate student. 3.0 GPA required.
Closing Remarks

Thank you very much for picking up or clicking on the spring 2017 edition of the IPFW English Department Newsletter. Many faculty and students put in a lot of work to make this document real and different from its previous editions.

Since you have made it this far, here is a treat for you:

Meet Zoey.

This is Zoey.
She is a gumball machine.
Or at least she was one for Halloween in 2016.
She is Dr. Andrew Kopec’s baby daughter and was only five months old when this picture was taken.

Kudos for the creative costume, Zoey!

We hope you have enjoyed the read, and have been persuaded to collaborate with the next edition of the Newsletter to make it increasingly better. Have a great summer!

For information on the Newsletter contact Dr. Kate White at whitek@ipfw.edu