
Writing & Rhetoric Studies

THE WRITING & RHETORIC REVIEW



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

**DEPARTMENT OF WRITING
& RHETORIC STUDIES**

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FEBRUARY ISSUE INFORMATION

DWRS DEPARTMENT NEWS

Maureen Mathison

Professor Maureen Mathison has been selected as a recipient of a Faculty Fellow Award for Fall 2025! Mathison will be able to pursue her research full time to work on her book on unruly controversy in science.

Jon Stone

Jon Stone's book, *Sensory Rhetorics*—a collection co-edited with Steph Ceraso—will be published in early 2026 by Penn State University Press.

Maximilian Werner

Maximilian Werner had two articles accepted for publication:

"Trouble in Paradise: The Myth of Civilization and the Illusion of Identity in Sam Shepard's Play True West." *The Journal of the West*. (Forthcoming spring 2025).

"Being and Becoming: Ambiguity and Double-Consciousness in Emerson's 'Self-Reliance.'" *Emerson Society Papers*. Vol. 3 Num. 2. Fall 2024.

Digital Teaching Symposium

Faculty and Graduate Instructors: Save the date to learn about innovative teaching practices at the Digital Teaching Symposium on Friday, February 28th, 10:00-11:30am in LNCO.

Professor Christie Toth



Christie Toth is the department's Coordinator of Transfer Initiatives and Community College Partnerships. Before coming to the University of Utah in 2014, Christie taught writing at several community colleges and at Diné College, a tribal college in Navajo Nation. Her scholarship focuses on recognizing, valuing, and

amplifying the literacy teaching and knowledge-making that happen in open-admissions colleges.

Christie is passionate about educational access—she believes everyone deserves the opportunity to learn at any point in their lives without having to leave their communities. Over the last decade, she has worked closely with faculty colleagues at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) and many transfer student collaborators to develop Writing Studies Scholars, a support program for SLCC students entering degree programs in WRS. In 2023, she published a book about these efforts called *Transfer in an Urban Writing Ecology: Reimagining Community College-University Relations in Composition Studies*. This book was co-authored with SLCC transfer students, SLCC faculty, and faculty and graduate students at the U.

These days, Christie spends a lot of her time working with colleagues at SLCC and in the Two-Year College English Association to develop opportunities for graduate students interested in teaching at community colleges. In 2020, she worked with WRS graduate students and SLCC colleagues to establish the Community College Professional Apprenticeship Program. Since 2023, Christie and SLCC professor Darin Jensen have co-hosted the annual Modern Language Association Summer Institute on Reading and Writing Pedagogies at Access-Oriented Institutions (AOIs) in Salt Lake. Christie is currently leading the department's efforts to create a low-residency graduate certificate and PhD program focusing on Teaching Reading and Writing at AOIs.

Rachel Lott

TURNING (AND RETURNING) TO EDUCATION

I had almost finished raising four children and was actively involved in my community, enjoying part-time teaching and believing I was making a sufficient contribution. However, my perspective shifted when a colleague asked me to consider teaching Concurrent Enrollment English 1010 at a juvenile justice facility. Teaching for the Higher Education for Incarcerated Youth (HEIY) program was a wake-up call, revealing a complacency I hadn't recognized in myself as a teacher, citizen, and life-long learner.

My HEIY experience accentuated the complex nature of literacy, revealing its connection to a range of social, economic, and systemic factors, including stigmatized sponsors of literacy, hegemonic power structures, material access, language barriers, financial resources, health conditions, and familial support. I immediately recognized glaring gaps and issues. I could not ignore the problems because these students—and all students—deserve better. Lacking the expertise to affect institutional change, I returned to academia to gather the necessary knowledge, networking, and experience.

Through mentorship and resources provided by the Writing and Rhetoric Studies faculty and associated prison education programs, I have taught three courses at the Utah State Correctional Facility. I also showcased eleven incarcerated students' work in our department's first-year writing symposium. I invited feedback from attendees, and our professors' thoughtful responses touched me. The symposium culminated in a deeply moving experience: the arrival of a niece of one of my students serving a life sentence. I accompanied her to his display, and we tearfully read his poetry together. His work found an audience; his talent was recognized, and his family was proud.

This powerful moment emphasizes the impact of providing opportunities for marginalized individuals to share their voices and be recognized. I have a lot to learn about social inequality, open-access institutions, and prison education programs, as well as how to build interpersonal and systemic bridges. Still, I know I am in the right place with the right people to do so.



Biography

Rachel W. Lott is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies. She is interested in open-access writing pedagogy, literacy and identity, and how these factors affect prison education.

Matt Shean

RETURNING TO THE U: A LIFELONG JOURNEY OF LEARNING AND GROWTH



I began my journey at the University of Utah many years ago after serving in the U.S. Navy, and it was an incredible time of learning and forming lifelong friendships. Partway through my studies, I had the opportunity to volunteer as a teacher in Taiwan. That experience led me to stay in China, where I continued teaching, completed my

bachelor's degree, and earned both a teaching credential and a master's degree in English language teaching.

Though I have built a fulfilling career in international education—working in China, Morocco, and South Korea—I have always felt a desire to return and finish my degree at the U. The university left such a lasting impact on my life that I often find myself reminiscing about my time there in conversations with friends and colleagues.

While I knew moving back to Salt Lake City full-time wasn't feasible, I kept an eye on the U's online programs, hoping one would align with my professional interests. When the Writing and Rhetoric Studies degree became available, I didn't hesitate to apply. The program has exceeded all my expectations and has been an enriching and rewarding experience.

Now, as I enter my final semester, I reflect on how studying both on campus and online has been truly inspiring. The flexibility of distance learning combined with the quality of education has made this journey unforgettable.

Go Utah!

Stephanie Weidauer-King



Stephanie Weidauer was a DWRS student who completed her undergraduate degree in May 2020. As the world fell under the COVID-19 pandemic, Stephanie secured a work from home career as a Proposal Manager for Motorola Solutions, a public safety software company. Currently, she leads a team that creates high-quality proposals for Command Center and Video Security products across the Commercial and State & Local sectors.

Stephanie is still connected to her DWRS roots. In 2021, she virtually presented a conference paper at IWAC with Dr. Maureen Mathison titled *Framing Technical Editing as a Social Justice Opportunity Through Human-Centered Projects*. She continues her work with Dr. Mathison and another WRS alumni author in bringing a publication titled *Facilitating Diversity and Inclusion in the TPC Editing Classroom* to fruition.

LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE:

FEBRUARY 9TH



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DWRS Undergraduate Form

DWRS Graduate Form



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