

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

Alumni Newsletter – Summer 2010

ISU English alumna named National Teacher of the Year



With Sarah Brown Wessling (center), National Teacher of the Year, in Washington, D.C., are her former English Education professors Donna Niday, Michelle Tremmel and Bob Tremmel. Rachel Mullen (second from left), also an ISU English Education graduate, is Wessling's former student and current departmental colleague. See page 7.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY[™]
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Greetings from the English department!

The past few years have been intense, challenging and productive ones here in the English department. Our new M.F.A. in Creative Writing and Environment is flourishing, our new Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics and Technology is poised to graduate its first students, and ISUComm has revolutionized what we used to call first-year composition. Let me highlight a few of the many developments in the department the past few years:

- Ten new tenure-track faculty have joined the department in a variety of curricular areas, including creative writing, communication studies, literature, linguistics, RPC and speech. We have been extremely fortunate to attract such a talented group of faculty who will serve the department well into the future.
- A 76-acre tract of land in Boone County was donated to the department by ISU alumnus Everett Casey, primarily for use with the new M.F.A. in Creative Writing and Environment. The land has been an outdoor classroom for several courses as well as the site for fieldwork for M.F.A. students.
- Our first-year composition program has been reshaped around the principles of ISUComm, primarily by integrating written, oral, visual and electronic (WOVE) communication. We believe we now have one of the most innovative multimodal communication programs in the nation.
- Our new Ph.D. program in Applied Linguistics and Technology (ALT) will grant its first Ph.D. degree this spring to Elena Cotos. Congratulations to Elena and the ALT program!
- Our English major has been redesigned to give students a broad, highly integrated education in literature and language and allow students more flexibility in shaping their degrees around their interests.
- Faculty have published many new books; won a wide array of awards, both at ISU and beyond; and been leaders in their respective fields. Among the many faculty distinctions, Mary Swander was named Iowa Poet Laureate last year, and Carol Chapelle was named Distinguished Professor this spring.
- Our Ph.D. program in Rhetoric and Professional Communication (RPC) is thriving, with students and faculty continuing to win major awards and distinctions in the field. RPC alumni continue to acquire tenure-track jobs across the nation, and many of our alums have been tenured and promoted.

Like most departments in large state universities, we are experiencing our share of budget cuts, which has required us to think imaginatively and focus on our priorities. But we are pulling together as a department and streamlining our operation while continuing to provide high-quality programs, both undergraduate and graduate. Although our department will be slightly smaller in the future, it will be as innovative, dynamic and multifaceted as ever.



This summer I will be ending my second 5-year term as chair of the English department. It's been a privilege to serve as chair this past decade and to work with such dedicated, creative and caring faculty and staff. When anyone asks me what I've liked most about this job, the answer is easy: interacting with and serving my colleagues. I now look forward to refocusing my energy on teaching and writing for many more years to come.

Our new chair, Barbara Ching, is a native Iowan who comes to our department from the University of Memphis. I invite my colleagues to offer her all of the empathy and goodwill that they've afforded me these many years.

Charlie Kostelnick

Charlie Kostelnick
Department chair

University of Memphis professor to become chair of English department



Barbara Ching, a member of the English department at the University of Memphis, has been named the new chair of the Department of English effective July 1, 2010.

Her appointment was announced March 8 by Michael Whiteford, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

"We are delighted to welcome Barbara to the faculty," Whiteford said. "Barbara brings new ideas and excitement to the job, and has a great administrative background to draw upon."

Ching replaces Charles Kostelnick as chair of the department. Kostelnick,

professor of English, will remain on faculty. He began as chair in 2000.

Ching has been a faculty member at the University of Memphis since 1992. She has held many roles in the Department of English, including director of Graduate Programs and Advising. In the College of Arts and Sciences, she directed the Marcus W. Orr Center for the Humanities, and she currently directs Memphis Reads, a campus-wide reading program designed to enhance the first-year experience.

Her research focuses on the ways cultural value is created, negotiated and displayed in literary and popular texts and in the discourse of cultural criticism. Her books include *Wrong's What I Do Best: Hard Country Music and Contemporary Culture* (Oxford University Press, 2001) and *Knowing Your Place: Rural Identity and Cultural Hierarchy* (Routledge, 1996) with ethnographer Gerald Creed. Her book in progress is *No Point of Purchase: Songcatching and the Experience of Culture*.

Ching has received a number of awards and honors for her work at the University of Memphis, including the Dunavant Professorship in the College of Arts and Sciences, a Distinguished Research Award in the Humanities, and an Early Career Research Award. She holds a Ph.D. from Duke University and an M.A. from New York University.

Chapelle named ISU Distinguished Professor



Carol Chapelle was awarded the title of Distinguished Professor at Iowa State University in April.

A colleague calls Carol Chapelle the most important figure for technology in language assessment in the world. Her research, which explores issues at the intersection of computer technology and applied linguistics, has significant impact, nationally and internationally.

Through their research or creative activities, distinguished professors have significantly influenced or improved the quality of their disciplines.

Memorial

Carol Verser Scott died January 14, 2010, in Nashua, New Hampshire, at the age of 65. She was a writing instructor in the English department at Iowa State from 1972 to 1978. She had a passion for the English language and all great literary works as well as for politics.

This newsletter is published for the alumni, friends, and faculty of the Department of English at Iowa State University, an academic department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Please send news about yourself and your family for next year's newsletter to ljpeters@iastate.edu.

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Outstanding Alumni Awards go to pair of English graduates



Ochsner

The Department of English presented its annual Outstanding Alumni Award in fall 2009 to two graduates: Richard Johnson-Sheehan, from West Lafayette, Ind., and Gina Ochsner, from Keizer, Ore. Johnson-Sheehan earned three degrees from the department, a B.S. in 1988, an M.A. in 1990 and a Ph.D. in 1995. Ochsner earned an M.A. from the department in 1994.

Johnson-Sheehan is a professor of rhetoric and composition in the Department of English at Purdue



Johnson-Sheehan

University. His specializations include rhetoric of science, professional writing and technical writing. He is also a mentor to new teachers in the department. Johnson-Sheehan's most recent book is *Writing Today* from Longman Publishers. He is currently working on two projects, a book on the rhetorical origins of the quantum theory and also a study of ancient Irish rhetoric.

