

Susanna Latham Benko

Department of English | Ball State University

Current Appointment

Ball State University

Professor of English, 2023—present

Director of Teacher Education, College of Sciences & Humanities, 2021—present

Professional Development Liaison for Secondary English Language Arts
in Muncie Community Schools, 2021—present

Education

PhD. Language Literacy and Culture, University of Pittsburgh, 2012

M.Ed. Secondary Education, Indiana Wesleyan University, 2008

B.S. English and Secondary Education (double major), Butler University, 2004

Research Interests

Teacher education and new teacher learning in literacy; supporting literacy development for preservice teachers; writing instruction in secondary English classrooms; resources for English/Language Arts curriculum and professional development; task design and relationships between curriculum and classroom instruction; educational policy as it relates to curricular materials and classroom practice

Publications (selected)

JOURNAL ARTICLES

* indicates undergraduate student

Hodge, E., Salloum, S., & **Benko, S.** (2024). How state educational agency coordinators navigate logics of local control in standards implementation. *Educational Policy*, 38(2), 391–420. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08959048231153595> (Published online Mar. 29, 2023).

Benko, S., Hodge, E., & Salloum, S. (2022) Justice and what just is: Online resources and social class. *English Journal*, 111(4), 49-55.

Benko, S. L. (2020). Looking forward, looking back: Reflections on values and pedagogical choices during COVID-19. *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*, 9(1). <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/wte/vol9/iss1/19/>

Benko, S. L., Hodge, E., & Salloum, S. (2020) Policy into practice: Understanding state writing resources. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 52(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X20915538>

- Hodge, E., **Benko, S. L.**, & Salloum, S. (2020). Tracing states' messages about Common Core instruction: An analysis of English/language arts and close reading resources. *Teachers College Record*. 122(3), <https://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=23019>.
- Salloum, S., Hodge, E., & **Benko, S. L.** (2020). State educational agencies in an uncertain environment: Understanding state-provided networks of English language arts curricular resources. *Educational Policy Analysis Archives*, 28. In E. Hodge, J. Childs & W. Au (Eds.) special issue, *Researching 21st Century Education Policy Through Social Network Analysis*.
- Hodge, E., Salloum, S., & **Benko, S. L.** (2019). The changing ecology of the curriculum marketplace in the era of the Common Core. *Journal of Educational Change*, 20(4), 425–466.
- Salloum, S., J, **Benko, S. L.** & Hodge, E. M (2017). Getting Connected: Finding Literacy Resources in the Era of Common Core. *Kappa Delta Pi Record* 43(3), 120-125. DOI: 10.1080/00228958.2017.1334476.
- Hodge, E. M., Salloum, S. J., & **Benko, S. L.** (2016) (Un)Commonly connected: A social network analysis of state standards resources for English/Language Arts. *AERA Open* 2(4), 1-19 DOI: 10.1177/2332858416674901 <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2332858416674901>
- Benko, S. L.** (2016). Instruction Matters: Examining preservice teachers' instruction for cognitively demanding writing tasks. *English Education* 48(3), 201-236.
- Benko, S. L.** Guise, M. E., Earl, C*, & Martin, W* (2016). More than social media: Using twitter with pre-service teachers as a means of reflection and engagement in communities of practice. *CITE: Contemporary Issues in Teacher Education* 16(1). <http://www.citejournal.org/vol16/iss1/languagearts/article1.cfm>
- Hodge, E. M., & **Benko, S. L.** (2014). A “common” vision of instruction? An analysis of English/Language Arts professional development materials related to the Common Core State Standards. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique* 13(1), 169-196.
- Benko, S. L.** (2012/2013). Scaffolding: An on-going process to support student writers. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 56(4), 291-300.

