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Writing & Rhetoric Studies

# THE WRITING & RHETORIC REVIEW

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THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

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**DEPARTMENT OF WRITING  
& RHETORIC STUDIES**

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# DWRS DEPARTMENT NEWS

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## Maximilian Werner

Maximilian Werner published two essays in *Free Black Thought*.

- "Lyric Ghosts: Countee Cullen's Apostrophe to Keats in 'To John Keats, Poet, at Springtime'" (Forthcoming January 6th, 2025).
  - "Bigger's Dream: Killing and Self-Preservation in Richard Wright's Native Son" (Forthcoming January 13th, 2025).
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## Aubrey Fochs

Aubrey Fochs advanced to All But Dissertation (ABD) status in November. Congratulations, Aubrey!

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## We Live Amid and As Archives Workshops

Facilitated by Dr. Romeo García, Luz María Carreño, Muath Qadous, and Keolanani Kinghorn.

"Join us for a series of free workshops (in-person and virtual) meant to create a supportive space where students can learn, reflect on, explore, celebrate, define, and share stories about the archives they live amid and as."

Click [here](#) for more information!

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## Honoring Pilar Pobil

The Writing & Rhetoric Department shares the loss and honors the memory of Spanish artist, Pilar Pobil. Recognized for her brilliant use of color and contrast, the only thing more vibrant than Pobil's art was her life. She was both an artist and cultural icon, connecting communities and generations through events, art classes, storytelling, and education.

The Humanities scholarship established in her name supports our Writing Studies Scholars who demonstrate their commitment to social justice.

Read the complete tribute from the College of Humanities [here](#).

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## Professor Alex Way

My research interests fall broadly within multilingual and transnational writing. To illustrate, I've previously analyzed the writing practices of undergraduate students in Japan to point out how these writing practices go beyond the theory of multimodality, or the idea that meaning-making channels, such as text, sound, and visuals, can be separated, counted, and analyzed for their communication affordances. I instead forward a theory of transmodality—one that emphasizes labor and practice—to illustrate the dynamic nature of each writing act.

As a language teacher, I've taught in many places. In addition to the United States, I've taught English as a Second Language (ESL) in private and public schools in Japan and South Korea. I have also taught English for Academic Purposes (EAP)—or English to prepare students for higher education—at Kanazawa University in Japan. I've turned some of these teaching experiences into publications that investigate how the English language is commodified and sold in countries where English is the foreign language.

I'm currently writing chapters for two edited collections. The first chapter compares EAP programs at two different Japanese universities and evaluates the potential for Writing Across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines (WAC/WID) pedagogies to bolster them. The other publication seeks to unpack ideologies that claim Japan is a monolingual, homogenous nation. Finally, I'm applying for grant funding to study western Japan's sustainability initiatives in the aftermath of the 2024 Noto Earthquake.



Dr. Alex Way is an Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies at the University of Utah. His research investigates the sociolinguistics of writing, translingual and transnational orientations to writing, and non-alphabetic literacies. He has published work in the edited collection, *Translingual & Transnational Graduate Education in Rhetoric & Composition* (Utah State University Press). He has also published in *Writers: Craft & Context*, *The Journal of Multimodal Rhetorics*, and *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing*.

# Tiffany Buckingham Barney

## INTRODUCING THE NEW WRS GSAC PRESIDENT!



I'm a home-grown U student in every way. I was initially admitted as an undergrad, then transferred to SLCC (a.k.a. "slick," the U's feeder school) for my associate's, then back for a bachelor's in English and minor in linguistics. While an undergrad, I interned as a technical writer through the U's Hinckley Institute and tutored

at SLCC's writing center. Shortly after, I took invitations to a master's/TAsip in linguistics at the U and an adjunct faculty position at SLCC.

Because of my deeply rooted relationship with the U, it seemed natural to include it in my applications for PhD programs and fitting for this program to be the offer I accepted.

Since joining this program I've participated in rich seminar classes, cultivated my teaching skills, added scientific writing to my toolkit, and adapted a 1010 course to an online shell. I was also honored to be selected by my students for a teaching excellence award.

I've participated in conferences by serving on advisory committees, putting together panels, chairing, and presenting my own research. I also added a new instructor-focused digital publication in Writing Spaces.

Currently, I'm working to formalize our department's GSAC and am excited to start my elected term serving my fellow grad students as GSAC president this coming January.

This last stretch of my formal education is rich with learning and teaching, presenting and publishing, as well as outside and departmental service opportunities. I'm especially excited to continue grafting my scholarship in English, linguistics, and writing studies with my research on automated writing assessment and genAI. This home-grown U student is ready to blossom.

## Oliver Perez

Meet Oliver Perez, a senior student in the Writing & Rhetoric Studies program!



We asked Oliver a few questions...

**Q: How did you get involved with Writing & Rhetoric Studies?**

A: It took me a while to figure out this degree was right for me. I studied Biology and Philosophy my first few years of college and worked in healthcare for three and a half years. I had the end goal of being a neuroscientist. After working in healthcare for as long as I did, I realized it was not what I wanted to do with my life. While looking at different majors, trying to figure out what I wanted to switch my studies to, I came across Writing and Rhetoric Studies and it just

clicked. I have always been passionate about philosophy, writing, and reading, so why not pursue a path that incorporates them all? I am glad I did.

**Q: Do you have a favorite course or class assignment from WRS so far?**

A: Histories & Theories!

**Q: Tell us about a current research project or interest!**

A: I am currently researching how rhetoric has influenced American politics and how we can use writing and rhetoric to unite as a community, support one another, and recover from living in a post-truth political society.

**Q: What do you hope/plan to be doing in 3-5 years?**

A: I hope I can travel, experience life and the world more, acquire more knowledge, and use everything I have picked up along the way in my writing.

**Q: Share a favorite book, movie/tv show, or song!**

A: My favorite song right now is Rings by Pinegrove.

# Mitchell Chinburg



Mitchell Chinburg was a DWRS and Honors College student who completed their undergraduate degree in August, 2024. His honors thesis was titled “Dissolving the Public Sphere: The Rise of Micro Publics in Political Discourse Circulation” which focused on the evolvment of our contemporary political news space.

Mitchell is now attending the University of San Diego School of Law as he pursues his Juris Doctor and a career as a legal professional. His long-term goal is to eventually run his own practice and make a concurrent return to academia at the cross-roads between writing, rhetoric, and the law. He aims to pursue a PhD in writing and rhetoric when he is able to.

Mitchell expresses his gratitude to the DWRS, its outstanding faculty, and the wonderful student community supported by the DWRS.

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# LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE:

# JANUARY 13TH

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**INTERESTED IN YOUR STORY BEING  
FEATURED IN A FUTURE ISSUE?**

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Follow the link and share the "Story" of your academic and scholarly journey.

**DWRS Undergraduate Form**

**DWRS Graduate Form**



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