

Words, Words, Words

Polonius: What do you read,
my lord?
Hamlet: Words, words, words

Act 2, Scene 2

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One Step At a Time

Looking back at my fourteen years in the English Department at USCA, I am astounded both by how quickly they have flown and by how much the Department has advanced. When I arrived, for instance, email was still an exotic concept. No one was really sure how to use it. The computer in my office was so slow that if I typed at my normal speed the text appeared roughly a line and half after it had been entered. There was no voice mail system, no video or word processing equipment in English classrooms, and four year universities in this state were still offering remedial courses to entering freshmen (a practice the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education has since delegated to two-year schools). The Writing Center (now renamed "The Writing Room") was housed in HSS 201. It was a terrific little center, but much too small for the needs of USCA's students. By way of establishing the historical setting, I will point out that the card catalog (which contained actual *cards*) could still be found in the library. The English major was still a rigidly prescribed course of literary studies without a writing option. Students today would hardly recognize the program!

Since then we have made tremendous advances. Things are not perfect, of course. No one will ever *really* convince me that computers don't have their own bizarre consciousnesses and quirky personalities, but things are

surely much better than any of us could have hoped in 1991. Of special value in this changing world we inhabit is the more flexible English major that allows students to "specialize" if they wish, depending on their future plans. In other words, a student planning on Law School can select relevant courses, as can a student planning on graduate school in English or American Literature, or a student aiming at a career in creative writing, public relations, or other writing-related fields. Partly because I sat on the committee that reconfigured the major and on the committee that designed the writing minor and concentration, I feel deeply invested in the department's growth and development. I am delighted by the way our list of courses has expanded to include Film, non-Western Literature and other areas of interest, and by the addition of more courses dealing with both the English language itself and with varied kinds of writing. As we look forward to the sixth year of The Oswald Review, the department can take pride in the way the journal's reputation—and the department's along with it—has grown since the publication was founded. It should be obvious that we came all this distance one step at a time, but it's easy to forget all the hard work that went into "growing" the current English Department and its offerings. I look back to 1991, and I am deeply impressed by the work the English faculty has done and continues to do.

How can I possibly sum up the experience of being a Professor of English here? I look back at the work, the students whose lives have touched mine, their intellectual gains, and the absolute *fun* of being in the classroom. I look, with pride and some thanksgiving, at the accumulation of scholarly and creative work that fills a bookshelf. I look back—and forward too—to friendships and collegial networks that began for me at USCA and that now extend far beyond this campus. I still have a "sneak" snapshot of the colleagues who decorated my office door with black flowers on my fiftieth birthday, and my happy chain of memories includes a sometimes rowdy and *always* witty lunch bunch. I look ahead to my retirement this coming May with excitement and joy. I love new beginnings, and this should be a fine one. I will take with me deep connections to USCA that will continue as long I draw breath and with them the fulfilling pleasure of watching a school I have loved, served, and called home for more than a decade move into the future with a vigor I have helped to forge.

Phebe Davidson
Distinguished Professor of English
G.L. Toole Professor of English
Carolina Trustee Professor



Alumni

John Moore

John Moore (B.A. English, 2002) always knew that he wanted to write. As an undergraduate, he enjoyed his internship at *The Aiken Standard* under Dr. Mack's supervision, but at the time he felt almost positive that it wasn't the right venue for him. However, after working various other jobs, he began to realize that writing for a newspaper would be more exciting, and he returned to *The Aiken Standard* with his resume. Moore first worked as an editorial assistant and then later became a reporter, which he describes as one of the most "time consuming and difficult" professions that only a truly dedicated person such as himself would enjoy.

Although reporters often feel the pressure to produce an article within a short period of time, Moore agrees that his years in the USCA English program have effectively prepared him. "All of my professors encouraged good writing [and] it was

important for me to do a lot of it because every day for me is like a week-end rush or an all-nighter." By graduation, Moore felt "toughened up" as he could write much faster and manage his time more wisely. Also, in reading works of literature from many authors, he broadened his range of knowledge, which he believes is very useful in reporting: "I write several stories a day, and they are almost never on a similar topic." Reading, Moore says, also helps him to understand why people view the world the way they do.

