

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE:

New English Faculty 1

CtC: Flipped Classrooms 4

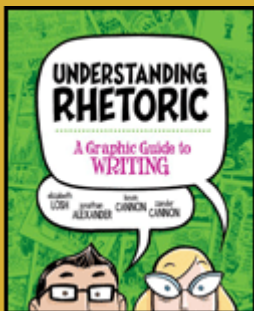
Upcoming Events 4

National Day on Writing 6

CFPs 6

FAQ 6

What We're
Reading:



Understanding Rhetoric: A Graphic Guide to Writing uses visual media and real-life rhetorical situations to help first-year writing students prepare for further academic and real-world writing challenges.

Comp Talk

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

CSUF TEACHING WRITING CLUB

TWC Welcomes New English Department Faculty!

The English Department at CSUF is privileged to welcome two new composition and rhetoric professors this semester: Dr. Bonnie Williams (“Dr. Bonz”) and Dr. Martha Webber. Dr. Bonz is the Teaching Writing Club’s new faculty advisor. She earned her PhD at Michigan State University, is a member of CCCC’s Language Policy Committee, and she recently published an article in the *Journal of Equity and Excellence in Education* titled “Students’ ‘Write’ to their Own Language.” Dr. Martha Webber earned her PhD at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and has most recently published “Literacy Intermediaries and the ‘Voices of Women’ South African Quilt Project.” Both professors were kind enough to grant TWC an interview for *Comp Talk*.

TWC asks Dr. Bonz: What are your research interests? What are you working on right now?
Dr. Bonz: My research interests are in Critical Studies in Literacy and Pedagogy. Specifically, my dissertation research was on African American verbal tradition, which is something that’s different from what most people would hear as Ebonics or African American language. The verbal tradition is basically focusing on how people communicate in that language practice, so not so much on grammar and syntax but specifically on some of the traditions like call and response, which is something that’s often used in African American churches, repetition, speakers like Martin Luther King and Malcom X use a lot of repetition in their speeches, and then signifying,

something else that’s a verbal act or speech act that can be used in the community, and so I looked at how students use that in their writing. So call and response often shows up; I would categorize that as rhetorical questions, including a lot of rhetorical questions as a form of dialogue in their papers, or narrative, “narrativizing,” which is sharing stories or anecdotal meanings, things like that, and then different forms of repetition, so not so much repetition of ideas but the repetition of words as a powerful, constructive essay strategy. Like I said, those speakers like Malcom X and Martin Luther King used that ethos to move audiences and move crowds, so we can also use those features in our papers and essays too. I looked at how those features in African American verbal tradition can be used in students’ essays and also used to enhance their writing. Again, for me it’s not so much about code-switching; it’s about showing how students learn these practices. Cultural traditions can be used in their writing as ways to enhance it as opposed to just encouraging students to code-switch out of their cultural background and into the mainstream, American English.

TWC: How did you become

interested in composition?

Dr. Bonz: I started out in a writing program. I always liked writing; I was interested in English. I

was always interested in language practices and specifically the African American language. When I learned about that, I knew I wanted to study it more.



But I became interested in writing because I applied for a job as a writing fellow in my undergraduate institution. I don’t know if you’re familiar with what a

fellow is, but they are students that are undergraduates that will work with an instructor and they’ll work with the students in a writing intensive course. Oftentimes, instructors will have conferences with students where the conferences will be held with a junior or senior writing fellow, and the fellow would then help the students with their writing and act as kind of liaison between the instructor and the student. And so I really enjoyed that experience working with students with their papers because writing was something that I struggled with a lot when I started my first year of college, and like I said, I always knew that I was a good writer, you know, I was creative, and I really loved writing, but I didn’t get the grades. I wasn’t getting A’s and B’s in my writing classes for the first time ever when I started college, and that really, really was a challenge for me. So as I continued to work at it, you know, studying writing, and getting better [Continued on Page 2]

TWC Welcomes New Faculty, Cont.

at the practice as an undergrad, when I got that position as a writing fellow that's when I really felt empowered to help students that were like me, and it felt really good to know that I had come to some level of mastery of the writing process, so I just continued from there on. I was often in the writing center, and worked with many instructors there and in my own classes. I had an instructor who had a background in writing program administration and writing centers, and she was the one who encouraged me to apply for graduate school. The rest is history.

