

# Creative Writing Pedagogy in the Two Year College: Lessons Learned and Literature Reviewed, Findings by a 35-year Teacher

James Andrew Freeman  
Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA, USA

**Abstract**—A literature and best practice review and retrospective from 35 years of applied community college teaching pedagogy looks at the heuristics of the whole creative writing student as an eager learner and suggests the most efficient practices; prerequisites and classroom universal policies necessary to growth in creative writing ability. Positive growth in creative writing students' work in the genre's is associated with particular student personality orientations and attitudes, such as low classroom anxiety, moderate social extroversion, and a propensity toward altruism, confirming the author's earlier research using the Omnibus Personality Inventory and longitudinal narrative pre and post-writing samples to confirm those same learning correlations in a California reservation Native American high school district. Thesis findings include that to both teach and learn creative writing effectively one must have paid apt, Chekhov-like attention to social nuance and sensory detail in order to provide rich fundings for story-telling; that to teach writing well one must be, have been or be associated with practicing writers; that to learn effectively the student must find and cultivate mentoring Giants who model for them their own creative writing process and tricks of the trade; and that a sense of humor is also necessary in both the instructor and the student in order to act as counter-point to all the hard work necessary for student writing to soar.

**Index Terms**—attitude, teaching, creative writing, mentoring, giants, models, pedagogy, novels, heuristics, universal design learning

## I. LITERATURE REVIEW: BACKGROUND

Students of mine often hear what the great detective novelist James Crumley taught us many years ago at Reed College, in Portland, Oregon: "You are not a writer until you have worn out a typewriter's keys so the letters are invisible, yet you still know where the letters are and until you have a 'steamer trunk' full of manuscripts." Adapting the adage to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we have: "You are not a writer until you put down your smart phone, turn off the ancient campfire narrative we, in the post-post Modern era, now call reality TV and wear out the virtual keyboard of your laptop, net-book, I-Pad, I-anything, filling three "North-face" back-packs with your tomes." Having worn out two keyboards, within a period of four years, this teacher feels, for the first time, despite some modest, decades-long success, that he *IS* now a writer! Jim Crumley, an ex-high school football player, also used to tell us Reedies, "you have to have something to talk about in the locker room." And so we do "talk story," making more delightful, enhanced, fictional meaning out of delightful, real chaos... At the risk of being accused of being a name dropper, but in the spirit of the Danish Italian astronomer Tycho Brahe who said, "If I have seen further than others, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of Giants," let this teacher back up and also say that if we are to teach creative writing, or any writing, or even teach at all, we need *GIANTS*, mentors, those whom we love and admire and those who know and knew more than we do and whom are unselfishly willing to share. Let's back up too, naming a few names and associating what these model authors contributed to the teacher this author *is* and could be if he weren't lazy and 57 years of Proustian age, where, in *Remembrance of Things Past*, Proust imagined miles-long chimera bodies, the persons we had been, trailing ghost-like in tentacles behind us everywhere we went.

All this good-natured chat leads to the present *thesis*: that to teach creative writing one must first live and experience life and all human interactions with a Chekhov-like attention for and sensitivity to nuance and detail so that one has many genuine stories to tell well; that to teach writing well one must also be or have been a practicing writer or, at the very least, hung-out with them; that to learn creative writing deeply, the student must find and cultivate mentoring Giants who will model for them *their own* seasoned creative process and also provide other models of first-rate fiction, poetry, drama or creative non-fiction; that to make this unique dynamic work on both sides of the learning equation a sense of humor is most helpful to act in counter-point to all the hard work and dedication necessary in order to soar. And one must, of course, wear out at least one computer keyboard!

Let us go then, "you and I/when the evening is spread out against the sky/like a patient etherized upon a table," along one man's immense, small journey of learning creative writing, teaching it, learning it all over again like a small lion in autumn embracing upcoming winter (Elliot (1917) "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" lines 1-3). We stress the pedagogical value of persistence with Elliot, too, along with humor, pointing out that his first anonymous reviewer

wrote negatively in *The Times Literary Supplement*: "The fact that these things occurred to the mind of Mr. Eliot is surely of the very smallest importance to anyone, even to himself. They certainly have no relation to *poetry*" (Waugh (1916) *The New Poetry*, *Quarterly Review*, October, citing the *Times Literary Supplement* 21 June 1917, no. 805, 299; Wagner (2001) "*An eruption of fury*", *The Guardian*, letters to the editor, September 4). Ouch! Thinking positively now, "It all began on a 'dark and stormy night...'" in Redding, CA, just after the peak of Bay-area ferment and foment of the far away but omni-present Vietnam War, the Tet offensive, Laos, Berkeley, the Fillmore west, the Cow Palace, "The Rolling Stones," Janice, Jimmy, Jim, the unfortunate members of the "27 club," teenage Carlos Santana, "The Grateful Dead,"... you see how we warm up and wear in and eventually wear out this new keyboard?

