

Postscripts

The Jacksonville State University English Department Alumni Newsletter

Student Etiquette 101

Andrea Porter

It's a typical day in American Literature 202. I've just called roll, distributed handouts, and launched into a discussion of T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land. But, before I even get to Madame Sosostris, seven students have come in late, causing me to pause for each of them, give them the handouts, and watch as they weave their way to the least convenient seats in the back of the classroom.

Undaunted, I continue, uncovering Eliot's fascinating allusions to the apocryphal story of Lilith, when I am interrupted by Justin Timberlake singing, "I'm bringing sexy back." A student on the front row jerks to action and pulls out the offending phone. I am only a little surprised when he says "hello" and steps outside for more privacy to talk.

I grit my teeth into my fakest smile and forge ahead, knowing that at least some students want to hear about Eliot. The rest of the class goes by without incident, and I finally come to my profound question for the class: "So, what do you think Eliot is implying in this poem about modern society?" A hand shoots into the air. "Jasmine," I say to the wiggling fingers, barely able to conceal my pride. "What page are we on?" she answers.

I began my teaching career as a Graduate Teaching Assistant ten years

ago at Mississippi State University. After completing my Master's degree at MSU, I continued teaching at the University of Alabama while working on my doctorate and even taught a few classes at a local community college for extra money on the side. Now, as I finish my third year of teaching in the English Department at Jacksonville State University, I have come to a disturbing revelation: while I am progressing in my teaching maturity, my students are, in fact, regressing in their behavior and maturity, which makes the frightening scene above possible every day in classrooms across the country.

When I was an undergraduate at the University of North Alabama, I had my fair share of academic disappointments, like a B- on a paper I was sure deserved an A, but I never questioned the professors

IN THIS ISSUE

Student Etiquette 101	1
Katie Cain Johnson Joins English Faculty .	3
Writers' Club News	3
English Department Foundation	4
Writers Bowl Article	6
Another Successful Year for Sigma Tau Delta	6
Southern Playwright's Competition	6
On The Brink	7
Imagining The Holocaust	7
Faculty P.S.	8
Jacksonville State University Writing Project	11
ALUMNI NEWS SOUGHT	12

whose hands bestowed those scarlet letters. Instead, I took a deep breath, hunkered down, and spent even more time on the next essay, all the while poring over the professor's comments on my previous paper, looking to see how I could improve. Today, unfortunately, I am confronted—and sometimes quite belligerently—with students who demand to know “why I gave them” a less than perfect grade. I then have to explain that I don't *give* grades; I am not the English fairy who magically taps the paper with her wand to make the grade appear. Instead, students *earn* grades, and, besides, we don't grade the students themselves; we grade their work, two different things entirely.

Students see the classroom of today as a “buffet of learning,” where they can pay for what they consume, come and go at their leisure, and certainly complain when the fare is not to their taste. They equate paying for a class with passing a class (with an A, of course). On the first day of every class, I have to dispel this myth, explaining that they actually pay for a seat in the course. What they do once in that seat—and how often they choose to come and take that seat—is entirely up to them. They also see no problem with strolling into a class fifteen, even thirty, minutes late, or leaving the class a little early if they have more pressing matters. I can remember when I was an undergrad, standing outside the classroom while the professor began his lecture, too scared to enter even a few seconds late. Feeling that it was just too disrespectful, I would usually, on the rare occasions this happened, choose to slink away and not enter at all. And, finally, with today's litigious climate, students complain, and complain often and loudly, to anyone “in charge” about their grades and whatever else might be unpalatable with their college experience.

I know that it is our instinct to compare today's society (to borrow one of our students' favorite terms) with the “good old days” of our youth, often forgetting that we were probably less than perfect angels in the classroom ourselves. However, today's “Echo Generation” does, in fact, need some coaching in the ways of the world. Who knows where the blame lies, perhaps in a mixture of video games, cell phones, TV, and a few overindulgent parents. The point is, I have realized, that these are basically good kids behaving badly—all because they just don't know any better. Therefore, I have taken “Student Etiquette 101” as my personal crusade.