TWC: Why did you come to Cal State Fullerton?

Dr. Bonz: The writing program here was looking for someone with culturally diverse perspectives, and I'm all about language. I'm all about learning as much as I can about different cultures, different languages, different dialects, how we use those in academic writing, and I call myself a language rights activist, so the job was very fitting for me. I love writing program administration, so I'm looking into possibly being able to coordinate here with the writing program, and I have an extensive background in that and in culturally relevant pedagogy for all students to learn some of the effective writing strategies and practices, so it's just really a great opportunity to be here. Also, in terms of my research specifically, being in California was one of the top choices for me specifically because of the history that it has with language, and even Arizona, Arizona's really close, and just the work that's being done with college students who try and make things more equal and more fair across the board to all students. So, this is a great place to be. I also heard that some students wanted to explore composition and rhetoric more specifically, and they needed some guidance and support, so I'm excited about the graduate course I'm going to teach in the spring, and I'm excited about working with students. I'm also going to try to bring more people over to our side, so literature people and other folks, composition people are known for trying to bring people over to our side. That's kinda how I got brought over here to it. We're always

trying to steal students. [laughing] That's my number one goal here at Cal State Fullerton.

TWC: What visions do you have for Cal State Fullerton's Comp. program? What would you like to see happen here?

Dr. Bonz: Well, I'm still getting my feet wet. I'm still learning about what's already in place. One of the things that I want to do with the Teaching Writing Club and being an advisor is just providing some guidance for students who may want to go and pursue writing to become teachers or to go to graduate school or to pursue getting a PhD in writing and rhetoric. I wanna be helpful to those students in terms of writing and information that they need to move on, and I think that I could be a valuable resource for them.

TWC: What can the Teaching Writing Club, or any other students, do to support your work?

Dr. Bonz: Well, I would say I'm always benefitting from working with graduate students because just reading your work, reading what you're writing about, everything that you are interested in, even if it doesn't have to do with specifically my particular research focus, I take something from every student that I work with, and I'm able to apply some of those things to the research that I'm working on. And even collaboration, that's something that's very important. That's something that a lot of my professors did with me at Michigan State University where I came from. They collaborated with me. They offered me opportunities to go to conferences and to present on panels. I actually presented with my advisor, the one who was the chair of my committee. We went, me and a couple of other colleagues, to Brazil one year for a conference on international gender and language and we presented there, and then we also went to Tokyo a couple years before that. I presented the paper for

the same conference. So I got to go there twice, and I made some connections. My perspective was broadened because I got to meet people. It was an international conference, and I met people from all over the world that study language, and it allowed me to expand my research in ways that were very helpful and very beneficial to me. So working with students, that is one of my main goals. That is why I really wanted to work with the Teaching Writing Club and get to know graduate students because I particularly benefited from that kind of interaction with my professors and I know what it can do and how it can help you grow as a scholar. I hope to do that with students too.

TWC: Is there a story behind why you like to be called Dr. Bonz?

Dr. Bonz: I love the story that goes behind it. My name is Bonnie, and there are many nicknames that I have from family members. However, I have a professor, Dr. Geneva Smitherman, who's one of the founding scholars in African-American language studies. She's a distinguished professor at Michigan State University. I had the opportunity to be one of the last students to take her class before she retired, and so in that class we learned so many great things from her. One of the things that she does is she has us call her Dr. G. because her first name is Geneva. Everyone calls her Dr. G., and all of her students who have gone on to become professors, especially African-American women, have taken on that kind of name. I have another professor, Elaine Richardson, who's another noted professor in African American Language and literacy. She teaches in the education department at Ohio State University. We call her Dr. E. And other [Continued on facing page]

