MELISSA NIVENS

MSU-TEXAS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Department of English, Humanities, & Philosophy Midwestern State University 3410 Taft, Blvd. Wichita Falls, TX 76308 (940)397-4145 office (940)389-2074 cell melissa.nivens@msutexas.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D. English, Texas A&M University-Commerce

May 2015

Dissertation Title: Domestic Literacy: Situating Composition within the Discipline of Home Economics
Dissertation Committee: Bill Bolin, Chair; Shannon Carter; Donna Dunbar-Odom; Jessica Brannon-Wranosky

My dissertation explores the Home Economics Department archival collection from the Gee Library at TAMU-C. I primarily look at a sample of final exams left from home economics students who lived in the Home Management House between the years of 1936 and 1952. I argue that the home management house was a rhetorical space that increased rural women's agency while affording them the opportunity to build a specific type of literacy that I call, domestic literacy.

M.A. English, Texas A&M University-Commerce

May 2009

Final Project Title: How Society's Attitudes Influence Student Writing: Plagiarism Today

Final Project Advisor: Bill Bolin

B.A. English, Texas A&M University-Commerce

December 1998

Texas Secondary English Teacher Lifetime Certification

EMPLOYMENT

Associate Professor & Faculty Director of First-year Mustangs Adventure

2022-present

- Teach undergraduate and graduate English courses
- Oversee the first-year seminar QEP
- Recruit and train Peer Educators and Faculty Mentors
- Develop first-year seminar curriculum
- Promote the first-year seminar QEP

Associate Professor & Writing Program Administration, Department of English, MSU Texas

2020-2022

- Teach undergraduate and graduate English courses
- Teach undergraduate Women's and Gender Studies courses
- Oversee the Writing Proficiency Requirement
- Conduct professional development workshops in composition
- Oversee curriculum for first-year composition courses
- Conduct Writing Program assessment

Assistant Professor & Writing Program Administrator, Department of English, MSU Texas

2016-2020

- Teach undergraduate and graduate English courses
- Oversee the Writing Proficiency Exam
- Train and monitor Graduate Teaching Assistants

- Conduct professional development workshops in composition
- Conduct Writing Program assessment

Lecturer, Department of English, MSU Texas

2013-2016

Teach undergraduate core English courses

Adjunct Instructor, Weatherford College Wise County

2009-2013

• Teach dual credit English courses

English Teacher, Alvord ISD

2000-2013

- Teach middle school language arts (2000-2005)
- Teach high school English II, English II PreAP, English III, AP Language, Dual credit English (2005-2013)
- Sponsor Varsity Cheerleaders
- Sponsor Junior Class
- Sponsor National Honor Society
- Coach UIL Ready Writing

Training Consultant, Education Service Center 11

Summers 2010, 2011

 Conduct professional development workshops for public school teachers on Texas state standards and exams

National Chapter Development Consultant, Kappa Delta Sorority

1999-2000

- Travel nationwide to university campuses
- Assist sorority chapters with membership recruitment and chapter establishment
- Conduct leadership workshops

Graduate Assistant TRIO Programs and Department of Literature and Languages

1999

- Oversee TRIO tutors
- Conduct Texas teacher certification exam preparation workshops (ELAR)

COURSES TAUGHT

ENGL 3523 Special Topics: Rhetoric of Domesticity

ENGL 5023 Teaching College Writing (online)

MWSU 1230 First-year Seminar

WGST 2503 Intro to Women's & Gender Studies

Honors

English 5/4553 Rhetorical Criticism and Theory

English 5/4013 Introduction to Composition Studies

English 3023 [Elementary] Composition Pedagogy & Practice

English 2113 Intermediate Composition & Grammar (face-to-face and online)

English 1153 Intro to Reading & Writing about Culture [formerly Literature]

English 1143 Intro to Critical Reading and Academic Writing [formerly Academic Research & Writing] (face-to-face and online and as a Learning Community)

English 0043 Integrated Reading and Writing (online as co-requisite)

English 1123 Rhetoric & Composition

English 1301 Freshmen College English I

English 1302 Freshmen College English II

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

2024-2025

"Barbie Land: Reflections on the Intersections of Woman and Mother." Journal of American Studies Association of Texas. 2025.

