



# WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities

## Dr. John Schwiebert, Professor of English

### Education

B.A. in English; Carleton College (1976)

M.A. in English and Writing; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (1986)

Ph.D. in English Language and Literature; University of Minnesota, Minneapolis (1989)

### Teaching and Research Interests

Notebooks and journals; writers' lives and literary practices; theory and practice of teaching literature and writing; nineteenth-century American literature; eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century British literature

### Undergraduate Courses Taught

English 1010 College Writing

English 2200 Introduction to Literature

English 3210 Advanced College Writing

English 3350 Notebooks, Journals, and Creativity

English 4520 American Literature, Beginnings to 1860

English 4630 British Literature, Neoclassic and Romantic

English 4710 (Eminent Writers)

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Walt Whitman
- Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson

English 4830 Directed Readings (Walt Whitman, Robert Frost)

### Graduate Courses Taught

MENG 5520 American Literature, Beginnings to 1860

MENG 5630 British Literature, Neoclassic and Romantic

MENG 6240 American Transcendentalism

MENG 6240 Topics in American Literature: Eugene O'Neill

MENG 6510 Walt Whitman

MENG 6510 Emily Dickinson

MENG 6710 American Transcendentalism and Its Legacy

MENG 6830 Directed Readings (William Wordsworth)

### Published Books

• *Reading and Writing From Literature*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), 2005.

[https://books.google.com/books/about/Reading\\_and\\_Writing\\_from\\_Literature.html?id=S7ekSQAACAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Reading_and_Writing_from_Literature.html?id=S7ekSQAACAAJ)

*Reading and Writing From Literature* is a combined rhetoric and anthology for introductory literature and literature for composition classes. The book presents a thoroughly integrated approach to reading and writing instruction. Following the practices of the best writers, students use texts—literary and other—to generate writing of their own in both traditional/critical and creative forms. Discovering intertextual connections between assigned readings and the texts of their own lives, they write *from* literature rather than only *about* it.

- *Reading and Writing From Literature*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), 2001. <http://www.amazon.com/Reading-Writing-Literature-John-Schwiebert/dp/0618218890>

- *Reading and Writing From Literature*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997.

- *Reading and Writing From Literature: Instructor's Resource Manual*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin (1997, 2001, 2005). [http://college.cengage.com/english/schwiebert/reading\\_writing/2e/instructors/irm/](http://college.cengage.com/english/schwiebert/reading_writing/2e/instructors/irm/)

- *Writing Across the Curriculum: An Annotated Bibliography* (with Chris M. Anson and Michael Williamson). Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1993. <http://www.amazon.com/Writing-Across-Curriculum-Annotated-Bibliography/dp/0313259607>

When this book was published, WAC was a major topic of discussion on college and university campuses. Years later, the basic tenets of WAC—write to learn, write in order to personalize and contextualize knowledge, write in every subject—remain as vital and pertinent as ever; and they continue to shape my teaching (see “Philosophy of Teaching and Learning,” below).

- *The Frailest Leaves: Whitman's Poetic Technique and Style in the Short Poem*. New York: Peter Lang, 1992. [https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_Frailest\\_Leaves.html?id=JMwfAQAAIAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Frailest_Leaves.html?id=JMwfAQAAIAAJ)

As I researched and wrote this book, Walt Whitman became ensconced in my head. Since then my heavily annotated dog-eared copy of the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass* has accompanied me on countless trips and journeys, long and short. Today, carrying Whitman in my bones, I can almost dispense with the book. Whitman inspired my first serious interest in scholarship. He has also influenced my teaching, as he has evolved from a subject of mainly academic interest into a lifelong companion. One of my goals as a scholar and teacher is to help students discover lifelong companions of their own (even one is enough) among the world's best writers.

### **Philosophy of Teaching and Learning**

- To read literature of any time and place is simultaneously to read ourselves and our own times. The teacher's job is to show that literature, even the oldest or most remote, is (as Pound says) “news that stays news.”
- As a teacher I must encourage students to ask *So what?* with reference to everything I teach, assign, or say to them and to find good answers to the question.

- Writing and reading are primarily means to the end of thinking well. Thinking well is primarily a means to living well—with intelligence, empathy, understanding, and humility.
- The character and presence of the teacher is more important than any amount of text or information. A good teacher can make the dullest subject exciting, and a bad teacher can make even Chaucer seem boring.
- The test of good reading and good critical writing is that the text is even more alive when you leave off than it was when you started. This felt vitality in the text inspires rereading and additional writing, as well as tolerance for and interest in opposing points of view. Lacking this vitality, which the teacher is responsible to stimulate, the text is in every sense “dead” and the effort expended has been wasted.
- Reading/Writing/Living: to draw hard lines of distinction among these three activities is reductive and misleading. In an inclusive vision, the three always fuse.
- Alexander Calder’s advice to visual artists applies equally to writers: “Constant activity is the best prescription for any sort of drawing [or writing]. Carry pencil and paper with you at all times. And use them. Don’t be self-conscious.”