TWC Welcomes New English Department Faculty, Cont.

professors call themselves Dr. T. Dr. L. So that's a way that all of us have found to pay homage to Dr. G, our teacher, who has mentored us and taught us so many great things. When I was in her class she nicknamed me Bonz. That was like my hip-hop nickname. Everybody was calling me Bons with an "s," but she actually made me take out that "s" and put a "z" on it because that's typical for hip hop. Everyone calls me Bonz back at Michigan State, so when I came here I knew that that's how I would pay homage to Dr. G. I wouldn't just be Dr. B. but I'd be Dr. Bonz. She calls me it now and all of my friends call me that. For me personally, it's a way for me to create a lineage between me and any student that I encounter along this path. So like everyone who has worked with Dr. G., any student that she's had over the last forty or fifty years, they call her Dr. G., but if someone talked to us and they say, "Oh, I met Dr. Smitherman," we know that that person was never her student, was never in her class. That's not a bad thing, but I think it's a connection that we all have with her, and I hope to make an impact like hers in the future in my career, and I can only pray that I'm as impactful as she has been. All of my students hopefully will have that connection with me and will know me as Dr. Bonz.

TWC Asks Dr. Martha Webber: What are your research interests? What are you working on right now?

Martha: Broadly speaking, I'm interested in material rhetoric and composition. What do I mean by that? Material rhetoric, in the sense of a rhetoric or thinking about rhetoric and composition as deeply rooted in theories of the material. I mean, quite literally, from the materials of writing technologies or tools, whether they're accessible or not to people, because the digital divide is something that I've thought about and have been interested in, but also I mean materials in kind of the social structures, like that kind of materialist sense, in kind of a western Marxist tradition. Just asking, what are the arrangements of the social around me, how are those contexts of the social materially affecting writers, the writing situation, so that's my broad research area, but right now, I've got kind of two

ongoing projects. Let me talk about the first one. For this December, there's an open call for papers for the Basic Writing e-Journal. I've checked it out before online, it's peer reviewed, it's accessible online, and they've got a call for articles to be finished by December about the question of basic writing and community engagement, and that really speaks to me, because a lot of people who are interested in community engagement will, I mean, I'm creating a straw person, but a lot of times the idea is that you've gotta master the basics before you can run, you know, or we wouldn't want our undergraduate students who haven't, you know, created expertise within say like a major field, to work with or intern with a nonprofit or become engaged with the community. This special issue is really asking what collaborations between "basic" writing (a term I'm not happy about) and community involvement can look like."

And there's a class that I did, Fall 2008, which was at Illinois, what would be our version of 99; it was our first year writing aimed at students who had scored lower on their ACT, and what inspired me to do the following with the class was I'd gotten involved with student organizations. I got involved with the Alternative Breaks organization on campus, and eventually served on the board, and what I kept hearing was students saying: "I wish I'd known about this when I was a freshman. It's my senior year, it's my junior year, and I've now just gone on my service trip. And I see that this is fulfilling, that it's helping me articulate what I'm studying into the real world," whatever that division really is, and what I had students do over that first year writing class was first observe, and then interview, and then ultimately do some archival research about a student organization, or if it had not been around for a long time, then some archival research on that issue that the student organization grappled with, and what I saw was, it was one of those moments where I wish I had done an IRB to study it, but I had no idea what was going to happen would happen. Out of the fifteen students (the classes are capped at sixteen and one dropped so I ended up with fifteen), and just informally, with the ones I kept up with, by year two, three out of fifteen were officers in the student organizations they had researched in that

class. And were really, I mean, meaningfully engaged as officers, you know; I mean they learned about the history. I didn't get the sense that these were positions of that resume-fluffing, you know, category that faculty sometimes suspect students are up to or that students may very well be up to. That's what I've been thinking about lately, you know, about what happened in that class, and can I write about it generally enough to make this argument that I see engagement for "basic writers," some form of engagement as a way for them to feel connected to their campus community. I felt like a lot of them saw, if not *themselves* in those organizations, but saw people *like* themselves who were towards their school goals. One quick example, I remember I had a student who was really upset. He was African American and that year that he came in (in Fall '08), the enrollment had dropped from 18-19% for African Americans to eight percent, so over half. I can say a statistic like that and say, "Whoa, that must be hard for a student like

