



Reading Matters

The Department of English

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From (the Edge of) the Chair's Seat

By the time you read these words, classes will have started, fall calendars will have begun to fill, and the first faculty meeting of the semester will have been held, all of which is to say that the fall semester is well under way.

We start the year with some personnel changes. **David Hamilton** retired last spring after a long and distinguished career that included teaching in the Nonfiction Writing Program and editing *The Iowa Review*, and Lecturer **David Dowling** accepted a position elsewhere in the university. Along with a few other shifts in appointments, that makes us a department of 48 faculty (41 FTE) comprised of 19 full professors, 22 associate professors, 5 assistant professors, and 2 lecturers. Those numbers show that we are the smallest in size that we have been in quite some time. Magically, we still manage to teach and mentor some 987 undergraduate majors (as of fall 2011) and 138 graduate students (32 in the MFA, 3 in the MA, and 103 in the PhD program), as well as maintain an impressive research and service profile.

I will have more to say in future issues about some of the challenges--and opportunities--the new academic year will bring. Until then, I hope you'll read on for fuller news about students, faculty, and upcoming events. Best wishes for a good start to the semester.

Publications, Presentations and other Faculty Matters

Lori Branch is editing a new series for Ohio State University Press on "Religion, Literature, and Postsecular Studies." The [first volume](#) in the series has just gone to press: Anthony Dyer Hoefer's *Apocalypse South: Judgment, Cataclysm, and Resistance in the Regional Imaginary*. Volumes under contract for 2013 include: Dawn Coleman, *Preaching and the Rise of the American Novel*; Jasper Cragwell, *Lake Methodism: Popular Religion and Polite Literature in England, 1780-1830*; Ilana Blumberg, *Victorian Sacrifice: Ethics and Economics in Mid-Century Novels*; Thomas Haddox, *Hard Sayings: The Rhetoric of Christian Orthodoxy in Late Modern Fiction*; Gail Turley Houston, *Victorian Women Writers, Radical Grandmothers, and the Gendering of God*.

Patricia Foster's essay "Inside" appears in the fall issue of *Ploughshares*, a nonfiction issue edited by Patricia Hampl. Her essay "Broken Parts" (*Antioch Review*, 2012) was excerpted in the July/August issue of *Utne Reader*. Patricia is a Breeden Scholar at Auburn University for the fall semester.

Mark Isham wrote an article, "Seeing Iowa from many perspectives" about being a member of the 2012 Faculty Engagement Tour for Iowa Now, the University of Iowa news service online newsletter, published May 18, 2012. Mark also gave a Seminar in Workplace Writing on June 21 at Rockwell Collins in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and will return on September 20. He has also been helping Rockwell Collins produce scripts for on-line tutoring.

Bonnie Sunstein presented her research at the International Conference on the Humanities in Montreal, Canada in June. Her essay, "I Eat What You Grow: High School Partners Write about Geometry Across a Big Backyard" appears in this summer's *International Journal of the Humanities*. 9:9. 233-249. Another essay based on the same project will appear in November, 2012: "Math in the Margins," *English Journal* 102.2. National Council of Teachers of English. Her short piece, "Teaching the Teaching of Writing: appeared in the June issue of *Iowa Now*. This summer, Sunstein served a fourth year as one of the three members of the national steering committee for the Norman Mailer Writing Awards, organizing and reading hundreds of students' writing from across the country. Several of our former students judged this year's high school and college fiction writing. The summer judging process culminates with awards to the finalists and their families at a gala dinner in October in New York City, along with writer/journalist/final judges, writers Tina Brown, Calvin Trillin, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Toni Morrison, Salman Rushdie, and actor Alec Baldwin.

Jon Wilcox's essay, "A Place to Weep: Joseph in the Beer-Room and Anglo-Saxon Gestures of Emotion," can be found in *Saints and Scholars: New Perspectives on Anglo-Saxon Literature and Culture in Honour of Hugh Magennis*, ed. Stuart McWilliams (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2012), pp. 14-32.

Early Modern Matters

The first meeting of the Early Modern Reading Group will be on September 13 at 3:30pm in 331 EPB. We'll be reading an excerpt from Stephen Dobranski's book on authorship. Stephen is one of the speakers at the upcoming PQ colloquium. Please contact [Blaine Greteman](#) if you have any questions.

Teaching and Research Matters

The Provost's Office announces four faculty development opportunities for fall 2012:

- 1) **Campus-wide Faculty Development Calendar:** Each semester, the Office of the Provost assembles a campus-wide calendar featuring a wide range of faculty development workshops offered by numerous offices. For a listing of Fall 2012 faculty development programs, please see the **Office of the Provost Campus-wide Faculty Development Workshops Calendar** at: <http://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty/documents/calendar.pdf> . The calendar is updated frequently, so check back for updates.
- 2) **Office of the Provost Faculty Success @ IOWA Programs:** The Office of the Provost is offers several workshops on topics key to faculty success. Many of these workshops are offered in conjunction with

the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (see below). Registration is required for most events. For more information about the Fall 2012 schedule or to register, see: <http://provost.uiowa.edu/facultydevelopment>.

