News

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• Writing Program Faculty Meeting -- Friday, Mar. 30
• Victor Villanueva, "Rhetorics of the New Racism,” -- Thursday, Apr. 12
• Writing Program Faculty Meeting -- Friday, Apr. 20
• Stuart Selber, "Technology & the Human Intellect: Computer Literacies and Development of the Creative Mind,” -- Friday, Apr. 27
• Anne Wysocki & Dennis Lynch, "Visual Rhetoric and Emotion,” -- Thursday, May 10
• Writing Program Faculty Meeting -- Friday, May 11
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Literature PhD

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Teaching Writing Tips

Peer Review Workshop Tips
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Instructor Writing & Scholarship

David Daniels -- "Litany," Many Mountains Moving, poem
Carol Samson -- "Even the Stones," Open Windows 2006, short story
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John Tiedmann -- "Concrete Universalities: The Cultural Politics of the New Criticism," Modernist Studies Association conference

Writing Tips

Revision Strategies
  Jeff Ludwig
What DU Students Write,  
What DU Professors Expect  
*Doug Hesse*

Undergraduates at DU seem well on their way to producing the eight pounds of writing that Nancy Sommers famously found that Harvard students did during their four years. Of freshmen completing the fall quarter at DU, 67% reported producing more than 16 pages in their first year seminars. In all other courses combined, 55% indicated writing 21 or more pages.

If students were busy writing, their professors were surely busy assigning and responding. In reporting on a recent undergraduate course they taught, 25% of the faculty assigned more than 30 pages worth of writing, while a full 90% assigned at least 11 pages.

These are some early findings in two studies initiated by Doug Hesse and currently underway in the University Writing Program. One study asked all students enrolled in WRIT 1122 several questions about writing experiences in the fall quarter, as well as prior to DU. 694 out of 868 (79%) replied. Students also submitted a paper they had written for a course during the term.

A second survey asked 321 tenure track faculty who had taught at least one undergraduate course in 2005 06 about their assigning practices and writing impressions. 134 of them (42%) responded. Among other interesting findings from the faculty survey are:

More than 50% assigned PowerPoint or oral presentations, 10% had students make websites, and 30% assigned audio or visual projects.

About 20% had their students keep a journal or notebook.
More than 52% had students write one or more short essays; about 40% had them write longer essays; about 17% had them write long research papers.

Of their own writing experiences, 28% of students reported spending 6 or more hours per week doing non-assigned writing such as email, Facebook, MySpace, or blogging. They overwhelmingly characterized high school writing instruction as formalistic, emphasizing the five-paragraph essay, grammar and spelling, thesis statements, transitions, and paragraphing.

There's something of a mismatch between what students experienced in high school and what faculty most value. When presented with 15 features of good writing and asked to choose seven they thought vital, faculty selected (in order): clarity (76%); quality of analysis (73%); logical development (72%); coverage of subject matter and depth of understanding (69%); and grammar/usage.

These preliminary findings merely tip the iceberg of more extensive studies. Writing Program researchers will analyze the student writings gathered from the fall term and interview faculty. More ambitiously, the Program will begin a longitudinal study that traces the writing of 100 freshmen through four years at DU.
A Conversation with Michael Bérubé: A Writing Program “Writer’s Studio” Event
Rebekah Shultz Colby

The Writing Program recently had the honor of hosting A “Writer’s Studio” Event with Michael Bérubé -- an in-depth discussion in the vein of the Actor’s Studio. Doug Hesse, Kelli Custer, and John Tiedmann took turns asking questions to lead the discussion, and then, time was given for the audience to ask questions at the end. Bérubé, a Literature Professor at Pennsylvania State University, is renowned for simultaneously existing within both the spheres of the academic and the public. His writing has appeared in periodicals ranging from the highly academic (and cloistered) Yale Journal of Criticism to the large public news venue of the Washington Post. He has written What’s Liberal About the Liberal Arts?: Classroom Politics and “Bias” in Higher Education and Rhetorical Occasions: Essays on Humans and the Humanities. Yet, he is almost more notable for his blog, which, like the rest of his writing, embodied both spheres as a blend of literary theory and social-civic and news commentary with a splash of popular culture thrown in for good measure.

Unfortunately Bérubé has since stopped his blogging. When his readers demanded to know why, he explained with one of his final blog posts:

“There’s still the problem of the invisible blogging. I don’t write these posts out in advance, you know. . . . Which means, among other things, that I do a great deal of the planning-before-the-writing while I’m not blogging. And that’s what’s been so mentally exhausting. It’s like ABC from Glengarry Glen Ross: Always Be Composing. And while it’s been great mental exercise, and it’s compelled me to think out (and commit myself in public to) any number of things that otherwise would have laid around the mental
toolshed for years, it’s not the kind of thing I can keep up forever, and it wouldn’t be seriously affected if I went to a lighter posting schedule.”

As an often struggling academic writer and teacher, I found this insight into Bérubé’s writing process compelling for several reasons. Yes, writing is mentally (and even sometimes physically) exhausting. However, with the ABCGlengarry Glen Ross allusion, Always Be Composing, Bérubé also hints at an important writing truth: composing, like breathing, is a perpetual part of life. We mentally compose constantly, whether we know it or not, whether we admit it or not – regardless of whether or not we actually think it will end up on a page. And regardless of whether we actually think it is academic, intellectual work, ready to be instantly commodified for a grade or within the academic publishing market, or not.

Which leads to the second reason I found this particular quote compelling. While the blog was probably exhausting, it also seemed to be a great catalyst for ideas that may never had had any outlet – or reason even for existence -- for this very reason. As Bérubé said later during the discussion, “The blog won’t reject it.”

In fact, his Always Be Composing reference also sheds light on how he manages to find time to write so prolifically while also leading the busy life of an engaged teacher, contributing colleague, and devoted husband and father. Although Bérubé ruefully admitted that a lower teaching load helps, he explained that he works in short, intense bursts in between other activities he does during the day. So, he literally is always composing. He also explained that he makes himself stop in the middle of an idea, not at the end. This forces him to come back to his writing so that he can finish these ideas. I imagine this method probably could also lead him to some new ideas as he struggles to remember exactly how he originally meant to finish an idea. And, of course, he creates false deadlines for himself.