Johnson-Sheehan has served in a variety of administrative positions,

including Director of Introductory Composition at Purdue and Director of Rhetoric and Writing and Director of Professional Writing at the University of New Mexico. A native of Hinsdale, Ill., he was named a Fellow in the Association of Teachers of Technical Communication in 2008.

Ochsner is an award-winning author and a university faculty member. She has authored two books: *People I Wanted to Be* (Houghton Mifflin/Mariner) and *The Necessary Grace to Fall* (University of Georgia Press). Ochsner's short stories have been featured in *The New Yorker* and *The Best American Nonrequired Reading*. She has won more than 20 awards for her writing, including the Flannery O. Connor Award, the Oregon Book Award and the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Book Award. She also has won a Guggenheim Fellowship and a National Endowment of Arts Award, both in 2005. Ochsner's latest book is *The Russian Dreambook of Color and Flight* (Houghton Mifflin, 2010).

Ochsner, who lives in Keizer, Ore., with her family, teaches in the English departments at Seattle Pacific University and at Corban College, Salem, Ore. She has a BA degree from George Fox University, Newberg, Ore., and an MFA from the University of Oregon in addition to her ISU degree.

Online graduate certificate program now available

Teaching English as a second or foreign language

The TESL/Applied Linguistics program has a new Graduate Certificate in Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. The certificate consists of two prerequisites and 12 graduate credits. Courses are designed to provide basic preparation in teaching English to speakers of other languages in a variety of settings. Students may do a stand-alone certificate or apply to do a graduate certificate in addition to the master's or doctoral program.

The certificate courses may be taken on campus but will also be available fully online. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences funded development of the online certificate courses, which take advantage of a synergy between graduate faculty in Applied Linguistics and Ph.D. students in Applied Linguistics

and Technology, whose creativity and ability to apply their understanding of technology and language learning promise to make the online certificate innovative and effective as well as attractive to teachers from Iowa, throughout the United States and around the world. The first course, Introduction to Linguistics, comes online in summer 2010. The other courses will be offered during the 2010-2011 academic year. After that, courses will be offered on a rolling basis to meet demand. For more information about the online certificate, contact Professor David Oakey at djoakey@iastate.edu or go to the certificate home page at http://www.public.iastate.edu/~apling/TESL_cert.html.

Integrating technology in online and hybrid writing classes for nonnative speakers of English

Addressing the anticipated increase in enrollment of nonnative English speakers in on-campus and online programs at Iowa State University, faculty in the Ph.D. program in Applied Linguistics and Technology are developing online and hybrid writing courses for these students. The current classroom-based face-to-face teaching approach is being reimagined into a blended online and one-on-one format by combining areas of expertise in the Applied Linguistics Program, namely, computer-assisted language learning, vocabulary development, language testing and corpus linguistics, with technological advances in interactive and customizable Web resources.

The development team, headed by David Oakey, John Levis and Volker Hegelheimer, is using a suite of electronic materials-development tools in combination with automated essay-grading systems to develop activities and tasks that will help ESL writers improve their writing proficiency more effectively both in traditional classroom settings and in virtual classrooms. Thus, materials for these new online courses are being developed using methodological approaches from the field of corpus linguistics.

Lexical analysis software is used on collections of texts from registers containing relevant lexis and discourse structures. Profiles of frequently occurring lexical co-selections and grammatical patterns, and co-selections are extracted from the data and used in contextualized language-learning activities. These activities introduce students to the features of written academic discourse by building on their existing knowledge of English in a way that allows them to express more complex meanings in their own discipline. Additionally, to maximize the use of technology, we incorporate automated essay-grading systems into the courses to increase student feedback and to maximize useful interactions between the course instructor and the students. Such online grading systems may be able to supplement and complement teacher grading in order to offer a greater variety of feedback on student writing, especially in developmental assignments that are not as high stakes.

Thanks to internal funding of \$35,000 from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Computational Advisory Committee (LASCAC), a healthy portion of the new materials has been developed, and the completion of the entire course for the fall semester of 2010 is on track.

Undergraduate majors and minors are being revised

Students seeking an English or technical communication major or minor will soon have more flexibility in designing their own degree programs. For the 2011-2013 catalog, the English department has revised the requirements for both departmental majors and minors to allow more options within the degree programs and to make them more accessible for students.

Under the new English major, students will choose 37 credits of course work in the categories of texts and language, critical reading and textual analysis, advanced communication, and English electives. Technical communication students, under their new 42-credit program of study, will be freer than ever to explore outside interests, possibly pairing their major with a minor in a technical, scientific or design field. Both majors will offer more room in the schedule to explore minors and second majors and yet still allow students to take courses in an area of interest, such as literary studies, creative writing or rhetorical studies.

Reconfigured minors in English and technical communication will also make it easier for students from across campus to be part of English department programs. Each minor was reduced from 18 to 15 credits to create more attractive programs that will foster interest in English courses. This credit reduction also aligns our minors with minors in other humanities and social sciences departments, making the English department programs more attractive in a tough market. Despite these credit reductions, however, the integrity of the minors was enhanced by requiring that 12 of the 15 credits be taken at Iowa State.

This year of programmatic changes has also brought a revision in English department learning outcomes (see Web site) and a reconfiguration of the Senior Capstone Portfolio course. Students will now produce a portfolio with the guidance of a faculty mentor while they concurrently take that professor's 400-level English course. When asked to reflect on their multiyear learning process and to prepare career materials for their portfolios, students should find much of value in these newly reconfigured programs.

Poague receives Regents Award

Lee Poague, professor of English, received the Regents Award for Faculty Excellence in fall 2009 from Iowa State University. The award recognizes outstanding university citizens who have rendered significant service to Iowa State and/or to the State of Iowa. Poague was one of 12 faculty and staff members in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences recognized by Iowa State University for their excellence in the classroom, research and other service areas.

The author of 11 books, primarily in film studies, Poague has taught an impressive array of graduate and undergraduate courses in the English department, not only in film studies, with subjects such as Ingmar Bergman and Woody Allen, Fritz Lang, Billy Wilder, film noir, and Alfred Hitchcock, but also in the areas of literary theory and criticism, first-year composition, and Shakespeare. Poague has been an invaluable department- and university-wide citizen, serving as the assistant chair of the English department (2001-2007), as well as on committees with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Center for Excellence in the Arts and Humanities, and the ISUComm Planning Committee.

Two from English honored by Liberal Arts and Sciences

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Iowa State University honored two English faculty—Carol Chapelle and Donna Kienzler—with awards last fall for their accomplishments.