2016-2017

"Pioneer Woman: Recovering a Red River Life Narrative." *Scholarship and Creativity Journal*. Texas College English Association. 2017. 1-12 https://sites.google.com/site/texascea/home/scholarship-and-creativity-journal/journal-archives/2017-publications

"Farm to Table: Home Management Houses as Rhetorical Space for Women." *Peitho Online Journal*, vol. 19, no. 2, Spring 2017. 282-300. http://peitho.cwshrc.org/farm-to-table-the-home-management-house-as-rhetorical-space-for-rural-women/

REVIEWS

2024-2025

Review of *The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness,* by Jonathan Haidt. *1922 Review* vol. 1, no. 1, 11 Nov. 2024.

2016-2017

Review of *Worth Writing About: Exploring Memoir with Adolescents*, by Jake Wizner. *Journal of Teaching Writing*. vol. 32, no. 1, Spring 2017. 93-99.

Review of *Claiming the Bicycle: Women, Rhetoric, and Technology in Nineteenth-Century America,* by Sarah Hallenbeck. *Composition Forum* vol. 35. Spring 2017. http://compositionforum.com/issue/35/nivens-hallenbeck-review.php

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2024-2025

Poster with Jennifer Amox, Suzanne Lindt, & Beverly Stiles. "Beyond the Syllabus: Incorporating Core Values for Student Success." Coalition for Transformational Education Conference. Miami, FL. March 2025.

"Considering the Kitchen: A Pedagogical Approach to Exploring the Rhetoric of Domesticity." Women's & Gender Studies. Lubbock, TX. March 2025.

"Mommy Wars Have Moved to TikTok: Exploring Competing Versions of Motherhood." American Studies Association of Texas. Wichita Falls, TX. Nov. 2024.

2023-2024

"Mothers, Daughters, and *Barbie The Movie*: Contradictions of Being a Woman." Celebration of Scholarship. Wichita Falls, TX. April 2024.

"Mothers, Daughters, & Barbie: Standing Still or Passing the Torch?" Women's & Gender Studies. Lubbock, TX. April 2024

"Building Community through First-year Composition." Conference of College Teachers of English. Denton, TX. March 2024.

"That's Texas': Defining Texas through Country Music." Texas College English Association. Denton, TX. March 2024.

2022-2023

"All Too Well: The Discourse of Wellness on College Campuses." Celebration of Scholarship. Wichita Falls, TX. April 2023.

"All Too Well: The Discourse of Wellness on College Campuses." Conference of College Teachers of English. Wichita Falls, TX. March 2023.

2021-2022

"Using Writing Intensive Courses to Re-define Writing Proficiency." Conference of College Teachers of English. Virtual. 4 Mar. 2022.

"Exclusive Pasts, Inclusive Futures: Exploring Sorority Rhetoric of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion." American Studies Association of Texas. Wichita Falls, TX. 12 Nov. 2021

2019-2020

"Country Music: An Unlikely Source of Feminist Activism." Conference of College Teachers of English. McKinney, TX. 6 March 2020.

"Wichita Woman: Using a Grassroots Newspaper to Change the Public Discourse." Feminisms and Rhetorics 2019. Harrisonburg, VA. November 2019.

2018-2019

"Borders and Bridges: Exploring Conceptual, Linguistic, and Cultural Borders in the FYC Classroom." Conference of College Teachers of English. Kingsville, TX. 1 Mar. 2019.

