

## Reading Matters

*Vol. 16, Issue 9, March 3, 2011*

### From (the Edge of) the Chair's Seat

As we turn the corner from February to March, we come almost to the semester's half-way point, with just a week to go before spring break.

Among the things that mid-point moment finds us in the middle of are salary deliberations. The department's salary committee will meet soon to review CVs, as a first step in the process. Although the state appropriation allotment for pay raises is not yet known, word is that departments can anticipate around 1.7 percent in merit raise funding, about the same amount as last year. That doesn't keep pace with inflation, alas, or offer as much room for rewarding merit as I'd like, but given the ongoing economic slump and budget shortfalls, it's probably the best we can hope for.

I'm happy to report that with unusual speed, the search for the "Digital Literacies/Visual Cultures" position, which is part of the "Public Humanities in a Digital World," has been completed. It's a pleasure to be able to welcome **Stephen Voyce** to the faculty. He is already in the midst of the transition to Iowa and is learning the ins and outs of the course planning process, with courses selected and fall course descriptions written.

Speaking of fall course descriptions, they are due to **Erin Hackathorn** by March 8, for posting on ISIS. Be sure to include a list of the texts you'll be using (if known at this point) and the bookstore at which you plan to order them.

Also in the curricular category and with no deadline to worry about, Associate Dean Helena Dettmer is accepting applications on an ongoing basis for the [Associate Dean's Curriculum Development Fund](#), which offers awards of around \$1500 to faculty to enrich current courses or propose new ones. If you have a course in need of buffing or have an idea for a new one, this fund might be worth tapping.

A deadline you should keep in mind is for CDAs. Don't forget that if you intend to apply in the fall for a 2012-13 CDA, you should let me know of that intention by March 28, so that I can inform the deans, who are requesting a list of those planning to apply. All you need to do at this stage is to send me an e-mail message, alerting me that you plan to apply.

Finally, the return from break will coincide with the visits of the departmental review external review team. They will be on campus for much of Monday and Tuesday,

March 21 and 22, and meeting with all faculty in one grouping or another, as well as with selected cohorts of graduate and undergraduate students, and Writers' Workshop faculty and graduate students as well.

With that excitement to look forward to, I'll end by wishing you a good last week of mid-term classes and a relaxing and productive break.

### **Publications, Presentations, and other Faculty Matters**

**Lori Branch** has been selected as one of 6 invited members of the Mellon Working Group on "Religion and Literature" for 2011-2012. This working group will meet 4 times in the next two years and is the literary division of a \$657,000 Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant to the University of Notre Dame for the study of "Religion Across the Disciplines."

**Patricia Foster** has been asked to give the Keynote Address at the Auburn University Literary Conference in Fall 2011.

**Mark Isham** gave an all day Seminar in Workplace Writing on February 15, 2011 at Rockwell Collins in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Engineers, marketing, financial services, and human resources professionals learned about creating effective sentences, organizing memos to get the response they need, writing for different audiences, choosing the best medium, note-taking, conveying a difficult message, choosing an appropriate style, and articulating criteria for success. Mark now introduces his seminars using cartoons to outline basic writing concepts.

In her role as an editor at the poetry press Canarium Books, **Robyn Schiff** is excited to announce the publication of WE ARE PHARAOH, a collection of thrilling poems by PhD candidate Robert Fernandez. There is a copy in the lounge to look at, and you can read more about WE ARE PHARAOH and other Canarium Books [here](#).

### **Graduate Student Matters**

**Chad Wriglesworth** has accepted a tenure-track position with St. Jerome's University at the University of Waterloo (Canada).

### **Teaching Matters**

ITS-Instructional Services and the Center for Teaching will offer a year-long TILE Faculty Institute, beginning with an intensive training event May 23-25, commencing the evening of May 22nd. The Institute will provide support and training for faculty

who seek to implement TILE-based teaching strategies into their courses. Institute fellows also will learn how to effectively use the [TILE spaces and technology](#).

The event will be conducted by Dr. Jon Gaffney, Post-Doctoral Fellow in Physics, University of Kentucky. Dr. Gaffney conducted the Fall 2011 TILE Institute and has worked closely with Dr. Bob Beichner, who directs the SCALE-UP program at North Carolina State University and conducted the summer 2010 TILE Faculty Institute. The nationally recognized SCALE-UP Project is a resource for institutions that want to create and assess classroom environments that support interactive, collaborative learning.