Apart from the actual writing Moore does for *The Aiken Standard*, he derives an equal amount of, if not more, fulfillment from meeting people he would never ordinarily encounter and from going to new places. "I enjoy learning about people—each day I learn something new. Everyone has a story and I am always amazed." As a reporter, John Moore hopes that his

writing makes an impact on others, but if nothing else, he expects to keep his readers well informed. On the value of an English degree, Moore adds: "It is necessary to have a strong foundation in English. People read what I write and if I make a mistake, they let me know about it."



Angela Williams



"They deepened my love of language but, more importantly, they deepened my thirst for knowledge," says Angela Williams (B.A. English, 1988) of her professors at USCA. Director of the publications division of the

Institute of Government at the University of North Carolina, Williams attributes much of her career and life success to the supportive environment that defines USCA's English program.

Editing, layout, design, and writing skills have proven to be essential for optimum performance as a director of publications. Williams and her colleagues work to publish books, reference works, manuals, magazines, a daily bulletin of legislative ac-

tions during sessions of the North Carolina General Assembly, and various other print and electronic materials. In addition, Williams also teaches a graduate writing course at UNC Chapel Hill, writes for a local newspaper *The Independent Weekly*, and manages a full-service publications business called Villanelle Productions. "Many [USCA] English courses—but in particular, Dr. Rich's grammar course and Dr. Gardner's poetry courses—sharpened my editing skills," affirms Williams. Also, she feels that working with Dr. Mack on *Broken Ink* armed her with solid editing and design experience, both useful in production and layout.

Equally as important as the tools and knowledge Williams gained through her English courses is the confidence USCA's environment helped develop: "I left there with belief in my ability to write because the visiting writers' series allowed me to interact with so many excellent writers." Dr. Lorch's and the late Dr. Bell's women's literature courses also contributed to Williams' view of her-

self as a "competent and powerful" person and helped her to discover her "voice." Furthermore, she asserts that an English degree provides graduates with something that no other degree can: "An English degree deepens your ability to communicate—and what could be more important than that?"

"I left [USCA] with belief in my ability to write...."

Alumnus Profile & More Faculty News

Brian Katonak

Having grown up and gone to high school in Aiken, Brian Katonak (B.I.S, 1989) is now a local attorney practicing in many areas of specialization, including criminal law and domestic relations. When he was first choosing a college, Katonak was eager to explore the world beyond his hometown. After a few semesters at Georgia Tech as an engineering major and also a pre-med major, Katonak just couldn't find his niche. "I wasn't enjoying what I was pursuing, and the classrooms were like auditoriums. The calculus course I took had 200



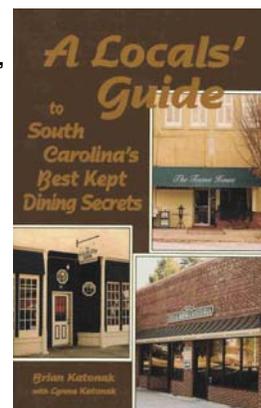
he always liked writing, Georgia Tech

people in it, and the professor didn't even know my name." Although

didn't offer an English major—so he returned to his roots and transferred to USCA, where he realized the importance of developing student/faculty relationships. "The professors at USC-Aiken really showed that they enjoyed their job and encouraged students while they were at it."

In building this support system, Katonak also learned how to refine his writing skills, which he says are absolutely necessary to become a successful lawyer: "When I spell out a legal argument in writing, it needs to reflect a level of professionalism if I am to gain respect from my clients and peers." In particular, he feels that working as a Writing Room Consultant and doing an independent study with Dr. Rich allowed him to improve his writing abilities. But according to Katonak, being a lawyer is more than employing strong English skills—it's also about fulfilling a desire to help people through what they may perceive as a complicated legal system. "It's a good feeling trying to assist people who can't get through their problems without an attorney."

