

2016-2017

# #bsuenglish: The Year in Review

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## Letter from Dr. Megumi Hamada

Greetings from the Academic Programs Office! I am the new Assistant Chair of Programs. The English Department is always looking for the best and brightest graduate students, and I am writing to ask for your help in promoting our graduate programs.

We offer master's degrees in Literature, Rhetoric & Composition, Creative Writing, General English, Linguistics, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), and a joint degree in Linguistics & TESOL; PhD degrees in

English with a concentration in Literature, Rhetoric & Composition, and Applied Linguistics; and two online programs, the Add-on License in English as a New Language and the Certificate in TESOL. We have a total of 77 students currently in our graduate programs.

One of the strengths of our graduate programs is faculty mentoring throughout the program. Each student works with their assigned academic advisor to plan their coursework.

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Students also have opportunities to work closely with faculty in and outside the classroom, which provides them ample opportunities for professional development.

Approximately 60 students have graduated from the MA and/or PhD programs in the past two years, with a job placement rate of 76 percent. Almost all of the alumni have a career related to their degree, and many of them teach in a college-level institution.

Current students and recent alumni have published their work, presented at professional conferences, won scholarships and awards, moved on to exciting positions, and continued their graduate studies. Our students are publishing in terrific journals and literary magazines, including *Callaloo*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Kairos*, *Pragmatics*, and *The Journal of Modern Literature*, as well as chapbooks and chapters in edited collections. Our students are presenting their research at major conferences, including the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the International Writing Centers Association Conference, and the Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference.

Our students are winning scholarships and awards, such as Fulbright grants and Ball State's Doctoral Level Excellence in Teaching Award. They're moving into

faculty positions at universities all over the country, including Biola University, the University of Illinois Springfield, and Fairmont State University, as well as universities overseas. They're also working in industries such as advertising, publishing, and social media management. Finally, our MA graduates often continue their graduate study, whether at PhD programs or MFA programs around the country.

### So, what can you do to help?

We appreciate your assistance by doing one or more of the following:

- Please post on your social media about our programs! Consider posting a Tweet such as this:

*Loved getting my MA in English @bsuenglish. Check out their program! Small classes. Great profs! bsu.edu/english*

- Does this video of "[A Day in the Life of a Graduate Student](#)," starring Rhetoric & Composition PhD student Morgan Gross, remind you of your time here? If so, please share it widely!

- Some of you may have received copies of our snazzy new promotional materials—we hope you've hung them up proudly! If you haven't gotten one of our posters, please get in touch with me so I can send something your way.

- We'd also love it if you sent your best students, colleagues, friends, and neighbors to study with us! Encourage them to



Dr. Megumi Hamada

give us a call or drop us an email.

- If you're doing something great with your graduate degree, we'd love for you to [write a blog post](#) about it!

- You can join our [LinkedIn group](#) so that our current students can quite literally "see" all the different careers they might pursue.

- We also invite you to attend or even present at a future English Department [Stars to Steer By](#) event.

We would love to hear from you as we continue to think about how to support the next generation of students who, like you, are passionate about English studies.

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**76%**  
grad student  
placement rate

## Indiana Writing project receives two grants

The **Indiana Writing Project**, directed by Professor Susanna Benko, was awarded two grants this year. The first was a \$20,000 grant for the College Ready Writers Program, which focuses on teaching argument writing in middle and secondary classrooms. This grant will fund 12-16 teachers' professional development in studying argument writing during the summer of 2017 and into the 2017-2018 school year.

The second was the "2017-2018 SEED Invitational Leadership Institute to Invest in Developing New Teacher Leaders." This \$15,000 grant will be used to support summer programming for teachers.

In March, the Writing Project also sent two local teachers, Jeri Tarvin and Katrina Gibson, to Washington, D.C. for the National Writing Project's Spring Meeting, where they met with legislators to increase awareness about the National and Indiana Writing Projects.

The Indiana Writing Project was founded on March 6, 1986. It is an affiliate site of the National Writing Project, which promotes teachers teaching teachers. They focus

# Indiana

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## WRITING PROJECT

on promoting the best writing instruction for all levels of education.

Ball State hosts the Invitational Summer Institute, where teachers at any level who have taught for at least three years can learn more about research topics in teaching writing and share teaching techniques.

## Dr. Rutter awarded immersive grant

Professor Emily Rutter received an Immersive Learning Micro-Grant for her fall 2017 course "**Storytelling and Social Justice.**" The course will facilitate a reciprocal relationship between Ball State undergraduate students and **Teamwork for Quality Living**, a local nonprofit focused on "empowering

people in poverty towards self-sufficiency" that has been in operation for more than twenty years. Students will use acquired knowledge to assist Teamwork members in documenting their personal journeys from poverty toward self-sufficiency. These stories will become part of a short documentary film and an electronic book.