Grants & Awards

- Co-Principal Investigator** (2023-2026). Building a Community of Practice Partnership. With Co-PIs Andrew Gatzka, Cresta Hancock, and Michael Gurlea. Ball State University, Provost Immersive Learning Sustained Grant. **\$45,000**

Indiana Writing Project Lead (2023-2024). Ball State University, Attract, Prepare, Retain Grant. With PI Susan Tancock. Funded by Indiana Department of Education. **Responsible for programming for professional development for teachers (\$139,932; grant total is \$ 2,170,520 .)**

Indiana Writing Project Lead and Project Team Member (2021-2025). Ball State University, Learning Recovery Grant. With PIs Kendra Lowery and Ai-Chu Ding. Funded by Indiana Department of Education. **Responsible for programming for professional development for teachers and youth writing camps(\$133,360; total grant is \$2,899,257.00)**

Indiana Writing Project Lead (2020-2021). Tutoring Fellowship Innovation Grant: A Partnership Between Burriss and Indiana Writing Project. With PI Abigail Comber. Indiana State Department of Education **Responsible for programming accounting for \$12,250.** (Grant total \$30,000)

Co-Principal Investigator (2017-2018) Supporting Common Core Implementation in English/Language Arts: Investigating the Resource Selection and Dissemination Strategies of State Coordinators. With Emily Hodge (PI) & Serena Salloum (Co-PI). Spencer Foundation Small Research Grant. Spencer Foundation Small Research Grant, **\$50,000**

Principal Investigator (2017-2018) College Ready Writers Program. National Writing Project, **\$20,000**

Principal Investigator (2017-2018) Invitational Leadership Institute for Developing New Teacher-Leaders, National Writing Project, **\$15,000**

Principal Investigator (2013-2014). Composition Camps as Opportunities for Literacy Development for Teachers and Students. With Co-PIs Paul Ranieri & Barb Miller. National Writing Project, Professional Development in High Needs Schools, **\$20,000**

AWARDS

Excellence in Teaching Award, Ball State University (2013, winner; 2020, finalist)
This university-wide award recognized faculty dedication and talent in the classroom.

Outstanding Dissertation Award, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh, 2012
This award recognizes excellent research completed by a graduate student.

Leadership Positions

Director of Teacher Education, College of Sciences & Humanities, 2021—present

- Meet regularly with CSH program managers, dean's office leadership, and Teachers College faculty and leadership to ensure cohesion across our teacher education programs. Examples of topics discussed include CSH's staffing for coursework related to year-long residency programs (for elementary education programs), practicum placements for students in the introduction course.

- Serve as colleague liaison for accreditation issues (e.g., CAEP accreditation, Science of Reading reviews)
- Serve the college on teacher education related issues, including hiring and mentoring new faculty in teacher education, developing new coursework and/or TSAP agreements, and other duties as assigned.

Director, Indiana Writing Project, 2016—2025

- *Long-term planning for the site*, including planning programs and budget; transitioned from a nationally-funded model to a self-funded model
- *Managing all aspects of grant-writing*, including monitoring CFPs, writing grant proposals for National Writing Project initiatives and for external funders for other initiatives; serving as PI for all grants, collecting data to evaluate grants, reporting
 - Wrote, received, and managed over **\$427,000 in grants and/or contracts** for professional development work
- *Organizing and supporting local site work*, including running professional development and youth programming, attending to logistics (e.g., securing space for events), seeking and managing professional development contracts.

Other Publications

* indicates undergraduate student

BOOK CHAPTERS

Hodge, E., **Benko, S** & Salloum, S. (2021). Integrating connectionist and structuralist social network approaches to understand education policy networks: The case of the Common Core State Standards and state-provided curricular resources. In M. Weber & I. Yanovitzky (Eds.), *Networks, knowledge brokers, and the public policymaking process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Cuenca, A., & **Benko, S. L.** (2017). Turning clinical practice upside-down from the bottom up. R. Flessner & D. Lecklider (Eds.), *The Power of Clinical Preparation in Teacher Education* (pp. 121-137). New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield.

