
Writing & Rhetoric Studies

THE WRITING & RHETORIC REVIEW



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

**DEPARTMENT OF WRITING
& RHETORIC STUDIES**

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DWRS DEPARTMENT NEWS

Rachel Bryson

Rachel Bryson published her book chapter "The Future of Disability and Accessibility Ethics" in *The Routledge Handbook of Ethics in Technical and Professional Communication*.

Jay Jordan

Jay Jordan received a fellowship to the National Humanities Center. Congrats!

Christie Toth

On March 11, Christie Toth led a national Modern Language Association webinar on Preparing for Careers at Community Colleges and Other Access-Oriented Institutions. This session was part of a four-part webinar series this spring called Building a Humanities Graduate Program for the Future: A Virtual Workshop Series. Christie was invited to host this session based on her longstanding involvement in graduate education issues through the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA), her work co-hosting the Salt Lake MLA Institute on Reading and Writing Pedagogies at Access-Oriented Institutions, and her leadership in the department's efforts to create substantive professional development opportunities for graduate students interested in community college careers.

Maximilian Werner

Maximilian Werner had two articles accepted for publication:

"Wolf Hour," *Western Humanities Review*. Vol. 76. Iss II. (Forthcoming Summer 2025.)

"The Life Behind *American Beauty*" was accepted for publication by *Bright Lights Film Journal*.

Emma Goldthorpe

Emma Goldthorpe, a second-year WRS Honors student, presented a poster at the Teach for Learning Conference held at Utah Valley University February 28, 2025. Emma's presented her poster "I Learn Through Commonplace," which described how commonplace books— rhetorical memory storehouses for thought— have contributed to her learning. Congratulations, Emma!

DWRS DEPARTMENT EVENTS

Colloquium: "How We Are Now"

We are honored to welcome our final speaker, Walid A. Afifi, Associate Dean and Professor at the University of Arizona, and invite you to join us for his two talks on April 14th in LNCO 2910 (Edna Institute).

- **PEDAGOGICAL TALK: 1:30–2:30PM**
- **SCHOLARLY TALK: 2:30–4:00PM**



Walid A. Afifi (PhD, University of Arizona) is Professor in the Dept of Communication and Associate Dean, and Director of Community Engaged Initiatives, in the Division of Social Sciences. He was elected as a Fellow of the International Communication Association in 2021 and served as President of the National Communication Association in 2023. He is one of the preeminent scholars in the study of uncertainty and its impacts. In the past decade, he has also been among the leading social scientists challenging the western bias of our knowledge in the Communication discipline; in that realm, he devotes particular attention to what Palestine teaches.

"Excellence in Writing" Award Ceremony and Undergraduate Writing Symposium

Our department's "Excellence in Writing" Awards Ceremony celebrates the outstanding achievements of our DWRS students from the 2024-2025 academic year. Join us on April 23rd in LNCO 2110 from 3:30pm - 5:30pm.

We'd also like to invite you to attend our Undergraduate Writing Symposium where DWRS students share and celebrate their work. This event will also be held on April 23rd in LNCO 2110, from 12:00pm - 3:00pm.

Please RSVP to Hailey at writing@utah.edu by April 16th.

Professor Natalie Stillman-Webb



Natalie Stillman-Webb began teaching for the then-University Writing Program in 2000. Being part of a growing department has given her opportunities to design and teach many different types of writing courses over the years. As the former Coordinator of Online Learning and now Co-Director of Undergraduate Studies, she also helps support curricula and effective teaching in the department.

Natalie is passionate about engaging students in real-world writing practices, including writing in the disciplines, project-based learning, and

community-engaged learning. One of her favorite classes to teach is WRTG 4830: User Experience Research and Writing. Each semester the class works with a different nonprofit partner, conducting usability testing on the organization's website and making actionable recommendations on how it can better meet the needs of its diverse users. Students learn about challenges facing their local communities while engaging with organizations such as The Road Home, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah, Sageland Collaborative, and The Children's Center Utah.

Much of Natalie's teaching and research has centered on supporting teaching and learning in digital environments. She recently facilitated the creation of an online major for the department, with the goal of expanding access to students who, because of physical or familial or geographical constraints, otherwise wouldn't be able to pursue a degree in Writing and Rhetoric Studies. Natalie's interest in developing best practices in online writing instruction has led to empirical research and publication in *Computers and Composition*, *Kairos*, *College Composition and Communication*, and *Composition Forum*, among others. She is currently finishing work on a book, titled *Community of Inquiry and Digital Peer Review*, with her collaborators Jennifer Cunningham (Kent State University), Mary Stewart (California State University San Marcos) and Lyra Hilliard (University of Maryland). The book examines the role of student peer review in fostering learning community in online and hybrid writing courses.

Kobe Rathsavong



My journey into grad school has been a lot and not a lot at the same time. I graduated high school in 2020 and finished my two Bachelor's in 2024, jumping straight from my undergrad into my Master's not long after. It's been a lot, but I'm happy working with professors from my undergrad and more opportunities to learn and write.

I have a lot of research interests, and a lot of them revolve around decoloniality. Decoloniality is important to think about, especially right now. We should question knowledge production from hegemonic powers for a hopeful future. It's a scary time now, but

slowly working toward change and decolonizing our knowledge is a big, important step we can all take. Writing and rhetoric studies have given me so many frameworks to analyze life, which can get overwhelming, but that's part of the fun too. I also deeply love history, and I studied it in my undergraduate studies alongside WRS. I'm happy that these fields mesh together so well.

I'm very proud of my Lao ancestry, which greatly influences my work. Other than decoloniality and history, my focus is how refugees fit into those two things. I hope my thesis can represent my research well: a hauntological analysis of how Lao refugees haunt the American neo-liberal dreams and what haunts Lao refugees as well. (The topic and title are still in the works.)

LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE:

APRIL 14TH



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FEATURED IN A FUTURE ISSUE?**

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

DWRS Undergraduate Form

DWRS Graduate Form



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