2017-2018

"What if the State Changes the Law?: Implementing a Co-Requisite Model for Developmental Reading and Writing." Council of Writing Program Administrator Conference. Sacramento, CA. July 2018. (did not attend)

"Building Future Scholars through Recovering the Past: University Archives as an Invention Site for Undergraduate Research." Rhetoric Society of America. Minneapolis, MN. 31 May 2018.

With Greg Giddings. "The Politics of Gender in Bruce Springsteen's *Darkness on the Edge of Town."* Celebration of Scholarship. Midwestern State University. Wichita Falls, TX. 25 Apr. 2018.

With Greg Giddings. "Darkness on the Edge of Town and Conservative Gender Roles." Bruce Springsteen's Darkness of the Edge of Town International Symposium. Monmouth, NJ. 14 Apr. 2018

"Student-Athletes and Performance in the Composition Classroom." Research Network Forum. Conference of College Composition and Communication. Kansas City, MO. 14 Mar. 2018

"Co-requisite Developmental Integrated Reading and Writing: A Paired Course Pilot Program." Conference of College Teachers of English. Stephenville, TX. 2 Mar. 2018.

2016-2017

"Pioneer Woman: Recovering a Red River Life Narrative." Celebration of Scholarship. Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, TX. April 2017.

"A Granddaughter's Inheritance: A Literacy Narrative Legacy." Texas College English Association Conference. Hurst, TX. March 2017.

"Composing Politics in the Digital Age: Pairing First-Year Composition and American Government." National Learning Communities Conference. Atlanta, GA. November 2016.

2015-2016

"A Literacy Legacy: The Literacy Narrative of my Grandmother." Digital Exhibit. Feminisms and Rhetorics 2015. Tempe, AZ. October 2015. https://youtu.be/kTVb66xqsao

"Farm to Table: Home Management Houses as Rhetorical Space for Women." East Texas Historical Association Fall Meeting. Nacogdoches, TX. October 2015.

2014-2015

"Playing House: Home Management Houses as Rhetorical Space for Women." COPLAC Meeting, Willimantic, CT. June 2015. (did not attend)

"Playing House: Home Management Houses as Rhetorical Space for Women." Celebration of Scholarship. Wichita Falls, TX. April 2015.

2013-2014

"Domestic Literacy: Open Reflections from the Home Management House." The Persistence of Memory: Remapping the Future of Composition Studies by Charting Writing Histories at One Rural Texas University. Conference on College Composition and Communication. Indianapolis, IN. March 2014.

PRIOR TO 2013

"Domestic Literacy: Exploring Home Economics and Higher Education by Compositing with New Media." Women and Rhetoric: Influence, Inspiration, Inclusion. Federation Rhetoric Symposium. Denton, TX. April 2012.

"Dual Credit: A Legitimate Path to Higher Education." EGAD Agora Graduate Student Conference. Commerce, TX. March 2012.

"This Ain't Your Grandmother's Book Report." Texas Association for the Improvement of Reading Conference. Denton, TX. September 2011.

"Multimedia? I Could Never Do That at My School." Texas Computer Education Association Conference. Austin, TX. February 2003.

INVITED TALKS

Podcast Guest. Episode 47: I Made It to Campus; What Now? Club Moffett Talks. March 2025.

Guest Lecturer. "Thinking about Teaching?" Intro to English Studies. November 2024.

Guest Lecturer. "Mothers, Daughters, and the Contradictions of Being a Woman." Feminist Philosophy. October 2024.

Guest Speaker. "Domestic Literacy: Home Economics at East Texas State." Bridgeport Historical Society, Bridgeport, TX. July 2024.

Panelist. "Exploring Alternatives to Traditional Textbooks." TLRC. March 2024.

Presenter. "First-year Mustangs Adventure." New Faculty Orientation. Summer 2023. Summer 2024.

Session Leader. "First-year Survival Guide." New Student Orientation. Summer 2023. Summer 2024.

Guest Speaker. "First-year Experience: Midwestern State University." Rotary Club. July 2023.

