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Dimensions and Directions

*The Joint Ph.D. Program in English and Education
at the University of Michigan*

Volume 19

Fall 2012

From the Chairs

This fall we find ourselves thinking about the breadth and richness of the JPEE community. When we say “breadth,” we are thinking in part about the many conferences we attend over the course of the year where we get to reunite with JPEE graduates now teaching across the country and the world. JPEE is a sprawling—and yet amazingly closely knit—community of scholars who share a passion for changing the educational landscape. We are also thinking about the many places—geographic, social, cultural, and educational—from which emerging scholars come to pursue a Ph.D. in the program. These scholars converge in Ann Arbor and enrich each other’s perspectives through the diversity of their lived experiences. And finally, we are referring to the stunning breadth of work that JPEE graduate students and graduates pursue, surpassing any traditional composition and rhetoric program in its range and interdisciplinarity. There are not many programs in the world where a student could pursue a project in new media composition or in Renaissance grammar texts; in constitutive rhetoric or language ideology; in genre theory or the practices and attitudes of composition instructors; in applied linguistics or ethnographies of students’ literacy practices. Yet here in JPEE, students pursue research in all of these areas in a program that feels fully coherent in all that it encompasses—and extremely rich in its scholarly rigor, engagement, and vision.

The sense of community in JPEE stems in part from the resources we are able to provide for students while they are here. All students are fully funded for the five years of the Ph.D., and we strive to provide enough funding in the summer that students can work on their projects rather than having to pick up outside jobs. We have also been able to help students attend exciting summer institutes, such as those offered by the Institute for Social Research. The tradition of Chalk & Cheese continues, with this year’s third-year cohort bringing us together every Tuesday for talk about attending conferences, choosing classes, staying sane in the midst of it all, and much more. We also work with the English department and the Rackham Graduate School to provide grants for students to attend conferences both in the U.S. and abroad. And JPEE students have a reputation for giving stimulating, innovative presentations that inform and engage (and with our new JPEE PowerPoint template, they are the best advertisement for JPEE we could ask for!).

As is true every year, students have also transitioned in and out of the Program. We are delighted to welcome the biggest incoming class we have had in several years: Merideth Garcia, Gail Gibson, Ben Keating, Molly Parsons, Aubrey Schiavone, and Nicole Wilson. These students are already contributing to Program life, and you can learn more about each of them in the following pages. Our most senior students have moved on to take positions elsewhere: Chris Gerben (currently teaching at Stanford University), Ben Gunsberg (Utah State University), Zak Lancaster (Wake Forest University), and Donna Scheidt (High Point University). This fall we were delighted to welcome back to Michigan JPEE alumna Sarah Robbins, who gave an inspiring lecture as part of the Rackham Centennial celebrations. (Continued on page 11.)



Anne Gere and Anne Curzan

Fall 2012 Cohort

Merideth Garcia grew up in a small town in North Texas, known mostly for its tornado activity, and has taken a wind-blown route through secondary education. She earned her BA in English Literature, her M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction from The University of Texas at Austin, and her MA in English Literature from The Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College. She taught English and English to Speakers of Other Languages for ten years at the middle school, high school, and community college levels. Her research interests include language acquisition, digital rhetoric, writing pedagogy, and the history (and future) of the English language.



After a 15-year career as a newspaper reporter, **Gail Gibson** discovered a second – and equally rewarding – professional life teaching developmental literacy courses for adults. Before joining the Joint Program in English and Education, Gail taught basic writing and academic reading as a full-time faculty member at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio, and her research interests are in language education for older students and political and identity issues in literacy education. A native of Jackson, Michigan, Gail holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and English from Michigan State University and a master's degree in education from the University of Cincinnati. She previously worked as a national desk reporter for *The Baltimore Sun*, covering national legal issues and the Supreme Court.



Ben Keating grew up in Boston, Massachusetts. Following his interest in writing and literature, he earned a BA in English from Kenyon College in Ohio, and, later, an MFA in creative writing from UC Irvine. Before relocating to Ann Arbor, he was a research assistant and project coordinator at the Comprehensive School Assistance Program at WestEd, where his work focused on K-12 school leadership and school improvement. Keating has taught multiple subjects in elementary school classrooms; he has also taught undergraduate and graduate courses in academic and creative writing. His research interests include secondary and postsecondary literacy pedagogies, digital/new media writing, teacher education, and writing across the curriculum.



