

► The Creative Writing department welcomes two new professors 1

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# English FSU

## Creative Writing Minor Welcomes New Professors

-Jerome Bass

As a freshman in 2008 I realized what I wanted to be just days after enrolling here: A fiction writer. So I marched on up to the English department to become a Creative Writing major, and found that there was no such thing. Needless to say I had a quarter life crises.

I had just enrolled in a school that didn't offer what I wanted -or so I thought. Running into the picture just in time to save the day was my advisor who calmed my nerves with the news that coincidentally the school was launching a brand new Creative Writing minor. It was experimental, and had just a handful of professors ready to launch the program. I took this as a sign from the universe. I was about to share my academic infancy with a minor that had arrived just in time to spare me from having to re-decide my future.

Fast forward to present day life at SUNY Fredonia and ask

this, "Did it pay off? Was the minor worth creating?" Absolutely it was. I don't say this because I've invested time and money into it, nor out of pride. I say this because there is hard evidence that there is extreme interest in the minor on the students' behalf, and definite growth from the department's behalf. What is that evidence? This year marks the first time in four years that the department has extended its roster of Creative Writing staff.

Professor Alvergue comes to us from UB as a current doctoral candidate. While he finishes his work there, he has entered SUNY Fredonia as a Creative Writing adjunct. He received his undergraduate degree from UC San Diego, and his MFA in English at CalArts in Valencia.

"I didn't realize how much it was growing," Alvergue says in response to the current state of the minor. While speaking to him about the minor, excite-

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## Student Goes Above and Beyond

-Mackenzie Froese

30 million adults in the United States are qualified as illiterate, meaning they cannot fully read, write, or understand written text. And in Chautauqua County alone, 12% of people over the age of 16 are classified as illiterate. These statistics are being combatted daily by the Literary Volunteers of Chautauqua County.

These volunteers have been working out of the 21 East Book Store in Dunkirk to help

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## Student Goes Above and Beyond: Continued from Page 1.

Local residents learn to read, obtain GEDs, pass military tests, and stay employed since 1969.

The Literacy Volunteers of Chautauqua County offer a variety of services to members of the community. They hold one-on-one tutoring for adults in reading, writing, math, English as a second language (ESL), GED preparation, basic computer literacy, and work place exam preparation.

Amandria Guadalupe is a senior English major at SUNY Fredonia. She has spent her Fridays and Saturdays for the past semester lending her hand to the 21 East Bookstore and Literacy Volunteers during her two credit internship. As part of a senior seminar, the internship was suggested by associate professor Dr. Christina Jarvis. As a result, Amandria now has experience working for a not-for-profit in an expansion of the field of English.

Amandria's responsibilities during her internship have appealed to her love of books. Since the 21 East Book Store runs off of the books residents donate, and the sales from them, books pass through the store almost constantly. Amandria has the ability to stock and categorize the books, as well as post the information of rare and collectable books online, so that collectors

can purchase them.

This student's experience gives one answer to the ever present question: "what can I do with my English degree?" Not-for-profit organizations such as these are always looking for people who have a working knowledge of not only literature, but technology and social media. All of these aspects, which are standard for SUNY Fredonia English majors, contribute to a well-rounded resume post-graduation.

If you are interested in the Literacy Volunteers of Chautauqua County, or the 21 East Book Store, or volunteering with either, you can find information online at [www.lvoccread.org/default.html](http://www.lvoccread.org/default.html)

For more information on other available internships, or to make an appointment with an internship advisor, visit Career Development Office in Gregory Hall or online at [www.fredonia.edu/cdo/Development](http://www.fredonia.edu/cdo/Development) Office in Gregory Hall or online at [www.fredonia.edu/cdo](http://www.fredonia.edu/cdo)



# Writers Wanted



Are you a writer or Editor?

The English Department Newsletter could use your help. We're looking for journalistic contributions for our next issue. This opportunity could help expand your writing experience, strengthen your writing skills, and contribute to your resume.

