

The Reavis Newsletter

Volume 51, Issue 1, 2017—2018



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Department of English

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



FROM THE CHAIR

I'm happy to report that the English department continues its excellent work on behalf of our students and the profession. Our scholars/artists/teachers published 10 books and 28 articles, essays, and poems in 2016-17. In addition, nine books are forthcoming. As noted in last year's newsletter, our department serves as a model for other departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences while it enhances NIU's scholarly and artistic reputation.

In our continuing efforts to enhance community, we celebrated the accomplishments of four of our faculty (Gulsat Aygen, Joe Bonomo, Amy Newman, and John Bradley) by hosting a book celebration in their honor.

Likewise, we also continued other community-building events. Professor Tim Crowley hosted another exciting NIU Unrehearsed Players reading. In the fall, students and faculty read *The Tempest* and much hilarity ensued. The event was so popular that recent alums attended and one even took the part of Prospero. Another outstanding event was hosted by Dan Libman whose fiction writing students read from their work at the House Café in downtown DeKalb.

We expanded our community this year to include two visiting Chinese scholars, Li Ailing and Rumin Huang. We are grateful to Professor Mark Van Wienen for organizing

these visits and to Professor Deborah De Rosa who mentored one of these scholars.

As in past years, Michael Day, Eric Hoffmann, Ellen Franklin, and their Graduate Assistants sponsored a well-attended Showcase of Student Writing in Holmes Student Center. The first-year students were proud of their research writing projects and were articulate spokespersons as they responded to questions. I wish to congratulate all those involved who make the showcase a yearly success.

We continue to have a great team of administrators and office staff who keep this department running and thriving. I'm especially grateful to Undergraduate Director Brad Peters for his five years of service as Undergraduate Director, and I thank Lara Crowley who recently stepped into the role. Jessica Reyman, Graduate Director; Michael Day, First-Year Composition Director; and Judith Pokorny, Assistant to the Undergraduate Director and Coordinator of Teacher Licensure, maintain their exceptional work.

And we couldn't do our work with the notable brilliance of Angie Gasero, our Office Administrator; Jodi Long, our Undergraduate Office Support Specialist; Maribel Montelongo, our First-Year Composition Office Support Specialist; and Shelley Hamlin-Rodrnick, our new Graduate Program Office Support Specialist, who all make my job much easier and who are delightful to work with.

Libman Honored

Instructor **Dan Libman** recently won the university's 2018 Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award. Dan teaches First-Year Composition but he is also one of our fiction writing instructors. Dan is an accomplished writer himself, having won a Pushcart Prize. Congratulations to Dan for being an extraordinary teacher who makes our department even stronger.



Welcome to Dr. Ryan Hibbett

Ryan Hibbett has joined our professorial faculty. Dr. Hibbett, who earned his Ph.D. at Southern Illinois University and has worked for 10 years in our department as an instructor. Dr. Hibbett is a Philip Larkin scholar and will soon have a book published about Larkin's work. Hibbett is an amazing teacher and an accomplished scholar and poet; he will work as a generalist in our department. Welcome, Ryan!

NEWLY PUBLISHED FACULTY BOOKS

Aygen, Gulsat. *English Grammar: A Descriptive Linguistic Approach*. Revised 3rd Edition. Kendall Hunt. 2016.

---. *Instructor's Assessment Kit for English Grammar: A Descriptive Linguistic Approach*. REVISED 3rd Edition. Kendall Hunt. Co-authored with Sarah Eastlund and Erin Vobornik. 2016.

---. *Crowds and Power/Kitle ve Iktidar* (7th ed.) Elias Canetti. Istanbul: Ayrıntı Publications. 2017.

---. *Fish and Fishing in the Bosphorous/Balıklarımız ve Balıkçılık*, 2017.

Balcerzak, Scott. *Buffoon Men: Classic Hollywood Comedians and Queered Masculinity*. Audio Book Edition: Read by Gary Roelofs. Mendocino, CA: University Press Audiobooks, 2016.

Bonomo, Joe. *Field Recordings from the Inside: Essays*. Soft Skull Press, 2017.

Bradley, John. *Erotica Atomica*, from WordTech Editions. 2017.

Deskis, Susan. *Alliterative Proverbs in Medieval England: Language Choice and Literary Meaning* Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2016.

Einboden, Jeffrey. *The Islamic Lineage of American Literary Culture*, Oxford University Press, 2016.

Newman, Amy. *On This Day in Poetry History*, Persea Books, 2016.

Promotions

During summer 2017, the Board of Trustees promoted **Susan Deskis** and **Diana Swanson** to full professors. Congratulations to Drs. Deskis and Swanson! In addition, **Melissa Adams-Campbell** and **Timothy Crowley** were promoted to and tenured as associate professors. Congratulations to Professors Adams-Campbell and Crowley!



From left to right: Dr. Diana Swanson, Dr. Susan Deskis, Dr. Melissa Adams-Campbell, and Dr. Timothy Crowley

Bradley and Renk to Retire

John Bradley, one of our exceptional instructors, plans to retire this spring after teaching at NIU since 1992. John came to us from Bowling Green State University after earning his M.F.A. there. While at NIU, John has taught numerous honors' sections as well as other First-Year Composition courses.