Molly Parsons grew up in a lake-dotted region of Minnesota and earned her BA in English from Carleton College in Northfield, MN. Her undergraduate experiences, including three years spent as a writing tutor at the college's Write Place, emboldened her to make a commitment to Teach For America after graduation. Molly spent four years teaching secondary English in Las Vegas, Nevada. She taught a variety of courses, including ESL Reading and Honors American English. During her time in Las Vegas, she also earned her M.Ed at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Molly is thrilled to be joining the 2012 Joint Program in English and Education cohort and looks forward to pursuing answers to queries that developed during years in the classroom.

Aubrey Schiavone grew up in Maryland just outside Washington, D.C. She first became interested in English education as an undergraduate at Mount St. Mary's University in Maryland where she studied literature and worked as a peer tutor in the University Writing Center. She continued her studies at Salisbury University on the Eastern Shore in Maryland where she earned an MA in Composition and Rhetoric and spent two years teaching first-year composition. She is excited to pursue these interests further and hopes to continue her investigation of how writing is taught at the college level, especially in first-year composition classrooms.



Nicole Wilson grew up in Southern California. After earning a BA in journalism from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, she worked as a fundraiser for a music festival, a corporate meeting planner, and a director of communications for a California university. Feeling drawn toward the classroom, Nikki decided to pursue a master's degree and found teaching composition at the post-secondary level to be both challenging and extremely rewarding. After a year-long hiatus spent studying and teaching in South America, she is excited to get back into academic life and the composition classroom. Her interests, while very broad, lie mostly in composition pedagogy, literacy studies, and the interaction between individual and classroom instruction.

JPEE Awards

During 2011-2012, the following students were awarded a Rackham One-term Dissertation Fellowship: **Timothy Green**, **Melody Pugh**, and **Shelly Swearingen**.

Brett Griffiths, **Liz Homan**, **Danielle Lillge**, **Sarah Swofford**, **Christie Toth**, and **Crystal VanKooten** received Rackham Graduate Student Research Grants.

Lizzie Hutton was nominated for a Pushcart Prize for poetry; she also has been invited to read this winter at the Princeton Poetry Festival.

Danielle Lillge co-authored a \$20,000 U.S. Department of Education Title II Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED 3) grant, which was awarded to the Oakland Writing Project. Danielle and the Oakland Writing Project Co-Director are initiating a cross-disciplinary teacher research project at an urban high school in the metro-Detroit area during the 2012-2013 school year. The Oakland Writing Project is a National Writing Project site affiliated with the University of Michigan.

Danielle Lillge was the recipient of one of the 2012 Rackham Outstanding Student Instructor Awards. This award recognizes exceptional ability and creativity as a teacher, service as an outstanding mentor, and continuous growth as a teacher and scholar. The Rackham Outstanding GSI Award is a highly competitive award: there were only twenty recipients across the entire university in 2012.

Danielle Lillge and **Crystal VanKooten** were awarded Rackham Graduate School Humanities Fellowships in 2011.



JPEE Current Student Activities

Timothy Green and **Stephanie Moody** are Graduate Student Mentors for the English Department Writing Program.

Brett Griffiths is finishing her dissertation, tentatively titled "Knowledge-making and Resistance: Understanding the Teaching of Writing at Community Colleges as Socially Situation"; her dissertation co-chairs are Anne Ruggles Gere and Vilma M. Mesa.

Brett Griffiths's article, "Textbook Mediation of Teaching: An Example from Tertiary Mathematics Instructors," written with Professor Vilma Mesa appeared at the beginning of 2012 in *Educational Studies in Mathematics*. Also forthcoming is a poem "Detroit Suburbs, 1976" from PoemMemoirStory in spring 2013.

Liz Homan, Danielle Lillge, Justine Neiderhiser, Christopher Parsons, Sarah Swofford, Chinyere Uzogara, and **Crystal VanKooten** from the NCTE Policy Team are crafting their first-ever ebook, which features videos of teachers, interactive audio/visual elements, and discussions of text complexity in light of the Common Core.