This author thought to go from Enterprise High School in Redding, CA (where Clint Eastwood went a couple of years before my tenure) to U.C. Berkeley, where it was all happening in the protest movement, the music, all of *IT*. However, he'd visited the high-rise dorms there, in 1972, as a Junior taking the SAT(s) (hate them), staying with a year-older Enterprise High football player, a man mountain named Delmer, who'd received a scholarship to Cal and who was red-shirted there and living in a sixth floor dorm. On my first night visiting Delmer, two LSD imbibing co-eds seeking Timothy Leary enlightenment jumped stoned off the seventh floor balcony of the self-same dorm building, shattering pelvi, humorous and femur bones, although ultimately "living," and perhaps, one hopes, later writing about their experiences, as *all* is potential material: *anything that doesn't kill us we should write about*. It was then that this writer decided to ride my green 50cc Suzuki powerhouse motorcycle, to attend Shasta College, a fine mid-sized two-year college right in Enterprise, CA, now called Redding. It was a happy decision: there he majored in both Journalism and English writing, coming under warm wings of both Eldridge Trott, a fantastically inspired and professionally seasoned Journalism Prof., who now, at 92, writes first rate novels (*Gathering at Vantage* 2007) and Kenn Roe, a highly-talented western genre novelist (*Cross Current* 2009), also now approaching his elegant 90's.

When this writer was a reporter for the "Lance," the Shasta College paper, and later a co-editor of that weekly and co-editor of the bi-annual Literary magazine, "The Spectrum," Eldridge Trott taught us painstaking lessons about preparation, research, the five "W's" and an "H" questions, the invert pyramid, getting at the condensed "bullion cube" of the truth before each Vietnam-area charged, Muhammad Ali and Joe Fraser and early "Eagles" band- inspired issue, and then, in his-- as we affectionately called it--the Eldridge "Cleaver" role, he would red-ink the hell out of the just-published-without- any-editorial-interference paper, pinned in infamy next to the classroom chalk board. How many out there remember using a chalk board, having teachers put lit cigarettes on the chalk board's sill? At Reed College, the incomparable Marvin Levich, for Philosophy of History, used to get so absorbed in his lectures that he'd light the *filter end* of his 100mm cigarettes while telling us about T.S. Kuhn's *The Nature of Scientific Revolution* and exhorting us to deep read a *Soviet* history of W.W. I and II. Prof. Levich once mopped the very floor below we Reedies, using William F. Buckley, his worthy foreign policy debate opponent, as a rag, but it is his pragmatic teaching philosophy that is most relevant to our present thesis. Levich said: "You had a burning problem that you asked students to pursue... and then you talked about it as if everyone in that class were a professional, as though they were your equals. That was a method of teaching that made some people uncomfortable, but in a lot of cases it was amazing how—if you expected the best from students—how many of them would, in one way or another, fulfill your expectation. I thought that any other method of teaching was coddling the students (Sheehy (2013) Reed class of 1982 "Going through the Fire-What Makes Reed Work" *Reed* June 38). So much of teaching rigor is about having high expectations and in providing multiple means of lift to meet those high bars of learning; that said by Levich, and said beautifully, it all starts with respect for students' intellectual capacities and a presumed teacher-student equality of subject matter gravitas. But we digress... Prof. Trott, like Marvin Levich, brought the "real world" right into the classroom, like so many fine community college teachers who've come from other worlds to teach what they know deeply, like career-long professional visiting astronauts splashed down back on earth to share with us as potential equals their stellar adventures.