It starts on the first day of class when I immediately make everyone move to the front seats instead of sitting only on the back rows and the outer perimeters of the room: “The English party happens up here,” I say, “and you are all invited—so move up!” I continue a few classes later with my famous “Peeving and Pleasing Your Professors” handout, which lists students' most annoying behaviors and provides my best

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Editor Gena Christopher

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tips on being better students. In addition, after receiving the one thousandth unsigned e-mail from the random JSU account that asks “What did we do in class today?,” I now include a special “netiquette” session about how to correspond properly through e-mail.

By this time, they usually think I’m a little crazy (and maybe I am, but only because they have made me so). Because we have talked about why tardiness is unacceptable, because we have outlined proper cell phone usage, and because we have laughed about the rudeness of packing up materials while the teacher is still lecturing, they start to mend their manners. Student Etiquette 101 *works*.

I know being Miss Manners is not really in my job description, but I feel it is my duty to send these young men and women out of my classroom better, more considerate human beings. I won’t be so optimistic as to think that they will all rush back to thank me one day, but at least now Justin Timberlake doesn’t interrupt T. S. Eliot and my classroom doesn’t feel like a waste land.

Katie Cain Johnson Joins English Faculty

Katie Cain Johnson joined the English faculty in 2007. Ms. Johnson, a native of Georgia, who grew up in Florida and Montgomery, Alabama, came with her parents to Jacksonville in 1988 and graduated from Jacksonville High School. She went on to attend Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, and received her undergraduate degree in English and Music from that institution. She returned to Jacksonville and received her Master of Arts Degree in English from Jacksonville State University in 1996. She taught part-time in the English Departments of Gadsden State Junior College and Jacksonville State University until she became a full-time instructor at JSU in Fall 2007.

Ms. Johnson’s parents, Vernon and Janice Cain, are both prominent educators, and Katie says that it was “inevitable” for her to enter the teaching profession. She has taught a wide variety of English classes, but this past year, she focused primarily on American Literature and the freshman English classes. Katie enjoys the diversity of the student population and the congeniality of her colleagues at Jacksonville State University.

Katie has continued to be active in the field of music by serving as pianist for West Side Baptist Church in Jacksonville. Her summer plans include reading, gardening, traveling with her husband, and spending time with her family and friends. Please join us in welcoming Katie Cain Johnson, our newest English Department faculty member.

Writers’ Club News

The Writers’ Club, led by club presidents Sarah Moersch and Danielle Jones-Pruett, sponsored its third annual Dr. Robert U. Moersch (R.U.M.) Awards in Fiction and Poetry. Winners of the R.U.M. Short Fiction Awards were announced at an awards ceremony in the Gamecock Center last November: Sarah Moersch, “Ingrained” (1st place); Amanda Gober, “Tears and Beer Cans” (2nd place); Danielle Jones-Pruett, “Search Lights” (3rd place). A record 44 poems were submitted for the R.U.M Poetry Awards this spring. Winners were announced at a ceremony in the Alumni House, featuring award-winning Alabama poet Irene Latham, who discussed her sources of inspiration and read from her work. The winners were Alex Ward for “more than all these,” Brian Roberts for “After Apple-Thinking,” and Megan Snider for

continued on page 7

English Department Foundation

We appreciate the large number of alumni, friends, and department members who have generously donated to the English Department over the last year. Your donations help support many of our programs.

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Writers Bowl Article

On October 31, 2007, the English Department sponsored the Twelfth Annual JSU Writers Bowl. Fifty-six teams from high schools throughout northern Alabama traveled to the JSU campus to compete. The team competitions required students to write a letter from the producer of a reality television show to a classic monster who was being eliminated from the show. The teams were also required to write a poem following a prescribed pattern describing someone whom the group knew well. For the individual essay competition, students were asked either to discuss the high school class they have taken that they believe will have best prepared them for college or how schools can best prepare students to deal with tragedies such as those at Virginia Tech or Enterprise High School. JSU's Steven Whitton was the chair of the Writers Bowl Committee, assisted by Gena Christopher and Randy Davis. Submissions were judged by the following JSU faculty: Don Bennett, Christy Burns, Margaret Copeland, Jennifer Foster, Larry Gray, John Hickman, Gloria Horton, Joy Maloney, David Myer, Andrea Porter, Teresa Reed, and Julia Wooster.

