



## **Eastern Illinois Writing Project Spring 2015 Newsletter**

### **The Eastern Illinois Writing Project**

<http://castle.eiu.edu/~easternnwp/>



Young people aren't the only ones intrigued by new technologies and how they can make learning engaging and fun. This summer, eight area teachers joined the several thousand teachers in face-to-face and online communities sharing and learning new ways to teach writing, engage colleagues, and enhance leadership skills through the Eastern Illinois University's National Writing Project Site.

As a result, teacher-leaders from the Eastern Illinois Writing Project (EIWP) Summer Institute will arrive at school in the fall equipped with new tools, strategies, and ideas gleaned from weeks of learning and collaborating with other teachers, librarians,

and community educators participating in the Summer to Make, Play, and Connect. Through this program, they took the first step in joining a nationwide K-university professional network focused on improving the teaching of writing and learning in the digital age.

During this year's EIWP Summer Institute, teachers across disciplines and grade levels developed their literacy teaching skills and their own love of writing. Their work in content-area reading and writing, digital writing, and research drew on the principles shared by the National Writing Project: The best teachers of writing are writers themselves, and the best teachers of teachers are other teachers.

“By collaborating on writing projects, teachers from Central Illinois schools joined a growing community of learners and professionals to celebrate and enhance the role of successful classroom teachers,” said EIWP Director Robin Murray.

Because digital writing specialist Troy Hicks will lead the EIWP Fall conference this year, this summer's invitational Summer Institute highlighted integrating technology into the classroom. The teacher's reading and research explored and implemented a variety of strategies found in Hicks' "Crafting Digital Writing" and Harvey Daniels and Nancy Steineke's "Content Area Writing: Every Teacher's Guide," as well as technology luncheons and interactive demonstrations of various Google apps.

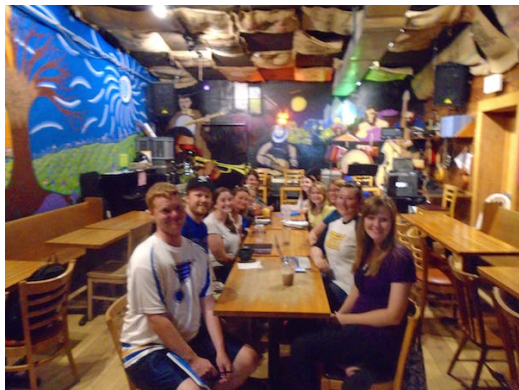
## SAVE THE DATE! Seventh Annual Institute Day October 16, 2015

The teachers' own writing was also showcased during the daily sacred writing time and weekly writing marathons. Each summer institute session begins with sacred time for students to write in their journals. But the weekly writing crawls took them out of the classroom each week, allowing time to reflect and share. This summer they explored the Charleston Courthouse Square, Tarble Arts Center, a local nature center, and Doudna Fine Arts Center.

Area teachers who participated in the 2015 EIWP are: Traci Becker, Cumberland Middle School; Casey Crowhurts, MacArthur High School; Ashley Wiberg, Mattoon High School; Tabitha Eller, Ramsey Grade School; Kayla Wilhelm, Ramsey Grade School; Heidi Bunton, Shelbyville School District #4; Nicole Chambers, St. Joseph-Ogden High School; and Lucas Voudrie, Riverton High School. Amber Laquet, East Prairie Middle School (Tuscola), and Kristin Runyon, Charleston High School, served as coaches and co-directors. Kaleigh McRoberts, Mattoon High School, was a coach and teacher leader, while Suzanne Fuller, Fairfield High School, was a technology liaison.

This summer's activities highlighted Dr. Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, NWP executive director's, suggestion that "NWP teacher-leaders work to help their students to become better writers and learners." Immersing teachers in writing and the teaching of writing benefits students and educators.

"We know through research that professional development programs designed and delivered by NWP sites have a positive effect on the writing achievement of students across grade levels, schools, and contexts and we're thrilled we can work, collaborate, and support the learning of thousands of talented teachers this year," concluded Eidman-Aadahl.



The 2015 Institute Day will focus on teaching literacy and technology across disciplines, including math, science, history, social studies, and technical subjects. Teachers from across disciplines and grade levels will share their teaching ideas in multiple breakout sessions, maintaining a teachers teaching teachers model to creatively meet the Common Core Standards. CCSS addressed will include CC.K-12.W.R.1-10, CC.K-12.R.I.1-10, and CC.K-12.W.1-10.

To highlight this interdisciplinarity across grade levels, we are also pleased to announce our keynote speaker: Troy Hicks. Dr. Troy Hicks is an associate professor of English at Central Michigan University and focuses his work on the teaching of writing, literacy and technology, and teacher education and professional development. A former middle school teacher, he collaborates with K-12 colleagues and explores how they implement newer literacies in their classrooms.