Kenn Roe was and is a wealth of seasoned craft who "has done this (teaching writing) before." In Kenn's class, this former student first experienced live workshop peer-reviews (stories on mimeograph and ditto) and encounters *with* real, living writers coming in to visit our creative writing classes to read and do Q/A, often spilling outside like pied pipers to the Shasta College cafeteria building quadrangle "to be continued" where male students with long hair and young women in peasant blouses and some "mature" students of both sexes would play life-sized chess on a life-sized outdoor chess board using their bodies and their minds. "The Doobie Brothers" song "Oh, Blackwater" would chime on the indoor jukeboxes; the Redding sun almost always shone incredible brightly in pre-9/11/01 azure skies so blue and so two-dimensional that you felt you could reach up and scratch them with a fingernail. Frost famously wrote "Good fences make good neighbors" ((1919) "Mending Wall" line 26). Good mentors also make good friends, and our *Giants* help make us not only better writers but also better people, another of Frost's poems, "A Tuft of Flowers," coming into full bloom as community college students find their writing bliss.

Young people out there now between the ages of 17-105 (there has to be some kind of cut off), this life-long student says this to you most especially in the post-2008 economy, and I say it from the heart. Please consider attending a good community college for your first two-three years of college before transferring to that dreamt-of-university. I did so with not only no regrets but with a resounding endorsement and have spent much of my life on community college campi, this one, Bucks County Community College, being the most physically beautiful one I have ever seen, situated as it is on the former railroad baron George Tyler's 1930's Normandy revival estate and with his 1,600 acre former

backyard as our Tyler State Park walkout from class, the site of the former native American “Council Rock,” where the Lenai-Lanape and Delaware folks would conclave once a year before William Penn’s son “walking purchased” for we European immigrants a huge swath of the Delaware River basin by using a string of runners from “sunrise to dusk” to appropriate where I live now and from Penn’s Landing to Easton, PA for the usual useless baubles in promise... There might be a creative writing lesson here: “write a vegetable dye letter on birch tree bark to the conquering Quakers, Pennsylvania Dutch, Irish, Scotts, African-Americans including lost boys from the Sudan and Kenyans, Indians from India, Eastern European immigrants, Mormons, Swedenborgians, Massachusetts Colony Pilgrims’ descendants alike to explain your way of life, your values, from a ten-year olds’ Leani-Lenape point-of-view.”

This life-long learner also teaches our students that art must be far more orderly and thus more *real* than reality, having as it does sharp focus on Aristotle’s unities of time, place and action or else a deliberate, modern rebellion against them, a clear beginning, middle and an end, a readily discernible theme point, even if that theme point is that there is no point. For more on Aristotle’s early rhetorical theory, please see the appendix, which this teacher also shares with interested writing students and which I first encountered at Humboldt State University (“The Rhetorical Triangle” Appendix One diagram). We now know what to do tomorrow morning in our online Canvas Creative Writing I class postings. The key to good teaching is to inspire oneself in theory, in models, and in artists whose work *we love* and thus to inspire/romance others with *our* passion for the subject(s) we so love and seek to share.

Though a Philosophy and Literature interdisciplinary major at Reed (one could do those things there and then and should be able to even today), we studied Creative Writing with the afore-mentioned Jim Crumley (*The Last Good Kiss* 1988), Peter Sears (*Green Diver* 2009), and briefly with the visiting Galway Kinnel (*Strong is the Hold* 2008). From them, and from literature professors like William Sherwood for “Modern Novels of Consciousness,” who’d successfully renamed his course from the less-racy “The Modern Novel” to attract even more students, and from an incredible Gogol, Pushkin, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky scholar whose name I’ve unforgivably forgotten, one learned the “Seven Elements of Literature” on mimeograph and chalk and over-head projector (the good old days), always in face-to-face classes, smoking permitted if not encouraged, smart luddites all as we had not yet learned the practice of sunscreen or discovered global warming. We watched Carter-Ford debates and *Roots* on a big, professor-surplus TV in the “Rat-cellar,” the Rathskeller, really a 24 hour cafe, and threw peanut shells on the floor and put them in the taxidermied moose head’s nostrils and ears, unfettered by political correctness. We argued in friendly debate, and with our team-teaching professors and frequent class visitors and those living, breathing writers, poets, philosophers, economists, scientists who wrote poetry, Jesuits, atheists, Jews, Free Masons and agnostics who argued in front of us and *with* us too, and we *learned how to learn, how to be stewards of our own lifelong education by seeing it happen right before our eyes and ears, education by demonstration and invitation. Takeover from without and within.* Reed was and is practitioner of an almost physical pedagogy, with classes under 15, seminar style, often team-taught and interdisciplinary, a senior thesis 100-page plus capstone project of research, defended-before-your-committee required, published in-house, and housed next to Gary Snyder’s creative one (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems* 2010) or Ry Cooder’s one on musicology (“Pull Up Some Dust and Sit Down” 2011) or Paul Norton’s one on computers ([www.Norton.com](http://www.Norton.com) software), if you were lucky. Reedies live in hope that *their thesis*, like Snyder’s poetry one, will be frequently stolen from the library’s thesis tower and require re-publishing. This student’s, titled modestly, “Dostoevsky: Reason, Will, God and the Problem of Freedom,” was standing proud and tall but dust-covered in the tower the last time I visited in the 1990’s (class of 1978, Philosophy, English).

