

To: Glynis Ridley  
From: Brian Leung / Kiki Petrosino  
Subject: Creative Writing Committee 2013-2014  
Date: May 09, 2014 [**Updated August 19, 2014**]

Once again, the CW committee had a successful and busy year. This past year, the CW committee consisted of me, Professor Skinner, Professor Griner, and Professor Petrosino. All members of the committee served admirably.

Prof. Jeffrey Skinner was awarded a 2014 Fellowship in Creative Arts-Poetry from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. Guggenheim Fellowships are intended for men and women who have already demonstrated exceptional capacity for productive scholarship or exceptional creative ability in the arts. The Creative Writing Committee and the Department congratulate Prof. Skinner on this prestigious award.

In December, Kiki Petrosino agreed to serve as Director of Creative Writing beginning July 1, 2014. As of that same date, Prof. Petrosino was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure.

The Axton Reading Series hosted six writers including Greg Wrenn, Tim Gautreaux, Tony Hoagland, Kyle Coma-Thompson, Austin Bunn, and Elissa Schappel. The Gautreaux event was held at the Cressman Center downtown as part of our continued sponsorship of the Writer's Block Festival Keynote reading mentioned below. Five of the six writers conducted Master Classes, and the sixth Master Class was replaced by 6 free workshops for 6 UoL students. Two of the Axton readers are former Axton Fellows.

For the third time, the Axton Reading Series sponsored the Keynote Address at the Writers Block Literary Festival. In addition to the exposure, our program secured workshop benefits for our students as part of our sponsorship. In November, 2014, we will sponsor this event once again and have once again secured free workshop opportunities for our students.

For the first time, active Part Time Lecturers and Term faculty were invited to give a reading. Pablo Martinez, Kristin Miller, Brian Weinberg, and Miles Fuller read in Humanities Room 300.

We awarded over \$22,000 in scholarship money. We continued both the graduate and undergraduate prizes in Creative Writing, (The Sarah Jean McDowell Prize and The Leon Driskell Prize, respectively) and for the fifth year held a lunch to congratulate the scholarship and prize winners. The donor of the SJM award asked to limit it to fiction, so we created an equal award for poetry out of Scholarship funds. The committee is interested in getting the poetry award endowed and named.

CW committee members promoted and helped students prepare manuscripts for various literary Prizes, including the Sarabande Books statewide *Flo Gault Student Poetry Prize* and AWP Intro Awards. Lauren Hannigan of UofL won the Flo Gault Student Poetry Prize.

As a committee and as individual advisors, we helped undergraduate and graduate students apply

to MA, MFA and PhD programs. In Fall 2013, Kiki Petrosino and Robin Mozer co-led a session describing MFA programs and the application process before a group of interested graduate students.

The committee also invited readers for the Fall portion of the Axton Reading Series. Fall readers are **Chelsey Minnis, Nick Flynn, and Heather Slomski (former Axton fellow)**

The Calvino Prize, for the second year, accepted submissions through an online platform. There were over 200 entries from US and international writers, with the winner receiving an all-expense paid trip to read his story at the Louisville Conference. The final judge was Tobias Wolff. Robert Coover will be the final judge in 2014.

The committee and program continue to feel the absence of Axton Fellow program, particularly because two of our Axton readers were Axton fellows coming “home” to share their success (and one more in the fall). The lack of fellows also has implications regarding the variety of creative writing courses.

Prof. Leung handed off his efforts to record and archive the Axton Readings to Kiki Petrosino. She, and GTA Ben Bogart arranged for archiving of audio recordings at Ekstrom Library. Some details remain to be arranged.

In late July 2014, Prof. Brian Leung departed U of L to take a position at Purdue University. The department, in consultation with the Director of Creative Writing, ran a successful national search to find a Visiting Assistant Professor with a specialization in fiction to fill the AY 2014-2015 schedule. We are pleased to welcome Prof. Ryan Ridge to the Creative Writing Program as this year’s VAP. Prof. Ridge holds an undergraduate degree from U of L and an MFA from the University of California at Irvine. His impressive list of recent and forthcoming publications do him great credit. We look forward to his presence in the program this year.

The Creative Writing Committee intends to announce and conduct a national search for a tenure-track Assistant Professor, specialization in fiction, with position to begin in fall 2015.