Aside from practicing law, Katonak had a book published in 1999 entitled: "A Local's Guide to South Carolina's Best Kept Dining Secrets." Over a period of six months, Katonak visited, and dined at, 87 locally owned, non-franchise restaurants across the state before writing an enticing profile on each one. As he explains in his book, he got the idea for this project when he realized that although "almost every town has a special place where the locals like to eat," visitors don't know such restaurants exist. Also, Katonak insists that money wasn't his motivation for writing. He did it for pure enjoyment, saying in his book: "I love South Carolina. I love to write. And I love to eat."



Faculty

Vicki Collins

Professor Vicki Collins, teaches English 101 and 102 and continuing education courses in creative writing, Spanish, and study skills. She is also a professional tutor for the English Department, a member of the First Year Experience Committee, and a presenter for the Writing Room Workshop Series.

In addition to teaching at USCA, Professor Collins remains very active in the community. She participates in in-service workshops for local schools and serves as the Vice-President of The Village at Jones Creek Homeowners Board. She is also a member of the Authors Club of Augusta and the Augusta Poetry Group.

Professor Collins also incorporates many different hobbies into her busy schedule. An active tennis player, she is a member and a team captain at the Petersburg Racquet

Club, and the league coordinator for the Central Savannah River Area Tennis Association. She is on the Benevolence Committee at Faith Community Church, and has taken mission trips to Honduras and Costa Rica.

Dr. Eunita Ochola

In March 2004, Dr. Eunita Ochola, in collaboration with the United Methodist Church, taught Swahili language to American volunteers working with the Somali Bantu Resettlement in Columbia, South Carolina. Also, at the University of South Carolina Lancaster in the Spring of 2004, she gave a talk on "Politics and Education: Attitudes Toward Girl Education in Contemporary Kenya."

The summer of 2004 proved to be very productive for Dr. Ochola, as she finished her manuscript of an article entitled "Effective Writing: Connection Between Choice and Environment of Use of Functional Discourse Features in Effective Essays by College Students." Additionally,

she finished her memoir, which will be published soon.

Also during the summer of 2004, Dr. Ochola found time to travel to Idaho, Ohio, and Texas, parts of the United States that she had only seen on postcards.

Dr. Ellen Lott Smith

Dr. Ellen Lott Smith teaches English Composition and Literature to freshmen; her main goal is to convey to her students that there are many varied career opportunities for those who develop strong writing and communication skills.

She is also an active member of the Aiken Student Club, a group of local ladies (many of whom are teachers) who focus on one course of study and present programs each year on that topic. For 2004, the club devoted its attention to the topic of "Women, Art, and the South."

Dr. Tom Mack

This academic year (2004-2005) marks Dr. Tom Mack's fourteenth as Chair of the Department of English. In August of 2004, the Department held its first full-day retreat, devoting much time and energy to revisiting the student learning objectives for both the composition sequence and the degree program (B. A. in English). In the fall semester, the Department also reinforced its ties to the local schools by hosting a session on shared values for high school teachers of English in Aiken County. Twenty area teachers were in attendance, including six USCA graduates.

In the category of traditional and applied scholarship, Dr. Mack was very busy. In October he presented a paper entitled "The Portrait as Truth Teller: Hawthorne's 'Prophetic Pictures' and James's 'The Sweetheart of M. Briseux'" at the 18th Annual International Conference in Literature and the Visual Arts in Atlanta, GA. Also in the fall, two of his reference articles appeared in Masterplots II: Short Story Series, Revised Edition, edited by Kent Rasmussen for Salem Press. Each article provides a detailed analysis of a noteworthy contemporary short story: "Bears in Mourning" by Adam Mars-Jones and "Minor Heroism" by Alan Gurganus. Also, this fall, the sixth volume of The Oswald Review was published; this international journal of undergraduate research in the discipline of English is co-edited by Dr. Mack and Dr. Davidson.

In the category of creative activity, Dr. Mack continued to write his column for The Aiken Standard. Since March of 1990, Dr. Mack's column on the regional arts scene has been a popular weekly feature of the local paper.

Dr. Mack devoted a great deal of time this summer to mastering new technology for use in the classroom. In the months of June and July, he copied over 900 slides as Photoshop images, which were then organized into twenty-three Powerpoint presentations and burned on CDs. In both AEGL 284 and 427 this fall, he used these CDs, which include images of American literary landmarks and the work of American visual artists associated with particular American writers. One such CD, for example, features a reconfigured 100-image presentation on



this country's most distinguished novelist Henry James!

