**Melanie E. Pitts**

***Curriculum Vitae***

College of Letters and Sciences

Arizona State University

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**Education**

**Ph.D.,** English Literature, University of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida), 2003

Emphases: English and Italian Renaissance, Women’s Writing, Gender and Subjectivity

Dissertation: *Lyric Warriors, Lyric Women: Gendering Petrarchism in Early Modern England*

Director: Mihoko Suzuki

Committee: David Glimp, Jeffrey Shoulson, Maria Stampino

**M.A.,** English, Florida International University (Miami, Florida), 1999

Emphasis: Shakespeare, Elizabethan and Jacobean Political Ideology, Gender

Thesis: *Rare Egyptian’ and ‘Noble Caesar’: Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra - Elizabeth, James, and the Iconography of Gender*

Director: James Sutton

Committee: Peggy Endel, Al Lopez

**B.A.,** English and Humanities, Florida International University (Miami, Florida), 1997

Graduated with University Honors, *Summa cum Laude*

**Academic Appointments**

**Lecturer Senior,** 2013 to present,Arizona State University (Tempe, Arizona), College of Letters and

Sciences:

-Teach a variety of courses across faculty groups for the College of Letters and Sciences

-Serve on various faculty committees at the group and school level

-Develop curriculum for Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies

**Lecturer,** 2007 to 2013, Arizona State University (Tempe, Arizona), School of Letters and Sciences

-Taught a variety of courses across faculty groups for the School of Letters and Sciences

-Served on various faculty committees at the group and school level

-Developed curriculum for Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies

-Mentored new Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies instructors

**Faculty Associate**, 2005-2007, Arizona State University (Mesa, Arizona), East College

-Taught a variety of composition, literature, and women’s studies courses

**Instructor**, 2003-2005, Florida Atlantic University (Boca Raton, Florida), English Department

-Taught a variety of upper and lower division composition and literature classes

-Served on various department level committees

**Teaching Assistant**, 1999-2003, University of Miami (Coral Gables, Florida), English and Composition

-Taught lower division composition and literature classes

-Tutored students across all disciplines at the University Writing Center

-Served on Writing Center committees

**Teaching Competencies**

English Literature (specializing in Early Modern)

American Literature

Interdisciplinary Studies

Liberal Studies

Feminist Theory

Composition

**Teaching Experience:**

**Arizona State University, 2005-present:**

BIS 301, *Foundations of Interdisciplinary Studies* (9 times)

BIS 302, *Interdisciplinary Inquiry* (4 times)

BIS 401, *Applied Interdisciplinary Studies* (9 times)

BIS 402, *Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Seminar* (10 times)

BIS 470, *Bachelor of Liberal Studies Capstone Seminar* (17 times)

I designed this course.

ENG 101, *First-Year Composition* (2 times)

ENG 102, *First-Year Composition* (8 times)

ENG 200, *Critical Reading and Writing about Literature* (once)

ENG 215, *Strategies of Academic Writing* (4 times)

ENG 218, *Writing about Literature* (once)

ENG 222, *Survey of English Literature* (once)

ENG 241, *Literatures of the United States to 1860* (once)

ENG 321, *Introduction to Shakespeare* (9 times)

ENG 329, *Nineteenth Century British Fiction* *– The Gothic Tradition* (7 times)

ENG 375, *Titans of Business* (36 times)

I designed this course.

ENG 498, *English Capstone Seminar* (8 times)

WST 100, *Women and Society* (once)

WST 300, *Women and Contemporary Society* (twice)

WSH 470, *Women and Popular Culture* (once)

**Florida Atlantic University, 2003-2005:**

ENG 1101, *English Composition* (9 times)

ENG 1102, *English Composition* (8 times)

ENG 2010, *Interpretation of Fiction* (twice)

ENG 2012, *Survey of Early British Literature* (twice)

ENG 2022, *Survey of Later British Literature* (twice)

ENG 2030, *Interpretation of Poetry* (twice)

ENG 3425*, Backgrounds of English Literature - Epic and Metamorphosis* (once)

ENG 4221, *Seventeenth-Century Literature* (once)

**University of Miami, 1999-2003**

ENG 105, *English Composition* (3 times)

ENG 106, *English Composition* (3 times)

ENG 211, *Survey of British Literature* (once)

**Teaching with Technology**

Total sections taught at ASU since 2006: 116

Hybrid: 13

iCourses: 90

ASU Online: 13

**Teaching Development Workshops/Conferences**

ASU Online Pearson eCollege Workshop, 2010.

Jossey-Bass Online Teaching and Learning Conference, October 2009.

Mesa Community College, Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference, May 2008.

*What’s New in Blackboard*, ASU Applied Learning Technologies Institute Workshop, May 2008.