Applications are welcomed from University of Iowa tenured, tenure-track, and clinical faculty members. More information and an application can be found [here](#).

### **Obermann Matters**

The Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, POROI (Project on Rhetoric of Inquiry), and Prairie Lights Bookstore will launch “Conversations and Controversies” on Tuesday, March 22 from 4:00-5:30 at The Times Club (upstairs in Prairie Lights). Join us for a discussion of *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses* by Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa (University of Chicago Press, 2011). The first 25 people to stop by Prairie Lights and sign up (name and email address) will receive one of the 25 copies provided courtesy of the Obermann Center and POROI. Thereafter, Prairie Lights will be happy to order copies. Everyone is welcome.

### **Disability Studies Matters**

#### **Monday, March 7:**

Advanced screening of “Wretches & Jabberers,” a new film about autism by Oscar winning director Gerardine Wurzburg, at the Englert Theater in Iowa City, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 7. This event is being co-sponsored by The Offices of the President, the Executive Vice President and Provost, the Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Vice President, the UI Institute for Vision Research, and the UI Nonfiction Writing Program. The Center for Disabilities and Development, Project Reach and the UI Center for Human Rights are co-hosting portions of the event. The film will be followed by a panel discussion with producer and director Wurzburg, producer Douglas Biklen, and two of the film’s stars, Tracy Thresher and Larry Bissonnette.

**Tuesday, March 8:** Two related events to the "Wretches & Jabberers" screening:

"Wretches & Jabberers: Stories from the Road" at 10 a.m. in the Illinois Room, Room 348 of the Iowa Memorial Union. Director Gerardine Wurzburg is joined by producer Douglas Biklen and the stars of "Wretches & Jabberers," Larry Bissonette, Tracy Thresher, Pascal Cheng and Harvey Lavoy to discuss making this powerful documentary.

"Finding Our Voices," a dramatic reading by writers with autism at 2:30 pm Tuesday, March 8 in the Rembolt Room, Center for Disabilities and Development. "Finding Our Voices," compiled and edited by Grinnell senior DJ Savarese, is a 25-minute collage of prose and poems by autists who type to communicate. The script, solicited by drama teacher Liz Hansen for the Iowa Large Group Speech competition, is read and performed by eight of DJ's peers. All events are free and open to the public.

### **Alumni Matters**

Martin Buinicki, an Iowa PhD (2003), has just been appointed the Walter G. Friedrich Professor of American Literature at Valparaiso University. His new book, on Whitman and Reconstruction, will be published next year by the University of Iowa Press. More information can be found [here](#).

### **Research Matters**

The Iowa Center for Research by Undergraduates (ICRU) is pleased to announce the ICRU Research Fellows Program 2011-2012 Summer and Academic Year support to promote the intellectual development of students through collaborative research with faculty and staff. Awards provide scholarships for a University of Iowa undergraduate to work under the mentorship of a faculty or P&S staff member. Summer Applications are due March 23, 2011. Academic Year Applications are due April 1, 2011. Information available [here](#).

### **Undergraduate Matters**

Alpha of Iowa chapter is pleased to announce that the following students have been invited to accept membership in Phi Beta Kappa: Kelsey E. Dallas, Lewis I. Field, Alisha A. Heisterkamp, Michael W. Holditch, Ryan J. Holley, Laura J. Jackson, Kevin J. Keating, Sarah M. Kosch, Julia N. Madsen, Anthony J. Melchiorri, Lauren M. Mills, Amanda S. Parker, Laura C. Poczatek, Lindsey M. Ring, Nate M. Rogers, Sara B. Schmid, Bret M. Scofield, **Adam J. Segal**, Carly R. Stahmer, Meghan Stephenson, Kassia A. Zalewski and Zhanran Zhao.

## **Facebook Matters**

The English Department is on Facebook! Go to <http://www.facebook.com/IowaEnglish> to become a "fan" of 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, March 24**. Please send submissions for the next issue by 5 p.m. on **Wednesday, March 23** to [Erin Hackathorn](#).