Jerry," but he was able to quite literally see a difference from seeing two hundred students to seeing maybe fifty. So he joined a group called "Men of Impact" and they did outreach in areas like college info, "Hey, you want to apply to U of Illinois, you belong here, I go there, here's what you do, you can be just like me." I didn't stay a lot in



touch with Jerry, but I saw him the second year at a basketball game (I've never had this happen before); he actually came up to me and hugged me and I was like "Whoa, hey, how's it going?" and he said "Hey. It's good to see you. This year, in the incoming class, there's at least four students I can point to; I'm the reason they applied here, and that they thought they could do it." And so it was really cool, so that was a really long answer, that's my big research area, that's one little aspect of it, and I've got my dissertation book project I'm still working on, and again it's a different site, it's set in South Africa, where I did research there, but it's asking some of the same questions: how are people who're involved in these large organizational structures finding meaning in them, being in some senses manipulated or misrepresented by them, and how are those big structures trying to create those meanings for them, and how are they

[Continued on page 5]

Continuing the Conversation: Flipped Classrooms

Just as MOOCs seek to move education out of the classroom to broaden educational opportunities, the flipped classroom model aims to change the way we view classrooms and open up educational opportunities for students. A flipped classroom, in a nutshell, is a classroom where the lecture takes place at home and the activities, which would often be considered homework or outside learning, take place in the classroom. An instructor will record and post a video of the lecture online, which students will be



responsible for watching and understanding. Students then come to class, where they work on applying what they learned at home through hands on activities.

Flipped classrooms change not only the technology of the classroom but also the philosophy; the goal of this model is to open up education. Instructors want to move away from the strict “banking” method of teaching, which states that students’ minds are like blank slates that the instructor needs to fill or write material onto, and towards a more open, participatory model of education in

which students are encouraged to participate and help dictate the rules of their learning environment. In flipped classrooms, the focus is not on teacher authority or knowledge, but rather on small groups of students working together to apply the concepts they have learned from the lectures they viewed at home. This model focuses on engaged, community learning; students work together to solve problems they may have encountered with the lecture and to apply the problems to new situations. It takes the focus away from isolated and standardized learning.

The flipped classroom model was developed by Jonathan Bergman and Aaron Sams, teachers at a high school in Colorado. While they initially began recording lectures as a way to help students who missed lectures, they quickly realized that there was a greater opportunity present and began sharing their methods.

The flipped classroom model places greater responsibility on the

students. Students who do not participate or are not curious about the material will not gain as much or do as well as students who watch the lectures and come prepared and inquisitive. This model also requires significant preparation from professors.

You can learn more about Flipped Classrooms from the following websites:

<http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/eli7081.pdf>

<http://www.knewton.com/flipped-classroom/>

<http://www.flippedclassroom.com/>

<http://www.thedailyriff.com/articles/the-flipped-class-conversation-689.php>

What do you think? Are flipped classrooms practical? What are their possible benefits or weaknesses? What impact, positive or negative, do you think this model could have on our education system if it became more widespread? Continue the conversation with us at [facebook.com/teachingwritingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teachingwritingclub)

Upcoming Opportunities at CSUF

There are many exciting things happening this fall for students interested in composition and rhetoric!