Finally, Bérubé discussed some of the connections between his different spheres of work. For instance, he explained how his own writing makes him a better teacher because it makes his feedback to his students on their writing more insightful. He is more aware of the fact that his students are writing papers for multiple audiences and with different rhetorical occasions in mind as well. He also told about how writing within a non-academic genre has also improved his writing. For example, space matters in a newspaper column, influencing him to become more deliberate and careful with his academic writing. For every point he argues to keep in a newspaper article, he has to deliberately cut something else. But this seems to have also taught him a valuable lesson about publishing and revision: it helped him recognize times when he needs to fight to keep certain points in his work and not to simply acquiesce and take out key points just because he wants to get published. He told of several times when he knew his point was important, that he knew he was right in making it, but he took out the point to get his piece published, only to discover afterwards that he had been right all along. To me, this seemed to be a particularly empowering point – a point that gives a new sense of integrity to the act of writing – even within a publish or perish academic world.
Professor Ingrid Tague, chair of the History Department, is remarkable for being both a dedicated scholar and an innovative teacher. She co-taught a class with Martha Santos entitled “Issues in World History: Deviant Women” – a course in which she used primary texts to encourage students to think critically about how both history and the roles of women get constructed. She is also currently working on a book about 18th century pets. In this interview, we discuss how she approaches her own research and writing and how she utilizes her own writing process to teach writing in her history classes.

Rebekah Shultz Colby: What do you think is the role writing plays in learning for undergraduate education?

Ingrid Tague: Well, probably the most significant role is not unique to undergraduates. It’s that people actually think through writing. I think most of the time people don’t really understand what it is that they want to say, what argument they want to create, until they go through that process of writing it down. So, I try to get students to realize that that’s what’s happening. And so, for instance, when they write a first draft, the argument that they’re saying they’re making in the introduction is not the argument that they’re making by the end of the paper. They have to allow themselves time to go back and change the argument in the introduction, so that it reflects what they actually are arguing. So, I think it’s that process that writing things down is how you go through that process of thinking things through. And I think that there’s no better way to know what you really think about an idea until you’ve actually gone through that process of writing. . . . I do think that it’s a hard thing for undergraduates to understand that their writing is not a one shot deal. That writing is not about getting a certain number of words on a certain number of pages.

So do you allow revision in your class?

Depending on the class. In the class I’m teaching now, I actually assign them weekly essays. And they’re short essays. They’re two to three pages long, but they are formal essays. And those are due on the day of the readings that we discuss in class the readings they are writing about. So, they haven’t actually talked about the readings in class before they write the essays. And I do that on purpose because then they come to class
prepared to talk about the issues. But because they’re weekly essays, I find that most students, if they try to get into revisions, end up just getting terribly behind. So, for them, I just say, “Look, I grade on improvement. For your next essay, you’ll get better.” And that’s how I do it.

When I assign fewer, longer essays, I encourage revisions then. Although a lot of times, I encourage students to think in terms of drafts rather than in terms of revision because I find that, once they’ve got the grade and my comments on their papers, they often think, “Well, if I fix the two things that you told me to do, my grade should go from a C to an A.” Or that they tend to see things in terms of working toward a particular grade and focusing specifically on the things that I have mentioned. Whereas I find that if I can get them to give me a draft, and then I talk about what they need to talk through and address in those drafts, they think to actually focus more on the way that they are thinking and the way that they are writing rather than focusing on the particular grade that they’re getting.

How would you describe your own writing process?

Slow. Excruciating. I love to have written. The writing itself is a nightmare. My drafts when I do start out really are a process of getting words down on paper – as much as possible, as fast as possible, without really worrying about what I’m doing with it. So, I don’t create elaborate outlines. I usually have a sense of “this is what I want to argue.” These are my main points that I want to make. And then I accumulate all the evidence that I have that’s relevant to anything that I’m saying. Then, I tend to start off with a paragraph with a topic sentence that’s saying where I’m going, and then there are 75 examples. And then the next thing, there are another 75 examples. And then I go back and weed out and figure out, “Okay, these are the ones that I really need to use, these are the ones that make the most sense, I need to spend more time actually talking about what’s going on in these, and this is how I can forward my argument.” For me, it’s because I really hate to write. Anything that gets me to write words on screen is a useful thing because, for me, the hardest thing is the beginning.

And so I never begin in the beginning. I always begin in the middle because the beginning is too daunting for me. It’s too much for me. It needs to be more eloquent or more sophisticated, or I need to know where I’m going. And because, as I said, I don’t figure out where I’m going until I’m going through that process of writing, I find that it’s better for me to start in the middle. And then I can figure out, okay, this thing that I thought was going to be really interesting and significant, I can’t really say very much about. And this other thing that I thought was going to be minor, I am spending pages on. And, again, I don’t usually realize that that’s what’s going on until I’ve done that writing process.

And for me, a lot of it is physical. I can’t revise on screen. I have to print everything out. I use red felt-tip marker to revise. I do a lot of actual scissor and tape moving around of material. And I just ink it up, print it out again, and ink it up again. I waste reams of paper. I’m bad for the environment. But it’s the only way that I can do it. I find that the amount of revision that I can do on screen is absolutely minimal. I need to be able to see things physically in relation to each other. I need to hold a piece of paper in my hand and be able to see that ten pages later this is where I’m going to go.

That’s fascinating. I’ve heard of other writers who do the same thing. Why do you think you do it that way?

