

Rhetoric and Composition

Fall 2014 Program Newsletter



Faculty and Students Receive Local and National Recognition

FSU Rhetoric and Composition faculty and graduate students have been receiving local and national recognition for their innovative scholarship, research, pedagogies, and service for many years, and this academic year has been no different. With a total of 14 awards, including two for scholarship, four for research, four for pedagogy, one for service, and two for travel, FSU rhetoric and composition scholars are continuing to promote excellence in the field.

Local Recognition

Beginning at Florida State University itself, in 2013, Michael Neal received the Ralph Stair Prize for Innovative Education.



This award is given in honor of Ralph Stair, a former business professor at FSU who “valued engaged, interesting approaches to teaching.” Dr. Neal gained recognition for his pedagogical work with the postcard archive, a brainchild of then-grads Katie Bridgman and Stephen McElroy that Dr. Neal helped to develop.

The project expanded under Dr. Neal’s leadership to include the participation of undergraduates enrolled in the Editing, Writing, and Media (EWM) concentration. With Dr. Neal’s guidance, the archive functions as what this committed teacher views as a non-traditional pedagogical space that engages students in “producing primary research rather than reading published texts about historical documents.” Through this work, students experience “a different type of learning than what you typically see in the classroom,” an unique opportunity the award recognizes.

The trend toward excellence includes Kathleen Blake Yancey, who has also been recognized for her pedagogical and professional service with current and former graduate students.

This year Dr. Yancey was one of three faculty members to receive the Graduate Mentor Award from the FSU Graduate School. As Dr. Yancey explains, “The mentoring award is given for work with graduate students outside of the classroom.” These graduate students include both advisees and non-advisees whose mentoring Dr. Yancey sees as a “signature of the program.” Dr. Yancey notes that “mentoring takes a lot of different forms.” Not only has she shepherded students through prelim, post-prelim, and job market preparation, but she has also coached them through ePortfolio construction, co-presented with them on numerous panels, and co-published with all of her advisees. Though Dr. Yancey believes that being active in a graduate program means that “mentoring is part of what you do,” she admits that “it was lovely to be nominated” and that she was “delighted that students and former students were glad to support [her] application.”



The local recognition includes graduate students as well, such as fourth-year PhD student Kendra Mitchell was awarded the Edward H. and Marie C. Kingsbury Graduate Award from FSU this past spring. According to Mitchell, “the Kingsbury Award is a year-long fellowship awarded for ‘good’ writing,” which she believes is defined as “rigorous, scholarly work that is not laden with jargon or field-specific terminology.” Kendra notes that “it is one of the [English] department’s highly competitive writing awards” and that she “wasn’t so sure that [she] would have any writing that would suffice.” After seeing another graduate student “receive the \$9,000 award for the second time,” Kendra remembers thinking to herself, “Why can’t I win this?” Kendra explains that she submitted a chapter publication and her successfully-defended prospectus: “I found a thread in my prospectus and publication that spoke to my potential as a scholar, which suggests that I was a good investment.”

National Recognition

Recognition for faculty and student excellence, however, extends beyond the FSU community to include national awards. Noteworthy is the 2013 Council of Writing Program Administrator’s Best Book Award presented to Tarez Samra Graban for *GenAdmin: Theorizing WPA Identities in the Twenty-First Century*. CWPA grants this award to “recognize books whose authors or editors have made an outstanding contribution to the field of writing program administration over the past two calendar years.” Dr. Graban co-authored this book with Colin Charlton, Jonikka Charlton, Kathleen J. Ryan, and Amy Ferdinandt Stolley in 2011. Dr. Graban explains that *GenAdmin* “talks theoretically about the history and nature of writing program administration,” a history that Dr. Graban and her co-authors were attempting to rewrite. Ultimately, the authors aimed to re-envision the writing program administrator “not just as a role, but as a philosophy to take into other parts of the university.”



Further national recognition of scholarly accomplishments at the national level also includes Michael Neal and Stephen McElroy, along with FSU alum Katherine Bridgman, who gained prominence for their scholarship on the FSU postcard archive. They received the Michelle Kendrick Outstanding Digital Production/Scholarship Award for their 2013 *Kairos* special issue article, “Making Meaning at the Intersections: Developing a Digital Archive for Multimodal Research.” As Dr. McElroy

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explains, the article concerns the development of the archive. Dr. McElroy traces the archive's inception to a graduate seminar in Digital Humanities that he and Dr. Bridgman participated in during fall 2011. The two decided to develop collaboratively a way to index the postcards that Dr. Neal was acquiring for the rhetoric and composition program. The article discusses this development in terms of three recursive stages: conception, construction, and production. "We talked about how we would design the article as a team, and then I did most of the work of actually encoding it," Dr. McElroy stated. "It was a lot of fun to do...and it was great working with Karen Lunsford [guest editor] and Cheryl Ball [editor]."