Secrets of the Trade Workshop—Ever wonder how much teachers get paid? Or how they deal with struggling students? Or whether they’ve ever planned an assignment that fell so flat they’ll never try it again? On **Wednesday, October 9th at 7 pm**, graduate and undergraduate CSUF students are invited to sit down with some seasoned instructors and ask them their secrets of the trade. This workshop will count towards the Teaching Writing Certificate. For more information, visit [facebook.com/teachingwritingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teachingwritingclub)

For CSUF graduate students, there are even more opportunities this October. The Office of Graduate Studies is offering a series of workshops funded by the US Department of Education and designed to help graduate students get the most out of their time here. These workshops do not count towards the Teaching Writing Certificate, but they are free and can be incredibly helpful. The workshops are incredibly varied, and the full schedule can be found at <http://www.fullerton.edu/graduate/epochs/gls-schedule.asp>. Below, however, we have listed some workshops for the month of October that *Comp Talk* thinks you may find useful:

Writing Personal Statements and Statements of Purpose—Thursday, October 17th, 5:30-6:30, H 516
This workshop is designed to help prepare students for that most difficult of tasks, writing about ourselves.

Critical Methodologies—Monday, October 21st, 5:30-6:30, LH 315
This workshop explores the various ways research is conducted in academia, presenting benefits and limitations of each approach.

Research Strategies for the Busy Graduate! - Tuesday, October 22nd, 5:30-6:50, H 516
This workshop helps students know how to start larger projects and discusses selection of sources.

TWC Welcomes New Faculty, Cont.

resisting?

TWC: How did you become interested in composition?

Martha: Oh, it was definitely through the writing center at UCLA. I was really on that literary studies track, and after I got back to school, I did my AA degree work for a bit. By the time I transferred to UCLA, though, I was all engines firing for literary studies. Then I was at the writing center, and it was just a really great writing center director, I'll never forget him, Dr. Ed Frankel, and I've since e-mailed him and said "You changed the course of my history at least." It was the training and orientation. I went in thinking, as some people might think going into a tutor training, that you're gonna learn how to best explain grammar or what best to mark on some of these papers. We were reading stuff by Stanley Fish on discourse communities, and I noticed that some of the other tutors in training were kinda like, "Why are we reading this? How can I help somebody tomorrow in a one hour session with this?" and I was the right subset. It just inspired me, what I was reading, and I went to his office and I said, "I'm thinking about applying to grad school. Who gets to research and write this? I have not encountered this before." It's actually a funny mistake that I ended up at Urbana-Champaign. He knew enough about the field to say, "Oh, yeah, rhetoric and composition, you've gotta go to this place, Urbana-Illinois, because that's where all the major journals are coming out of." What he didn't realize is he confused the NCTE, National Council for Teachers of English, which is based in Urbana-Illinois, with the Center for Writing Studies at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, an amazing program that I'm glad I ended up in but not the publisher of everything the NCTE produces, so it was kind of an accident, and it was a happy one.

It was the only program in composition I applied to. I applied to all other literature programs, but by the time acceptances were coming in, that was the one that I was like, "I've got to do this."

TWC: Why did you come to Cal State Fullerton?

Martha: Because they wanted me, but most importantly because it's a public, accessible state university and access to public education is so important to me. I am a product of California state public education. In high school, I didn't find my path until I'd spent some time at community college, and the fact that those pathways are still open is exciting to me when I meet transfer students, so that was the general reason. Fullerton specifically because it's recognized and classified as being a Carnegie engaged university, and when I got here I could tell that they really did live up to that classification. From the president down, they're taking community engagement and the way that the university and the students that are coming out of it can collaborate meaningfully and reciprocally with the community both around them and also digitally, internationally, so that was something specific, and then finally it was the department of English; I definitely see other departments where when you have creative writers, literature, and composition faculty together, there isn't the amount of respect or interest that I really see modeled in every interaction that I've had here, so those are some of the reasons that really stood out to me.

TWC: What visions do you have for Cal State Fullerton's Comp. program? What would you like to see happen here?

Martha: I'm really excited that they've talked to Dr. Bonnie Williams and myself about really wanting to get our sense of that. First, I wanna get a sense of what the culture is here, what's working well here, and really kind of what the need both at the undergraduate and graduate level is and what interest there is. To be simplistic, our undergraduates have had less cur-

ricular opportunities to be introduced to rhet/comp unless they enroll in 402 for the Writing Center. So something the Composition Committee has been talking about, although I can't speak for the whole committee, is how to expand the "Language Courses" category for the undergraduate curriculum. Right now it's 303 and 305, which are the grammar of the English language and history of English in America class, and so we still need to have this discussion, but if I'm going to be pulling for anything in that meeting, I think we need a history of rhetorical theory

class at that 300 level.