A lot of it I think is because I’ve got a really lousy memory. I know there’s a certain irony in a historian with a really lousy memory, but it’s true. I have a very, very bad memory. Part of the reason I need to assemble every single example of everything is because I don’t remember that it exists unless I’ve got it in front of me. And again, I lose myself in my own writing unless I can physically say, “Go back to page four.” And if I have page four, and I have page six, and I can move that stuff around, I find that that’s the only way I can keep that stuff in my head. When I move that stuff on screen, I get lost. I don’t remember where I am actually physically within what it is that I am writing. So, really, I’d love to say that it’s because I think visually or something like that, but really it’s because I have a terrible memory. It’s the only way in which I can
Peer Review Workshop Ideas

Blake Sanz

All students turn their drafts in to me via blackboard on a day before class. For that following class day, three to four students are charged with providing an oral presentation in which they discuss their writing process. They’re guided in this by a set of questions I send them beforehand. The rest of the class is charged with reading the essays of those who are presenting and preparing questions based on their reading that they will then ask during class following their peer’s presentation. In general, the presentations have run between 6-8 minutes, and the Q&As that follow have run a little longer, making for an average of about 15-17 minutes per student, and therefore about an hour’s worth of discussion of four student essays. I’ve tried a variety of strategies for each presentation day regarding the final 30 minutes of class, usually involving some amount of individual time in which students might apply what they saw being discussed of someone else’s essay to their own.

For discussion, a typical question would be something like this: “I noticed you organized your essay according to elements of rhetorical analysis: syntax, diction, etc., and that this led to some overlap in your discussion of the essay you chose to analyze. What reason was there for that ordering, and do you plan to keep it?” Other questions ended up being more content-based, as in, “In the essay you chose to analyze by Sedaris, he seemed really interested in coming off as funny. Why do you think that was important to him?” These, I hope, were helpful in that they addressed not only matters of writing process, but of the thought of what either could or should have gone into the writing of their essay. In some cases, when students were reticent to share, I’d call on them to ask their questions, and in other cases, I’d ask my own questions. In general, however, students tended to dominate the class those days, and I only interjected a couple of times at points when I felt the discussion was getting off-track, or when I wanted the student presenting to more directly answer something that had been asked.

Invariably, the questions were much more telling than the answers. That is, more often than not, students seemed to be able to recognize in others’ essays what they had not necessarily accounted for in their own writing. Their ability to incorporate this feedback and self-reflection into their revisions remains unclear, but at least I feel that these projects helped create a class ethic that values revision along the lines of a tangible audience that reads and has reactions to their work.

This idea was born out of my concern that traditional peer review would be difficult to integrate into a 10-week quarter. That is, I wanted to come up with a more efficient way of doing it. At Louisiana State University, my prior students and I had nearly always been frustrated with peer review, and yet I sensed that these skills were an important part of what I wanted them to learn. But it always seemed a waste of time to them, and I think that formalizing the process into an oral presentation provides students a sense of ownership that perhaps traditional peer review had not done for my prior students. Because each student only presents once, on only one of their four essays, I worry a bit that this method doesn’t provide as full amount of feedback for them, but the way by which they are encouraged to turn discussions of others’ papers onto their own makes up for that, I hope.
I also find this efficient, since it seems that many students struggled with so many similar issues. The presentations, then, assuaged many of their personal fears about their writing, helping them form a more tangible sense of their own rhetorical community, and to some extent, I think, demystified the process of writing for them, as well as giving them ideas for revision.

**John Tiedmann**

I give my 1122 students 40 minutes to write an essay in response to a question I put up on the screen; after they are done, I put one of their drafts up on the screen, and we workshop it together. My goal is to give them some practice using concepts we discuss, as a kind of dry run for a graded essay they'll start in the next week. I also think the exercise serves as a kind of workshop in workshopping. During the workshop part, I ask each student to explain to the class what they thought was strongest about the draft and to suggest how, on the basis of that strength, the writer might revise the essay. They are generally good at identifying strengths, but many of their suggestions for revision are, predictably, a bit vague and under-elaborated. So, when a student gives a less than fully developed suggestion, I explain what one would need to do to make a suggestion of its sort truly useful, then ask the student to develop his/her suggestion while we move on to the next student. I come back to these students periodically, to solicit their now more useful suggestions, and I explain to the class why I think these revised suggestions were indeed more useful. I am usually quite happy with the suggestions once they take the time to think them through, and it seems like the quality of suggestions overall improve the further along we get.

Which brings me to my suggested implementable special solution. Next time we workshop in small groups, I'm going to ask each student to write his/her suggestions for the others in coherent paragraph form, and to send those suggestions to me at the end of class. And when next we meet, I'm going to put some of those suggestions up on the screen, and as a class we'll workshop them together. How can you elaborate this suggestion? How can you extend its scope? How can you make it more specific? Etc. I think that the difficulty that students face when trying to elaborate upon their suggestions for revision is akin to the one they face when trying to elaborate their own ideas: a lack of concrete know-how. An exercise like this gives me a chance to provide it.
Where did you get your undergraduate degree? What was your major? Where did you get your Masters and PhD and what was it in?

B.A. from St. Cloud State University (now the University of Minnesota at St. Cloud) in St. Cloud, MN
Double Major in English and American Studies

M.A. St. Cloud State University in English with a focus on early 20th century American Literature

PhD: Illinois State University in English Studies; my dissertation considered the ontological construction of modernist identity in 20s and 30s American literature.

Why did you choose DU?
For professional and academic reasons, the opportunity to create a new program to service the writing and learning needs of such a prestigious university was just too much to pass up. For personal reasons, Denver seemed like an excellent place for my wife and I to start our married life together; for both of us, the mountains are an amazingly strong draw.

Describe what your writing process is like:
Actually, my writing process is a lot like funnelling a lot of ideas into one spot, one space, and then adding enough pressure to it so that something happens. That’s kind of what both the big picture of a project I undertake is like and also what happens when I get to the smaller parts of the project. Whether it’s a philosophical debate I’m entering and I just don’t know how, or if I’m searching for the right words to make a strong point, often I funnel the ideas and continue to hone them. At times I discover in honing in on ideas, research, etc. that I’m truly able to learn alongside myself. Moments like those are the ones I really like to share with my students, and while my process is certainly not the most efficient one, it’s all I have right now.
What do you enjoy most about writing?
There’s a moment I dread and enjoy most, which happens simultaneously: it’s the one where I’ve been putting things off so long that I dread sitting down to write; writing feels almost foreign at that point. But when the writing happens, gets going, and I’ve found that 4 hours and almost 10 pages have passed, next comes the moment I enjoy the most. My back hurts, my fingers ache, and my head’s tired; I know I have to get home or onto other things, but I also know I want to get back to it. That’s the best.