*Integrating Library Resources* *on Blackboard*, ASU Applied Learning Technologies Institute Workshop,

March 2008.

*Blackboard Assignments,* ASU Applied Learning Technologies Institute Workshop, February 2008.

*ePortfolios* Conference, ASU Polytechnic Campus, February 2007.

*PolyTechCompetent Core,* ASU Polytechnic Campus, September 2006.

*Advanced Blackboard,* ASU Applied Learning Technologies Institute Workshop, September 2006.

*Using Blackboard,* ASU Applied Learning Technologies Institute Workshop, February, 2006.

*Problem-Based Learning,* ASU Faculty Workshop, 2006.

**Teaching Interests**

Liberal Studies

Shakespeare

Milton

Women’s Literature

Italian Renaissance Literature

English Romantic Literature

Interdisciplinary Approaches to Identity

Epic and Metamorphoses

**Service**

**Faculty Senate:**

Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication, College of Letters and Sciences, Arizona State

University (2013-present).

**Committees:**

Non-Tenure Track Committee, Faculty Senate, Arizona State University (2013-2014).

Personnel Committee, Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies, School of Letters and Sciences, Arizona State University (2011 - 2014).

Curriculum Committee, Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies, School of Letters and Sciences, Arizona State

University (2010 - 2014).

(Chair) Faculty Annual Review Committee, Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication, School of Letters and Sciences, Arizona State University (2010).

Faculty Annual Review Committee, School of Letters & Sciences, Arizona State University (2009-2010).

Curriculum Committee, Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies, School of Letters and Sciences, Arizona State University (2009 - present).

Faculty Search Committee, Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies, School of Letters and Sciences, Arizona

State University (2009 - 2013).

Curriculum and Standards Committee, School of Applied Arts & Sciences, Arizona State University

(2007-2008).

**Mentorship:**

Faculty Advisor “Superstition Review,” Arizona State University’s Online Literary Magazine (2011-2014).

Faculty Mentor for new Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies Instructors, School of Letters and Sciences,

Arizona State University (2008 - present).

Obama Scholar Mentor, Arizona State University (2009-2010).

**Professional:**

Editor, *Acercamiento: Exposure-based treatment for phobic and anxiety disorders in Latino youth*.

Treatment Manual. Arizona Technology Enterprises (*Technology*). Collaboration with Psychology, Arizona State University (2005).

**Conference Papers**

*“*Gender, Petrarchism, and the Sidney Lineage: Mary Wroth’s Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*.”*

Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference, New York (NY) 2004.

“‘We are Women’s Men’: Shakespeare’s Cleopatra and Elizabethan Gender Politics.”

New College Conference on Medieval-Renaissance Studies, Sarasota (FL) 1998.

**Awards and Honors**

Graduate School Award of Academic Merit, 2003, University of Miami

College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, 2000-2001, University of Miami

College of Arts & Sciences Outstanding Academic Achievement in Humanities, 1997, Florida

International University

**Memberships**

Association for Integrative Studies, 2007-2009

Modern Language Association, 2003-2009

Shakespeare Association of America, 2003-2009

**References**

Duane Roen, Head, Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies, Professor of English, Arizona State University,

Tempe, AZ 85287-1901; (480) 727-6513; [duane.roen@asu.edu](mailto:duane.roen@asu.edu).

Ian Moulton, Head, Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication, Associate Professor, Arizona State

University, Mesa, AZ 85212; (480) 727-1172; [IAN.MOULTON@asu.edu](mailto:IAN.MOULTON@asu.edu).

Greg Glau, Director of English Composition, Associate Professor, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff,

AZ 86011; (928) 523-6713; [gregory.glau@nau.edu](mailto:gregory.glau@nau.edu).

Andrew Furman, Associate Professor of English, and Department Chair, Florida Atlantic University, Boca

Raton, FL 33433; (561) 297-3830.

Mihoko Suzuki, Professor of English, University of Miami, Coral Gables, FL 33124; (305) 284-5623;

msuzuki@miami.edu.

**Statement**

As a freshman in college, I was fortunate to have an exceptional humanities instructor who sparked my passion for learning and altered the course of my life. My experience in his class prompted both my desire to teach and my interest in multiple disciplines. As an undergraduate, I studied philosophy, art history, and English. And, as a doctoral student, I specialized in literature, which allowed me to maximize my interdisciplinary interests. It has been said that literature is a “parasitic” discipline, and indeed I incorporated historical, sociological, and psychoanalytic approaches in my exploration of Renaissance texts.

My position as a Senior Lecturer in English in the College of Letters and Sciences (CLS) has been a perfect fit for me in two important ways. First, my dedication to teaching and serving students is strongly valued and supported. Second, I have been encouraged to put my interdisciplinary interests to work by engaging in curriculum development, teaching, and serving across multiple areas.