Another Successful Year for Sigma Tau Delta

This past fall, Sigma Tau Delta was busy with several activities. The group had its annual Scary Story read-around in October and its induction ceremony for new members in November. The members also participated in the Door Decorating Contest during JSU's Homecoming Week activities and two Get-Acquainted-with-Sigma-Tau-Delta sessions in Stone Center to recruit new members. In February, the group hosted its annual Worst Love Poem contest. In March, the annual Faculty Scholars Bowl featured the talents of English Department members Randy Davis, Steven Whitton, John Hickman, Bill Hug, David Myer, and Gloria Horton. Christy Burns served as moderator for the event. The group sponsored a "Nutti-est Professor on Campus" contest to raise money for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, a book project for children from birth to five years old, spearheaded by the United Way of East Central Alabama. The group presented a check for 75 dollars to the library. The winner of the event was Dr. Donald Prudlo of the Department of History and Foreign Languages.

Southern Playwright's Competition

The Southern Playwright's Competition, the English Department national project, celebrated its 19th anniversary this year with a production of *Other People's Dreams* by Evan Guilford-Blake of Atlanta's Academy Theatre. An outgrowth of the highly successful production of Randy Hall's *Black Warrior* two decades ago, SPC seeks to identify and encourage plays by Southerners about the Southern experience. Previous winners have gone on to well-regarded New York productions.

The winner of the 2007-2008 competition was announced this April: *Death by Darkness* by Elizabeth Orndorff of Danville, Kentucky. It is a drama set in 1842 in the Great Star Chamber of Mammoth Cave. *Death by Darkness* will receive a production during the JSU Drama Department's 2008-2009 season.

The competition is overseen by Joy Maloney and Steven Whitton.

For more information, see <http://www.jsu.edu/depart/english/southpla.htm>

On The Brink

On the Brink, the English Department's annual conference on emerging Southern writers, was held Saturday, February 9, 2008, at Houston Cole Library. The conference is a part of Kaleidoscope, the College of Arts and Sciences' festival of the arts. Organizers of the event were Christy Burns, Gena Christopher, and Steven Whitton, all from the English department; Linda Cain of the Houston Cole Library; Judith Mckibbin (retired English faculty); and David Hodnett, community representative.

On the Brink is designed as a provocative and entertaining gathering of Southern writers and readers. The conference offers a forum to emerging writers as they explore the Southern experience through its past, present, and future. Attendance this year was over 100.

The conference theme this year was "Maybe I can explain your devil to you," a theme that brought together writers working in a range of genres. Writers read from their work, discussed their reasons for working in their chosen genres, and responded to questions from the audience.

This year's slate of writers and featured works included Sonny Brewer (*Cormac*), Wayne Caldwell (*Cataloochee*), Brent Davis (*Raising Kane*), Gerald Duff (*Fire Ants*), Ravi Howard (*Like Trees, Walking*), Carolyn Jourdan (*Heart in the Right Place*), Lester Laminack (*Snow Day!*). Mr. Laminack is a JSU graduate.

For information about the 2009 conference see <http://www.jsu.edu/depart/english/brnk08co.htm>.

Imagining The Holocaust

Imagining the Holocaust is a writing contest designed to teach Holocaust history and its continuing influence in today's world to middle school and high school students in the state of Alabama. The competition is open to many kinds of writing, from essays to more creative approaches in poetry and fiction. Entries are due each spring, and prizes, including U.S. Savings Bonds worth \$100, \$75, and \$50 to the top three winners in each category, are awarded. The top winners also participate in JSU's annual Holocaust Memorial Commemoration on April 5. Those winners and their teachers are: Middle School: Fiction: Clark Gavin (Mary Dichiara, Our Lady of the Valley Middle School); Poetry: Katie Boyd (Sue Freeman, Cullman Middle School).

High School: Fiction: Leah Hendry (Angie Robinson, White Plains High School); Poetry: Rachel Martin (Beverly Haynes, Faith Christian School).