Dr. Harry Hootman

After retiring from the Savannah River Plant in 1995, Dr. Harry Hootman, the newest member of the USCA English Department, took advantage of the tuition-free education opportunity for South Carolina's senior citizens to pursue an interest in literature. He recently received his doctorate in English from USC Columbia majoring in nineteenth-century British and American literature, and is now enjoying his appointment as a part-time faculty member.



Dr. Hootman is currently looking for a publisher for his dissertation entitled *An Index of British Literary Annuals and Giftbooks 1823-1861*. This copyrighted work provides an index to these annuals, a comprehensive introduction, and a quantitative overview. Currently, the indexes consist of separate author, artist, engraver, title, subject, and content listings from 238 British literary annuals.

An avid book collector, Dr. Hootman donated over a hundred Hemingway books to the Thomas Cooper Rare Books Collection while a graduate student at USC. Two years ago, he was the runner-up in the Thomas Cooper Library student book collecting competition with a complete collection of John McPhee first editions; and last year he won first place with a complete collection of John Hersey first editions.

Dr. Steve Gardner

In addition to his two sections of English 102 and one section of English 285, Dr. Steve Gardner taught something new this fall—a course in the short story in England and America. For the Spring 2005 semester, he is also looking forward to his favorite seminar of poetry writing.

Dr. Gardner is currently involved in two editorial projects: "The

Southern Poetry Anthology: South Carolina," which is co-edited by USCA alumnus William Wright; and a "Best of The Devil's Millhopper," a twenty-five year retrospective of this magazine by three of the only four editors it has ever had (Stephen Corey, Jim Peterson, and Dr. Gardner). In addition to working on these projects, Dr. Gardner serves as the Vice Chair of the Faculty Assembly and is a member of the Faculty Welfare Committee, the English Department Assessment Committee, and the search committee for a new assistant professor of English.

Dr. Gardner's creative pursuits have led to the completion of one of his short stories. Also, he continues to work on his poetry.

Dr. Stanley Rich

At the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Conference on Linguistics in April 2004, Dr. Stanley Rich presented a paper entitled, "From Alligators to Chinaberries: Fauna and Flora Placenames in Four West Alabama Counties." From May 31 to June 15 2004, he participated in a Study Tour of "Magna Grecia: An Archeological Study of Early Greek Colonization (From the Eighth to the Fourth Centuries B.C.E.) in Sicily and Southern Italy." Additionally, in August 2004, Dr. Rich traveled to Los Angeles, California to present a workshop on "Designing a Peace Studies Course" at the National Meeting of The Fellowship of Reconciliation at Occidental College.

Also, Dr. Rich recently had an article published entitled "American Roman Catholic Journalist Dorothy Day: Agent for Social and Political Change."

Karl Fornes

In 2004, Karl Fornes gave two important presentations: one with Jennifer Little of the USCA library at the Georgia Conference on Information Literacy and another at the USCA Educational Technology Conference, discussing the use of web logs in the writing classroom. He was also named to the Board of Trustees of the Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art in Augusta, GA, and he continues his duty as Treasurer of the Southeastern Writing Center Association.

Faculty

Dr. Sue Lorch

During the Fall 2004 semester, Dr. Sue Lorch chaired the subcommittee responsible for developing and implementing the American Democracy Project Film Series. This proved very successful because it encouraged students in a variety of classes to cultivate an interest in politics. For the Spring semester, the committee is planning a second series of films to focus on the impact an individual can have on community issues.

At Vice Chancellor Ozment's request, Dr. Lorch is the institutional representative for USCA to the Alliance for South Carolina Women Higher Education Consortium. This group is working to improve the status of and participation by women in the state in the areas of education, political involvement, health care, and economics. Also, Dr. Lorch continues to promote Women's and Gender Studies at USCA by coordinating events for Women's History Month in March and by being an active member of the planning team for the Pickens-Salley Symposium on Southern Women.