Carol Chapelle, professor of applied linguistics, received the Outstanding Career Achievement in Research Award. The honor recognizes faculty members who have a national or international reputation for contributions in research and/or artistic creativity and who have influenced the research activities of students.

Chapelle is the author of 10 books, numerous book chapters and refereed articles, and conference proceedings and presentations on the subjects of applied linguistics, computer-assisted learning, language learning, and language testing. Cutting-edge, seminal, rigorous, innovative and visionary are the words professional reviewers often use to describe Chapelle's scholarship. An international lecturer, Chapelle has been invited to deliver keynotes at institutes and universities all over the world, including Hawaii, Denmark, Wales, Spain, Korea, Singapore and Morocco. In 2007 her book *Computer Applications in Second Language Acquisition: Foundations for Teaching, Testing, and Research* (Cambridge University Press, 2001) was translated into Arabic.

Donna Kienzler, professor of English, received the Institutional Service Award. The award recognizes a member of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty for a history of exemplary institutional service that has benefited the department, college and/or the university.

Since 2001, Kienzler has worked with over 350 graduate students from all disciplines across the university in the Preparing Future Faculty Program (PFF), a program she designed to enable graduate students to acquire critical professional tools and skills. Kienzler has also mentored 20 M.A. and Ph.D. students on thesis and dissertation projects, as well as designed a Graduate Student Teaching Certificate program. "The greatest lesson I have learned from the PFF program is that you have to be passionate about what you are teaching," one graduate student noted. "I have learned this from observing the PFF instructor, Donna Kienzler."

Honeycutt named Liberal Arts and Sciences Master Teacher



Lee Honeycutt, associate professor of English, was one of five College of Liberal Arts and Sciences faculty members named Master Teachers for 2009-10. The Liberal Arts and Sciences Master Teacher program recognizes teachers who have a reputation for using unique methods to enhance student learning. This year's award recognizes individuals who have successfully enhanced teaching and learning in their courses through the effective use of technology, particularly novel technology.

Honeycutt is a central figure in developing the technological component of the English department's undergraduate and graduate programs. At the undergraduate level, he has taught four technology courses and has served on the Technical Communication Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, which developed the department's Bachelor of Science degree in Technical Communication. At the graduate level, he has taught three technology courses and is a strong advocate for infusing technology theory and practice in curricular revisions in the master's program in Rhetoric, Composition, and Professional Communication (RCPC).

Department's MFA in creative writing is nation's first with its own nature preserve

When Fred MacVaugh was given a class assignment to explore Iowa State University's new nature preserve—a 76-acre plot of largely underdeveloped land outside of Boone—he couldn't wait to literally get his feet wet.

A former journalist who previously worked for the National Park Service, MacVaugh was excited to wade Bluff Creek in the new Everett Casey Nature Center and Reserve. He is one of the students in the English department's Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in creative writing and the environment program—the nation's first to have its own nature preserve.

For their assignment, the MFA students were teamed with second-year architecture graduate students from the College of Design to “map” the ISU land. The architecture students created the visuals through artistic graphic relief maps. The creative writing students provided the words.

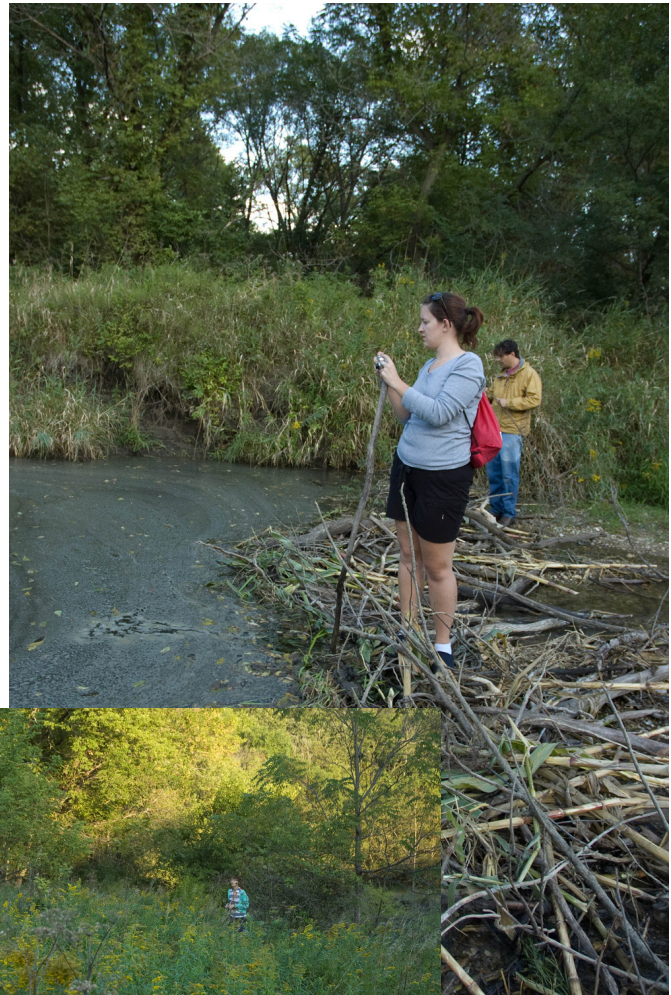
MacVaugh's “map” began with this paragraph:

I stand on a gravel bar in the middle of the creek, water spouting through small gaps in a beaver dam like water from garden hoses. Shallow below the dam, the water trickles and flows free, quick, and clear to one side of the gravel bar. Like water everywhere, it follows gravity and the laws of thermodynamics, seeks the deepest channel, the course of least resistance. The water reflects daylight in bright, blinding, and rapid flashes as it ripples over white and gray rock, some layered with green algae. Between the gravel bar's opposite edge and the bank, silver-hued Topeka shiners, endangered in Iowa, dart through still and shoal waters.

The mapping project was the first for ISU students in the new preserve. The land, valued at \$201,000, was donated to the university by Everett Casey of Detroit, Mich.—a 1946 ISU engineering graduate—who asked that it be preserved in its natural state. Casey received writing instruction at Iowa State, which he credits as being fundamental to what he later did as a Detroit-area attorney and owner of a manufacturing company.

As the initial assignment may suggest, the MFA faculty plan to put the Casey property to good use—and not just with their own students.