Presenter. "Quality Enhancement Plan." SACSCOC Site Visit. March 2023.

Presenter. "Learn about the QEP." TLRC. Feb. 2023. (Repeated for Student Affairs Retreat, SGA, & Admissions Retreat)

Guest Lecturer. "Using Archival Research in Rhetorical Studies." Intro to Graduate English Studies. November 2022 and November 2023.

Guest Lecturer. "Country Music: Where are the Women?" Honors Seminar. Midwestern State University. October 2022.

Panelist. "Researching Texts for, by, or about Women." MOSAIC Women's History Month 2022. Midwestern State University. 31 Mar. 2022.

Guest Speaker. "The Wichita Woman: A Space for Community Activism." League of Women Voters. 7 April 2021.

Guest Lecturer. "Country Music: An Unlikely Source of Feminist Activism." Honors Seminar. Midwestern State University. Oct. 2020 and Oct. 2021.

With Greg Giddings. "Gender and Politics in Bruce Springsteen's *Darkness on the Edge of Town."* Faculty Forum. Midwestern State University. 4 Feb. 2019.

Guest Lecturer. "Recovering MSU's Past: Library Archives as an Invention Site for Feminist Rhetorical Research." Honors Seminar. Midwestern State University. Nov. 2019.

Guest Lecturer. "Recovering MSU's Past: Library Archives as an Invention Site for Feminist Rhetorical Research." Introduction to English Studies. Midwestern State University. 18 Sep. 2019.

"Aunt Pliny." Red River Reading Series. Midwestern State University. 1 Dec. 2017.

"Unruly Women: Activism Then and Now." Honors Seminar Presentation. Midwestern State University. 13 Oct. 2017.

With Hillary Coenen. "Unruly Women: Activism Then and Now." Wichita Falls Public Library. March 2017.

Guest Lecturer. "Playing House: Home Management Houses as Rhetorical Space for Women." Rhetorical Theory and Criticism. Midwestern State University. March 2016.

Panelist. "First-Year Experience at MSU – Where are we going?" Teaching and Learning Resource Center. Midwestern State University. December 2015.

WORKSHOPS

With University Writing Council. "Defining Writing Intensive: A High Impact Practice." University Writing Council. Midwestern State University. 16 Feb. 2022.

"Navigate PY Faculty Training." Midwestern State University. 20 Sept. 2021.

"Public Service Announcement Group Project." NOYCE LC Workshop. Midwestern State University. 27 Apr. 2018.

With Betty Carroll. "ELAR College Prep Course." Region IX Education Service Center. Wichita Falls, TX. July 2016.

"Grab Some Grammar and Go." W4Tx: Keep Calm and Write On. Region IX Education Service Center. Wichita Falls, TX. July 2016.

With Betty Carroll. "ELAR College Prep Course." Region IX Education Service Center. Wichita Falls, TX. August 2015.

With Ashley Campana. "Grab Some Grammar and Go." Academic Vertical Alignment Training and Renewal Symposium. Wichita Falls, TX. February 2014.

SERVICE TO DEPARTMENT

English UG Program Assessment Committee (2024)

English Website Committee (2024)

Lecturer Search Committee (2024)

Department Scholarship and Awards Committee (2024-present)

Department Secretary Search Committee (2022)

Composition/Rhetoric Asst Professor Search Committee Chair (2019-2020)

Department Chair Search Committee (2018-2019)

Composition Committee (2014-2023), Co-Chair (2016-2020), Chair (2020-2021), (Co-Chair (2021-2022)

- Discuss ENGL 0043, 1143, ENGL 1153, ENGL 2203, ENGL 2113 curriculum
- Select course materials

Graduate Studies Committee (2014-Present)

- Interview and select graduate assistant candidates
- Review graduate program materials and curriculum

Business Writing Asst Professor Search Committee (2017)

Professional Writing Asst Professor Search Committee (2016)