Briefly, how would you describe your teaching philosophy?
Roughly speaking, I’m a problem-posing teacher who values students’ investment in not being a passive consumer of language and text, but who are active and critically connected to texts and learning. In my experience, such an assumption confronts student resistance and passive acceptance of ideology, creating instead productive and interactive moments of learning that moves into dialogue and critical literacy, and I often try and learn from student resistance as a way of thinking through learning, literacy, and engagement.

What drew you to become a writing teacher?
I guess I’ve always been drawn to the classroom, but what drew me to become invested in teaching writing was its emphasis on teaching in the first place. Writing teachers have always been the best teachers I’ve ever had: the ones most conversant, the ones with the best answers, the ones that helped me learn the most, and the ones most interested in students. I was drawn to it as a teacher. It’s that excellence in teaching and being informed about pedagogy that keeps me devoted to the writing class.

What do you enjoy most about teaching writing?
Broadly speaking, as a teacher I always enjoy the moments when something I’ve been pushing students to understand seem to click, to make sense. But the kinds of moments I most enjoy about teaching, the moments I find the most energizing is when the class is conducting itself, when the work I’ve done to make writing and learning conducive to itself pays off, and the students are in charge of directing the class without even realizing that they’re learning. Outside of the classroom itself, what I enjoy most about teaching is considering new approaches to writing instruction, asking questions about how students writing with colleagues, and formulating the next teaching moment.

What are your hobbies and outside interests, or, as Doug puts it, guilty pleasures?
In the winter I love to ski; in the summer it’s golfing; and in between its reading, playing poker with friends, and keeping up with Harry Potter, Scrubs, and some of my favorite bands. I range all over the place, from Social Distortion to The Decemberists, and from the Red Hot Chili Peppers to Cake to Tool.

Sorry, no Guitar Hero for me...I will admit to being a) a little obsessed with hockey, and b) being EXTREMELY excited for baseball season.

Name an unusual or little-known fact about yourself.
I’m a bit of a shark at darts, particularly Cricket.
Where did you get your undergraduate degree? What was your major? Where did you get your Masters and PhD and what was it in?
I went to the University of Chicago as an undergraduate and majored in the Humanities. The program allowed us to mix and match our emphases — I focused on literature in Spanish (especially twentieth-century Latin American lit) and creative writing. When I was done with my B.A., I was tired, especially of school; U of C was very intense. I think I may have worked harder there than I did through much of graduate school. After three years in the working world, however, school sounded like a great option again. I completed my MA and PhD at the University of Texas in Austin. It was a really rewarding experience. My work focused again on twentieth-century literature, but this time on American poetry. I also began teaching while I was in Texas — both writing and literature classes.

What do you enjoy most about writing?
My dad is a painter. A number of years ago he and I were speaking about his work — the call to paint; and he explained to me that painting is his clearest way of thinking. I really appreciated that description — I think I like writing because it is my clearest form of thinking. Whether I am writing poetry, analyzing the works of others, or examining something in the world that has caught my attention — writing focuses my attention; it allows me to work through and rework my thinking: what I am seeing, what I am trying to say. I like that it is usually a solitary endeavor while I am writing, but then it goes out into the world, where it becomes a collaborative process with my readers.

Briefly, how would you describe your teaching philosophy?
This is a timely question, as I’ve been thinking about my teaching with almost every waking hour in the past few months.

I think teaching is a privilege. I really do. It is also hard work, as hard as it is to be a student, I think. And perhaps harder for me: I had over twenty years to perfect the role of student. I am only about eight years into the role of teacher . . . every quarter is a revelation.
As a teacher, I would say my philosophy is to try and foster an environment of respect for ideas. If you talked to one of my students today, they could tell you my favorite question to ask them about their writing is: why? (or, sometimes, how?). I want to know why people think the way they do, and I want to help them be able to articulate their own ideas, give their own claims credence and development. The traditional classroom sets up such deeply entrenched hierarchies — this is something I struggle with. I want everyone in the room to be taking their thinking and writing seriously; but I don’t want to be the “writing enforcer.” As a faculty, we have talked about the names or roles we would like to be given when helping students with their writing (coach, consultant, etc.). I’d like to be a sounding board and a guide. I think I am still discovering the many ways in which the power of effective writing can be brought into the classroom and made engaging for students.

What drew you to become a writing teacher?

In college, I had a Calculus teacher who was really good at math. Really good. But he was not very good at teaching it, because he was so good at it himself — Calculus was so intuitive for him, that he didn’t have a broad vocabulary of ways to explain it to those of us for whom it was not intuitive. I have thought about this with regards to my teaching of writing. I can write well (not everything I produce is a mind-boggling work of genius, but writing is something I feel competent and confident about), and I am glad to have a set of skills and experiences that allows me to do this. You wouldn’t want to be taught by someone who isn’t good at what they are teaching. However, teaching writing requires a level of mindfulness that writing, on its own, may not. This is a roundabout way of explaining what drew me to teaching writing. I like writing very much, and it is easy for me to get excited about it. Teaching writing is like drawing back the green velvet curtain and taking a good look at “the wizard”: asking yourself questions about your own processes, how you came to be the writer you are, and how you can come up with as many ways as possible to help students achieve their own levels of proficiency (and enthusiasm, with any luck), even if they are not going to go by the same paths and byways you took in getting there.

What are your hobbies and outside interests, or, as Doug puts it, guilty pleasures?