3) National Center for Development and Diversity: The Office of the Provost and the Chief Diversity Office are pleased to announce that The University of Iowa is now an Institutional Member of the [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity](#) (NCFDD). The NCFDD is an independent faculty development center dedicated to supporting faculty. The University has a longstanding relationship with the scholar who heads the NCFDD, [Kerry Ann Rockquemore, PhD](#). The NCFDD Institutional Membership offers numerous benefits to faculty members, including:

- access to monthly tele-workshops and special guest expert workshops,
- a subscription to NCFDD's monthly newsletter and the *Monday Motivator*, a weekly update on a topic related to faculty productivity, and
- access to private online networking forum, including access to moderated monthly writing challenges and the option of being matched with an online writing accountability partner.

For more information about registering to access NCFDD services, please contact Diane Finnerty, Office of the Provost: diane-finnerty@uiowa.edu.

4) UI Write-on-Site Faculty Writing Groups: Write-on-Site groups meet for three hours each week to support faculty members' writing productivity by integrating regularly scheduled blocks of writing time into one's weekly schedule. Write-on-Site groups meet on **Thursday mornings, 8:30-11:30 a.m.** and **Friday mornings, 8:30-11:30 a.m.** This program attracts faculty members from many colleges on campus and past participants report that participation in the group assisted them in setting and achieving monthly writing goals, safeguarding time for writing in their busy schedules, and decreasing their sense of isolation by networking with other faculty members engaged in similar processes. Additional information about the UI Write-on-Site program, including the Fall 2012 schedule, can be found at: <http://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty/newfaculty.htm>

Desire2Learn

On Monday, October 1, 2012, Desire2Learn (the vended solution we refer to as ICON and our course management system) will highlight a fairly new product called Desire2Learn Analytics tools. You are cordially invited to participate in the overview session from 9:00–10:30 a.m., in Room 109 EPB. This session will focus on what Analytics offers and how faculty can use data from ICON to track student progress, assess students' likelihood of succeeding, and more. This session is jointly sponsored by the Office of the Provost and ITS-Instructional Services. Our hope is to use this demonstration to begin discussions on campus on how we can use student learning data to assist with our continued goals of students' success and retention at The University of Iowa. Please register for the session at the link directly below.

http://its.uiowa.edu/apps2/training/public/abs.php?abs_id=588 If you have any questions regarding Desire2Learn Analytics, please feel free to contact Annette Beck (annette-beck@uiowa.edu or 335-6043) and she will be happy to help.

The UI Center for Teaching has a new lineup of fall semester workshops, including:

- Designing and Leading good Classroom Discussions
- Tips for Successful Teaching at Iowa
- Reception for first-Year Seminar Instructors
- Funding Support to Implement Innovative Teaching: Brown Bag Lunch
- See What I Mean: Using Visual Thinking in the Classroom
- Engaging Students to Think Critically
- Asking Questions, Getting Answers: Engaging STEM Students
- Getting the Most Out of End-of-Semester Ratings

Registration and descriptions of each workshop are available at

<http://centeach.uiowa.edu/WorkshopSchedule.shtml>

Alumni Matters

Erin Mann (PhD 2011) has accepted a position as an Assistant Professor of English at Lindenwood University-Belleville, Belleville, IL.

Bridget Draxler (PhD 2011, Assistant Professor, Monmouth College) was named an NEH Fellow and attended the NEH seminar this past summer at the University of Missouri. More information can be found [here](#).

Jen Sherer (PhD 2008) has been named the [Director](#) of The University of Iowa Labor Center.

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Matters

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will hold its Annual Faculty Meeting on Monday, September 24, at 3:30 pm in the Second Floor Ballroom, Iowa Memorial Union. New tenure-track faculty will be welcomed, and those who were promoted or tenured last spring will be honored—including our own **Robyn Schiff**. All faculty are invited to attend.

Obermann Center Matters

The Obermann Center has many exciting events planned for the year including the Genetics in Literature, Life and the Laboratory Symposium on October 31-November 2. Click [here](#) for more information about the symposium and [here](#) for a schedule of all of their upcoming events.

Facebook

The English Department is on Facebook! Go to <http://www.facebook.com/IowaEnglish> and “Like” the department.

Other Calendars

[UI Master Calendar](#) | [UI Academic Calendar](#) | [The Writers' Workshop Calendar](#)
[The International Writing Program Calendar](#) | [The Writing University Calendar](#)

Future Issues

The next issue of Reading Matters will be on Thursday, September 13. Please send submissions for the next issue by 5:00pm on Wednesday, September 12 to [Erin Hackathorn](#).