

# JACOBSON CENTER TELEGRAM



Issued in early fall and winter, the Jacobson Center Telegram informs Smith staff, faculty, and students about newsworthy developments in the work of the Jacobson Center and the teaching of writing. Complementarily, it hosts a forum on writing specifically for faculty and a guest perspective on writing or the work of the center in every issue. The Telegram is posted on the [Jacobson Center website](#) and distributed to the community.

## NEWS & DEVELOPMENTS

In January 2022, [Duncan Griffin](#) joined the Jacobson Center staff as Learning Specialist & Tutorial Services Coordinator. Duncan coordinates the peer tutors in the non-quantitative disciplines, conducts college success workshops, and meets individually with students. He also teaches IDP 136, Applied Learning Strategies.

[Jaime Green](#) has joined the Jacobson Center as the instructor for two courses: ENG 118, Colloquia in Writing, and ENG 135, Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction. Among her other achievements, Jaime is the series editor for *Best American Science and Nature Writing*. Her book, *The Possibility of Life*, will be published by Hanover Square Press in the US and Duckworth Books in the UK in April of 2023.

[Allie Itzi](#) and [Dāshaun Washington](#) have joined the Jacobson Center as on-site writing instructors. Both talented teachers and writers, they'll mostly be meeting individually with students, and offering strong support to our thesis writers.

Magda Zapędowska and Miranda McCarvel will be hosting their own [Teaching Circles](#) starting this fall. Magda's is focused on the philosophy and practice of ungrading, while Miranda's is focused on the sharing of teaching tips. All are welcome.

The 10 returning Peer Writing Tutors have gathered to welcome 10 new Tutors, who began training and holding their shifts in the Jacobson Center and in Neilson Library Learning Commons on September 12th. With the new hires, the Peer Writing program now boasts readers in 19 different majors and numerous sub-specialties. These details, along with their photos, will soon be posted to the [Jacobson Center website](#), and they will begin visiting Writing Intensive classes to describe their services to first-year writers.

## SPOTLIGHT

After much discussion and planning, the [Journalism Concentration](#) is finally up and running. Grounded in the Jacobson Center, it will soon be accepting its first batch of applicants. The gateway course, *The Journalistic Impulse*, taught by Julio Alves and Naila Moreira, is underway with 35 students. Naila is directing the concentration.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Liberal Arts Luncheon 10/13*  
**Beyond the Op-Ed**  
Naila Moreira

*Liberal Arts Luncheon 11/17*  
**Futurist Geographies of Abundance in Early African American Print**  
Magdalena Zapędowska

*Teaching Arts Luncheon 11/18*  
**Teaching with Writing in Larger Courses**  
Magdalena Zapędowska

# FACULTY CORNER

Smith's institutional strong valuation of writing is evident in many places at the college, but none more so than in the instructors' commitment to their teaching and students' commitment to their work. Sometimes the work a class produces is so good that it deserves to be preserved and shared. This writing can inspire teachers to create different kinds of assignments and spur future students to set the bar high for their own work. We can imagine students reading their peers' or former students' work and saying to themselves, I want to write something like that. For this reason, we've started Of Note, a compendium

of student work from classes at Smith. We are grateful to the students and instructors who've participated so far, and look forward to featuring more work in the future. Instructors interested in having work from a class shared with either the Smith community or the world at large should contact Julio Alves or Jonathan Ruseski. No work can be published without the writer's permission.

Along the same lines, the new edition of Smith Writes launched on October 3rd. This is writing by first-year students in Writing Intensive courses, almost all students in their first semester. Students submit their best work and the Jacobson Center

editorial board of staff and peer writing tutors select the very best for publication. Once the work is accepted, the writers commit to working with a writing instructor on revising and editing the work for publication in Smith Writes, often adding images and editing the work for a public audience.

The commitment on the part of students is impressive, but no more so than their final pieces. This year's edition will feature essays on feminism and pornography, Smith students' changing roles during WWI, menstrual hygiene in Zimbabwe, and the Flint water crisis, among other topics.



## PERSPECTIVES

from Nell Adkins '23

I joined the Jacobson Center in the fall of 2021 as a peer tutor. Since then, when asked about my job, I have been lucky to be able to say I love everything about it. From improving my own writing, to working with my peers, to broadening my understanding of the liberal arts and the diverse academic disciplines studied at Smith--it has truly been a joy.

Every day when I walk into the Center I am greeted by the warm smile of Cora Lee and in the Neilson Learning Commons I get to catch up with my fellow peer tutors before other students come in.

It's an interesting position to be in, that of a peer tutor. This is a topic of conversation that was often discussed in our training course. To me, however, it is a meaningful way for every student to share a little sliver of the unique perspective

we all offer. It is an exchange of information, trust, and curiosity. Any tutor's experience represents only a drop of all the knowledge in the world (and at Smith for that matter). But, if I am able to help a student brainstorm, edit for clarity, share an aha moment, or come away with more writing confidence than they came in with--then I can end the day feeling good about the work I do and the Center where I work. I hope you'll stop in and visit us soon!