As a kid, I had several career paths in mind: first, I wanted to be an archeologist, and then, I wanted to be a marine biologist (and finally, about the age of eleven or twelve, I decided I wanted to be a writer). The first two of these had a lot to do, I think, with growing up in the Southwest and going potshard and fossil hunting with my mom. We spent a lot of time walking and watching the ground for clues. As a child in Santa Fe, the distant past and the ocean were two of the most mysterious things I could imagine; and to find their traces in my desert home, you had to pay attention. I still walk and watch the ground, but what I am looking for now has expanded to include botany and traces of urban archeology — found objects, unfamiliar plants and flowers. I am an amateur naturalist. I still am fascinated by the ocean . . . in fact, that interest will be finding its way into my 1133 classes this coming quarter.

Name an unusual or little-known fact about yourself.

People are often curious about my first name—so I will share the history of its origins: Alba means “dawn” in Spanish; it also means “white” in Latin (as many botanists have been happy to tell me — this is why plants with white blossoms often have alba in their taxonomic names). Both roots of the word have to do with the emanation of light. In the Catholic church there is a prayer thanking god for the new day, called an alba. Ginsberg, the poet, also wrote a piece called “My Alba.” My parents chose this name for me for these reasons, but for others, especially. My father grew up in Colombia, where Alba was a relatively common girl’s name. As a young man, he was fascinated with Goya’s paintings, and particularly with his portrait of the Duchess of Alba. When my parents were in their twenties, they traveled together through Europe, stopping for a time in a village in France called Alba La Roche . . . all of these factors combined to give me my name, or so the family mythology goes.
Where did you get your undergraduate degree? What was your major? Where did you get your Masters and PhD? What were they in?
I received my B.A. in English from Washington State University (WSU), after receiving an A.A (Associate in Arts) from William Rainey Harper Community College. I have no minor, although I changed my major several times before figuring out what I wanted to study. So I took 2 – 3 core classes in four other disciplines aside from English. Does that count as a minor? My M.A. is also from WSU and is in English with an emphasis in Composition and Rhetoric. I am currently finishing my PhD from Michigan Technological University in Rhetoric and Technical Communication. My areas of emphasis are rhetoric and composition, cultural studies, and pedagogy.

Why did you choose DU?
I chose DU for several reasons, two of which I’ll touch on here: 1) The opportunity to help develop a new writing program is exciting, and I looked forward to teaching first-year composition again (something I hadn’t done for a few years); 2) I’ve been fortunate to work in different colleges and universities with different student, staff, and faculty communities. DU offers the chance for me to work within yet another set of circumstances. This diversity helps me develop as a teacher and writer.

Describe what your writing process is like:
I tend to let ideas stew before writing. This is not necessarily how I approach teaching writing, however. I encourage students to learn various approaches to writing and determine which approach works best given the communicative situation.

What do you enjoy most about writing?
I enjoy wrestling with words and ideas, forming them into something that seems fresh. I also enjoy trying to penetrate to the core of what seems to me an intriguing question or challenge. But I think what I like most about writing is the freedom it allows me. Writing can occur in almost any situation for almost any reason. I’ll rely on a musical relationship here via Neil Young’s career: sometimes you need to play Harvest, sometimes Zuma, and sometimes Living With War.
Briefly, how would you describe your teaching philosophy?
I approach teaching writing from a quasi-classical model. I believe the goal of classical rhetoric that asks students to study and create texts as a process of enabling and participating in civic discourse is still a noble goal. The models from that time need, of course, to be modified to be more inclusive and in sync with our times, but those models are still productive as for me as I think about my teaching.

What drew you to become a writing teacher?
Working as a tutor in Washington State University’s Writing Lab. I was there for approximately four years as an undergrad and grad student. I learned that I was not only pretty good at helping fellow students talk about and address their questions concerning writing, but I enjoyed being a tutor as well. By the time I left WSU, I had taken on many roles in that Writing Lab that allowed me to experience a wide range of what I would experience as a future teacher.

What do you enjoy most about teaching writing?
I truly enjoy being in the classroom and working with students.

What are your hobbies and outside interests, or, as Doug puts it, guilty pleasures?
I love music and movies. I also love playing pool, but I don’t do that much when class is in session. I have recently become a fan of, okay, an addict of, the video game Guitar Hero 2. Because I have no musical ability but am an avid music fan, the game allows me to live out my boyhood dreams of being in Cheap Trick.

Name an unusual or little-known fact about yourself.
I wrote and directed a short movie a few years back. It was a great experience. I recommend everyone take a shot at it, and it is a bit easier to do now with digital cameras and editing tools. The process required skills that I didn’t know I possessed or at least hadn’t used in quite some time.
Phil Shaw Interview
Writing Center Consultant, BA in English (Literary Studies)

Where did you get your undergraduate degree?
I have yet to get my undergraduate degree, but I’ve been discussing it with some of the folks at the registrar’s office, and they think it’s about time I did. The severance package they’re offering me includes a BA in English (Literary Studies) and a pair of minors, just as an added incentive.

Why did you choose DU?
I’m a Colorado native, though I was born in LA (Lower Alabama), so the decision to go to DU wasn’t an agonizing one. I was under the impression that DU was the best school I could go to locally for what I wanted to do. *hushed silence*. I’m still under that impression, by the way.

What do you plan to do with your degree once you are done?
I plan on squeezing every penny, every all-nighter, and every drop of blood and sweat out of that degree and collecting it in a claw-foot bathtub. I’ll then take that around with me to different Graduate Admissions offices and show it to them, demanding admission to their program because, so help me God, I will teach college-level English! And should they say no, I will cry two more perfect tears and let them fall into the ocean of my small accomplishments, and drag my weight to the next opportunity.

Describe what your writing process is like:
Well, there are really several different writing processes, and to some extent; I think that each paper or each story requires a different perspective or set of tools. For instance, when I write a prose piece, I like to think about the story as if it were already finished, although the plot details and characters might be unclear. I like to feel the emotions that that unique sense of completion creates in me, and from there, I know what kind of story I’m going to write, and in what emotional context. I think that it’s very important to have an emotional plan, far more than any sort of plot-driven or character-centered one. At the end of the day, people read stories to get a feeling.