Liz Homan, Danielle Lillge, Justine Neiderhiser, Christopher Parsons, Sarah Swofford, Chinyere Uzogara, and **Crystal VanKooten** contribute to the Policy Research Briefs that appear in each issue of the National Council of Teachers of English's quarterly Council Chronicle.

Liz Homan has been working on an interdisciplinary team outside of E&E designing a website, *The Revision Project*, for instructors who want to engage in discussions with their students surrounding their revision and writing processes. The team is hoping instructors will find the site helpful because it features students' voices and ideas about revision, along with instructor and research resources related to the topic of revision in the college composition classroom.

Liz Homan is co-president of the School of Education's Graduate Student Community Organization.

Lizzie Hutton, Becca Manery, and three U-M Lecturers, will be presenting at the Associated Writers and Writing Program (AWP) Conference in March. Lizzie will be presenting a session entitled "Process, not Perfection: Investigations into Making ." Becca will be presenting a session entitled "Creative Convergences: Integrating the Arts and Technology in the Writing Classroom."

Becca Manery and her English 223 students are pleased to be part of a collaboration with British performance poet Lucy English and her students at Bath Spa University in the UK.

This summer marked **Becca Manery's** fifth appearance as guest instructor for Chicago Shakespeare Theatre's Bard Core, a professional development workshop series for Chicago public school teachers.

Stephanie Moody is completing her dissertation, titled "Affecting Genre: Women's Participation with Popular Romance Fiction," under the joint direction of Anne Ruggles Gere and Megan Sweeney.

Stephanie Moody serves as a graduate student member on the School of Education Executive Committee.

Justine Neiderhiser, Melody Pugh, and **Sarah Swofford** are serving as the coordinators of the

JPEE Current Student Activities continues...

Language and Rhetorical Studies interest group.

Justine Neiderhiser, **Ruth Anna Spooner**, and **Sarah Swofford** continue to work on analyzing the university wide Directed Self-Placement essays for the Sweetland Center for Writing. Molly Parsons and Aubrey Schiavone will join the project this semester, and continue the work that the research team has begun assessing textual complexity in these essays.

Justine Neiderhiser is taking part in a range of projects analyzing the choices that students make in their writing. Over the past year she has been working on a project with John Swales, Carla Vergaro, and two undergraduate research assistants to investigate student use of imperatives in the Michigan Corpus of Upper Level Student papers. The goal of the project is to determine how and when students use imperatives, a potentially risky choice for engaging with their evaluators and teachers.

Anne Porter had a piece published: "Sponsoring Green Subjects: The World Bank's 2009 Youth Essay Contest," in *International Advances in Writing Research: Cultures, Places, Measures*, edited by Charles Bazerman and Chris Dean (Anderson: Parlor Press, 2012).

This past summer, **Shelly Swearingen** presented preliminary findings at the International Gender and Language Association's (IGALA) annual conference in Brazil. Her dissertation project, "On the Linguistic Pedestal: Language, Gender, and Ideology in 19th-century American Etiquette Literature," focuses on the ways in which advice literature reflects, reinforces, and revises ideological constructs related to feminine ideals of language usage.

Christie Toth worked with Assistant Professor Peter Bahr, Kate Thirolf, and Johanna Masse in the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education to co-author a chapter reviewing the literature on the post-transfer experiences of community college students, which will be published in the *2013 Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*.

Christie Toth worked as a research assistant at the Sweetland Center for Writing, and helped conduct a study during the 2011-2012 academic year on the writing experiences of transfer students at U-M. This study informed the creation of a new Sweetland course (Writing 350: Excellence in Upper-Level Writing), which is designed to support the writing success of transfer students at U-M. Anne Gere, **Sarah Swofford**, and Christie presented on this research at the Council of Writing Program Administrators this summer.

Christie Toth is spending the Fall 2012 semester teaching basic writing and conducting ethnographic research with composition faculty at a tribally controlled college on the Navajo Nation. This work is supported by research grants from Rackham, the Center for the Education of Women, and the Bowdoin College alumni scholarship fund. She continues to work on Sweetland research projects long-distance, and she is taking advantage of her time out west to attend regional Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) conferences in Salt Lake City and Las Cruces. She is looking forward to presenting on her dissertation research at CCC this spring, as part of a panel on composition and settler colonialism with U-M's Scott Lyons (English and Native American Studies), Dana Nichols (Sweetland), and her fellow E&Eer **Chinyere Uzogara**. Christie is also excited to be teaming up with Anne Gere, Sweetland's Naomi Silver, and alumna Laura Aull to offer a half-day workshop on DSP.