Guise, M., & **Benko, S. L.** (2014). “Scaffolding Beginning English Teachers to Teach Secondary Students How to Utilize Digital Tools When Composing.” In Rebecca S. Anderson and Clif Mims (Eds.), *Digital Tools for Writing Instruction in K-12 Settings: Student Perception and Experience* (pp. 589-607). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP (selected)

Grutsch-McKinney, J. & **Benko, S. L.** (2021) The origins of the Burriss Writing Center. Ball State English Department Blog (Invited blog post). <https://blogs.bsu.edu/english/blog/2021/12/01/the-origins-of-the-burriss-writing-center/>

- Benko, S. L.** (2020, May 4). Our literary lives in lockdown: It doesn't need to be elaborate. Teachers, Profs, Parents: Writers Who Care Blog. (*Peer-reviewed blog post*)
<https://writerswhocare.wordpress.com/2020/05/04/our-literary-lives-in-lockdown-it-doesnt-need-to-be-elaborate/>
- Benko, S. L.** (2019, November 12). Teaching is a way to make a living. It's also a way to make a life. Ball State English Department Blog. (*Invited blog post.*)
<https://blogs.bsu.edu/english/blog/2019/11/12/susanna-benko-teaching-is-a-way-to-make-a-living-its-also-a-way-to-make-a-life/>
- Hodge, E., **Benko, S. L.**, & Salloum, S. (2018). Instructional Resources and Teacher Professionalism: The Changing Landscape of Curricular Material Providers in the Digital Age. *Teachers College Record*. (*Commentary*). <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentID=22539>
- Hodge, E., Salloum, S., & **Benko, S. L.** (2017, May 19). How 'common' are state-provided standards resources? What state-provided resources can tell us about college-and-career-ready standards implementation. C-SAIL: The Center on Standards, Alignment, Instruction, and Learning Blog, (*Blog post*).
<http://c-sail.org/resources/blog/how-common-are-state-provided-standards>

Conference Presentations

** indicates K-12 teacher

- Carty, A. ** & **Benko, S.L.** (2024, March). Reaching Reluctant Writers: What Works. A presentation at the Indiana Council for Teachers of English, Indianapolis, IN.
- Benko, S. L.**, Abernathy, H. ** and Chandler, L. ** (2023, November). Collaborating to Support Student Writers: Connecting Writing Project Sites with School Writing Centers. A roundtable presented at the National Council for Teachers of English, Columbus, OH.
- Benko, S. L.**, Abernathy, H. ** and Chandler, L. ** (2021, November). Social Justice at the Center: Intentionally Designing Peer Tutoring Programs to Strive for Equity. A paper accepted for presentation at the National Council for Teachers of English, Louisville KY. (Due to ongoing pandemic, we declined our acceptance)
- Benko, S. L.**, Hodge, E. & Salloum, S. J. (2020, Apr 17 - 21) From Common Core to Instructional Recommendations for Writing: Studying State-Sponsored Writing-Focused Resources [Roundtable Session]. AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA <http://tinyurl.com/qwda6o7> (Conference Canceled)
- Hodge, E., Salloum, S. J. & **Benko, S. L.** (2020, Apr 17 - 21) "It's Just an Option": State Coordinators Negotiate the Politics of Local Control During Standards Implementation [Roundtable Session]. AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA <http://tinyurl.com/qpg5gaa> (Conference Canceled)

Salloum, S., Hodge, E., & **Benko, S. L.** (2019, November). Curricular coherence and local control: Understanding state policy networks of instructional resources in the wake of common standards. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, New Orleans, LA.

Hodge, E., Salloum, S. & **Benko, S. L.** (2019 April). Understanding Education Politics and Policy Networks with Social Analysis. Roundtable presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Ontario, Canada.

Hodge, E., **Benko, S. L.** & Salloum, S. (2018, October). Common standards and open educational resources: How state education agency coordinators support teachers. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Open Education Conference, Buffalo, NY.

Salloum, S., **Benko, S. L.** & Hodge, E. (2018, April). Supporting teachers in an era of common standards: Understanding state coordinators' decisions about curricular resources. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.

Benko, S. L. and Gibson, K. .** (2017, November). If we build it, will they come?: Examining recruitment strategies at a writing project site. Roundtable presented at Annual Meeting of National Writing Project, St. Lois, MO, November, 2017.

Hodge, E., Salloum, S., & **Benko, S. L.** (2017, November). Common, but coherent? Exploring messages about literacy instruction in Common Core resources. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Denver, CO.