**Teaching**

Since 2006, I have taught 116 sections at ASU and consistently been rated “High Merit” on annual evaluations. One core strength I bring to CLS is versatility in teaching. In 2005, I began teaching women’s studies and composition courses as a Faculty Associate and quickly moved on to teach literature and interdisciplinary humanities. Two years later, I was asked to help expand the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Program at the Polytechnic Campus. After training with BIS faculty, I created my own versions of the four core courses, which I still teach today. And, when the BIS program acquired the Bachelor of Liberal Studies degree, I was happy to branch out again and develop curriculum for and teach the BLS capstone seminar course, which was one of the first to use Pearson’s Learning Studio platform. Currently, I teach upper division literature, interdisciplinary theory/inquiry, and capstone classes for three programs in SLS, including English at the Polytechnic Campus and the BIS and BLS Programs in Tempe. I also teach these courses in a variety of formats including online, hybrid, and face-to-face as well as in both fifteen and seven week semesters.

In my view, teaching begins with course development. I enjoy the challenge of creating new curriculum and when possible choose topics that attract students. One interdisciplinary course I developed, ENG 375 “Titans of Business,” explores corporate innovators from a humanities perspective. Students are enthusiastic to enroll in topics such as “Steve Jobs,” “Google,” and “Wal-mart.” Once in class, I challenge them to analyze the impact of corporations on cultural advancement, the power of corporations to shape economies, and issues of consumer responsibility. Another example is my ENG 329 “Gothic Tradition” course, which I created in response to the recent vampire “craze.” In this popular class, students spend time analyzing the dialectic between reason and irrationality, the limits of science and human knowledge, the conflict between the individual and society, and tensions concerning race, gender and Imperialism. Students also enjoy my BLS 470 capstone seminar “Seeking Self” where they are encouraged to evaluate and integrate various aspects of their identities. During the first half of the semester, students examine categories of social identity (including gender, race, and ethnicity) and how “difference” impacts the development of stereotypes, power struggles, and group relations. In the second half of the term, students use lyric poetry, self-portraits, and life writing as tools to express a coherent sense of self. These types of topics not only engage students, but serve as a gateway to further knowledge and promote personal development.

On course evaluations students often point out that my classes promote critical thinking and creativity. This is because I use a student-centered approach in which I act as a facilitator, allowing students to take charge of their own learning process. My students spend much of their time discussing and interrogating ideas and the cultural contexts that shaped them. As a result, they increase their ability to develop, problematize, and communicate various opinions as well as define themselves as individuals. One of my favorite evaluation comments is “I believe I am a better person and more thoughtful citizen as a result of this class.”

Nearly all my courses fulfill the General Studies “Literacy and Critical Inquiry” requirement and thus center on writing. I make an effort to create written assignments that promote analytical thinking and the synthesis of ideas. In my BLS 470 capstone seminar, students finish the semester by choosing a topic and creating their own seminar course. This requires researching social sciences and humanities literature, developing a series of 3 written assignments, constructing a syllabus, and creating a flyer to “sell” the topic to students. This project gives graduating seniors the opportunity to synthesize what they have learned in the program and put that knowledge to work on a topic of their interest.

I also craft assignments that encourage students to think not only critically but creatively. Students in my “Gothic Tradition” course are asked to write their own Victorian ghost story or a “missing chapter” from texts like Stoker’s *Dracula* or Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. And, the final project for my Shakespeare students is to describe their own production of one of the plays. This assignment is especially wide open for creativity since the production can be set anywhere and anytime. I have read futuristic, science fiction, animated, and Bollywood versions of *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet* among others. Students find this assignment challenging because they must justify every setting, casting, and costuming choice in the production. Successful completion of this task requires a high level of understanding and a personal vision of the play. This was my intention. Often students enter my class intimidated by Shakespeare; however, this assignment allows them to exit with the knowledge and confidence that they can not only successfully read but actually *remake* one of the plays. Students respond very well to these types of creative projects, saying they “spark innovation” and energize learning.

I am proud that I am an effective teacher; but, I am perhaps more proud that I am an effective teacher online. My online classes are successful thanks to a combination of best practices and tailoring to promote student success. Over the last five years I made an effort to educate myself in online teaching by taking several Blackboard workshops and training with ASU Online to use the Learning Studio platform. As my interest in online pedagogy increased, I began participating in online learning conferences such as the *Jossey-Bass Online Teaching and Learning Conference* and the *Pearson Headwinds English Online Conference,* where I discovered new tools and strategies to enhance learning. For example, I now use software such as Wimba Podcaster to record audio messages for students and Camtasia to create screen-capture video with voice narration when demonstrations are useful. To further engage students, I incorporate a variety of online resources in all my classes. When teaching Shakespeare, for instance, I post video clips of scenes from various productions for students to view as they read. This allows them to visualize different interpretations of the same scene or soliloquy and highlights the flexibility and timelessness of the plays. Students in my seminar courses find links to interviews, documentaries, and other multi-media resources included with readings for class discussions. To promote additional independent exploration of knowledge, I often send my students on virtual field-trips to cultural/historical sites. I also use virtual simulations, such as *Project Implicit* to help students better understand bias and discrimination. At this Harvard University virtual laboratory students can take a demonstration test to check for implicit bias and assumptions across a variety of categories.