Contact Jerome Bass at [Bass3735@Fredonia.edu](mailto:Bass3735@Fredonia.edu)

## Creative Writing Minor Welcomes New Professors: Continued from page 1.

ment was present on his face and nothing but enthusiasm was evident while he shared his thoughts on the minor. "I don't see why it couldn't be an MFA program. The students here are so enthusiastic about writing. More so than other schools I've taught at." Alvergue makes it clear that the overall impression that the campus gives is an enthusiastic one regarding its attitude toward liberal Arts.

Sharing an office with Alvergue is the other addition to the minor, Creative Writing adjunct Rebecca Schwab. Professor Schwab completed her BA in English at the University of West Georgia, and her MFA in Fiction from West Virginia University.

"Developing a Creative Writing Minor is just one of the many steps Fredonia has taken to remain a top name in the arts," says Schwab. "This is an opportuni-

ty to give those students interested in pursuing writing the chance to polish their craft and be exposed to bright-light names like Rachel McKibbens. I see this program growing and developing more in the years to come--and that improvement becomes a productive cycle."

With the addition of Jose Alvergue and Rebecca Schwab, the minor has a larger staff than ever before. This addition solves the problem of the lack of slots open for each class. As a student of the minor I can testify to the fact that getting into some of the classes within the minor was comparable to finding a parking spot on campus. With two more professors, hopefully that problem will be solved.

While speaking to both professors it became very clear that both are excited to teach here, and see definite

growth in the department. The department has already benefited from their contribution to its work on campus, and on behalf of the department I welcome them, and say thank you.



Professor Jose Alvergue

# Study Abroad Programs Grow and Multiply

-Jerome Bass



One sentence that most students will hear a thousand times throughout their stay at a university will be, “Studying abroad is very important to your growth as a student and as an adult.” The wording may change but the idea will always be the same. Having seen many students who have used multiple study abroad programs, it’s become clear that this really is true.

To English majors the choices may seem slim. Naturally England is the obvious choice, and possibly the only one that comes to mind. So much more is out there that relates to the major and in so many other areas. Not only are there opportunities abroad for English majors, but within the states as well. The English program generously provides two separate alternating summer programs as of this year to English majors: One abroad and one here at home.

This summer Dr. Iclal Vanwesenbeeck is taking English majors on a trip to the Eastern Mediterranean, which includes Greece and Turkey. The program weaves both the English department and the Biology Department together in an overlapping style. Students will

gain knowledge on the history within the areas including the mythology that relates to literature, and on the biological aspect of the cities within the trip. Such aspects include “looking at the water systems of the Hellenistic period and comparing it to modern water systems,” as Dr. Vanwesenbeeck carefully describes. What’s the appeal to English Majors? Dr. Vanwesenbeeck points out that “For the English majors, needless to say, they will see some of the most important locations in mythology and even Christianity.”

Meanwhile, back here at home Dr. Christina Jarvis offers a trip within the states that will be available again in the summer of 2014. The trip is hosted by the American Studies program, but is available to English majors as well. The trip is one that Dr. Jarvis is quite passionate about. English majors will have the opportunity to not only visit Yellowstone Nation Park, but go well beyond the limitations that are given to the average visitor. “While, the trip is domestic, students are able to do things that most visitors can’t,” Jarvis says.

Students are able to speak to ranchers who speak about how the wolf population of the park affects their cattle. Students can then talk to wolf advocates who speak out against those ranchers. Finally, they are then given access to outside organizations that help see both sides of the subject.

“It’s important to see one’s own country,” Jarvis says. “See America first. We have some of the few untouched ecosystems on the planet. Yellowstone is one of the few parks in tact with most major mammals.” Jarvis makes it clear that going abroad is wonderful too, but sees the positive aspects to staying within the states.

Like the trip to the Eastern Mediterrane-

an, the department heads there alongside the Biology Department. Both trips offer the opportunity to link subjects that are comparable to CCC courses. They also allow the students to develop the skills to link these subjects and let them interact with each other on an informative and educational level. Not only would these opportunities strengthen multiple academic skills, but could seriously change you for the better. If given the opportunity you should jump on it while it lasts.

For more information please visit both the English and Biology departments.