Academic Advisor

- File degree plans
- Assist students in course selection

Graduate Student Committee Member (Thesis and Non-thesis)

Composition Grading Workshop

- Select essays for review
- Conduct workshop on grading consistency for English professors, instructors, and TAs

SERVICE TO PY COLLEGE

Furniture Selection Committee (2022-2023)

College Research Committee (2016-2018)

- Review travel funding applications
- Serve as proxy for University Research Committee

SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY

Rising Sophomore Summit Planning Committee (2024-25)

Children's Book Week Reader (2024)

Student Success Council (2024)

Early Orientation Committee (2023-present)

New Student Orientation Presenter

First-year Survival Guide (2023-present)

Title IX Case Investigator (2023-present)

QEP Advisory Committee Chair (2023-present)

University Tenure and Promotion Committee (2022-present), Chair (2023 & 2024)

First-year Council (2022-2024)

QEP Planning & Implementation Committee (2021-2022)

- Serve on Curriculum Work-group
- Consider details for implementing the First-Year Seminar

Women's History Month Planning Committee (2021)

EAB Navigate Faculty Champion (2020-present)

Train and assist instructors with the Navigate reporting platform

Mustangs Round Up Facilitator (2019)

• Speak to in-coming freshmen about relevant topics such as campus safety and academic success

University Writing Council Chair (2019-2022)

- Initiate Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiative
- Develop Writing Intensive (WI) Course policy
- Develop professional development for WI instructors

Financial Aid Advisory Appeals Committee (2017-Present) Chair (2019-2021)

- Conduct meetings
- Hear student appeals to the Financial Aid Office
- Correspond with office of Enrollment Management

Core Curriculum Committee (2016-2022)

Evaluate core course submissions

MSU Texas Mustangs Ignite Summer Bridge Program Task Force (2017-2018)

- Determine elements of summer bridge program
- Assist in drafting summer bridge proposal

MORE Presenter (2018)

Introduce Writing Proficiency Exam to new and transfer students

Writing Proficiency Exam (2016-2022)

- Proctor exam sessions
- Evaluate exams
- Report results to Registrar's Office
- Create exam preparation materials including videos, samples, and workshops

English Department Grammar Fair (2014-2020)

- Schedule and set up event
- Provide table materials
- Oversee table leaders
- Serve as table leader as needed
- Evaluate event attendance

MSU Texas EURECA Project

- Faculty Mentor (Fall 2018)
 - o "Midwestern's O-Wa-Ki-Ya and the Feminist Rhetorical Perspective"
 - Oversee research project process and progress
- Submission Evaluator
 - Score potential EURECA projects
- Forum Presentation Evaluator
 - Score student presentations
- Forum Session Moderator
 - o Introduce and time student presentations

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICE

National Resource for the First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

• Conference Proposal Reviewer (2023)

National Council of Teachers of English

Conference on College Composition and Communication

- Panel Chair 2016
- Table Lead 2018

Council of Writing Program Administrators

• Conference Siting Committee (2019)

Conference of College Teachers of English

- President (2022-2023)
 - o Conduct both Executive Board meetings and General Business meeting
 - Secure keynote speakers
- President Elect (2020-2021 and 2021-2022)

Texas College English Association

- Panel Chair 2019, 2020
- President (2019-2020)
 - Write Conference Call for Papers
 - o Evaluate conference submissions
 - Secure keynote speaker
- Vice President (2018-19)
- Secretary/treasurer (2017-18)

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

First United Methodist Church of Alvord, TX

- Lay Leader (2021-2023)
 - Preside over Leadership Team meetings
 - Consult with Pastor on church business
- Vacation Bible School Director (2009-2021)
 - o Plan all aspects of event
 - Purchase curriculum and supplies
 - Recruit volunteers
- Administrative Council Chair (2016, 2017)