For an academic paper, I like to start writing a few days before the due date, and if it keeps coming, I keep writing. But that’s atypical. Usually I get burned out, and spend the following days mulling over what exactly it is that I am burned out about. I’ll flip idly through the texts I’m using, looking for nothing in particular but never not looking. Eventually, as the due date approaches, I pull myself together and go to war. Most of the
time a paper is finished within a single evening, read over the next day and turned in.

**What drew you to become a writing consultant?**
As with most aspects of my life, being a writing consultant meshes exactly with my goal in life: to become fabulously wealthy. Like backyard pool in the shape of Lee Iacocca wealthy. But it wasn’t always that way. When I started here in the Fall, I was a volunteer. At the time the position was really only available to work-study students and I, in a poorly managed deal involving my financial future and a piece of carrot cake, lost that funding. However, by some fantastic miracle, I became a compensated member of the WRC team. So, what was the draw to the writing center? I want to learn about the ways other people write, and maybe in doing so, learn a little more about the way I write.

**How would you describe your philosophy as a writing consultant?**
It’s embarrassing for me to admit, but I totally bought into the company policy. After having seen the way other consulting programs were run (both in high school and at other colleges), I was hooked by this idea of “non-directive peer consultation.” It’s not just because I am by nature very lazy, either. I like to see people learn a little about the way they write as they try to fit their voice into other peoples’ boxes or tailor their ideas to fit an expectation. Not that those boxes or expectations are inherently bad or malevolent, just that for a lot of writers, it can seem that way. I suppose that my position in this struggle between expression and expectation is somewhere in the middle, as a sort of linguistic or rhetorical buffer. I don’t really want to help people change the way they write, but how they think about writing. I think if we can accomplish that together, they have a better chance of understanding those outside expectations and being able to adapt, without losing that part of their voice which makes it unique.

**What are your hobbies or outside interests?**
In my free time I enjoy spending time with friends, eating sushi really slowly (because it’s expensive), playing various instruments I keep around the house, going on fantastic road trips, and dancing to the Talking Heads.
Faculty Scholarship

I have a new poem, "Litany," published last month in the literary journal Many Mountains Moving.

I am currently poetry editor of the experimental literary journal Born Magazine, which features multimedia, collaborative projects in poetry and image.

My short story "Even the Stones" was published December 2006 in a publication called Open Windows 2006 by Ghost Road Press.

I've signed a publishing contract with Ohio University Press for my book, "Power in the Blood: A Family Memoir." It will be published in Fall 2008. I've also accepted an invitation to write a chapter for the book, Appalachia in the Classroom: Teaching the Region (also to be published by Ohio University Press in 2008). The book will feature chapters by leading scholars in Appalachian Studies.

Both books will be part of Ohio University Press's Ethnicity and Gender in Appalachia series. My involvement with the series stems from my 1998 Rockefeller Fellowship at Marshall University's Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Gender in Appalachia.

In October, I delivered a paper titled "Concrete Universalities: The Cultural Politics of the New Criticism" at the Modernist Studies Association's conference in Tulsa, OK.

In April, I'll take part in a seminar titled "Public Rhetorics and Permanent War" at the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Cultural Studies Association (U.S.), at Portland State University, Portland, OR.

In July, I'll deliver a paper titled "Of Publicity and Privation, or Cultural Studies as Public Criticism" at Cultural Studies Now -- An International Conference, at the University of East London.

In June, I'll attend the Rhetoric Society Summer Institute, at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY.
In revision, it is important to see the big picture. Don't make revisions just to see where you end up. Begin by looking at your draft. What does it accomplish? What do you want it to accomplish? Decide on what you want your ultimate purpose, focus, and audience is to be, and then decide how to use the suggestions that you have received to help you achieve these goals in your draft. Once you have a clear conception of where you are going, then you can decide what changes to incorporate into your paper.

Below are some questions that you can use to help you guide your revision efforts.

**Audience and Purpose:**

Do you have a clear audience in mind for your paper? If not, spend some time thinking about what group of people you would like to have read your paper, or who would be interested or influenced in reading your paper, and why. Consider age group, gender, interests, hobbies, educational level, experience, career, level of knowledge about your topic, etc.

What do you want to communicate to this audience? Why? Can you convey this thought in a single sentence? If not, you may need to narrow your focus or consider writing a larger project that could encompass the scope of your ideas.

Keep your audience and purpose in mind as you read each and every sentence. Are they most appropriate in relation to your audience and purpose? Does your audience already know the information that you are conveying? Do they need more background in order to understand the significance of your point? Is the language appropriate for your audience?

Does each paragraph contribute to your focus and purpose? If not, how can you make it do so? Sometimes the only thing to do is delete, as painful as that may be.

**Tone and Mood:**


Is the paper informal or formal? Why? What words or phrases make it so? Does the level of formality work with your audience and purpose? If not, you need to reconsider and rework the areas of your paper which create the formal or informal mood.

**Organization and Presentation:**
What did you put at the beginning/introduction of the paper? Why? Does it make the most sense there? Is that the most effective place for that information? Is there other information that could work more effectively there? Is there one or two sentences somewhere in the beginning of the paper that sum up what you have to say about the issue you've chosen?

What is in the middle of the paper? Why? Is it easy or logical for the reader to follow? What would happen if you moved some of the information around? Would the paper be more or less effective? Why?

What did you end/conclude your paper with? Is it what you want to leave your reader thinking about? Does it effectively tie together or wrap up your thoughts? Is it the most effective way to end the essay?

**Details and Support:**

Keeping your purpose and audience in mind, have you provided enough details and examples to make your point? Is there enough support to accomplish your purpose?

Do you have enough details to keep the reader interested? Do you have too few details to keep reader interest?

Do you offer enough examples to make your points clear? Is everything understandable and clear?
Every day we use the web looking at websites that are trying to sell, inform, or persuade or, often, a mixture of all three. However, what makes a website effective or persuasive? What makes one easier to use and navigate than another? What makes one easier to read and another grab your attention more?