## Professors make mark in media

Professor Matt Mullins had two film poems, "**Aubade**" and "**After Image,**" screened at the 5th Annual International Video Poetry Festival in Athens, Greece.

Professor Rani Deighe Crowe's short film script "**Heather has Four Mommies**" was an Official Selection for the Austin Comedy Short Film Festival Spring 2017.

Professor Peter Davis recently released a double album (*The Leaves*) from his music project, Short Hand. *The Columbia Poetry Review* nominated him for a Pushcart Prize, and *Frontier Slumber* recently released a cassette tape of him reading his poetry called "**Some Small Animal Situation.**"

### Highlighted publications

**Professor Mike Donnelly:** *Freedom of Speech and the Function of Rhetoric in the United States*

**Professor Emily Jo Scalzo:** *The Politics of Division*

**Professor Rebecca Manery:** *View from the Hôtel de l'Étoile*

**Professor Mary Lou Vercellotti:** "The Development of Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency in Second Language Performance: A Longitudinal Study" in *Applied Linguistics*

## Pulitzer Prize-winner Tyehimba Jess visits



Tyehimba Jess

On April 18, Ball State University hosted renowned poet **Tyehimba Jess**. Jess read from his book of poems, *Olio*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry one week before his visit.

The event, sponsored by the English Department's Marilyn K. Cory Speaker Series, the Office of Institutional Diversity, and

the Multicultural Center, filled a lecture hall in the Art and Journalism Building to standing room only. Jess showcased syncopated sonnets that could be read four different ways, as well as other experimental form poems. After his reading, attendees lined up to speak to Jess, as well as get an autograph and take a picture with him.

An alumnus of Cave Canem and New York University, Tyehimba Jess received a 2004 Literature Fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts. He has published two books, *Leadbelly* and *Olio*. *Olio*, part fact and part fiction, is a collection of poems that explores the stories behind America's blues, work songs, and church hymns. The poems highlight

the lives of African American performers from the Civil War era through World War I in order to help readers understand how they resisted and occasionally defeated those who tried to "minstrelize" them.

### Other readings

Anderson native Douglas Manuel visited Ball State to read from his collection of poems *Testify*, which explores racial tension through introspection.

Angela Palm visited Ball State to read from her book *Riverine: A Memoir from Anywhere but Here*, which centers on her experience growing up in DeMotte, Indiana.

## In Print XII and the release of *The Broken Plate*

The 12th annual In Print Festival of First Books featured editor Mary Biddinger and authors Sequoia Nagamatsu, Daniel Raeburn, and Iliana Rocha on March 15 and 16.

**Sequoia Nagamatsu** read from his book *Where We Go When All We Were Is Gone*, a collection of short stories inspired by Japanese folklore and pop culture. The fantastic and mystic stories serve as a spotlight on the spaces people occupy at their most vulnerable.

**Daniel Raeburn** shared

an excerpt from his memoir *Vessels: A Love Story*. First seen as an essay in *The New Yorker*, Raeburn's *Vessels* shares an intimate look into his and his wife's journey through multiple miscarriages and a stillbirth.



**Iliana Rocha** read from her debut collection of poems, *Karankawa*. The collection won the 2014 AWP Donald Hall Prize for Poetry. The poems use family narratives, myths,

and stories of creation to explore the concepts of birth and death, coming out, and transforming.

**Mary Biddinger**, editor of the Akron Series in Poetry at the University of Akron Press, joined the authors for a panel discussion on the second day of the festival. A poet herself, Mary Biddinger has published five collections of poetry, her most recent being *Small Enterprise*.

*The Broken Plate*, Ball State's international literary magazine, released its 12th issue, featuring authors and artists of all disciplines, at In Print. This year, the magazine introduced its first-ever **online issue**, which includes a sampling of work by creators not in the print edition. The online issue features writers and artists from around the world.

## Get to know this year's new faculty members



**Rani Deighe Crowe** received her MFA in Filmmaking from Ohio University. She

has taught Theater Rehearsal and Performance, Film Studies, and Film Directing, among others. This spring, she taught Introduction to Screenwriting and Advanced Screenwriting. Her teaching philosophy is to promote and encourage creativity. She encourages risk, permits failure, and empowers students to take agency of their education and creative process. Her research focuses on narrative filmmaking. She especially strives to create female-driven narratives and to increase diversity and representation.