2011-2012 Dissertations

Christopher Andrew Gerben

Expanding the Conversation: Analysis of Collaborative Composition in Social Online Spaces

Chair: Barry Jay Fishman and Anne Ruggles Gere

In this dissertation, Chris Gerben examines the writing and interaction behaviors of undergraduate students who are active on social websites such as blogs and Facebook. Chris argues that students appear to be actively enacting sophisticated writing and literacy practices (such as making persuasive arguments and co-authoring texts) in ways that both students and instructors may not fully realize. As part of the study, he offers up a systematic way to study and classify these behaviors for use in the college writing classroom.

Benjamin Edward Gunsberg

Technological Enhancement and Writing in the Digital Age

Chair: Anne Ruggles Gere

This dissertation explains how the proliferation of digital and Internet technology generates uncertainty around the teaching of writing and, in an effort to clarify the terms of this uncertainty, develops concepts for analyzing the relationship between writing instruction and technological change. The concepts developed here are applied to theoretical, historical, and classroom-based sites of inquiry to highlight the complex and plural influences coming to bear on writing instruction in the digital age. The result is a multidirectional view of the interlocked relationship between writing pedagogy and technological innovation. This interlocked relationship is articulated concretely in an ethnographic account of two college English courses, which require students to compose multimedia and Internet texts.

Carlton Isaac Lancaster

Stance and Reader-Positioning in Upper-Level Student Writing in Political Theory and Economics

Chairs: Anne Curzan and Anne Ruggles Gere

This dissertation examines patterns of *stance* (also known as evaluation or appraisal) in argumentative essays written by high- and low-performing student writers in two upper-level undergraduate courses, one in political theory and the other in economics. Using methods of linguistic discourse analysis, it identifies recurring patterns of stance in students' texts and interprets how those patterns correspond to the instructors' goals and assessment criteria, as revealed through interviews. The main question the dissertation takes up is whether there are patterns of *interpersonal* meanings projected in the students' texts (as opposed to *ideational* meanings or "content")—patterns of meaning that run below the instructors' fully conscious awareness, that correlate with high- and low-graded essays, and that play a part in positioning the instructors to respond in certain ways. The analysis shows that the high-performers in both contexts more consistently construct a "novice academic" stance while the low-performing writers more consistently construct a "student" stance. The study contributes to the field of composition and rhetoric by pinpointing discursive resources that enable some student writers to construct more discipline-congruent styles of argumentation than others. These findings have implications for instruction and faculty development in writing in the disciplines (WID) contexts.

Donna Lynn Scheidt

Using Narrative Jurisprudence to Develop a Narrative Approach to Deliberative Ethical Argument in Composition

Chairs: Anne Curzan and Anne Ruggles Gere

This study provides composition instructors and their students with a more robust understanding of ethical argument, one that uses a narrative approach in order to make sense of how writers reason and argue by means of values, emotions, and particulars. Introducing the term “deliberative ethical argument,” this dissertation argues that such argument merits more attention in composition pedagogy because of its potential to enrich students’ argumentative agility and to address some instructors’ concerns with argument as reductive, unengaging, dispassionate, or aggressive. The dissertation draws on scholarship concerning legal narratives (“narrative jurisprudence”) in order to explain how writers use specific narratives to make ethical arguments; how narrative structure influences ethical arguments’ plausibility; and how widely circulating narratives can clarify what a writer is arguing and its persuasiveness. The study also enhances a certain narrative approach, that of legal scholar Bernard Jackson, in order to help students recognize and think through the implications of various argumentative strategies. Finally, the study considers how a narrative approach complements a common approach to writing instruction on ethical argument – the principles-and-values approach – thereby demonstrating how students might more rigorously and complexly think about and assess values in their own and others’ arguments.



Donna Scheidt, Zak Lancaster, Ben Gunsberg and Chris Gerben



Burton Bell Tower
Fall 2012

Jennifer Buehler received a SLU Presidential Research Fund Award to support her continuing ethnographic work on the challenges faced by dropout and disconnected youth returning to high school.