Additionally, Dr. Lorch presented a lecture to the Academy of Lifelong Learning on Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" and conducted a workshop for the Writing Room series with the provocative title of "Sex, Profanity, and Diction."

Dr. Daniel Miller

Associate Professor of English, Dr. Daniel Miller continues to teach a variety of courses, including The Victorian Age, The Novel Until 1920, Contemporary Fiction, and Contemporary International Short Fiction. He has presented papers primarily but not exclusively about contemporary fiction and film directors. His film papers concerned the directors Orson Welles, Robert Aldrich, Nicolas Roeg, and Sam Peckinpah; and his literature papers have thus far included studies of Ford Madox, John Gregory Dunne, John Updike, and Robert Stone.

Dr. Jill Hampton

At the Society for the Study of Nineteenth-Century Ireland International Conference held in Chicago, IL in April 2004, Dr. Jill Hampton presented a paper entitled, "Religious Ambivalence in May Laffan's *Hogan, M.P.*" Also, in October 2004, she traveled to Milwaukee, WI for the American Conference for Irish Studies Midwest England Regional Meeting to present her "May Laffan and another Hidden Ireland" paper.

Dr. Hampton wrote a book review on *A Family of His Own* by Charles Duffy and had it published in *New Hibernia Review* in the Spring of 2004. For 2005, she anticipates two more publications: a book review on *Writing Irishness in Nineteenth-Century British Culture*, Ed. Neil McCaw, for *Irish Literary Review*, and a chapter entitled "May Laffan's Religious Ambivalence" for *Evangelicals and Catholics in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*.

Dr. Hampton's works in progress include a book review on James Murphy's *Abject Loyalty: Nationalism and Monarchy in Ireland During the Reign of Queen Victoria* and an article entitled "May Laffan and another Hidden Ireland."

In addition to her scholarship, Dr. Hampton serves on the parents' board at her daughter's high school. She is also interested in remodeling her 1950s home, attending Aiken equestrian events, and even doing a little of her own horseback riding.

Ilona Law

For the past two years, Professor Ilona Law has been teaching an overload of composition courses. Her scholarly interests include 19th century Victorian literature, and this Spring she will be offering a special topics course in Charlotte Bronte and Elizabeth Gaskell. In the area of service, Professor Law is a member of the English Department Assessment Committee and is the secretary of the English Department. During the Fall semester,

she was appointed chair of the English Department Search Committee.

Presently, Professor Law is acting as mentor and editor to a local physician who is writing his first novel. She has found it gratifying to see how important language and literature have become to a skilled practitioner and diagnostician and feels excited to help him discover his own creative abilities. Also, as copy editor of the Church Music National Conference, Professor Law enjoys the opportunity to work in her two favorite fields: writing and music.

In addition to her scholarly pursuits and service to USCA and the community, Professor Law finds solace in playing the piano, gardening, and tending to the many stray animals she has kindly taken into her home.

Linda Lee Harper

Professor Linda Lee Harper teaches Composition and Literature and Introduction to Creative Writing. In 2004, she conducted two workshops, "Logic" in the Spring and "Punked: Is That All You Have To Say?" in the Fall and directed a lecture at the Morris Museum of Art in October. Professor Harper was also included in the recent literary map of South Carolina and in *Literary South Carolina* (Hub City, 2004), an evaluation of South Carolina's literary trends and writers over the past 335 years.

Professor Harper continues to serve as Advisor to the USCA literary journal, *Broken Ink*, which collaborated with AASA in Spring 2004 to present Poetry: Def Jam. *Broken Ink* also sponsors campus poetry readings and is planning a joint reading with Augusta State University's literary journal in 2005. Also, beginning in Fall 2005, students can explore the option of doing an editorial internship through *Broken Ink*. Additionally, Washington Group International has gifted *Broken Ink* with a generous endowment to award annual prizes. These Washington Group Literary Awards are granted to the best fiction, poetry, and visual arts selected for publication in the journal.