**Allison Layfield** received her PhD in Literature from Purdue University in 2016. Over the

past ten years, she has taught classes in academic and creative writing and literature. This spring, she taught Introduction to Asian-American Literature, Reading and Writing about Literature, and English 104. Her teaching philosophy is based on a concept she calls "building bridges" across differences, which asks students to examine how they make sense of literature about people very different from themselves. Her research focuses on young adult literature, multicultural education, and contemporary multi-ethnic American literature.



**Rebecca Manery** received her PhD in English and Education from the University of

Michigan. She has taught Creative Writing, Composing Research, Writing and Rhetoric, and Professional Writing, among others. In fall 2017, she will be teaching Poetry Writing. Her teaching philosophy is based on respect for each learner, respect for the subject they are engaged in, and support for a community of learners who learn with and from one another. Her research is in the small but growing field of creative writing studies, particularly creative writing pedagogy in higher education.

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## 18 graduate students complete their degrees

**Aymen Al-Dujaili**, MA in Literature, advised by Robert Habich.

**Aied Alenizi**, PhD in Applied Linguistics, advised by Liz Riddle.

**Mutib Alghami**, MA in Linguistics, advised by Liz Riddle.

**Abdullah Al-Sheikh Hasan**, PhD in Literature, advised by Adam Beach.

**Joel Bergholtz**, MA in Rhetoric & Composition, advised by Rory Lee.

**J. Collings**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by Silas Hansen.

**Courtney Conley**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by

Jill Christman.

**Carrie Duke**, PhD in Literature, advised by Debbie Mix and Bob Habich.

**Cameron Eigner**, MA in Linguistics and TESOL, advised by Mary Lou Vercellotti.

**Mustafa Harb**, PhD in Applied Linguistics, advised by Liz Riddle

**George Hickman**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by Sean Lovelace.

**Sharon Jackson**, MA in TESOL, advised by Megumi Hamada.

**Arshad Khan**, MA in Literature, advised by Molly Ferguson.

**Carie King**, PhD in Rhetoric

& Composition, advised by Michael Donnelly.

**Zachary Kocanda**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by Cathy Day.

**Meagan McAlister**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by Cathy Day.

**Matthew Schmalzer**, MA in Literature, advised by Joyce Huff.

**Kellie Suttle**, MA in TESOL and Linguistics, advised by Liz Riddle.

**Rachel Tindall**, MA in General English, advised by Deborah Mix.

**Andrew Wurdeman**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by Silas Hansen.

**Robert Young**, MA in Creative Writing, advised by Katy Didden.

77  
current students  
in grad programs

# Get to know this year's new faculty members

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**G. Patterson** received their PhD in Rhetoric and Composition

in 2013 and a graduate certificate in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies in 2011 from Miami University. This spring, they taught Introduction to Digital Literacies and Professional Writing. They also have taught courses in Creative Writing, Literacy Theory, and Women's, Gender & Sexuality studies. Their primary teaching philosophy is based on rhetoric and how people tell stories to get other people to believe certain things and to act on those beliefs, as well as encouraging students to understand the consequences of the stories they tell, repeat, and refuse. The focus of their research is cultural rhetorics and gender studies—primarily difficult dialogues. Currently, they are working on a book that examines the intersection of LGBT issues and religious discourse in the classroom.



**Jeff Spanke** received his PhD in English Education from Purdue University in 2015.

He has taught Introduction to Secondary English Education and currently teaches Young Adult Literature. He also observes student teachers in English education. His teaching philosophy is that all art serves to increase the human capacity for empathy and understanding, and that teaching, therefore, offers a mechanism by which we can engage with art, promote dialogue, foster compassion, navigate borderlands, and accept the inevitable ambiguity of the lived experience. His research interests include writing instruction, teacher recruitment, retention, attrition, and non-traditional learning spaces.

## New hires for 2017-18

Benjamin Bascom, *Literature*  
Guilherme Garcia, *Linguistics*  
Sreyoshi Sarkar, *Literature*



**Aimee Taylor** received her PhD in English with a concentration in Rhetoric

and Writing from Bowling Green State University in December 2016. She has taught Developmental English, First-Year Writing, and Grammar. Her teaching philosophy is very student-centered, collaborating extensively with students and relinquishing much of a traditional teacher's authority. She emphasizes encouraging students to help write class policies and provide feedback on lessons, hoping to make the students feel that they have a valued voice, regardless of their perspectives. Her scholarly interests include rhetoric online, body politics, and identity. She is also interested in doing scholarship and developing courses in aural literacies and audio documentary, and teaching grammar in the context of writing.