“I think our mission, as far as our students go, is to give them as varied and rich an education as we can,” said Steve Pett, associate professor of English, who has been planning use of the land by MFA students. “And in Iowa, that's removed from what a lot of people think of as a quintessential environmental landscape. This [the nature preserve] is really vital for us, yet we can only introduce students to that landscape in certain limited ways. People from other disciplines bring additional knowledge and



understanding to enrich our students' education.”

That's what has MacVaugh so excited about the new creative resource. He sees it as providing enrichment to his ISU educational experience.

“I'm personally more interested in what this resource could be as a pedagogical tool in just this situation [the initial class assignment]—bringing people from all different disciplinary backgrounds together to think about place and what it means for us as a people,” he said.

Future plans at the Casey Nature Center and Reserve include restoring the property back into a native prairie. Other plans include adding a rustic structure, road, water line, hiking trails and a septic system.

Pett has plans to use the land with MFA students, alumni and visiting writers. “We see it as a resource that gains in value as we exploit the strengths of other programs on campus. This is a place that already, I think, is helping our students sharpen their skills at observation and maybe refine their writing in a way that will make it more authoritative and effective,” he said.

Writing about Zimbabwe

M.F.A. field experience draws Kim Rogers back to Africa.

After two lengthy stays in the southern African nation of Zimbabwe, Kim Rogers had much to tell, more than she could include in her poetry. That's why Rogers, already the holder of an M.A. in creative writing from Iowa State, has pursued the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing and Environment—and why she made a fourth trip to Zimbabwe. Her M.F.A. thesis, a book-length memoir, *There Is No Truth: Returning to Zimbabwe*, has allowed her to write at length about the nation that has left an indelible impression on the Illinois native. “Poetry as a medium doesn't allow you to convey a complex narrative,” said Rogers, who wrote a series of poems about Zimbabwe for her M.A. “I believed the story I needed to write was bigger than that.”

“ISU's terminal M.F.A.,” according to Debra Marquart, professor of English and one of the program's directors, “is place-based writing, concentrating on the consciousness of places. The place shapes the writing.” In addition to writing a thesis, M.F.A. students take a core of English courses and 15 additional credits outside the English department. A required fieldwork, or internship, experience with an organization truly engages the students with their subject matter. Rogers knew immediately where her fieldwork would take her.

As an undergraduate in 1998, Rogers took her initial trip to Zimbabwe for a study-abroad semester. She spent seven months in the nation formerly known as Rhodesia when it was under British control. She studied at the University of Zimbabwe, and it sparked her interest in transcultural writing.

She wrote about the experience in her poems, fueling her desire to return. A U.S. Student Fulbright grant allowed her to spend 2000 at the Zimbabwe College of Music studying ethnomusicology. She focused on the mbira, a musical instrument often called a thumb piano. “It's a spiritual instrument in Shona culture,” said



Kim Rogers

Rogers. For centuries it has been played at all-night rites to communicate with ancestral spirits. By playing mbira, she gained access to “all kinds of avenues in Shona culture.”

Meanwhile Zimbabwe was experiencing severe changes from the often-violent redistribution of land formerly held by whites. The economy was in shambles and unemployment soared, spurring an exodus of over 3 million Zimbabweans into the diaspora. It was against this backdrop that she learned to play the mbira and gained an insight into the daily struggles foreign to most Americans. “Living in a volatile environment changes your perspective on life,” she said.

When the new M.F.A. became a reality in 2006, Rogers was drawn to its requirements to do fieldwork and to take 15 credits outside the English department. She used the outside credits to study African politics and globalization in developing nations, and in Fall 2007, Rogers returned to Zimbabwe. She did her M.F.A. fieldwork at Kufunda Learning Village, a grassroots organization that works

toward sustainable livelihoods for rural and urban Zimbabweans. “My drive to go back was strong because I paid for the trip myself,” she noted. She taught poetry, nonfiction and business writing workshops for adults at Kufunda Village. She also helped with a book that mapped the cultural histories of local plants and animals on the Kufunda grounds. “It was a great experience,” she said about her M.F.A. field experience and her fourth trip to Zimbabwe.

Rogers is set to graduate in fall 2010. Her M.F.A. thesis is a book-length narrative focusing on her 2007 trip but spanning the changes she's observed in Zimbabwe, and in herself, during the past 10 years.

The call to return to Zimbabwe still tugs at Rogers, despite the frustrations of a country in political and economic upheaval. “If I could make a living there, I would be there in a heartbeat,” she said. After completing her thesis, Rogers will return to Zimbabwe to share it and thank her friends there for their support. “And I'm sure they will tell me where I've gotten things wrong.”

ISU graduate named National Teacher of the Year

Sarah Brown Wessling, an Iowa State undergraduate and graduate alumna in English, was named the 2010-2011 National Teacher of the Year. President Obama conferred the honor on Wessling on April 29 in the White House Rose Garden. Considered the nation's top teaching honor, this award is sponsored by the Chief State School Officers. Wessling was selected from among the 2010 state teachers of the year.

Wessling invited Iowa State English Education faculty Bob Tremmel, Michelle Tremmel, and Donna Niday to Washington, D.C. to see her receive this honor. On April 28, they were guests at a black-tie dinner at which Wessling delivered a 15-minute address, and on April 29, they observed President Barack Obama give Wessling the National Teacher of the Year Award in a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden. Other guests included Wessling's former student and colleague at Johnston High School, Rachel Mullen, also an Iowa State University graduate in English Education.

In August Wessling was named the 2010 Iowa Teacher of the Year by the Iowa Department of Education. She has served as the department lead teacher of Johnston High School in Johnston, Iowa, where she has taught for the past 10 years, preceded by one year of teaching at Cedar Falls High School.

Wessling has received numerous awards, including National Teaching Board Certification in 2006 and the Iowa Governor's Scholastic Favorite Teacher Award recognition. She is president of the Iowa Council of Teachers of English (ICTE) and the recipient of various ICTE awards.

Wessling received her Bachelor of Arts degree in English with specialization in Teacher Education in 1998 and her Master of Arts degree in English in 2003, both from Iowa State. She was a recipient of the Graduate Research in Excellence Award for her thesis, which analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively the reading and writing experiences of advanced placement students. Wessling was featured on the cover of associate professor Donna Niday's first coauthored book on mentoring beginning teachers, and Wessling cowrote a chapter in Niday's second mentoring book.