School of Education

JPEE Alumni

Laura Aull ('11) is now in her second year as an Assistant Professor in the department of English at Wake Forest University in North Carolina. This fall, she is teaching a first-year writing seminar and an upper-level linguistics course (Structure of the English Language), in which she is happily using Anne Curzan's textbook *How English Works* (with Michael Adams). Laura was thrilled to welcome another JPEE alum, Zak Lancaster, as a new Assistant Professor in her department this year and is looking forward to future collaborative work on corpus linguistic analysis of student writing. Probably the biggest development of the past year for Laura is implementing a Directed Self-Placement (DSP) system like the "Michigan Model" at Wake Forest, on which she is doing research that draws on collaboration and insight from Anne Rugles Gere and current E&Er Christie Toth. Next year, Laura plans to take a research leave for DSP research and to spend some of that time in Ann Arbor.

Jennifer Buehler ('09) is Assistant Professor of English Education at Saint Louis University (SLU). After a semester-long faculty research leave in spring 2012, she received a SLU Presidential Research Fund Award for \$25K to support her continuing ethnographic work on the challenges faced by dropout and disconnected youth returning to high school. An article drawn from her dissertation work on urban school culture is forthcoming in *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*. Jennifer just began her fifth year as the host of Text Messages, a monthly podcast on young adult literature sponsored by www.readwritethink.org. In her final year on the board of directors for ALAN, the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE, she served as chair of the 2012 ALAN Award Committee.

Mike Bunn ('10) is a full-time faculty member in the University of Southern California Writing Program, teaching lower-division and advanced composition courses, as well as co-teaching a graduate course for first-time writing instructors. His most recent article, "Motivation and Connection: Teaching Reading (and Writing) in the Composition Classroom," is forthcoming in the February 2013 issue of *College Composition and Communication* and draws upon qualitative research conducted as a JPEE student at the University of Michigan.

In addition to earning tenure and promotion to Associate Professor of English and African American Studies at Wheaton College in Norton, MA in 2009, **Shawn Anthony Christian** ('03) is director of the Summer Institute for Literary and Cultural Studies, which the College hosts. Shawn published the essay "The (New?) 'Rap on Race': Historicizing Calls for Racial Dialogue in the Early Years of Barack Obama's Presidency" in *Reading African American Experiences in the Obama Era: Theory, Advocacy, Activism* (Peter Lang Publishing, 2012), which fellow alum Ebony Elizabeth Thomas co-edited. He also was chosen to be a Leonard and Louise Riggio Fellow to conduct research at Emory University's Manuscripts, Archives, and Rare Book Library as part of his scholarly exploration of the artistic collaborations of James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, and James Weldon Johnson.

JPEE Alumni continues...

Paul Feigenbaum ('09) is entering his fifth year as an Assistant Professor at Florida International University in Miami. This year he has been fortunate to have a few pieces published. His article "Tactics and Strategies of Relationship-Based Practice: Reassessing the Institutionalization of Community Literacy" was published in *Community Literacy Journal*; his article "Challenging Rhetorics of Adaptation through Creative Maladjustment" was published in *Composition Forum*; and his article "Traps, Tricksters, and the Long Haul: Negotiating the Progressive Teacher's Challenge in Literacy Education" was published in *Reflections*. He also has a co-authored chapter coming out in a collection in November.

Cathy Fleischer ('90) is in her twenty-second year at Eastern Michigan University, teaching in the English education and rhetoric/composition programs, a place that she still loves. She also serves as the Imprint Editor for NCTE's Principles in Practice Imprint (<https://secure.ncte.org/store/books/series/pip>). Check it out! Some of the books might be of great interest to JPEE students and alum. In the last year, the teacher researcher group that she helps coordinate has been keeping a blog about their experience on the National Center for Literacy Education's Literacy in Learning Exchange. These wonderful teachers (from elementary to college) meet monthly to talk about the research projects they've initiated in their own classrooms, and the blog entries focus on their progression as teacher researchers, with video clips from the meetings and from their own classrooms. The group was recently interviewed by National Writing Project Blog radio about the project.