The middle school contest was supervised by Joy Maloney, the high school contest by John Hickman. Steven Whitton is contest coordinator.

Information about student participation in the "Imagining the Holocaust" competition may be obtained from Mr. John Hickman at (256) 782-8253 or jhickman@jsu.edu, or Mrs. Joy Maloney at (256) 782-5469 or jmaloney@jsu.edu. Information about the JSU Holocaust Remembrance may be had by contacting Diana Cadwallader at (256) 782-5644 or dianac@jsu.edu.

See also <http://www.jsu.edu/depart/english/holocaust/holocaust.html> for more information.

Writers' Club News, continued from page 3

"Baptism." Judging the two contests were faculty members Pitt Harding, Larry Gray, Katie Cain Johnson, Raina Kostova, Joy Maloney, and Andrea Porter. The winners received cash prizes and a public reading of their work, and their names have been added to a plaque displayed in Stone Center. The winning stories and poems appear in the 2007-2008 edition of *Something Else*, the literary journal published by the Writers' Club. Contact the English Department at (256) 782-5412 to purchase copies of this journal.

Faculty P.S.

Rodney Bailey serves on the Speech Committee for the English Department. He is also the Technology Liaison for the JSU Writing Project.

Don Bennett has been an instructor in the JSU English department for six years. Last year, he taught Freshman Composition, Oral Communication, American Literature, English Literature, Advanced Composition, and the Theory of Composition. He is ending his second term as president of the JSU chapter of Phi Kappa Phi, a national honor society for teachers, students, and alumni, which recently had its initiation of new members. Away from school, Don and his wife Amy (a private voice teacher) both perform with the Theatre of Gadsden and are active members of their church. They have two children: Timothy, age eight, and Paul, who just turned two.

Christy Burns participated as a committee member for the On the Brink conference. In addition, she judged for several writing competitions: Southern Playwrights, "Imagining the Holocaust," and the Writers Bowl.

Gena Christopher continued to teach technical writing and Alabama and American literature classes. She also was given the opportunity to teach the Bible as Literature class with Jennifer Foster in May. She serves on the planning committees for the On the Brink conference and the JSU Writers Bowl, and she is the sponsor for the JSU Circle K student organization. Also, she coordinated the judges for this year's Arts and Sciences Symposium and edits Postscripts for the English Department. Ms. Christopher was chief writer of JSU's NCAA Self-Study Report in 2007-2008.

Margaret Copeland is serving on the Assessment Subcommittee, JSU Institutional Effectiveness Committee. Also, she continues to serve on the Basic English, Speech, and EH 101 and EH 102 Committees.

Randy Davis served as discussion leader for the Seventeenth Annual Literature and Medicine Retreat, sponsored by the Alabama Chapter of the American College of Physicians/American Society of Internal Medicine. Works discussed included Walker Percy's *The Second Coming*; Tennessee Williams' *The Night of the Iguana*, Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf*, and selected stories of Amy Hempel.

Carmine Di Biase published an article in Aghios: Quaderni di studi sveviani titled: "Pare che il telefono inglese non trasmetta le mie sillabe": traducendo Svevo." This is a study, in Italian, of the recent English translations of the novels of Italo Svevo. Additionally, he was invited to present a book at the 16th annual Mittelfest, in Cividale, Italy on July 21, 2007. The book was Jean-Pierre Bouerdick's Viaggiare nei balcani, the first extended study of Felix Kanitz's account of his travels through Bulgaria. The Times Literary Supplement invited him to review three books this year: A History of Italian Theatre, edited by Joseph Farrell and Paolo Puppa; Viaggiare nei balcani, by Jean-Pierre Bouerdick; and Le avventure di Pinocchio: testo inglese a fronte, by Carlo Collodi (translated by Gloria Italiano). And, he wrote two reviews for The Anniston Star.

Robert Felgar was cited and quoted extensively in a collection of essays entitled Richard Wright's "Native Son," ed. Ana Maria Fraile, (Amsterdam, NY: Rodopi, 2007). He was also cited in "Symbols in the Sewer: A Symbolic Renunciation of Symbols in Richard Wright's 'The Man Who Lived Underground,'" a South Atlantic Review article that appeared in 1989, and he has been cooperating with other Wright scholars in lobbying the US Post Office for a stamp honoring Wright in 2008, the centennial of his birth. In addition, Dr. Felgar agreed to give a lecture at the University of West Georgia for its Richard Wright Centennial on September 23, 2008.

