



SPRING NEWSLETTER

The Writing Intensive Program

A tribute to Janice Simon, on her retirement

from Tara Ainsworth-Kraft, Art History WIP TA

In Fall 2021, I supported Dr. Simon's in-person writing-intensive (WIP) course on early American art and watched her genuine excitement for art history and discussion spread to our undergraduates, who by the end of the semester could barely keep from raising their hands to share ideas and observations. Discussion in Dr. Simon's classes doesn't take the form, often, of a singular question posed to the class but rather operates as a collaborative dialogue where students and instructor together visually analyze, compare, and contrast works of art in relation to context provided through lectures and reading. In essence, after providing needed framing, Dr. Simon passes the classroom to the students often with the phrase 'now let's get you talking.' I've witnessed students from previous classes who said no more than two words in an entire semester become the strongest discussion leaders in her classroom and I believe this is because of her wholehearted enjoyment of discussing art history with students.

Dr. Simon's classroom structure is mirrored in her assignments, specifically her writing projects like the Visual Essay Exhibition. Using PowerPoint slides or other creative programs, students curate their own exhibition of the course complete with a location, themes, primary sources, and a wide variety of objects, which they then explain through a written accompaniment detailing the connections they learned and made. The assignment brilliantly fulfills the intended function of an exam, to test student comprehension of material, while mirroring Dr. Simon's classroom format of looking carefully, thinking specifically and synthetically, and then articulating what these findings might tell us about a particular moment in history.

from Lindsey Harding, WIP Director

Janice Simon's experience with WIP speaks to her commitment to undergraduate education here at UGA. For teaching writing-intensive courses means teaching courses that are also reading-intensive and thinking-intensive. Teaching writing-intensive courses means demystifying for students the conventions and processes of writing in art history that Dr. Simon has long since mastered and helping those students engage with the field's genres, analytical approaches, scholarship, and questions. Teaching writing-intensive courses means, for Dr. Simon, engaging students deeply in deep learning through innovative writing projects. One of her students reflected on the class, "I felt a sense of accomplishment when I turned in a paper applying my own creative ideas to a project. This motivated me to do my best and absorb as much as possible."

WIP Faculty Profile

Cecilia Herles, Women's Studies

What have you learned from your experiences as WIP faculty?

My understanding of writing and teaching has been transformed by being part of WIP over the last fifteen years. WIP helps me to create a space of community learning, and it equips me with ideas and pedagogical strategies for teaching ways of knowing in Women's Studies. WIP is a valuable resource for students and faculty. It supports students in forming connections with each other, strengthening communication skills, and instilling confidence in seeing themselves as writers. For example, WIP encourages students to work towards publishing their work in The Classic journal. WIP supports faculty in many ways including sharing resources and sharing ideas, and I'm inspired by what I learn at the workshops.

What is your WIP teaching philosophy?

My WIP teaching philosophy is rooted in providing the space for students to find their sense of voice in their writing and to effectively articulate their stances. I value writing as an important part of a feminist tool kit.

How do you put that philosophy into practice in the classroom?

I provide low stakes writing assignments that ask students to take a stance about the reading and to support it. I hope they build on these low stakes assignments to find their sense of voice and develop, revise, and edit a final paper throughout the semester.

Read Dr. Herles's full profile [here](#).

Catch the latest season of WIP's Red Penned Podcast on [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), and WIP's [website](#).



The Classic Journal is now accepting student submissions for our fall issue. Encourage your students to submit today.



@WIPATUGA



LHARDING@UGA.EDU



WIP.UGA.EDU