Hodge, E., Salloum, S., & **Benko, S. L.** (2017, April). Tracing messages about Common Core instruction: An analysis of state-provided resources for English/Language Arts. A paper presented in a symposium titled Theories and Analysis in Relational Governance: Shaping Policy Through Research, Ideas, and Networks. A paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association, April 2017.

Benko, S. L., Hodge, E. M. & Salloum, S. (2016, November). Common Messages about Instruction? An Analysis of State-Provided Common Core Resources for English/Language Arts A paper presented at the International Literacy Association National Conference, Nashville, TN.

Hodge E. M., Salloum, S., & **Benko, S. L.** (2016, November). Organizing for instruction: An analysis of the organizations sponsoring state standards resources. A paper presented at the University Council for Education Administration annual convention, Detroit, MI.

Benko, S. L., Salloum, S., & Hodge, E. (2016, April). Policy into practice: Investigating state-endorsed writing resources for the Common Core State Standards. A paper presented at the Writing and Literacies Special Interest group at the American Educational Research Association National Conference, Washington DC.

Hodge, E. H., **Benko, S. L.**, and Salloum, S. (2016, April). Common Core connections: A social network analysis of state-level instructional resources for English/language arts. A paper presented at the American Educational Research Association National Conference Division L, Section 3 Washington DC.

Salloum, S., Hodge E. M. & **Benko, S. L.** (2015, November). Testing state capacity for standards-based reform: A social network analysis of state-level Common Core resources. A paper presented at the University Council for Education Administration annual convention, San Diego, CA.

Hodge, E. M., & **Benko, S. L.** (2015, July). Whose voices count in defining “Common Core instruction”? A national analysis of state-level professional resources. A paper presented at the annual convention for the Conference of English Education, New York, NY.

Benko, S. L. & Hodge, E. M. (2015, April). Tracing messages about common core instruction: A qualitative and social network analysis of state-level resources. A paper presented at American Educational Research Association National Conference, Chicago, IL.

Miller, B.** & **Benko, S. L.** (2014, November). Raising the Grade: Challenges and lessons learned from providing professional development in an “F rated” school. A roundtable presented at the National Writing Project Annual Conference, Washington, DC.

Benko, S. L. (2014, November). Zooming In: Using video cases of teaching to help pre-service teachers see writing instruction in new ways. A paper presented at the National Council for Teachers of English Annual Convention, Washington, DC.

Benko, S. L., Guise, M. E., Earl, C., & Martin, W. (2014, November) Using twitter as a reflective tool in teacher education. A roundtable presented at the National Council for Teachers of English Annual Convention, Washington, DC.

Benko, S. L. (2013, April). Teaching to the Task: Pre-service teachers’ enactments of cognitively demanding writing tasks. A paper presented at the American Educational Research Association National Conference, San Francisco, CA.

Invited Presentations

Benko, S. L., Hodge, E., & Salloum, S. (2018, June). State and district policies supporting open educational resources. Presentation at PreK–12 OER Learning Network Convening, New America and International Society for Technology in Education, Chicago, IL.

Benko, S. L., Hodge, E., & Salloum, S. (2018, March). State educational agencies and curricular resources: Lessons learned for open educational resources from state-provided standards resources. Research presentation at PreK–12 OER Learning Network Convening, New America, Washington, D.C.

Teaching

COURSES TAUGHT

Ball State University

ENG 150: Introduction to English Education
ENG 350: Teaching Writing in Secondary Schools
ENG 414: Young Adult Literature
EDSE 460/465: Supervision of Student Teaching
ENG 609: Independent Study for Indiana Writing Project Summer Institute
ENG 672: Workshop in English Language Arts
*courses at the 600 level are graduate; 100-400 level are undergraduate

University of Pittsburgh

IL 2233: Teaching Writing
IL 2725: Teaching Lab
IL 2720: Teaching Seminar
IL 2281: Teaching Practicum
IL 1230/2230: Introduction to Inquiry in English Education
Student teaching supervision (16 students total in urban, suburban, and rural placements)
*courses at the 2000 level are graduate; 1000 level are undergraduate

Service & Professional Activity

National Service: Reviewer

Journal of Teacher Education, 2011-present
English Teaching Practice and Critique, 2014-present
Voices from the Middle, 2018-present
Teachers, Profs, Parents: Writers Who Care Blog, 2020-present
Teaching/Writing: A Journal of Writing Teacher Education, 2020-present