In this assignment, you will design a website. You can either use the topic you have been working on all quarter or an entirely new topic. You can pick a new audience or keep an old audience you either directed your editorial or letter to the editor to. Either way, your website should achieve a specific purpose and be targeted to a specific audience. Your website should inform your audience about your topic and, in some way, persuade them to change their minds and/or do something.

Like the other assignments, your website should be well researched and supported. However, because of the hypertextual, linking nature of the web and the limited amount of scrolling most computer users usually do per page, you will have to use space differently than you would in print. In addition, you will use graphics, pictures, and other strategies to grab your audience’s attention, inform them of your issue, and persuade them to change their minds and/or spring into action. Like the other assignments, I will expect a works cited page in MLA style, although it does not necessarily have to appear as a formal part of your website.

Because you want to convey the most amount of information possible in a persuasive way within a website, keeping your audience and purpose in mind while you compose becomes especially important. In other words, how can you persuade your audience specifically of your position – i.e. to change their minds, to try something new, to take action, etc? So, while you compose your website, keeping these questions in mind will be helpful:

1) What is the purpose of your website? What specifically do you want to persuade your audience of? Why?
2) Who is the audience for this website?
3) How can you use visuals to make your points both clearer and stronger for your audience? How can you best utilize your web space to inform and persuade your audience?
4) Thinking of the rhetorical features of effective websites we discussed in class, what are 3 or 4 specific rhetorical strategies you want to use to reach this audience? Why do you think these strategies will be effective?
Assignments and Examples

Letter to the Editor
Geoffrey Bateman

For this assignment, you will demonstrate that you can write a well-crafted, rhetorically situated, and audience-aware letter to the editor of a regional or national newspaper like the Denver Post or the New York Times. There are two options to fulfill this assignment.

Option #1: Find a recent (ideally within the last four or five days) editorial or a piece by a columnist that elicits a strong response from you. You might fervently disagree or agree with it, but regardless, I want you to identify a piece of writing that interests you and that addresses an issue you feel passionately about. First, I want you to write a letter to the editor that responds to the editorial or column and meets the specific guidelines that the newspaper lays out for such letters. (For example, the Denver Post will only accept letters that are less than 200 words.) You should prepare this letter with an eye for submitting it to the editor and writing it so well that it gets published. (Once you workshop the letter and get feedback, you will submit it.) Second, for the purposes of our class, I would like you to expand this letter to a 500-600 word letter that more fully addresses the issue you are responding to. You should maintain the same focus on the newspaper’s audience, but develop your ideas further. Please submit both of these pieces, as well as the original editorial or column, to your writing group (via the group discussion board or file exchange) and to me (via digital dropbox).

Option #2: For this option, I would like you to draft three different letters to the editor in response to a recent editorial, column, or other letter to the editor. Depending on the newspaper you write for, these letters should each be 200-250 words long. You should follow the guidelines listed above in terms of identifying issues to respond to. Write each of these letters with the intent of submitting them, but you will only have to select one letter to submit after you workshop all three. For our workshop please submit each letter and the pieces they respond to to your writing group (via your group discussion board or file exchange) and to me (via digital dropbox).

Please note: For either option, please compile all these pieces into one MS Word document. You may need to cut and paste the original article(s) and reformat them, but make sure they’re all in one document to make sharing and accessing these files easier.

Also, please make sure you submit your drafts to your writing group so that everyone has enough time to download them to their computer before class begins on Wednesday. If 9:00 am is not early enough, then arrange a better time for your group.
As you travel around DU and Denver, you probably notice pamphlets or brochures everywhere. Unlike the editorial or letter to the editor, their intentions might not be as overtly political or entirely based on current events. But also unlike an editorial or letter to the editor, pamphlets almost always want their audience not only to change their minds about something but also to do something about it – join an organization, change a bad habit, or try something new, etc. In other words, pamphlets are very action-oriented, so being persuasive to a specific audience is even more important.

In this assignment, you will design a brochure or pamphlet. You can either use the topic you have been working on all quarter or an entirely new topic. You can pick a new audience or keep an old audience you either directed your editorial or letter to the editor to. Either way, your pamphlet should be informative and persuade your audience of your position on your topic.

Your pamphlet should be well researched and supported. However, like the letter to the editor, you have limited space. So, you will use graphics, pictures, and other strategies to grab your audience’s attention, inform them of your issue, and persuade them to accept your position. Like the other assignments, I will expect a works cited page in MLA style, although it will not appear as part of your brochure.

Because you want to convey the most amount of information possible in a persuasive way within the limited space of a pamphlet, keeping your audience and purpose in mind while you compose becomes especially important. In other words, how can you persuade your audience specifically of your position – i.e. to change their minds, to try something new, to learn new habits, etc? So, while you compose your pamphlet, keeping these questions in mind will be helpful:

1) What is the purpose of your pamphlet? What specifically do you want to persuade your audience of? Why?
2) Who is the audience for this pamphlet? Where will it appear? What type of people usually comes here?
3) How can you use visuals to make your points both clearer and stronger for your audience? How can you save space by conveying more information through visuals instead of words?
4) Thinking of the rhetorical features of effective pamphlets we discussed in class, what are 3 or 4 specific rhetorical strategies you want to use to reach this audience? Why do you think these strategies will be effective?
Alpine Bank, Main St. Breckenridge

Among designing single or multifamily homes they also design commercial buildings. The designs are unique and the buildings are designed to fit well with their surroundings. The materials and colors are chosen collaboratively by the customer and the architect to insure the highest quality satisfaction.

Hand drawn draft of the bank building of Entrada at Breckenridge

NEELY ARCHITECTURE

J. LEE NEELY • ARCHITECT

1705 Airport Road
Unit 5
Breckenridge, Co
80424

Phone: 970-547-0554
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E-mail: jlnarch@colorado.net

Designing custom, unique homes throughout the mountains.
**Philosophy:** Neely architecture provides excellent service and works with the customer's wants and needs. The goal is to design homes and buildings that are creative that work with the surrounding environment. Views and positioning of the house are taken into consideration for placement and design.