Zak Lancaster ('12) graduated from JPEE in August 2012 and is in his first year as Assistant Professor of English at Wake Forest University. At Wake, Zak is working with fellow JPEEer Laura Aull to build the university's writing program, and he is focusing his efforts on launching a Writing Across the Curriculum initiative. He is in the midst of designing research projects that extend from his dissertation. These include investigating how students transfer their knowledge of writing from one context to another; how students talk about writing and how that talk relates to their writing performance; and the effects of writing instruction based on promoting students' ability to talk about writing in sophisticated ways. Zak has just finished writing two chapters for Parlor Press and WAC Clearinghouse, one focused on assisting faculty in the disciplines to work with second language writers and the other on the use of linguistic analysis for teaching first-year writing. Since completing his dissertation, Zak has presented pieces of his work at four scholarly conferences and is now taking a break from conferences so he can concentrate on his research, his writing, and his efforts to settle down in North Carolina.

Melinda McBee Orzulak ('11) is currently an Assistant Professor of English at Bradley University, where she contributes to the English Education program. She serves on the English Education committee and has become involved in AERA's Writing and Literacies special interest group. Lately, her work has led her to work with English teachers who are grappling with how to work with Generation 1.5 writers and incorporate blogging technology into secondary ELA classrooms. In general, her work focuses on linguistically responsive writing instruction, and she collaborates with inservice English teachers to support the learning of preservice teachers in a Methods of Teaching Writing course. Melinda's recent publications have focused on translating her past research for practitioner audiences: "Beyond what 'sounds right': Reframing grammar instruction," in *Language Arts Journal of Michigan* (2012); "Positioning student teachers as powerful partners: Dancing without bruised toes," in *English Journal* (2012).



Angell Hall

JPEE Alumni continues...

The College of the Bahamas is where **Randall Pinder** ('11) is starting his new position as ENG 119 coordinator with responsibility for their first-year writing course this year. They have 35 sections (700 students) for the semester. He is excited about the work and teaching as he will teach two sections of ENG119 and one section of the third year writing course. In September 2012, he had a book chapter proposal accepted for the upcoming publication *Developing and Sustaining Adult Learners*; the book will be published in fall 2013. Randall presented at American Association of Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) conference last year in Indianapolis with the title "Direct from the Source: What Literacy Means to Adult Learners." He also presented at this year's AAACE conference: "Developing and Sustaining Adult Learners in the 21st Century." His session title was "What Trisha Taught Me: A Case Study of a Tutor-Learner Relationship." He is looking forward to seeing JPEE folks at the 2013 Conference on College Composition and Communication conference. He and two colleagues were accepted for the March conference. Their session title: Beyond Bahamian Classroom Walls (and Back Again): Student Writing and Engagement in Public Spaces. Anne Gere is going to be their moderator.

Sarah Ruffing Robbins ('93) is the Lorraine Sherley Professor of American Literature at TCU in Fort Worth, TX. She wants to thank fellow JPEE alum Dave Schaafsma for his ongoing assistance with research she's been doing on the legacy of Jane Addams' Hull-House teaching and its links to programs being sponsored by the Hull-House museum today. Sarah had a busy few months this summer/fall serving as director of an international conference on American women writers, held in Denver in mid-October. She's also been doing research at the National Museum of the American Indian and thanks U of M American Culture professor and Dean Phil Deloria for his generous guidance of this work. Her recent publications include an essay on Harriet Beecher Stowe's international celebrity in a collection called *Transatlantic Women: Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers and Great Britain* (UPNE, 2012) and an essay for a collection commemorating the 200th anniversary of the ABCFM, an international missionary organization. Her collaborative book project with historian Ann Pullen, *Nellie Arnott's Writings on Angola, 1905-1913* (Parlor Press 2011), won an honorable mention award from the Society for the Study of American Women Writers in its triennial awards competition. On the teaching front, with support from TCU internal grant programs, she is developing an honors program course on cross-cultural contact zones and a course on YA lit in the American marketplace for the English major. At the graduate level, recent teaching has included a team-taught class on 19th-century transatlantic cultural exchange and a new seminar on authorship as examined through a range of (inter)disciplinary lenses.

Margaret K. Willard-Traub ('98) recently stepped down (in August) as director of the Writing Program and Writing Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn to have more time for research. She will be at CCC in Las Vegas giving a paper related to transnational, classroom-based research she has been doing with colleagues in France and Beirut. She is also active on the university-wide level as a member of a newly formed General Education Task Force, which is charged with helping to re-envision UM-Dearborn's approach to general education.