For the Love of Teaching

"I love what I do and I can't think of anything else that I'd rather be doing," says Carolyn Hadden (B.A., English Education 1993), a tenth and twelfth grade English teacher at North Augusta High School. Aside from her joy at having the opportunity to make a positive impact on her students, Hadden is fascinated by the sincerity and light-heartedness of teenagers, whom she says there is much to learn from. As a teacher, Hadden owes much to USCA for effectively preparing her and has very fond memories of the institution. "I especially think of Dr. Rich when I make my twelfth grade students memorize the first eighteen lines of the General Prologue of The Canterbury Tales—in Middle English!" She assigns this task because she believes it teaches her class that they can accomplish what they first perceive as impossible.

Cynthia Boston (B.A. English Education, 2002), who teaches two different levels of sophomore English at Aiken High School, also accredits USCA for providing her with a strong English foundation and teaching skills: "My professors taught me to be patient and work with kids until they 'get it.'" Students will take notice, she stresses, if a teacher's optimism for academic improvement begins to wane: "[You've got] to stay positive, stay focused, and remember [that] you're there for the students." Studying at USCA not only equipped her for what Boston describes as a "trying profession with very little rewards from outsiders" but it also brought her into contact with people who have become her friends for life: "We are all teaching at different schools, but we get together as often as possible to catch up and vent."

Other USCA alumni who are currently teaching in area schools include Melissa Maypole (Silver Bluff High School), Carol Garrett (Silver Bluff High School), Tami Shaffer (Wagner-Salley High School), and Erin Long (Aiken High School).

From The Editor

As a sophomore English major, I felt very excited when Dr. Mack approached me about doing a directed internship with him in "desktop publishing" (AEGL 497). Whenever I come across any type of newsletter, brochure, flier, or similar publication, I always think to myself, "Wouldn't it be fun to be the person who puts that together?" Although I was on the yearbook committee as a sophomore at Atholton High School in Columbia, Maryland, my job was limited to story writing and captioning pictures—the privileged upperclassmen reigned over layout and design decisions and even the coveted digital camera. But this semester, I've had the opportunity to plunge into all aspects of assembling a publication.

Working on the Department of English Newsletter has brought me into contact with people from whom

there is much to learn. The different perspectives, college memories, and career experiences of USCA alumni have been a source of inspiration, opening my mind to the versatility of an English degree and to the potential impact English majors can have on the lives of others. And of course, I have enjoyed the actual act of writing their stories simply because I love words.

Although "words" are certainly important in creating a newsletter, I learned that their organization on a page also requires a significant amount of attention. How should this text sit in relation to that picture? In relation to other text? What font should I use? Experimenting with these elements on Microsoft Publisher gave me a chance to expand my creativity, to keep the publication's visual appeal in mind just as I consider certain writing techniques when working on a story.

Undergraduate Focus

My friends and co-workers think I'm insane. Why would I, an experienced firefighter/paramedic with over twenty two years experience, become a full-time student—much less pursue a degree in English? For me the answer is simple. Despite all of my travels and experiences in the United States and Europe, some of my fondest memories are of an A.P English class taught by Carolyn Black. In those classes, her enthusiasm and encouragement helped us to understand the experiences and emotions articulated in novels, essays, and poems. It is my sincerest hope that I can pass on the gift she gave me by teaching college students and pursuing my own writing.

Initially, the choice of USCA was simple logistics. As a resident of Aiken County who worked full time, I needed a reputable, convenient, four year institution. What I have found in these last eighteen months is a student body that is generally enthusiastic and eager and a faculty that ranks the best out of all the institutions I have encountered. The English faculty is one of the most supportive, creative groups of people that I have ever had the pleasure of dealing with. Collectively, they have inspired me to reach for my goals by presenting challenges and opportunities such as membership in Sigma Tau Delta and an internship with The Oswald Review, both of which have enhanced my educational experience. Their professionalism and energy will serve as my model when I finally appear in front of a college class!

By: Michael Clune

For the latest news on the USCA Department of English, please visit our home page:

<http://www.usca.edu/english>

This internship has proved to be much more challenging and exciting than remaining within the confines of my position on the yearbook committee. While I love to write, desktop publishing really requires many different skills. Everything I have done—from communicating with faculty and alumni to manipulating text boxes on the computer—will assist me in the future. And now, I even know how to use a digital camera!



Monica Budnichuk