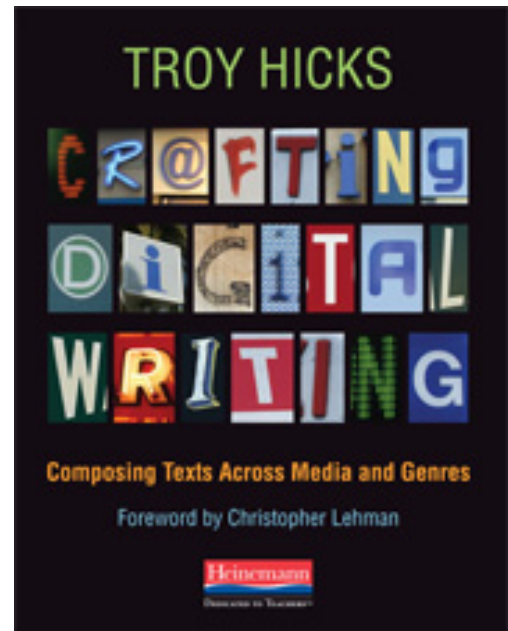
Hicks also directs CMU's Chippewa River Writing Project, a site of the National Writing Project, and he frequently conducts professional development workshops related to writing and technology. Hicks is author of the Heinemann titles *Crafting Digital Writing* (2013) and *The Digital Writing Workshop* (2009) as well as a co-author of *Because Digital Writing Matters* (Jossey-Bass, 2010) and *Create*,

*Compose, Connect* (Eye on Education/Routledge, 2014) in addition to numerous journal articles and book chapters. The following descriptions highlight Hicks's presentation for the October conference:

Keynote: "Mixing Sources, Amplifying Voices: Crafting Writing in a Digital Age": As the inputs continue to multiply, how can we help students find, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of sources? More importantly, how can we help them craft digital writing in effective ways, utilizing the information that they have found to develop multimedia texts? Bring your favorite device, because in this interactive keynote we will explore a variety of web-based tools and mobile applications to help students mix together a variety of sources and amplify their digital voices.

The Institute Day will also include teacher-driven presentations and workshops that allow both attendees and presenters to share effective ideas and confer with one another, emphasizing the belief that the best teachers of teachers are other teachers. Workshops will include "Lessons on Common Core Peer Editing," "Technology and Common Core," "Curriculum Development and Common Core," "Primary Sources and Common Core," Writing to Learn," and "Google Apps and Common Core." These workshops will help teachers better meet their students' literacy needs across the curriculum and grade levels, facilitating ways for students to mix together a variety of sources and amplify their digital writing voices.

Our Institute Day will end with a catered luncheon and a Post Keynote Luncheon Conversation: "Please bring your questions and ideas from the keynote straight into this follow-up conversation. Here we can discuss some of the digital writing tools in more detail, connect more directly to your classroom practice, and look at more examples of student work. You will help make this session happen, so please come prepared to interact, learn some more, and create your own digital writing."



One of Hicks' Useful and Innovative Texts



Institute Day 2014 Keynote Audience

## The Graduate Certificate in the Teaching of Writing at EIU



This certificate is available to any already certified teacher across the curriculum and grade levels, and builds on the work completed during the EIWP Summer Institute. To meet the requirements for the certificate you must complete only 18 hours of graduate work in the Teaching of Writing. The only six hours required for this certificate are those earned during the summer institute, ENG 5585.

This certificate (which appears on transcripts) professionally recognizes the accomplishment of completing 18 hours in the teaching of writing. These courses that you complete can also be applied toward an MA in English or other discipline. The following outlines the current requirements for the graduate certificate:

All students must complete the following **six-credit** course:

- ENG 5585 Writing Project for K-12 Teachers\*\*

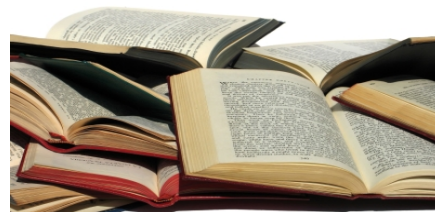
Students should choose at least **four** of the following **three-credit** courses:

- ENG 4760 Studies in Professional Writing\*
- ENG 4801 Integrating the English Language Arts
- ENG 4906 Problems in the Teaching of English\*
- ENG 5007 Composition Theory and Pedagogy
- ENG 5011 Studies in Composition and Rhetoric\*

- ENG 5091 Studies in Language, Linguistics, and Literacy\*
- \*These courses may be repeated.  
\*\* Students must complete one year of teaching before applying for English 5585.

## Good News NWP SEED Grant II Approved

We are pleased to inform you that the Eastern Illinois Writing Project has been awarded the second installment of our \$20,000 federal grant over two years for your site's 2014-2016 SEED Teacher Leadership Development Grant proposal. The purpose of this grant is to expand and develop teacher leadership to improve the teaching of writing and learning in the nation's schools. The goal of this funding is to provide new learning opportunities for a minimum of 20 teacher leaders in your service area over the course of the two-year grant. These teacher leaders can be both new fellows and existing teacher leaders participating in programs that expand their capacities and support their effectiveness. This grant is supporting our Summer Institutes in 2015 and 2016, our Institute Days in 2014 and 2015, our Summer Writing Workshops in 2015 and 16, and assistance with the English Summer Camp.



## Books Worth Reading

*The Girl on a Train*

*Goldfinch*

*Sharp Objects*

*Room*

*Astray*

*Transatlantic*

*The Circle*

*The Killing Tree*

(Not necessarily in this order)