John has also taught poetry writing for us and is an accomplished, well-published poet having published 13 books of poetry, as well as three anthologies. He is also a recipient of two NEA Fellowships and a Pushcart Prize. One of his reviewers said about John, "Once upon a time, somehow, some way, Samuel Beckett and Buster Keaton had a child. His name is John Bradley."

John will certainly be missed in the department, but we know that he will continue to excel as a writer and thinker. We are grateful for his many years of service to our department and to our students who have benefitted from his excellent teaching and mentorship.

Department Chair **Kathleen Renk** will also be retiring at the end of June after teaching at NIU for 14 years. "I am grateful to the department for the many opportunities that I have had," she says, "including teaching in our Oxford and Ireland programs numerous times." Professor **Brad Peters** has been appointed Acting Chair for the 2018-19 academic year.



Ph.D. Graduate Accepts Postdoctoral Position

Dr. Tracy Stephens (Ph.D. 2017) is now a postdoctoral fellow at Queen's University in Charlotte, North Carolina.

News from an Alumnus

Doug Feldmann (B.A., 1992) will release his twelfth book in 2017, entitled *Whitey Herzog Builds a Winner: The St. Louis Cardinals, 1979-1982* (MacFarland Press). Dr. Feldmann is a professor in the College of Education at Northern Kentucky University and a statistician at the Great American Ballpark in Cincinnati.

SPRING 2017 UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE AWARDS

John C. and Judith M. Gurley Endowed English Scholarship
Margaret Hitchcock

Orville Baker Essay Award
Samantha Reid – 1st place; Leo Thull– 2nd place;
Zahra Muhsin – 3rd place

S. Orville and Adra Baker Scholarship
Katherine Fiste

Rosalie Hewitt Scholarship in English
Tracy Osimowicz

Lynne Waldeland Scholarship in English
Victoria Lambton and Elisha Chappero

Richard H. Howland Award for Poetry Writing
Andrew Beebe and Abigail Carlson

David and Linda Nelson Award for Teacher License in English
Andrew Bohn (Spring 2017), Kelsey Blomberg (Fall 2017)

Robert T. Self Award in Literature and Film
Andrew Beebe (UG) and Rowenna Miller (Grad)

Russell and Jeanne Durning Family Fund Scholarship
Zahra Muhsin

Charles W. Hagelman, Jr. Scholarship for Study in Oxford
Kaye Jansen, Breanna Klobnak, Katherine Fiste and Zahra Muhsin

Mike and Ann Malone Award for Short Fiction
Aiden Osterby

Gail White Award for excellence in tutoring in the Writing Center
Jeff Gard, Amy Johnson and Rachael Skog

Queen Victoria Hardison Award for excellence in tutoring in the Writers' Workshop (CHANCE students)
Bria Temple

Mae Thomas Award for first-year composition writing in Communication Skills classes:
Salaam Armistead, Diana Martinez, Gino Hipolito, Nathaniel Ochs.
Honorable Mention - Corey Brown and Gabriela Ibanez

Maude Uhland Award for critical first-year composition writing
Michelle Hawkins, Hanna McCurley, Nora Smith.
Honorable Mention - Darrieton Washington

Jan Kiergaard Award for Excellence in First-Year Composition, ESL classes
Jiayue Li, Erina Kariya, Aashish Nimbekar. Honorable Mention – Elham Jorjafki and Revela Odhuno

Showcase Award for Excellence in First-Year Composition
Amanda Bartemio, Marcus Applewhite, Joseph Balbuena, Siamak Berenji, Christoph Koeninger, Angelica Davis, Brianna Zukowski, Kristin Pierce, Leeann Young, Drew Winterton, Cinny Lamberti, Nicolle Sienko, and Kylie Cosentino

Director's Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award for Excellence in Teaching First-Year Composition
Kelle Mullineaux

Graduate Director's Award for Exemplary Contribution to the Program
Bryan Mead

John Ireland's Passing

One of our beloved instructors, John Ireland, passed away in July 2017 after a brief illness. John had taught in our department since 1999. He was a tremendous teacher who had an absolute zest for life and travel. He was also an actor and an avid learner who continued to take Japanese and Italian while he was teaching. His students reported that his teaching was "exciting" and that he "challenged" them. One student noted that Mr. Ireland "made me fall in love with English again." John adored teaching and continued teaching until he could no longer do so. We miss his positive energy, wisdom, and good will.

Support the Department of English

By giving to the Department of English, you are investing in tomorrow's leaders. There are a variety of opportunities for alumni and friends to support the department's goals to ensure that faculty and students are able to continue excelling in their teaching and research .

Make your gift today!

Contact Ray Earl- Jackson, Director of Advancement, at 815-753-1390 or re.jackson@niu.edu

Let us hear from you! Keep up with friends and classmates by sending us some information about yourself!

_____ Last Name, First Name, Last name at Graduation

_____ Address

_____ City/State/Zip

_____ E-Mail

_____ Degree and Year, Telephone

_____ Occupation, Employer/Firm

Return to Department of English, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115-2828 (or e-mail adybas@niu.edu).