I've done the research; there's none being offered in the Communications department (sometimes there's crossover between rhetoric focus in English and Communication). There really isn't that history of rhetorical theory, at least in the Western tradition, from the pre-Platonists to contemporary theory, and that's something that I'm probably going to

try to suggest that we need for rhet/comp.

TWC: Is there anything the club (or other students) can do to support your work?

Martha: Well, one thing I might say is even if you're not in a class with me, know that my office hours are open to all students, so if you'd like to get to know me in whatever capacity, feel free to engage with me, because if I know what you're interested in, I've got a little bit of brain real estate that helps me keep an eye out for opportunities, or I'll think of somebody and a way to connect you to somebody I know at another university, just so that I have a sense of that because, also, I know at some point I'd like to think about establishing a research assistantship for my book project.

OCTOBER
2013



National Day on Writing

Sunday, October 20th marks the fifth annual National Day on Writing! This holiday, created by the National Council of Teachers of English and officially recognized by the US Senate, asks everyone, from students to teachers to politicians to sandwich-makers, to think about the role writing plays in everyday life. This, the NCTE hopes, will help us all to become more conscious of writing and therefore to become better writers. This year the NCTE asks us to think about

connections; how we use writing to connect across disciplines, with other people, with other organizations and opportunities, and more. Since this year's National Day on Writing falls on a Sunday, educators are encouraged to participate whenever it is convenient for them, but NCTE hopes all educators and students will tweet the ways that they make writing connections using the hashtags #write2connect and #dayonwriting on Monday, October 21st. To find out more, go to <http://www.ncte.org/dayonwriting>

Teaching Writing Club

Calls for Papers

June 5-8, 2014 Washington State University will be hosting a "Computers and Writing" conference with a focus on evo-, convo-, and revo- lutions of interfaces, texts, and technologies. October 31st is the deadline to submit proposals of 1,000 words or less. For more info, visit <http://www.siteslab.org/cwcon/2014/cfp>

The Southwest Popular and American Culture Association will be holding a conference on February 19-22, 2014 in Albuquerque, NM on Pedagogy and Pop Culture. Proposals should include a 100-250 word abstract and a 50 word bio. All students are welcome to submit, but graduate students with teaching experience are particularly sought after. The deadline for proposals is this November 1st, but proposals will be considered on

a first come first serve basis. Apply for their conference here: <http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/node/52787> Arizona State University will be hosting a Hybridity Conference February 28 — March 1, 2014. Proposals are not limited to composition, but comp. topics include Hybridity and Literacy, Hybridity and Academia, Hybridity and the Internet, and more. 250-500 word abstracts are due by December 1st. To find out more, visit: <http://call-for-papers.sas.upenn.edu/node/52467>

TWC Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I join the TWC?

A: Complete a membership envelope in the English Department Office (UH 323) and ask them to put it in our inbox.

Q: What can I do as a club member?

A: Besides attending our workshops and activities, you can get involved by joining one of our club committees. Our committees include workshop planning,

fundraising, *Comp Talk*, events, and community service.

Q: Do your workshops count toward the Teaching Writing Certificate?

A: Yes! All of our workshops and many of the Creative Writing Club's workshops will satisfy the workshop requirement for the certificate. There are also department-sponsored events that sometimes count toward the certificate. If you're involved in the program it's pretty easy to

take care of that requirement.

Q: Does the TWC do community service?

A: We're currently looking for teaching-based community service opportunities and would love to hear your ideas.

Q: How can I contact the TWC?

A: via e-mail at teachingwritingclub@gmail.com or facebook at [facebook.com/teachingwritingclub](https://www.facebook.com/teachingwritingclub).