Our three term former National Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky (holding the honor longer than Robert Frost) has argued that “poetry is as physical an art as dance,” meaning that spoken word, when spoken or read from the page, issues from the human diaphragm, moves air molecules that physiologically affect the listeners’ ears, colliding with ear canal channels, ear drums, anvils and stirrups, becoming electrochemical dendritic and synaptic impulses in the brain after being mechanically transferred (Pinsky (2006) Reading BCCC Auditorium April 14). There in the Portland, OR milieu, air molecules moved us significantly. Steve Jobs flunked out after freshman year at Reed but stayed on another year and a half, inventing the “blue box” there in the basement of Elliot Hall and in his dorm room to steal international long-distance calls through pulse dialing, while auditing Yoga, Calligraphy, Drama and Poetry in his very successful “failed” second year (*Reed* (2012) Alumni magazine Jan.). Of auditing calligraphy, Jobs said in his 2005 Stanford Commencement Speech: “but I stuck around Reed and took a calligraphy class, one that was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can’t capture” (*Reed “Feature Article”* Jan., 2012). Steve Wozniak and Alen Ginsburg are examples of visitors. As mentioned, legendary Marvin Levich once cleaned William F. Buckley’s intellectual clock there in a debate over the Shah of Iran and Muslim clerical opposition to the U.S.’s role; the physics students still have their own (thankfully small) nuclear reactor; nearby Portland State University Iranian transfer and other incensed international students frequently burned effigies of the Shah of Iran in those days before the American hostage-taking that prevented Carter from gaining re-election in the years to come (“Argo” (2012) Antonio Mendez and Matt Baglio).

A few years later, not too far away, Humboldt State MATW first-year-of-the-program classmate Al Steen, later a professor of English at the American University of Beirut, then a journalist covering revolution, would be taken hostage for 5-years as well. Some of us wore rat suits to the vaunted Reed Psychology Department debate between visiting B.F. Skinner (*Beyond Freedom and Dignity*) and Eric Fromm (*Escape from Freedom*). Oh, yes, and a bunch of us in

Crumley's inspired fiction workshop, including Rit Bellis and Wendy Fitzgerald and Tom Hofheinz, three of the finest creative writers I've met in almost 40 years now in the biz, drove to that famous Missoula Montana ("U Moo") softball league, staying in Bill Kittredge's (*Hole in the Sky* brilliant memoir) Bitterroot mountainside house, where Lewis and Clark and Sacagawea came through, we moderns playing softball with the likes of James Wright, Jim Welsh and assorted other writer types, all of whom could play ball, all we young workshopppers first piling into Jim Crumley's newish (then) blue BMW 2002 tii and into my kiwi-colored Lotus Cortina, somehow arriving back at Reed's ivy-covered halls only a day or so late for the Monday fiction workshop led by our ringleader. This former Reddie says two things: one, the outside of class lessons, poetry readings, conferences, happenings, impromptu *teaching-learning* moments are as important as the real or virtual classroom ones, maybe more so, as they reinforce the classroom nexus and give us "something to talk about in the locker room." Two is a warning and an admonition to teachers and students alike: you must grow to love your *Giants*, as they have in part romanced you into love of your common subject matter, but your *Giants* are mortals, despite our wishing them Methuselah-like long lives and Proustian-like, miles-long bodies. They will, ultimately, leave you with indelible memories and smiles and "Remembrances of Things Past." James Crumley, (1939--2008) RIP, great teacher, great writer and great man. Alen Hoey, fine poet and missed colleague, RIP. Mike Zuroy (*Second Death* and an O'Henry prize winning short storiest), this author's first literary agent and mentor, RIP. Bill Hotchkiss, novelist, poet, critic, co-publisher with James B. Hall of Castle Peak Editions, best and longest-running literary friend, RIP (*Dance of the Coyote* 1997 and many more).