- Conduct Council meetings
- Work closely with pastor
- Staff Parish Relations Committee Member and Chair (2013-2015 & 2018-2019)
 - Conduct SPRC meetings
 - o Facilitate and complete annual "Marks of Fruitfulness" evaluation of pastor and other reports
 - Hire church staff
- San Antonio Mission Trip Chaperone (Summer 2016)
 - Conduct VBS at SAMMinstries
 - Volunteer at downtown mission
 - Paint bridge
- Lector
 - Read scripture during worship service
- Technology Team
 - Run sound and slides during worship service
- Ministry Safe Coordinator
 - Maintain sexual abuse prevention training records

Kappa Delta Sorority

- National Bias Response and Intervention Team (2021-Present)
 - o Review reported incidents of bias
 - Facilitate restorative justice measures
 - Advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion
- National Leadership Team Member (2019-2021)
 - Chapter Advisory Board Specialist
 - Assist local advisors with sorority operations
 - Attend national convention
 - Participate in team calls
 - Develop training materials
- Fort Worth Alumnae Chapter (2014-Present)
- Alumnae Engagement Task Force (2018)
- Chapter Advisory Board Member (2009-2014, 2019-present)
 - Vice President of Inclusion Advisor (2024-2025)
 - Director of Member Retention Advisor (2022)
 - Vice President Advisor (2022)
 - o Director of Scholarship Advisor (2019-2021) (2022-2024)
 - Attend monthly chapter council/advisor meetings
 - Mentor collegiate sorority women

Alvord ISD District Educational Improvement Committee (2017-2022)

Parent representative

UIL District Meet Ready Writing Judge (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021)

4H District Fashion Show Judge (2016, 2017)

Alvord ISD Athletic Booster Club (2000-2022)

- Secretary (2021-2022)
 - Create meeting agendas
 - Keep minutes
 - Support local athletes
 - Work concession stands and other fundraising events

Food Bank Volunteer

- Wichita Falls, Texas (2022)
- Fort Worth, Texas (2016)

Live Thankfully Volunteer

- Sort canned food
- Package food donations for families

HONORS & AWARDS

Ten Year Service Pin, MSU 2023

Visionary Values Award, TLRC, 2023

Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences Teaching Award, 2022

Five Year Service Pin, MSU, 2018

Bridgeport High School Wall of Honor Award, 2018

Intramural Research and Creative Endeavors Award, 2017

Lamar Award of Excellence, Bridgeport Masonic Lodge, 2013

Jack Harvey Fellowship Award, Weatherford College, 2013

Janet E. Arnett Graduate Scholarship Recipient, Kappa Delta Sorority, 2010

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Red Raider Coach Academy, TTU

Writing Across the Curriculum, TLRC, MSU

Promoting Well-being Through Learner Centered Education, Faculty Learning Community, U of Florida

Textbooks, TLRC, MSU

Community TLRC, MSU

AI TLRC, MSU

Al and Digital Pedagogy, CCTE

Title IX Case Investigator Training, MSU

What AI Means for Teaching, MLA

Mental Health First Aid Certification, MSU

Critical Conversations: Engaging Gen Z, MSU

Title IX Designated Reporter, MSU

Inclusive Practices, Kappa Delta Sorority

Critical Conversations: How to be an Anti-Racist, MSU

"Strategies in Antiracist Writing Instruction," TWU

CAMPUSPEAK Dr. Wharton DE&I Training, Kappa Delta Sorority

Achieve Training, McMillian/Bedford

"Rhetorical Listening with Dr. Krista Radcliff," NCTC Denton

ProctorU Training, MSU

Developing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Faculty Training, MSU

Eli Review Summer Demo Workshop, online

Learning Communities Workshops, MSU

Banner Training, MSU

Time Clock Training, MSU

Computer Security Awareness and Ransomware, MSU

Sexual Harassment, MSU

ADA Compliance for Online Courses, MSU

DegreeWorks, MSU

QPR for Suicide Prevention, MSU

Co-requisite Conferences, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Fort Worth & Austin