Jennifer Foster, during the summer of 2007, worked with the Gamecock Orientation team and was chosen to do so again in 2008. During 2007 and 2008, she served as the chairman of the Basic English Skills committee and prepared for a new class, English 376, The Bible as Literature, that she taught with Gena Christopher during May 2008.

Joanne Gates published a theatre review, wrote an article on Shakespeare in Longleaf Style: Luxury Living in Northeast Alabama, and presented at a regional conference, Popular Culture Association of the South / American Culture Association of the South [PCAS/ACAS]. She also served as book discussion leader of the book Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare's Hamlet, edited by Bernice Kliman (A Writing Project sponsored event for JSU faculty teaching EH 102) and as the guest speaker for a lunch presentation on

Elizabeth Robins at the Cherokee County Library. Dr. Gates continues to serve as Chair of the Board, Friends of Houston Cole Library, and Dr. Gates, with David Hodnett as the co-organizer, the Friends of Library, and English Department presented a memorial tribute to Susan Methvin, November 19, 2007.

Larry Gray delivered a paper entitled “A Case of Reappearing Nationalism: Sherlock Holmes and the World Wars” at the Ninth Conference of The Space Between, Literature and Culture, 1914-1945, which was held at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD, in June 2007; his paper entitled “C.S. Lewis and the Dystopian Dialogue” has been accepted for the Tenth Conference of The Space Between, to be held at Northwestern University in June 2008. Closer to home, Dr. Gray delivered “Beautifully Doomed: Titanic and The Wings of the Dove—Two Films of 1997” in October as part of the English Department Lecture Series. His article, “The Great Disconnect: Jack Burden and History in All the King’s Men” is forthcoming in a book collection about Robert Penn Warren’s novel, to be published by Rodopi Press. Dr. Gray will also be delivering a paper on the short fiction of Henry James at the Fourth International Conference of the Henry James Society in Newport, RI, in July 2008.

Pitt Harding published an essay on Paradise Lost entitled “‘Strange point and new!’: Satan’s Challenge to Nascent Christianity” in Uncircumscribed Mind: Reading Milton Deeply (Susquehanna UP, 2008). He will present a paper this summer at the Ninth International Milton Symposium at the University of London, celebrating the 400th anniversary of Milton’s birth.

John Hickman served as a member of the Holocaust Remembrance Committee and as the high school coordinator for “Imagining the Holocaust,” a writing contest designed to teach Holocaust history and its continuing influence in today’s world to middle school and high school students in the state of Alabama.

Gloria Horton serves as the Liaison Officer to NCTE for the Association of College English Teachers of Alabama, representing that organization on the NCTE Board of Directors. She is the chair of the steering committee for Academe, Jacksonville State University’s organization in support of faculty teaching, scholarship, and service. She served as Faculty Chair of the 2008 United Way Campaign and served on the United Way 2008 Campaign Cabinet and on the Helping Kids Succeed Allocation Panel. She also served as chair of the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council. Ms. Horton provided an in-service presentation for Jacksonville State University’s Regional In-service Center, called “Turning Sows Ears into Silk Purses,” as part of a reading conference for which she wrote a grant which was funded by the Rural Sites Network of the National Writing Project, in July 2008. Her poem, “Museum Piece,” won a prize in the Alabama State Society of Poets fall contest. She also published an article, “Using Persona Writing to Help Students Find Their Voices,” in *Connections*, the journal of the Georgia Council of Teachers of English, in February 2008. She received the Distinguished Service Award for the College of Arts and Sciences for 2008. Gloria has served as editor of the *JSU Writing Project Newsletter*, editor of the *JSU Writing Project Anthology*, and editor of *The Academe Newsletter*. She serves as a reviewer for *English Education*, as editor for the publications of the office of the Vice President for Institutional Advancement, and she has written an article on the teaching of reading to be published by the National Writing Project’s National Reading Initiative. Also, she is chairing the Writing in the Twenty-First Century Conference to be held on July 16, 2008, and is a coordinator of the JSU Language Arts Olympiad. She is Director of the JSU Writing Project.