In addition, Wessling is a frequent speaker on the Iowa State campus, demonstrating classroom applications of technology to each semester's instructional technology class. In 2009 she was featured on a three-member teacher panel at the first meeting of the newly formed National Council of Teachers of English Iowa State Student Affiliate. In addition, she has copresented at national conferences with Niday and with faculty from Curriculum and Instruction. This summer, with Michelle Tremmel, ISU senior lecturer, and Shelby Myers-Verhage, assistant professor of English at Kirkwood Community College, she will once again copresent an ICTE symposium and workshop, Growing Writers, to connect high school and college composition instructors.

As Iowa Teacher of the Year, Wessling began her duties



Sarah Brown Wessling and President Obama

in January 2010, speaking to schools, universities, and organizations throughout the state and participating in the assessment of teacher education programs. In an ongoing blog, Wessling will be chronicling her National Teacher of the Year experiences and providing her teaching philosophies and practices.

"This (National Teacher of the Year recognition) "is a tremendous honor that is a reflection of my school district, the colleagues I work with and the students who inspire me. I am especially proud to be a graduate of Iowa State University, to which I am indebted for so many powerful and formative learning experiences," Wessling said.

"Sarah Brown Wessling has made a tremendous impact on teaching and learning within her school district, across Iowa, and across the nation with her teaching, service, publications and presentations," said Donna Niday, ISU associate professor and Wessling's master thesis advisor. "Sarah is an inspiration to all students and teachers, but especially to beginning teachers, illustrating how someone can inspire others in their first years of teaching. I'm so proud of Sarah's contributions to the profession, and I'm eager to see her future contributions."

Wessling will speak to students and faculty at Iowa State Sept. 14.

Swander, poetry classes created a tactile and audible show for Iowa Department for the Blind



Mary Swander, right, and her students.

Students in poetry classes at Iowa State University helped make art more accessible to Iowans with disabilities.

The Iowa Department for the Blind opened an exhibit last December in Des Moines entitled “More than Words: A Tactile and Audible Poetry Experience.” The exhibit showcased work being crafted by two undergraduate poetry classes at Iowa State, instructed by Iowa’s poet laureate and distinguished professor of English, Mary Swander.

The students’ creations transformed their own poems into works of art they could hear or touch, making them more accessible to people with disabilities such as blindness.

According to Tracey Morsek, director of the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the idea for the exhibit grew out of a visit from Swander during the Author Reads series in October.

“The reception we received from Mary’s visit was astonishing,” Morsek said. “The words in a poem create a ‘visual’ component that augments its meaning. The enhanced experience created with poetry offers the personal enrichment that is essential to us at the Library for the Blind.”

Morsek reports that tactile art is an important component of the library. It housed the installation of “Please Touch the Art,” an exhibit by nationally renowned artist Ann Cunningham.

“These exhibits allow the blind or disabled to experience different art forms and they also serve as a way to broaden the horizon of the general public,” Morsek said.

Swander says this exhibit also provides a valuable learning experience for her students. “After meeting with the Library for the Blind in October, I was asked to create poetry that

was accessible to the blind,” Swander said. “This seemed like an interesting challenge that would be good for my undergraduate students.”

Four staff members from the Iowa Department for the Blind—two of whom are blind—visited Swander’s students to help them research and prepare their ideas for the exhibit. The visit was an enlightening experience for the students.

“I couldn’t even tell that they were blind when they walked into the room. It really was invisible to me,” said senior Adam Brandt, a history major at Iowa State.

“I was surprised how many misconceptions there are about the blind. I didn’t know that only 18 percent of visually impaired people are classified as totally blind and that most can differentiate between light and dark,” added senior Jesse Yousif, an animal ecology major.

The students took what they learned from the visit and started crafting different concepts for their pieces. Working in small groups, they brainstormed ideas for poems and tactile objects that correlate with the words of the poetry.

One group’s concept was focused on the fall season. When creating their poem, these students considered the senses that are felt during this time of year. Their sketches depicted a container that would hold symbols of fall, such as leaves or mittens, which the observer could touch while listening to the words of the poem.

Another group created a spinning object that would depict different stars and constellations with raised up pegs and bumps. Visitors would be able to interact with the item and feel the constellations represented in the poem.

“The object allows the observer to be a part of the experience while they listen to the words of the poem,” said junior Kelsey Drey, an animal ecology major.

ISUComm: A decade of development

The ISUComm program, which focuses on foundation and advanced communication across disciplines and across academic undergraduate years, celebrates a decade of development this year. The Faculty Senate first began reviewing the university's writing proficiency requirements in 1999, leading to a broader based communication-across-the-curriculum program that was approved in phases, receiving final approval in fall 2004, followed by four years of pilot operation and faculty development before achieving official status in 2007. Michael Mendelson served as the founder of the initiative and as the first director, followed by Don Payne, who has been the director for the past five years but is retiring this year.

The program emphasizes an integration of written, oral, visual and electronic communication, often referred to as WOVE. The former English 104 and 105 courses have been reconfigured into English 150 and 250, taught respectively at the freshman and sophomore levels by tenure-track faculty, senior lecturers, lecturers, and teaching assistants. This year Carol Chapelle piloted four sections of an English 150 hybrid course, which was taught partly face-to-face and partly online. David Russell oversaw a similar hybrid configuration of four English 250 sections. Seven other professors or senior lecturers (Dean Bakopoulos, Al Clarke, Elyse Demaray, Jim Gilchrist, Don Payne, Steve Pett, Linda Shenk) taught collaboratively with one or two teaching assistants. Each of the grouped sections focused on a specific theme, ranging from Eco-Composition: A Writer's Sense of Place to Global Issues to The Politics of Food and Health. ISUComm foundation courses director Barb Blakely and assistant Susan Pagnac oversaw the pilots, and Donna Niday and Dawn Eyestone assessed the program through surveys and interviews.

Under its slogan of Strengthening Communication Across the Curriculum, ISUComm has worked with various departments to intertwine communication into existing courses. ISUComm has collaborated with many academic programs, including Accounting, Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering, Agronomy, Art and Design, Biology, Curriculum and Instruction, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Industrial Manufacturing and Systems Engineering, Meteorology, Plant Pathology, Statistics, Textiles and Clothing, and Veterinary Medicine. Some of the departments have desired assistance in preparing posters and poster presentations while others have requested assistance with video, assessment, or curriculum design. Special upper-level courses have been developed for some disciplines (e.g., Advanced Communications for Agricultural and Life Sciences, Biological Communication, and Industrial Engineering Leadership), and many courses in the disciplines have been redesigned to integrate WOVE activities. ISUComm has also collaborated with other institutions in WOVE curricular development (Auburn, Georgia Tech, Iowa Community Colleges, Kentucky, Northern Iowa) and in



funded communication research (Carleton College, Edmonds Community College, Kansas State University, Morehouse College, St. Olaf College, Wellesley College, Yale University).