Bill, this scribe will never forget your informal workshops at Woodpecker Ravine in Grass Valley; Gary Snyder, Edith Snow, Stan Hager, Bill Howarth, Judy Shears, Gary Elder, Lee-Marie Varner, Rian Cooney, your first Wally the wild turkey, myself an awed neophyte, the night croaking away, the Milky Way and the big dipper so up-close and bone-white that you could reach up and drink from the dipper, using it as a wine ladle, the poetry and fiction moving Pinsky's air molecules and *mattering, changing us physiologically, teaching us Heraclitus' last, best message...* "Chance is a constant; the only thing you can count on is change; you can never step into the same river twice, for the river has changed and you have changed." Bill knew Heraclitus was right (and Robert Pinsky too), and he wrote like no other novelist I've read, soaring inside and outside and above the human soul (*A Winter's Tale* forthcoming, post-humously, from Castle Peak Editions). Bless you, Lee-Marie Varner for carrying on your own and Bill's work and legacy. He loved you like no other can, and we teachers and students must love and believe in our mentors unconditionally if we are to survive the mass mowing of fragile plant-life, Frost's "The Tuft of Flowers" still standing, surviving it all.

## II. HEURISTIC PEDAGOGY AND WHAT WORKS FOR ME

Likewise, this old soul asks my creative writers to attend as many live readings as possible, to go to poetry slams, even to jump up onstage and to grab the mike, to buy books from and to write snail mail letters to writers whom they admire, helping them track down possible addresses/routes/websites/blog and social media (for first contact) to get those eventual letters a decent chance of being read. Brave students often get responses and find those future possible *Giants*. I learned most of this from Carolyn See in person at a wonderful conference in the early 2000's at Ashland, OR at Southern Oregon State U., where I taught for a while, when Lawson Inada (a White House-visiting fine poet) was in the English dept. Poets like the late William Stafford, fiction writer Carolyn See herself, and poet/editor Maria Mazzotti-Gillan of "The Patterson Literary Review" and long-time Director of the Patterson Poetry Center at Passaic County *Community College*, and another of my *Giants*, despite her small physical stature, are all renowned for their generosity. Most folk in the writing business, despite its increasingly competitive nature, like to see others shine and to help others succeed, being those altruists mentioned in the abstract here. I do not think that I am being Pollyanna in that belief, with some exceptions. Carolyn, whose recent novel *There Will Never Be Another You* (2006) advances her already stellar reputation, also has a fine advice book for creative writers that I strongly recommend to all students and teachers alike: *Making the Literary Life* (2003). It, like, Stephen King's wonderful *The Writing Life*, is an indispensable companion text for creative writing classes and contains more creative writing wisdom than discussed here. I also love and use James Moffett's *Active Voice* (Boynton/Cook 1981), which is that famous program of assignments from middle school to college and to the rest of our lives, his *Coming on Center*, and his *Points of View*, models and brilliant theory for *Active Voice* or adoptable as a stand-alone text, as well as Ann Lamont's fine *Bird by Bird...* I experienced Moffett's unique approach to teaching writing and all discourse at Humboldt, under the *Giant bean-stalking*, if that can be a coined phrase, of Dr. Tom Gage, Dr. Karen Carlton (eventual Dean) and the legendary Dick Day, Ray Carver's fiction teacher. There, deep in the ancient and replanted redwoods, *Sequoia sempervirens*, the Coast Range mountains, and near hundreds of miles of pine-thatched and Douglas fir-littered trails, I even had the pleasure of taking short-term classes from James himself along with Ernest Gaines (*The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, *A Gathering of Old Men* and *A Lesson Before Dying*).

James Moffett was a brilliant mind and teacher; I'm not sure that the teaching profession has caught up with him yet, his theories and innovations, but I suspect that a Moffett revolution is still in order (please see the Moffett consortium site: <http://jamesmoffettstudies.ning.com/>), and I know that my *Giant* Dr. Tom Gage and Steve Lafer (my MATW classmate along with Al Steen and now heading up a dept. in Reno, NV) are along with interested others re-igniting that worthy revolutionary fire (see also Moffett's later *Universal Schoolhouse, The: Spiritual Awakening through Education*).