Bill Hug is the English Department’s Director of Writing. In addition, he serves on the English 101-102, Competency, and Literature Survey Committees.

Katie Cain Johnson is the newest member of the English Department. She serves on the Speech Committee.

John Jones presented a paper entitled “Blake, Self-Annihilation, and Communication” at the Language and the Self: From Locke through the Romantics session of the South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Conference, New Orleans, February 23, 2008. He also chaired this session. His review of Romantic Natural Histories: William Wordsworth, Charles Darwin, and Others, edited by Ashton Nichols, will appear in the journal Eighteenth-Century Novel on April 30, 2008. Additionally, his proposal for a conference paper entitled “Blake’s Diverse Texts: Milton” was accepted for the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism 2008 conference to be held in Toronto, August 21-24, 2008. Dr. Jones has been asked by the

editor of the forthcoming Facts on File Companion to Literary Romanticism, Andrew Maunder of the University of Hertfordshire, to write essays on William Blake's "The Clod & the Pebble," Blake's "The Shepherd," Thomas Hobbes, industrialism, and slavery and the slave trade. The book will be published in 2009.

Rufus Kinney is the English Department liaison with the campus bookstore. He also serves on the English Majors and Minors, Review, and Speech Committees.

Raina Kostova taught World Literature and Speech for the first time, as well as her first online 102. She also presented a paper on Wallace Stevens at the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association Conference in Bellingham, WA, November 2, 2007, and a paper on Poe at the South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference in Atlanta on November 10, 2007. In addition, two articles she co-edited with Dr. Tony Brinkley of the University of Maine were approved for publication by Mondernism/Modernity and The Dostoevsky Journal. Besides serving on the Hiring Committee, she won the best speaker award from the Toatmasters Club and helped judge a number of writing contests associated with the English Department.

Joy Maloney was the Middle School Coordinator for the "Imagining the Holocaust" writing competition for 2007-2008. She was also the coordinator for the Southern Playwright's Competition.

David Myer continues to serve on the Editorial Board for The Journal of the Alabama Academy of Science. He also is serving as a Gamecock Orientation (GO!) Advisor for the 2008-2009 academic year.

Elizabeth Nelson has been chosen as a 2008 Gamecock Orientation Advisor. She also served on the English Department's Competency and Review Committees.

Andrea Porter was invited to speak on a panel about the Vietnam War at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY, in November 2007, and also was a guest teacher in a course on Vietnamese women while she was there. This spring, she presented a paper titled "Jarhead and the Failure of the Vietnam Myth" at the 39th Annual College English Association Conference in St. Louis, MO, and her paper received an honorable mention for the James R. Bennett Award for Literature and Peace. Dr. Porter presented another version of this paper as part of the Faculty Lecture Series in April. She serves as the Advisor for Zeta Tau Alpha at JSU and will travel to the Fraternity's biannual National Convention in July as a representative of JSU and to receive her honor ring, the highest award given to an alumna of the organization based on national and local service to the Fraternity.

Deborah Prickett is the English Department's Director of Technology. She chairs the English 101-102 Committee and serves on the Curriculum and Distance Learning Committees.

Teresa Reed is a newly appointed full professor at JSU, and has been on the faculty since the fall of 1996. She has recently become the advisor for all the English majors and minors and is enjoying getting to meet more students. In October 2007, Reed attended the annual meeting of the Southeastern Medieval Association, where she presented a paper called "In Thrall to the Past: A Reading of 'The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell.'" This July Reed will be traveling to Swansea, Wales, to present a paper on Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde at the biennial meeting of the New Chaucer Society, for whom she is also a bibliographer, reviewing journals and a book or two for the annual Chaucer Bibliography, available at <uchaucer.utsa.edu/>. Reed is looking forward this fall to teaching a section of freshman composition with a service learning component. In addition to the writing and reading necessary for the class, the students will also be volunteering at not-for-profit organizations in the area as part of the work for the class.