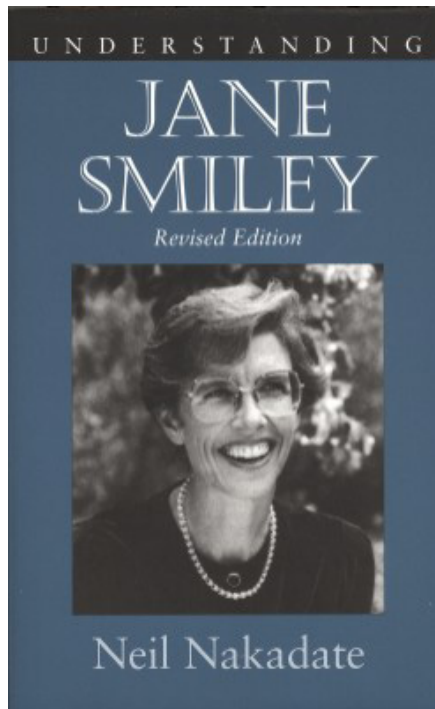
ISUComm added a communication friendly course management system called Moodle to support WOVE pedagogy, a system administered first by Quinn Warnick and recently by Russ Suvorov. Already the Moodle system has supported over 200 courses in all colleges and over 15,000 students. To enable instructors to incorporate a full range of instructional features, Suvorov created over 50 video tutorials to demonstrate Moodle features.

In moving to a WOVE format, ISUComm has worked with the Writing and Media Help Center, directed by Chris Nelson, and with new communication centers in Business (overseen by Abhijit Rao) and Agriculture. The program has also created numerous publications, ranging from instructional materials on its Web site <<http://isucomm.iastate.edu/>> to annual student and instructor guides for the foundation communication courses to specialized guides, such as one featuring electronic portfolios.

ISUComm's innovativeness has received national and international accolades. Director Don Payne said, "We live in a multimodal age where written, oral, visual, and electronic forms of communication swirl around us in complex patterns, patterns that ISU's twenty-first-century graduates must comprehend and master if they are to shape the future with confidence, skill, and ethical responsibility."

Recent faculty publications

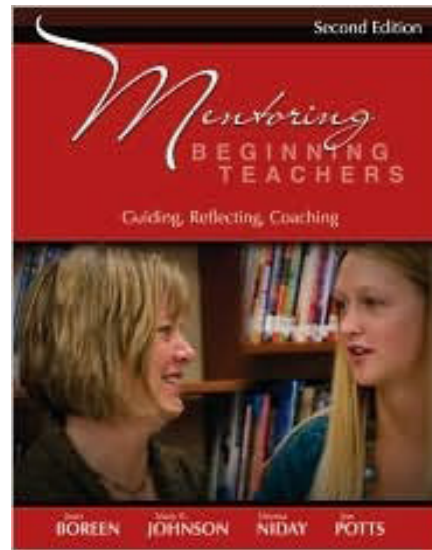
Neil Nakadate



Neil Nakadate's *Understanding Jane Smiley: Revised Edition* (University of South Carolina Press, 2009), a fully updated edition of the only book-length study of Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jane Smiley, is a comprehensive survey of the innovative author's literary career in relation to her social, intellectual, and creative convictions. The volume's updated biographical material benefits from an unpublished interview with Smiley in 2008, and the citations and extensive bibliography have also been updated, making this new edition an ideal point of entrance for readers eager to understand Smiley's complete body of work.

Nakadate is a university professor of English at Iowa State University. He has edited two books on Robert Penn Warren and is coauthor of *Writing in the Liberal Arts Tradition* and coeditor of *A Rhetoric of Doing: Essays on Written Discourse in Honor of James L. Kinneavy*. His poetry and essays have appeared in *Aethlon*, *Cottonwood*, *Flyway*, *ISLE*, *Annals of Internal Medicine*, and various anthologies.

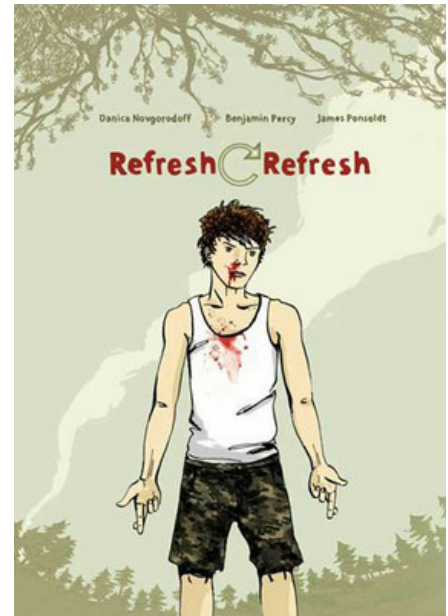
Donna Niday



Mentoring Beginning Teachers, Second Edition: Guiding, Reflecting, Coaching (Stenhouse, 2009), by Donna Niday, Jean Boreen, Joe Potts and Mary K. Johnson, provides a comprehensive and tested plan for helping mentors guide new teachers in moving beyond the basics of plan/teach/evaluate to a higher level of joint assessment and inquiry. The first edition of *Mentoring Beginning Teachers* was named an Outstanding Academic Title by the American Library Association's Choice magazine in 2000. The expanded second edition—packed with insights, anecdotes, and updated research—provides mentors with a road map for helping new teachers become confident, reflective educators. The collaborative model outlined in the book is enlightening and rewarding for mentor and novice alike.

Niday is an associate professor of English. Before joining the faculty at Iowa State, she taught for 20 years in public schools.