## Digital Literature Review 2017: "Monsters"



The *Digital Literature Review* is a digital-only journal of literary scholarship created by students. Each

issue is themed around a topic. This year's topic was "**Monsters.**"

The critical essays within the journal examine scholarly issues pertaining to monster theory and topics like the gothic, the uncanny, the sublime, the grotesque, and the abject. The *DLR* received 27 individual submissions and published eight of them, in addition to four cultural editions, with topics ranging from the corpse-eating ghosts of the

Japanese folktale "Jikininki" to monstrous masculinity in the *Mad Max* film saga.

Students in the *DLR* work collaboratively to collect submissions, review those submissions, and create the digital journal. Next year, the *DLR* is focusing on post-apocalyptic themes in film and fiction.

## The Outstanding Senior Nominees:

**Lauren Birkey**

English Studies

**Stefanie Clark**

Creative Writing

**Nikole Darnell**

Creative Writing

**Erin Drake**

English Studies

**Ellie Fawcett**

Literature

**Olivia Germann**

Literature

**Blake Lehr**

English Studies

**Andrew Miles**

Creative Writing

**Lucas Miller**

Creative Writing

**Caroline Siler**

Creative Writing

**TJ Tekulve**

Creative Writing

**Brittany Ulman**

Creative Writing

## 2017 Outstanding Senior



Congratulations to Kathryn Hampshire, this year's recipient of the

**Dr. Joe and Carol Trimmer Outstanding**

**Graduating Senior Award.** Here's a little more about Kathryn.

**What was your concentration?** Literature.

**What are your post-graduation plans?**

I plan to earn my MA in Literature at IUPUI and then pursue a PhD.

**What advice would you give to younger BSU English students?**

Take advantage of the unique experiences our department has to offer, especially immersive learning projects, student employment, and conferences. My involvement in the *DLR*, *Jacket Copy Creative*, and the Writing Center, along with presenting at local, regional, and national

conferences, have been integral to my development as a scholar and as a person.

**What has been your biggest takeaway from BSU English?**

When people ask what I can do with my English major, I always say, "Anything!" My time in this department has helped me see just how powerful and versatile this field of study can be.

**What was your most memorable moment in BSU English?**

I started out as a journalism major, but I knew within a few weeks that I belonged in the English Department. I had to give up a journalism scholarship when I switched majors, which made me constantly second-guess my decision—until I took my first English course, 230 with Dr. Andrea Wolfe. I'll never forget how at home I felt in that class, and that feeling has only grown stronger since.

## Two new English immersive learning courses

This year, the English Department welcomed two new immersive learning classes: *Book Arts Collaborative* and *Jacket Copy Creative*.

**Book Arts Collaborative**, led by Professor Rai Peterson, exposes students to the lost arts of fine binding and letterpress. Students learn several binding techniques and how to operate 100-year-old presses to create unique products. They also teach community workshops and work with local retailers to sell *Book Arts* products.

The spring semester saw the production of a hand-bound artist's book called *Spaces between Places*. The collaborative put out a limited edition of 60 copies, which were officially released during the class's end-of-year festival **Interrobang**. The two-day event welcomed book artists and letterpress professionals from around the region to present and demonstrate their talents.

**Jacket Copy Creative**, led by Professor Eva Grouling Snider, allows students to work in a marketing agency-

like environment. Students in the class work with clients to promote events; design fliers, logos, and brochures; develop a cohesive brand; create content for multiple mediums; and more.

Major projects from this year included rebranding the **Indiana Writing Project**, designing a prospectus for the College of Sciences and Humanities dean search, building the Practical Criticism Midwest website, and developing content for local nonprofit **Whitely Community Council**.

# Meet a few of our Outstanding Seniors



Lauren  
Birkey

**What was your concentration?**  
English Studies.

**What are your post-graduation plans?**

Get a job so I won't be homeless.

**What advice would you give to younger BSU English students?**

Do not limit yourself. The stuff you learn in these classes is going to help you in any career you pursue after graduating. And I mean any career. (But if you're going to be a doctor just go to medical school, okay? Please.)

**What has been your biggest takeaway from BSU English?**

English classes made me a better person. To communicate (i.e., write) well, you have to understand who you're communicating with, and that means developing empathy and understanding world views you have never experienced before. The more you read and write about the world, the more you will come to understand how you fit in it.

**Who was your most influential professor?**

All of them. Not sucking up here. Every English professor I met left me with some nugget of golden wisdom.

**What was your most memorable moment in BSU English?**

When I took an English class that taught web development. Have you ever seen a bunch of English majors trying to code? It's hilarious. And painful.



Nikole  
Darnell

**What was your concentration?**  
Creative Writing.

**What are your post-graduation plans?**

Wherever the road takes me.