Valerie Rimpsey serves on the English Majors and Minors and the Competency Committees.

Misty Sandlin taught oral communication, composition, and literature courses. She also served as a judge for various writing contests.

Susan Sellers completed her seventh year as Director of the English Competency Exam, which includes coordinating the campus and Distance Learning exams. She also continues to serve as the Scholarship Advisor for Zeta Tau Alpha. And, she represents the English Department by serving on the Teacher Education Council and the Department of Secondary Education Advisory Council.

Janet Smart retired in May after serving the department in several capacities, particularly as the speech specialist. She will be greatly missed by her colleagues and students.

Steven Whitton has completed his 35th year teaching at JSU. He is Coordinator of Graduate Advisement and remains involved with On The Btink, the Southern Playwrights Competition, the JSU Writers Bowl, and “Imagining the Holocaust”. His book reviews appear frequently on The Anniston Star’s book page.

Julia F. Wooster has continued her usual schedule of teaching Oral Communication and Composition & Speech in the Fall and teaching Composition & Speech and American Literature 202 in the Spring; also, she is currently teaching Detective Fiction during the May term. She continues her service to the department with membership on three committees. She is chair of the English-Education Liason Committee and serves as the Social Director for the department.

Jacksonville State University Writing Project

The Jacksonville State University Writing Project site had another successful year, beginning with the summer institute in July 2007, at which 12 teacher fellows read, wrote, presented, and learned together as much as they could about being successful teachers of writing. The participants for the institute included: Kathryn Barber, John S. Jones Elementary School; Amy Box, Zora Ellis Jr. High School; Donna Coleman, Gadsden State Community College; Lisa Finerty, Walter Kennedy Elementary School; Steve Haslam, Jacksonville State University Graduate School; Kimberly Kuzmic, Gaston High School, West End High School; Charissa Lambert, Ohatchee High School; Mica Mecham, Jacksonville State University adjunct instructor; Susan Ross, Whitesboro Elementary School; Kathy Shelton, Duran Jr. High School; Holly Sutherland, St. Clair County High School; Linda Wynn, Wellborn High School. The Writing Project has hosted a number of other activities, in addition to a successful summer institute.

Besides the summer institute, the site held a number of other events, beginning with its annual “Menu for Success: A Mini Institute for New Teachers,” in July. Twenty-six first- and second-year teachers attended this event to hear various WP consultants provide helpful information for use in their teaching. Also in July, the site co-sponsored “Reading in the Twenty-First Century,” with the JSU Regional In-Service Center, at McClellan. More than fifty area teachers attended the event, keynoted by David Booth, author of *Reading Doesn’t Matter Anymore*, with concurrent sessions provided by JSU Writing Project fellows. The conference was partially funded by a Rural Sites Network Mini-grant, and conference participants attended follow-up sessions during the month of October. Another successful event was the first annual Technology Conference, sponsored by the site in February. Thirty area teachers spent a day learning about the latest classroom technologies. This conference will be an annual event.

The past year has been busy for our site in other ways. The *JSU Writing Project Newsletter* was published in the spring. The seventh annual Language Arts Olympiad was held in May. Our writing group, Scribblers, continues to meet monthly, and a number of the group’s members have had works published this past year.

Plans are underway for the 2008 Summer Institute and for a mini-institute for new teachers to be held during the summer. Director of the JSU Writing Project is Gloria Horton; co-directors are Lisa Williams, Melissa Shields, and Lisa Light; technology liaison is Rodney Bailey.

ALUMNI NEWS SOUGHT

We would like to share more alumni news, so please send us updates of your activities for publication in next year's newsletter. If those of you who earned a degree in English/Language Arts from JSU will take a few minutes to e-mail Gena Christopher at genac@jsu.edu or to fill out the form below and mail it to **Gena Christopher, English Department, Jacksonville State University, 700 Pelham Road North, Jacksonville, AL 35256**, we will be most appreciative.

Name _____

Occupation _____

Mailing Address _____

E-mail Address _____ (We promise not to abuse it!)

Recent News (Attach a note, if needed, or include in e-mail)

Degree(s) earned at JSU _____ Date(s) _____

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