Not to be overlooked are recipients of departmental and disciplinary awards, such as Logan Bearden, who received the Fred L. Stanley



Award for Excellence in First-Year Teaching; Christine Martorana, who received the Ermine M. Owenby, Jr. Fund to Promote Excellence Award; and Dr. Graban, who received the Council on Research and Creativity First-Year Assistant Professor Award. In addition, Jacob Craig was awarded the Pearson Publishing Emerging Pedagogies Research and Travel Grant; Christine Martorana also was granted travel funding from both Pearson and WPA-GO; and Kendra Mitchell won the NCPTW/IWCA registration and grub travel grant as well as the CCCC Chairs' Memorial Travel Award.

From local to national, from department to discipline, awards of various kinds attest to the scholarly and pedagogical excellence of our program, our faculty, and our students. It is with pleasure that we congratulate them all for these well-deserved recognitions.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



Heather Lang, a third-year PhD student in Rhetoric and Composition, is currently serving as one of seven Graduate Fellows for The Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative, an off-shoot of the Gayle Morris Sweetland Center for Writing and the University of Michigan Press. Heather explains that "the main goal of the DRC is to support the computers and writing community by providing pedagogical and research tools and making a space for sharing ideas." They use their blog as "a major point of contact with the community, running regular features like the Web Text of the Month feature," which recently highlighted our own Jacob Craig's work in

Digital Makers Spaces. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to participate in the community by contributing to the wiki of the field's history and blog carnivals. Heather is also "planning a Wiki Wednesday feature, along with fellow fellow Matt Vetter, that focuses on Wiki editing as a form of activism." She adds that she's "pretty excited to get that out in the world." So far, Heather has found this work to be rewarding, noting that it "has helped [her] get a wider view of digital rhetoric and composition, and that [she's] really enjoying working with the other fellows because each of [them] has a very different perspective on the digital and [they] have a lot of really great conversations."

Bret Zawilski, a fourth-year PhD student in Rhetoric and Composition, completed his service as assistant editor for *College Composition and Communication* and began his service as assistant editor for *Kairos*, an open-access online journal. Though his job title remains the same, Bret explains that the work is quite different: "The editorial process is broken down into a multi-tier set of stages that address both the form and content of a piece; whereas the editor of a print publication might be most concerned with the structure and organization of an article, in working with *Kairos* I've had to take a deeper look at the underlying code at the foundation of several webtexts." Bret also focuses on sustainability and accessibility, noting that "many webtexts rely on media hosted on other sources (i.e., YouTube or Soundcloud), but we have to ensure that we have some kind of local archive of these materials; otherwise there's the risk of a site shutdown or other error wiping out crucial components of the article." He admits that the process is new to him and that he's "already learned quite a bit about the sheer variety of texts that can be created for a digital platform like *Kairos*." More generally, this opportunity has made him "more appreciative of the kinds of considerations authors need to take into account when creating a text that uses its form—the conceptual design of the webtext—to augment the meaning and practices demonstrated within."



UPCOMING CONFERENCE DEADLINES

QRN at CCCC 2015: November 15, 2014

WPA 2015: Submissions begin November 15, 2014

NCTE 2015: Submissions generally accepted between early December and mid-January

Feminisms and Rhetorics 2015: February 1, 2015

UPCOMING GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

SAMLA, November 7 – 9, 2014

- Jacob Craig, "Layout, Meaning, and Genre: Visual Rhetoric in a Mobile Ecology"
- Joe Cirio, "The Invisible Checklist: Sustaining Reflective Practices for Student-Negotiated Rubrics and (Ideally) Beyond"
- Heather Lang, "Integrating Person-First and Identity-First Language in the Service Learning Classroom"
- Erin Workman, "Experiences Influencing Writing: Mapping FYC Students' Use of Prior Knowledge"

ASHR, November 20 – 23, 2014

- Martha Canter, "Tea Time: Eighteenth-Century English Women's Economic Agency and the Rhetorics of Home Display"

American Reading Forum, December 10 – 13, 2014

- David Bedsole, "'Time has Proved a Lot of Things': Songcraft, Social Need, and Multimodal Literacies"