While the use of technology is important, clear communication and rapport with students is especially critical in a virtual environment. Students have noted that my online courses are especially effective because of the clear course requirements and my efforts to be interactive and accessible. I provide prompt feedback on coursework, and I also make an effort to interact with students outside the limits of the course website. Research on online teaching shows that e-mail communication contributes to student success; consequently, I e-mail all of my classes 2-3 times per week with outlines for the upcoming week, updates, and reminders on due dates. This is not an attempt to babysit my students, but an effort to be “on their phones” and a part of their personal networks of friends and contacts. I also make a point to check my e-mail regularly (several times a day, including weekends) and make myself available by phone in an attempt to be as accessible, helpful, and supportive as possible. My students appreciate these efforts, often making comments like “she shows true concern for her students” and “her communication with her students by far separates her from other professors.”

**Service**

Beyond my substantial instructional contributions to CLS, I also have served the college and ASU in other ways. In my leadership role as coordinator for the Polytechnic BIS Program, I met with department heads to encourage the development of BIS concentrations at the Polytechnic Campus. During that time, I also individually mentored five new instructors to the BIS program. Sessions included training in the objectives and requirements of the program and the curriculum guidelines for each of the four core courses. I also provided guidance on developing Blackboard/Learning Studio sites for BIS/BLS courses and made my course shells available. Teaching across different units has been a positive experience for me, and I am happy to support other faculty as they branch out as well.

I also have served, and continue to serve, on multiple committees. At the group level, I chaired the 2010 Faculty Annual Review Committee for Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication. Because we were the inaugural FAR committee for IHC, my efforts focused on planning our process and developing forms and other documentation for recommendations. Under my direction the committee gathered, organized, and evaluated materials for over 20 faculty members at the Polytechnic Campus. From 2009-2014, I also served on the BIS/BLS Curriculum Committee where I helped to develop outcomes for the newly acquired BLS program along with strategies for student engagement and program development. I also worked with other faculty to create plans to double enrollment and hire graders for several sections, including my BIS 470 seminar, in an effort to help the university cut costs. We also developed outcomes and measures in preparation for the university accreditation process and recently restructured the Organizational Studies program. In addition to the curriculum committee, I have also served on the Personnel Committee for Interdisciplinary and Liberal Studies where I reviewed faculty applications for promotion.

At the college level, I served on the curriculum committee from 2010-2013. During my tenure, I acted as chair to approve the new Global Technology and Development Master of Science Program. I also helped facilitate approval of the BA in Communication and changes to the BA in English and History programs at the Polytechnic campus. Lastly, I served on the SLS Faculty Annual Review Committee from 2009-2010 to revise and streamline annual review documentation requirements for faculty.

I also have served CLS and the greater university by mentoring students in a variety of capacities. I have been an Honor’s Disciplinary Faculty since 2006, and I also have served as an Obama Scholar mentor to Polytechnic students. In addition, I served for two years as a Faculty Advisor to ASU’s online literary magazine *Superstition Review*. The journal is hosted by SLS at the Polytechnic Campus and publishes art, fiction, interviews, nonfiction, and poetry. Each semester 15 to 20 undergraduate student interns work to create and launch an issue. As an advisor, I participated in collaborative meetings with the founding editor, other advisors, and interns to plan issued. I also provided one-on-one mentorship to the two interns editing the “Interviews” section of the magazine.

In addition to committee service and mentoring, I recently was elected senator for Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication at the Polytechnic Campus. In that role, I represent our faculty group in senate meetings, vote on a variety of motions, and review new courses for our unit. From 2013-2014, I also served on the Senate Non-Tenure Track Faculty Committee where I co-wrote a position paper arguing for faculty leave time for professional training. As a Polytechnic Campus senator, I also participate in monthly caucus meetings to discuss ideas for campus development.

Looking forward, my primary goal is to continue to develop and teach interesting classes that prompt students to become active participants in their education. I am also elated about plans to develop new degree programs in Interdisciplinary Humanities and Communication at the Polytechnic Campus. I look forward to contributing to the future growth of IHC, the College of Letters and Sciences, and Arizona State University.