Benjamin Percy

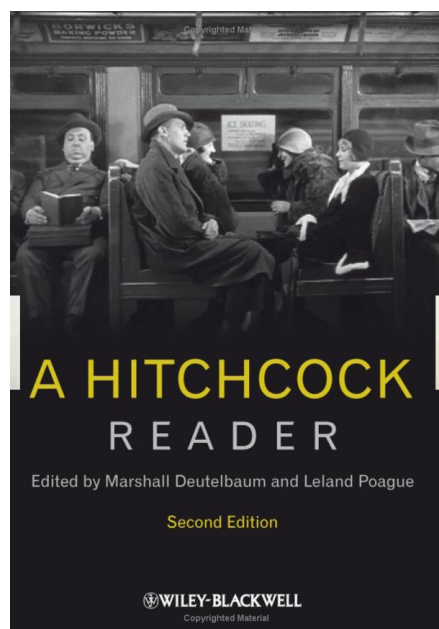


Benjamin Percy's *Refresh, Refresh* (First Second, 2009), coauthored by James Ponsoldt and illustrated by Eisner-nominated artist Danica Novgorodoff, is the graphic novel adaptation of his story by the same name about three teenagers on the cusp of high school graduation and their struggles to make hard decisions with no role models to follow, to discover the possibilities for the future when all the doors are slamming in their faces, and to believe their fathers will come home alive so they can be boys again. *Booklist* called it a "resonant, slow-building tale of the boys—or men, in the eyes of the armed forces—left behind, and senselessly left fatherless, by war." And *Kirkus Reviews* called it "disturbing and intense . . . a thoughtful examination into these very contemporary characters' psyches."

Percy was raised in the high desert of central Oregon. He is the author of a novel, *The Wilding* (Graywolf, 2009), and two books of stories, *Refresh, Refresh* (Graywolf, 2007) and *The Language of Elk* (Carnegie Mellon, 2006). His fiction and nonfiction have been read on National Public Radio, performed at Symphony Space, and published by *Esquire*, *Men's Journal*, *the Paris Review*,

the *Chicago Tribune*, *Glimmer Train* and *Best American Short Stories*. His honors include a Whiting Award, the Plimpton Prize and a Pushcart Prize. His work has been translated into French (Albin Michel), Italian (Random House Italy) and German (Random House Germany), as well as published in the United Kingdom (Jonathan Cape—Random House U.K.).

Lee Poague

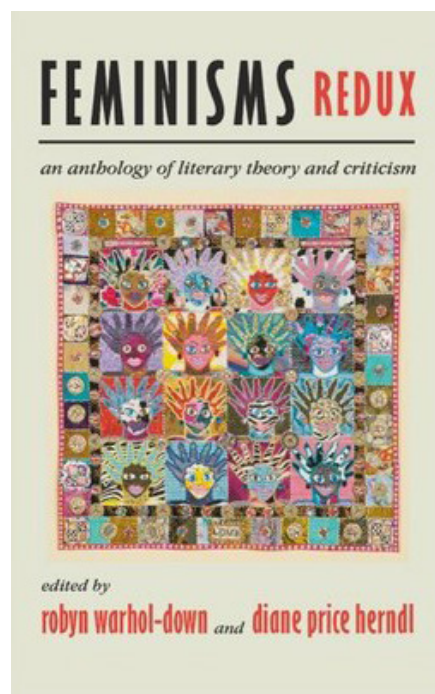


Lee Poague's second edition of *A Hitchcock Reader* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), coedited with Marshall Deutelbaum, is receiving enthusiastic reviews. David Sterritt, chair of the National Society of Film Critics and professor emeritus of theater and film at Long Island University, called it a "richly intelligent book, even more indispensable in its new edition, [that] illuminates every facet of Hitchcock's importance as artist, entertainer, and philosopher-poet." Sidney Gottlieb, coeditor of *Hitchcock Annual* and professor of media studies at Sacred Heart University, called it "an admirably well-assembled entree to the endless realm of Hitchcock criticism." And Richard Allen, professor and chair of cinema studies at New York University, called it "quite simply, the best

anthology available on the master."

Poague, a professor of English, teaches classes in film, literary theory, and (occasionally) Shakespeare. His scholarship has focused on classical Hollywood (Capra, Hawks, Hitchcock), but it also has paid extended attention to Susan Sontag's work as writer, critic, and filmmaker.

Diane Price Herndl

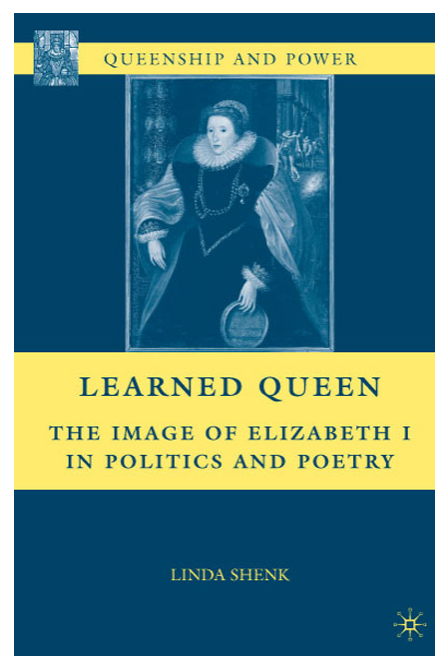


Feminisms Redux (Rutgers University Press, 2009), coedited by Robyn Warhol-Down and Diane Price Herndl, is a groundbreaking anthology that *Belles Lettres* called "admirably comprehensive, intelligently organized and introduced, with a wide array of challenging yet accessible essays." The 1991 landmark edition of *Feminisms* presented the most comprehensive collection of American and British feminist literary criticism ever published. In 1997 the volume was revised to include more than two dozen new essays. *Feminisms Redux*, presented in a concise format, includes many essays from the second edition that continue to speak to current concerns but also provides new contributions that address work in postcolonial studies, queer theory, and disability studies. As

in the earlier volumes, the editors have gathered the full text of original articles and book chapters, with no edited excerpts. The range of essays covers not only gender and sex but also sexuality, race, class, nationality and (dis)ability and the intersections of these categories as they play out in writing by and about women.

Price Herndl is a professor of English and former director of Women's Studies. She is a coeditor of *Women's Worlds* and the author of *Invalid Women: Figuring Feminine Illness in American Fiction and Culture, 1840–1940*.

Linda Shenk



Linda Shenk's *Learned Queen: The Image of Elizabeth I in Politics and Poetry* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), the first book to examine Queen Elizabeth I as a learned prince, reveals a rather startling phenomenon: Elizabeth's educated status was crucial to England's burgeoning role as an international power. Examining Elizabeth's own demonstrations of erudition alongside literary works of such political luminaries as Sir Philip Sidney and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, this book reveals how poetry, foreign relations, and intellectual culture are far more integrated than

we may have imagined. From these connections emerges a methodology that places Elizabethan political culture and poetry fully on the transnational stage of a diplomacy-driven world just beginning to acknowledge a truly global perspective.