I'm looking to the future as one big adventure. I might have an opportunity to move out west, but that's still in the works.

**What's your favorite book?**

*The Other Boleyn Girl* by Philippa Gregory.

**What advice would you give to younger BSU English students?**

Don't worry about being weird, because we're all a little weird. Let your true, natural self shine through and you will fit in just fine.

**What has been your biggest takeaway from BSU English?**

Take the immersive learning classes. They will make you smarter, better humans. (I've taken three—four, if you count the fact that I did *DLR* twice.) Also, make friends with the professors. The BSU English staff have been the most supportive and caring people I have ever met in my entire life, and I will carry the lessons they taught me in my heart forever.

**Who was your most influential professor?**

Honestly, I think it has been a three-way tie between Joyce Huff, Angela Jackson-Brown, and Jeff Spanke. All three of them have taught me so much about different aspects of life.



Ellie  
Fawcett

**What was your concentration?**  
My concentration was Literature.

**What are your post-graduation plans?**

I'm currently looking for work at a marketing firm, preferably in the Indianapolis area.

**What has been your biggest takeaway from BSU English?**

My biggest takeaway from my time here has been that it's always necessary to cast a wide net when you read to ensure that you're learning as much as possible. Read everything by everyone.

**Who was your most influential professor?**

Beth Dalton was the most influential professor I've had at Ball State (even if I did technically have her for an Honors class). Her Honors sequence helped me to get a better grasp on what it really means to read a story and the ways in which the arts and humanities shape and reflect our world. Without her class, I'm not sure I would have ever switched my major to English!

**If you could live in a fictional world, which one would it be?**

I think Neil Gaiman's depictions of the world in his novels are fascinating. Everything is almost normal, but there's an undercurrent of magic and surrealism. I would like to live in his imaginary universe, even if it might get a little dangerous.



# Meet a few of our Outstanding Seniors



Andrew  
Miles

## What was your concentration?

I have a concentration in Creative Writing and a minor in Telecommunications.

## What are your post-graduation plans?

After graduation, I will spend one or two months at home before moving to acclimate myself to Tampa, where I will be starting my MFA at the University of South Florida during the fall 2017 semester.

## What advice would you give to younger BSU English students?

Other than to immerse themselves in books they love and books that challenge them, I would recommend to younger Ball State English students to take their time with their writing, to believe and prepare for a life after undergrad, to reach out to the community, and most importantly, to care for and love themselves as they explore who they are through their reading and writing. See Sonya Huber's "[Shadow Syllabus](#)" on Huber's website.

## Who was your most influential professor?

Hands down, Professor Jill Christman and Professor Mark Neely. I could thank them in so many ways, but instead of writing an essay here, I'll just say that they, as well as many of my other professors, made me feel like I could take my learning and use it to make an impact in the literary community.



Blake  
Lehr

## What was your concentration?

English Studies with a minor in Professional Writing & Emerging Media.

## What are your post-graduation plans?

I will be attending Michigan State's College of Law in the fall to obtain a J.D. Degree.

## What has been your favorite English class?

ENG 351: Contemporary American Literature with Dr. Emily Rutter has been one of the most rewarding classes I have taken at Ball State. It was both challenging and engaging, pressing the class to contemplate a number of contemporary social issues. I recommend the class and the professor to any English student looking to fill an elective or literature credit.

## Who was your most influential professor?

Paul Ranieri. He's continually pushed me to examine my beliefs and perceptions—making me a more introspective and thoughtful individual. He's also a genuinely great man, a professor who cares about his students and their cognitive development.

## If you could meet any fictional character, who would it be?

I would love to sit down and have a drink with Jay Gatsby. He's such a fascinating character.



Brittany  
Ulman

## What was your concentration?

Creative Writing with minors in Professional Writing & Emerging Media and Spanish.

## What are your post-graduation plans?

At first, I was solely looking for a job, no matter the position or the industry. I interviewed and was offered job opportunities at numerous companies, but something was missing from each of these prospects. When my grandmother passed away in February, I finally realized I need to ensure that the time I spend on this Earth is doing whatever makes me happy.

## What has been your biggest takeaway from BSU English?

When I first entered the BSU English world, I thought it would be nothing more than a group of individuals who were there for the same reason: to get an English-related degree and move on with our lives. I was skeptical at first whenever I was told I had become a member of a much larger family, but now I understand why all of my English professors mentioned it at least once. No matter how involved a student is within the department, BSU English has a knack for embracing each student that walks through its doors. Because of my decision to change my major from dietetics to creative writing, I blessed myself with a family that will always reside in Robert Bell.