**Environmental Consideration:** The use of green building is highly considered. Green building is the idea of environmental friendliness with cost reductions through efficiency improvements, reduced energy and raw material inputs. Energy efficient homes that narrowly affect the environment are designed whenever possible.

**Personal Information:**

**Credentials:** Lee Neely obtained his architectural degree at the University of Texas at Austin. He is licensed in Colorado and registered in New Mexico. He has built many types of buildings throughout Colorado, ranging from residence additions, and single family homes to multifamily complexes and commercial buildings.

**Contact Information:**

Email: jlnarch@colorado.net
Phone: 970-547-0554
CONTACT INFORMATION

CALL FOR QUESTIONS ON PRICING, AVAILABILITY, OR APPOINTMENTS:

PHONE NUMBER: **(248) 892-5380**

OR E-MAIL:

RICHELLE.GONZALEZ@DU.EDU

SEND IN ORDERS, PAYMENT, SUGGESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS TO:

RICHELLE GONZALEZ
#333B 1901 E. ILIFF AVE.
DENVER, CO, 80210

www.myspace.com/richellegrae

PHOTOGRAPHY

All photos by Richelle Garcia
BACKGROUND
RICHELLE GONZALEZ IS A FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER BORN IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN. SHE FOCUSES HER PHOTOGRAPHY ON CANDID ANDPOSED PORTRAITS AS WELL AS CAPTURING EMOTION THROUGH LESS ANIMATE SURROUNDINGS UTILIZING LIGHTING, COLOR, AND EMOTION. besides photography as a pass-time, richelle often paints, draws and uses every medium in the arts to for self expression. she also spends time writing poetry, short expressive pieces and she is currently in the process of writing a book temporarily titled the trigger effect about her personal outlook on her experiences, emotions and relations.

CAMERA
http://www.canoncamera.com/images/Canon/69402_p.jpg
CANON DIGITAL REBEL 30D EOS 30D WITH 18-200MM F3.5-6.3 DC SIGMA LENS

TECHNIQUE
APERTURE DEFINITION: “A usually adjustable opening in an optical instrument, such as a camera or telescope, that limits the amount of light passing through a lens or onto a mirror.”

RICHELLE OFTEN DECREASES THE APERTURE SO AS TO FOCUS PRIMARILY ON THINGS IN A CLOSE RANGE TO ADD A MORE SIMPE LOOK TO BUSY PHOTOS. IN THE PHOTO TO THE LEFT, RICHELLE USES A DECREASED APERTURE TO FORCE THE VIEWER TO FOCUS MORE ON THE END OF THE CORD TO CREATE A SNAKE LIKE EFFECT. THE COIL THEN IS PUT INTO THE BACKGROUND AND MADE BLURRY TO REINFORCE THAT CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CORD.

SHUTTER SPEED DEFINITION: “The time the shutter remains open to expose the film to light from the lens.”

RICHELLE DECREASES SHUTTER SPEED IN ORDER TO ONLY ALLOW THE BRIGHTEST LIGHTS IN A LOT OF HER PHOTOS. IN THE PHOTO TO THE LEFT, SHE UTILIZED A DESK LIGHT SET CLOSE TO THE FACE TO BLOCK OUT EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE PHOTO CREATING A SORT OF EMOTION AND LOOK. THE PICTURE BECOMES FOCUSED ON THE FEATURES AND EXPRESSION.

EDITING
OFTEN AFTER TAKING A PHOTO, RICHELLE WILL EDIT THE PHOTO TO EVEN FURTHER ENHANCE THE EFFECT. GENERALLY THIS WON’T CHANGE THE PHOTO SIGNIFICANTLY.

IN PHOTOS LIKE THE ONE ABOVE, RICHELLE INCREASED CONTRAST IN THE PHOTO TO CREATE A VERY SHARP FEELING FOR THE VIEWER. SHE THEN CUT ALL COLOR OUT OF THE DRESS REPLACING IT WITH BLACK AND DECREASED THE SATURATION OF THE COLORS TO CREATE A GLOOMY, DEPRESSING FEEL. THE PHOTO GIVES A SENSE THAT THE FIGURE IS ON THE EDGE OF SANITY. THE STARK CONTRAST OF THE BLACK DRESS AND WHITE SHUTTERS CREATES A DEFINITE FOCAL POINT AND EMOTION. FROM FAR AWAY IT ALMOST LOOKS AS IF THE PERSON IS HANGING OR ABOUT TO JUMP OFF OF A LEDGE. THE COLORS REINFORCE THIS FEELING.

IN THE PHOTO TO THE LEFT, RICHELLE CREATED AN IMAGE OF TWO PEOPLE THROUGH A MIRROR IMAGE OF ONE. BY ERASING THE FACE OF THE INDIVIDUAL LOOKING INTO THE MIRROR, ONE GETS THE SENSE OF AN EMOTIONLESS BEING, BUT THROUGH THE REFLECTION, ONE SEES DIFFERENTY. THE FRENCH PHRASE “NE FEIGNEZ PAS”, DON’T FAKE, IS WRITTEN TO EVEN FURTHER EXPRESS THIS DISCONGRUITY.

EDITING PRICES
PRINTS:
8 X 10— $15.00
• MOST PHOTOS CAN BE CROPPED DOWN TO THIS SIZE IF NEEDED
• BUY 3 PRINTS AND GET THE FOURTH FOR FREE.

12 X 12— $14.00
• THIS IS SPECIAL FOR ANY SQUARE PIECE THAT IS SHOWN
• BUY 3 PRINTS AND GET THE FOURTH FOR FREE.

RATES:
PROMOTIONAL— STARTING AT $150, GOES UP DEPENDING ON CIRCUMSTANCE
ALBUM ARTWORK, ADVERTISEMENT— STARTING AT $200, ALSO DEPENDS ON CIRCUMSTANCE
PORTRAITS, EVENT PHOTOS— TRAVELING EXPENSES PLUS $40