Ebony Elizabeth Thomas ('10) recently moved cities and institutions. Formerly an Assistant Professor in the Division of Teacher Education at Wayne State University in Detroit, she is now Assistant Professor of Reading/Writing/Literacy in the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania. 2012 saw the publication of her first book, *Reading African American Experiences in the Obama Era*, as well as a co-authored article with Kelly Sassi ('08) in the December 2012 issue of *Qualitative Inquiry* and an invited chapter on African American reads in ALA's *Diversity in Youth Literature*. Ebony received an Honorable Mention nod in the 2012 NCTE Promising Researcher Award competition, and a 2012-2013 CEE Research Initiative Grant. She is enjoying Philly and the East Coast.

(Continued from p. 1)

Liz Homan, Danielle Lillge, Justine Neiderhiser, Ruth Anna Spooner, Sarah Swofford, and Chinyere Uzogora work with Anne Gere to produce the Policy Research Briefs that appear in each issue of the Council Chronicle published quarterly by the National Council of Teachers of English. Crystal Van-Kooten helps manage the website of the Digital Rhetoric Collaborative, a new project launched by the Sweetland Center for Writing, and Christie Toth, Lizzie Hutton, and Sarah Swofford along with a number of other JPEE students are involved in several research projects at Sweetland. These include a study of the University's Upper-Level Writing Requirement (first established in 1978), a longitudinal study of undergraduates' development as writers, and a project that examines the effects of integrating writing into introductory science courses.

We also must share some sad news with the JPEE community. Florence Danielson "Danny" Dunning, born in 1924, passed away peacefully among family on September 26, 2012, in Madison, Wisconsin. Her warm spirit and gentle manners enriched the lives of her family as well as countless friends.

We hope to see many of you in the coming year, here in Ann Arbor, at a conference, or perhaps in your current place of residence. And we want to extend our thanks to each and every one of you for all that you have given to JPEE and your ongoing efforts to transform education, both local and global.



The Rackham Graduate School and the Joint Program in English and Education presented the Rackham Centennial Alumni Lecture

Following an introduction by Anne Gere, Sarah Ruffing Robbins presented a wonderful lecture, entitled "Learning Legacies: Cross-Cultural Teaching Narratives in American Education." Sarah Ruffing Robbins is Lorraine Sherley Professor of American Literature at Texas Christian University. She is the author of the Choice-award-winning *Managing Literacy*, *Mothering America: Women's Narratives on Reading and Writing in the Nineteenth Century* and the *Cambridge Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe* and is co-editor, with Ann Pullen, of *Nellie Arnott's Writings on Angola, 1905-1913: Missionary Narratives Linking Africa and America*. Sarah has also co-edited several essay volumes growing out of K-through-university collaborative projects funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and the National Writing Project; these include *Writing America*, *Writing Our Communities*, and *Teachers' Writing Groups*. Most recently, she co-edited and wrote several essays for *Bridging Cultures: International Women Faculty Transforming the U.S. Academy*. Sarah teaches courses in American literature; writing, authorship and literacy studies; and American cultural studies. She is currently serving as Vice President and conference director of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers (SSAWW) and has also held leadership positions in the American Studies Association (ASA), the Modern Language Association (MLA), the National Writing Project (NWP), and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). Prior to enrolling at the U of M in 1990 as a Regents and CEW Scholar in the Joint Program in English and Education, Sarah taught English/Language Arts and journalism for over a decade in a range of secondary, middle school, K-12, and community college settings in Georgia and Michigan.



Sarah Ruffing Robbins



Ingalls Mall Entrance

The mission of the University of Michigan is to serve the people of Michigan and the world through preeminence in creating, communicating, preserving and applying knowledge, art, and academic values, and in developing leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future.



**Rackham Centennial
100 Years and Counting**

Stephen Dunning Student Support Fund

As you think about your end-of-year charitable contributions, please consider a gift to the Stephen Dunning Student Support Fund. This is the fund that supports special events, provides Chalk and Cheese refreshment, and, when monies permit, supplements research-related expenses for graduate students.

Contributions of all sizes are most welcome. Write checks to the University of Michigan E&E Gift Account and send them to Jeanie Laubenthal, Joint Ph.D. Program in English & Education, 610 E. University, 4204 SEB, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259.

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