National Writing Project (NWP)

Site Report Reader, March 2023
Attendee, Director Working Meeting, May 2022
NWP Site Leader Group, member 2021-2022
New Director Support Team, co-chair w/ Beth Rimer (Ohio Writing Project), 2020-present
Network Support Team, member 2018-present

University

CAEP Leadership Committee 2022-2025 (responsible for CSH programs)
Professional Education Committee

- Executive Committee (secretary), 2020-2022
- College of Sciences & Humanities representative, 2020-present

- English Education area representative, 2015-2017, 2018-2020
- CAEP Leadership Committee, 2014-2015
 CAEP Standard 2 (Clinical Practices): Co-Chair, 2014-2015

College

- Chair, College Promotion and Tenure Committee (2024-2025)
 Search Committee Member, Department of History (Social Studies Education search)
- Search for tenure track faculty hire, 2021-2022
 - Search for contract faculty hire, 2021
- NEH Internal Review Committee, 2018
 Search Committee for Dean of College of Sciences & Humanities, 2016-2017
 Interactive Learning Space Classroom Mentor, Cohort 5, 2016-2017
 Excellence in Teaching Award committee, 2015, 2016
 Teacher Education Committee, 2012-present (secretary, 2012-2013)
 Interactive Learning Space Classroom Advisory Group, 2014-2015

English Department

- Chair, Promotion and Tenure Committee 2024-2025
 New Faculty Mentor: Charlotte Kupsh, 2023-2025
 Linguistics Search Committee, 2022-2023
 Member, Promotion and Tenure Committee, 2018-2019; 2019-2020; 2021-2022, 2024-2025
 Member, Salary Committee, 2017
 New Faculty Mentor: Jeff Spanke (2016-2021; earned tenure in 2021)
 English Education Search Committee, chair, 2015-2016
 Rhetoric & Composition Search Committee, member 2014-2015
 Programs Committee, 2012-2013
 English Education Area Committee, 2012-present
 DP2 & DP3 Portfolio Committee, 2012-2017

Community Service

- Member of Education Transformation Team, New Castle Community Schools 2022-2023
 Grant Writer for Dance Abilities Program (for dancers with special needs) for Academy of Dance Arts, Fishers, IN. Secured \$7,000 in grant funding for this organization.

Consulting & Professional Development (selected)

CenterPoint Education Solutions

Curriculum Reviewer, 2021

Provided feedback on 4th grade units of study (for full school year) in ELA, reviewing all course materials, assignments, assessments, and teacher and student resources. Evaluated content for alignment, rigor, focus, coherence, and quality using a CenterPoint created evaluation tool aligned to third-party review standards.

Institute for Learning (IFL) at the University of Pittsburgh

English Language Arts Consultant, 2012 - 2013

Contributed to English Language Arts team at the Institute for Learning by designing performance based assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards, providing feedback on professional development modules, and facilitating professional development for teachers and instructional coaches.

Common Core State Standards Assessment and Task Design Team, 2011-2012

Conducted cognitive analyses of prototype instructional tasks, assessments, and student work for assessments and tasks written for the Common Core State Standards; wrote reports on analyses. This work was completed for the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

Research and Development Corporation (RAND)

Consultant for Measuring Effective Teaching Foundation Project, 2010

Aligned standards and assessment items from five states to elements of National Assessment of Educational Process' (NAEP) framework for reading/language arts.

Past Appointments

Ball State University

Associate Professor of English, 2017-2023

- Director of English Education Program: 2018-2021

Assistant Professor of English 2012-2017

- Director of English Education Program: 2015-2017

University of Pittsburgh, Teaching Fellow & Graduate Student Researcher 2008-2012.

Various Middle/High Schools: Secondary English/Language Arts Teacher

Quaker Valley Middle School, Sewickley PA; 8th grade English, 2008.

Mater Dei High School, Evansville, IN; 9th – 11th grade English, drama, 2005-2007.

Fulton Junior High School, Indianapolis, IN; 7th and 9th grade English, 2004-2005.