Jossey-Bass, 1994). My online (Canvas delivery system) Creative Writing I and II students profit greatly from working through seven or eight well-chosen and incremental tasks from the *Active Voice* program of assignments as they work on related, public space workshop submissions of fiction, poetry, drama (Moffett asks that they write a dialogue-driven one act play in which the dialogue frames conflict), and creative non-fiction, such as personal essays, journals, biography and auto-biography, as well as memoir and belles lettres. As leader, I try to dive into the large 29 assignment-long and outward-growing sequence at the right level, cherry-picking Moffett tasks particularly appropriate for creative writers, like the "Interior Monologue" which asks learners to invent a created narrator-as-protagonist, stretching beyond biography, to record the inner speech, stream-of-consciousness style, of that invented character's compelling point-of-view. You see how James Moffett infuses my own writing style even now, the center of within spilling ever outward, having written most of his sequence myself all those good Humboldt State years ago.

For second semester and repeat Creative Writers (I love them) in Creative Writing II, I use alternative craft writings from *Active Voice* and alternatives from *Points of View*, as well as selections from the follow-up Moffett text, which offers more student and teacher-edited samples of the assignments themselves as models: *Active Voices I-IV* (Boynton/Cook, 1987). These four anthologies offer writing from four different levels: elementary, middle, secondary, and college. The writings produced come from the wide range of possibilities suggested by Moffett's ideas of the structure of "the universe of discourse," and, while the educational tendency might be to concentrate just on the college-level samples for community college instructors, some of the earlier level models are quite useful and engaging. These one-semester more advanced students also share a minimum of three public workshop submissions in the genres of creative writing, many of them drawing from the fundings of the Moffett "craft writings" to expand and adapt for workshop. Scholar John Warnock's essay on Moffett in *Twentieth Century Rhetoric and Rhetoricians* (Greenwood Press) is comprehensive; Mr. Warnock has also reviewed Moffett's theory tracked well in most of James' publications (*The Voice*, Vol. 6, No. 1). Either way, we stand on the shoulders of a *Giant* in James Moffett, or else my students and I are getting metaphorically taller reading him, not physically shorter as humans tend to over the years, seeing further up the learning road, experiencing epiphanies.

Speaking of tall shoulders, Professor Emeritus Tom Gage at Humboldt State (and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) likewise is doing brilliant teaching poetry and writing work through his current course titled *gignomai*—which translates as "knowing by heart" ((2012) "The Middle Voice and the Internet: Negotiating Insights from Poetry to Foster Cross Cultural Fluency" TYCA NE Conference: Oct. 25-27, Syracuse, NY <http://facebook.com/tycanortheast>). Thirty five years ago, Dr. Gage broke new ground in co-creating the nation's first teaching-writing MA at H.S.U. I'll never forget, as part of the inaugural class in 1978 and hired to teach Freshman Comp. as a Lecturer at Arcata as well, the *many* rich experiences Tom and his colleagues like Karen Carleton and Dick Day, who had been Ray Carver's advisor/teacher, taking seven classes from master Dick Day *before* Carver studied with John Gardner at nearby Chico State, *led* we eager, Ray Carver and Thomas Pynchon-obsessed charges willingly into... One was the San Francisco-during-a-seven-point-on-the-Richter-scale earth-quaked conference on Brain Hemisphericity and Learning Strategies in 1979 with Carl Sagan and Norman Cousins... Staying at the Marines' Memorial Club on Sutter (what a good Army brat all grown up does), I'd never seen so many grizzled veterans like those imbibing and talking story in the Sky Room bar on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor hit the floor so fast in under-table and probably-wise hiding! Shake, rattle and roll! More to the point, the conference and the opportunity to attend as a graduate student while enrolled in Tom's class were both priceless. The earlier Asilomar conference featuring the surgeon Joe Bogan who first performed the brain split surgery for epilepsy that educator and scientist Roger Sperry got the Nobel Prize for investigating also marks the kind of inspired inquiry we were exposed to at Humboldt in the MATW.