Shenk is an assistant professor of English. Because of her enthusiastic teaching of Shakespeare and early modern British literature, her students have nicknamed her Shenkspeare.

Mary Swander



The Girls on the Roof

Poems

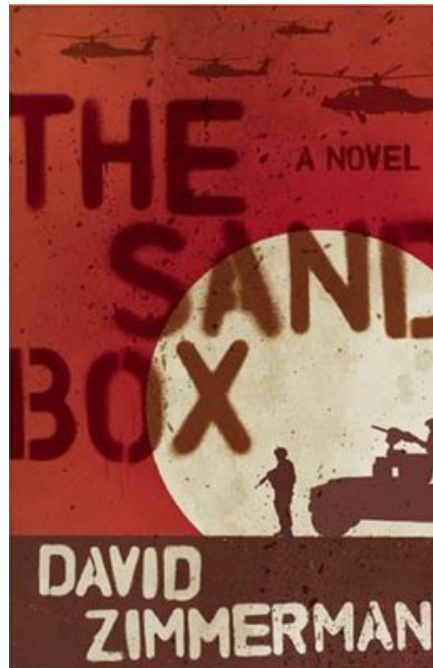
Mary Swander

Mary Swander's *The Girls on the Roof* (WordTech Communications, 2009) is a book-length narrative poem about a mother and daughter stuck on top of the roof of a cafe on the banks of the Mississippi River for three days during the 1993 flood. Elaine J. Lawless, president of the American Folklore Society, praised the book, saying that "Swander has managed to invoke the power of the river for the 'river rats' who cling to its shores, or float through its excesses, as well as eloquently capture the marked cadences of tall tales told by those, dead or alive, who crowd back into Crazy Eddy's. Like the waves of the flood, the rhythm of storytelling, 'lies,' and stormy preaching overlap with echoes of the Bible, Homer and the macabre humor of tales of yore. Swander's concoction begs to be read aloud, to be performed."

Swander, Iowa poet laureate and

distinguished professor of English, is a nationally and internationally known award-winning author of nonfiction, poetry, drama, and journalism.

David Zimmerman



David Zimmerman's *The Sandbox* (Soho Press, 2010), a blistering look at military life in "the sandbox" of Iraq, has received rave reviews. *The New York Times* called it "gripping." Ron Carlson, author of *The Signal*, praised the book, saying that "*The Sandbox* sabotaged me. I read the first four pages and my sleeve got caught in the lives of these soldiers, and the story was gritty and real and offhand, and so I lost the day and the next, and I'm so happy to report back that this terrific novel offers us both the world of the conflict and another story just as powerful. Zimmerman's made a fine book." And a review in *Publisher's Weekly* stated that "Zimmerman's remarkable debut succeeds both as a realistic portrayal of the current Iraq war from the American perspective and as an energetic thriller." The reviewer went on to declare that "Zimmerman is a talent to watch."

Zimmerman is an assistant professor of English. He has worked as a publicist

at St. Martin's Press and taught writing at Georgia Southern University, Dilla University College in Ethiopia, South College in Savannah and the University of Wisconsin, where he was also a fiction fellow at the Wisconsin Institute of Creative Writing.

Where are they now? Retired English faculty check in



Dorothy Winsor

Dorothy Winsor retired in 2007. Since retiring, she's traveled to Italy, the British Isles and France and taken a cruise up the Amazon River. She's also attended one- or two-week writing workshops at Taos, Martha's Vineyard and Iowa City. She's writing fiction and waiting for her agent to sell some.

Since retiring in 1998, **Bill McCarthy** has coedited a collection of writings by English author Anna Letitia Barbauld (Broadview Press, 2001) and published his biography of Barbauld (*Anna Letitia Barbauld, Voice of the Enlightenment*, Johns Hopkins, 2008). He is currently coediting a volume in the Cambridge edition of the correspondence of Samuel Richardson. He divides his time between Westfield, New Jersey, and Key West, Florida.

Rosanne Potter retired in 1998 after teaching a wonderfully satisfying senior seminar on Virginia Woolf. She lives with her husband, Bill McCarthy, in Key West, Florida. They remodeled her parents' home in Westfield, New Jersey, to make it wheelchair accessible so that they could spend summers there. Her retirement has been a compound of poetry, painting and political action, sunrises and sunsets. Her book *Key West: Transit of Venus*



Roseanne Potter

(SeaStory Press, 2005) is a collection of poems about Key West and her paintings. She's been active socially and politically, chairing the Friends of the Library board and the board of the local ACLU chapter, but she spends most of her time painting both abstract expressionist works and portraits. The photo shows her on her Freedom Bike (a hand-crank Special-Olympics bike) with her favorite place (White Street Pier, which is a couple of blocks from her home) in the background. Although she loved teaching at Iowa State and looks back with great pleasure on almost all the courses she taught there, she is happy in retirement and feels lucky to be in Key West most of the year yet to be able to get away from the hurricanes by traveling (in the metropolitan area, to Canada and Europe) in the summers.

Bob Bataille, who retired in May 2000, stays busy by taking a fitness class three times a week at the Forker building on campus. He also volunteers for the Red Cross, the Iowa Department of Elder Affairs and the Social Security Administration. He and his wife, Mary Howard, travel frequently throughout the country, visiting children and grandchildren.



Joe Geha

After retiring in January 2002, **Joe Geha** has been busy keeping house and cooking delicious meals for his wife, who's holding down a real job. And, of course, he's still writing. He's been doing some volunteering too—assisting in medical missions to the Dominican Republic, reading for Iowa Radio Reading Information Service for the Blind and Print Handicapped, tutoring Afghani and Sudanese immigrants and fingerprinting for the Ames Police Department. He's also keeping his hand in archery, oil painting, teaching cooking demos and poker. Lots of poker.

Carol David still lives in Ames and stops by the English department occasionally to renew old friendships. Last month she was the evaluator for a graduate program at Kennesaw State University in Atlanta, Georgia, an experience that prompted her to catch up on recent research and discover just how out of date she's become since her retirement in 2000. She has tutored for John McCully at Saint Cecilia Catholic Church and made some wonderful international friends. She thinks that life is good—but not as good as it was during the 43 years that she taught in the English department.

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