Likewise, I'll never forget Prof. Gage's hosting me at the 1981 CCCC conference in Disneyland, presenting my own graduate MA research linking the attitudinal orientations of a large Hoopa Native American population to growth in both narrative and expository writing ability over a full year's English writing instruction on the Hoopa Reservation and using a U.C. Berkeley-designed application of the Omnibus Personality Inventory's (OPI) many scales correlated with two pre and post year writing samples for each student (Freeman (1980, 81) "A Study of Personality Orientation and Growth in Writing Abilities" MATW Thesis Humboldt State University 1980, an ERIC publication June, CCCC Conference Proceedings 1981). A long-ago finding of interest *here* is that artists and teachers score with *identical means* on the O.P.I., save for in the altruism scale. *Teachers score highly on altruism* as one might hope, while *artists score low on altruism*. Further, *writing improvers* in my study tended to score *high in altruism* and *low on anxiety* about new situations (e.g. learning), and those improvers tended to be *moderately socially extroverted*. Those scoring *high* on the O.P.I. social extroversion scales tended to be writing *regressors* over the course of a year's instruction. Tom Gage directly led me to this important deep troth of inquiry, the huge role that student *attitude*, personality orientation and learning styles play in not only the teaching and learning nexus in creative writing instruction but in *all* teaching and learning. Where *Giants* lead, I will follow, and those *Giants* led me to others as Humboldt State teachers or friends, folks like poet Jim Galvin (*The Meadow*), poet Jorie Graham (*The Dream of the Unified Field*), fictionist Jayne Ann Phillips (*Machine Dreams*), visiting Tillie Olsen (*Tell Me a Riddle*), James Moffett, and Ernest Gaines, all as important, living, breathing models who so inspire(d) that we students were expected to, were even *romanced into*, by public displays of teachers' love for their subject matter, to deep learning. *Learn* we did.

Dr. Gage has not slowed down at all. If anything, his “Gignomai” Osher course, offered at Humboldt and globally via the internet, is even more innovative than his previously inspired teaching. This teaching of poetry method, which involves a carefully crafted syllabus revealed only in-the-moment cumulatively, one poem at a time to students, pro-cursively and re-cursively recited *aloud* punctuated with the students’ *expectations* of the upcoming subsequence of lines serendipitously stitched into the recitation as the poem builds back to the original text, one line at a time, with the ultimate comparison/contrast and surprise of the poet’s actual conceit and line building comparing to how the students’ predictions and expectations bring them into the poem’s conceit, its whole atmosphere and tone, almost guaranteeing the hoped for fusion and fission of poem and student, provides “knowing by heart,” perhaps promoting learning to write by heart as well. This is a purely and elementally brilliant as well as biologically and neurologically sound way to teach not only poetry but any material written or oral. *Genius...*

Here one makes a final and honest appraisal of my current creative writing contributions to my own college for 30 some years, Freeman’s last creative writing stand if you will. That said, I offer that while I *might be* a natural teacher (I’ll leave that to my students to decide), our *students* are the reason for the college’s existence and for my coming to work each day; my interdisciplinary knowledge is strong, *perhaps*, and I definitely seek to share what I know, definately, but I live most of my professional life in the quest, just as you no doubt do as educators, doing Taylor Mali’s “greatest job in the world,” to stimulate thought and to inspire students toward *their* pursuit of self and knowledge. I continue to delight in my students’ many successes after three decades plus of teaching at BCCC and am surer than ever of our shared mission, to plant seeds, light fires, motivate and unabashedly display *our own love of the subject matter in public spaces*. Our students are in my “wonder world;” I am in Bucks County to teach them to this day. Hence, the lessons: “Pay apt attention, make notes, use all of your senses including intuition, keep a journal, mine your journal, cross pollinate with interdisciplinary learning, write your life in the way only *you* can, but tell it with Emily Dickenson’s ‘slant’ and with calculated, learned-by-modeling- and practiced artistic manipulation.”

I find that it is the whole *gestalt* of the open classroom, face-to-face or virtual, where all are adults and where anything class-related can happen and be talked about freely without censorship nor fear or censure that is special and *valuable* and *liberating*. Likewise, fostering a state of classroom disequilibrium, whereby an ironically pre-arranged student skit in which a “boyfriend” and “girlfriend’s” squabble erupts in the hallway outside the classroom door and enters the classroom and whereby this conflict is deeply observed until the students, finally in the know and relieved, write in three Moffett-ian groups pure descriptions of the event; one group narratives with a chronological ordering; the third exposit away from the story to a general principal and a thesis which in turn abstracts from the narrative exemplification. One must be careful these days post Columbine, Jonestown, Waco and 9/11 about potential agitation, but, if an educator is careful and uses sensitive forethought, such exercises can still be done in the parameters of one’s college mission and individual class curriculum. The Humboldt M.A. thesis and much current research has proven that excessive anxiety is an enemy of learning; humor and laughter are its friends; hence, we educators must work to break down student subject matter fears and apprehensions. Humor, when it is genuine and not forced, without pandering or committing Prof. Levich’s “coddling,” is a superb way to achieve this worthy end, to walk gracefully the line. It is a fine but important pedagogical line we walk together.

Likewise, there are many other faculty *volunteer* activities that matter in the lives of students: for 27 years, I was involved to a lesser or greater degree in volunteering to help coordinate the Poetry Series, Wordsmiths, helping bring Ray Carver, Tess Gallagher, Gwendolyn Brooks, Rikki Lights, Robin Moore, William Stafford, Carolyn Forché, Sharon Olds, David Bradley, Sapphire (Romona Lofton), Robert Pinsky, Andre DuBus III and the like to not only read and do Q/A but also to often meet with our in-house student creative writing club, the Tyler Literary Society—“our Dead Poets Society” -- for a luncheon or tea. Bill Stafford once brilliantly taught my Children’s Literature class in front of 120 welcome interloping students who crowded a lecture hall just to meet Bill and John Haines before their nighttime reading. A group of us took a long walk *with* him in Tyler Park that I (and I’m sure the students) still cherish, “Travelling through the Dark,” as we did on the way back to campus. Bill wrote the creative writing class a poem just for the group he visited, mailing it to us as serendipity a month or so after his second visit to BCCC, one of his “daily doodles” that arise when “you lower your standards so much that you can easily write a poem a day” (Interview (1990) and *Writing the Australian Crawl* intro.). Please see Appendix two for this *gem*. True education must at bottom be personal, both in the teacher and in the student, in order to “take.” When it does “take,” education is magic, the best of humanity shining through.

Long ago at Bucks, I was a member of the original Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Committee; its co-teaching English departmental outreach project; the themed research paper interdisciplinary grant project, team teaching for the first time at my institution, along with the Philosophy instructor and musician David Brahinsky, “Western American Literature” themed Comp. 111 classes, ping-ponging off each other, deep reading American immigration journals, photographs, music, bringing it home, tracking Manifest Destiny and Genocide, talking and singing story, *with* the students. I was the English department’s first academic advising specialist, serving for seven years, and continue to advise beyond the contractual obligation, because I personally *care* about student success and about students’ lives. I care about them, good community college students, usually highly motivated, in part because I *was/am* them, and remembering vividly not only where I came from, my *Patria*, but who I was then, whom I wanted to become, my own *attitude* and learning preferences. I learned an engagement technique years ago at a “Great Teachers Conference” in

Harrisburg, PA, at which I also met Ed Rendell, then the state Democratic Party Chair and ex-Mayor of Philadelphia, before he became Governor. The technique, which I still use, iconoclastic Luddite that I am, is to keep a small, pocket sized-notebook with each student's name at the top of a page, a few start-of-the semester notes provided by the student as to their name, background in life, major, reason for taking the course, goals and aspirations, heroes, Giants known or sought, etc. When a student must miss for "a soccer game next Wednesday," I'll make a note in the notebook, saying something like "Harsh will be out next Wed. for soccer but will read Frederick Turner's Immigration theory monograph and return on Friday in the computer lab class... ask about the game!...ask about his own family's immigration!" Students are often pleasantly surprised that a) I have a memory and b) that I have taken a semi-social interest, that I **care**. That is the key. I care about the hard-working faculty too. That is why I was also a member of the Faculty Federation's Salary Fairness Committee years ago and currently serve on the Negotiations and Meet and Discuss Teams. Why, why do all this when reality, lowest- common-denominator, TV is available? I figure I'll be dead a long time, that eight hours plus sleep is over-rated, that life's too short, and that I only have another 10 years of so of teaching full-time that I want to maximize, to *savor*, and savor it I do. I, like *giant* Dr. Gage, strive to live Kenneth Patchen's line to, "never give up this savage religion." Teaching is that savage religion: savage in a passionate way, yes, but also a religion that must stem as the drive to *live* and to *live better, smarter*.

More to the whole life point, if "God is in the details," then so it is in teaching. Good teaching is student-centered and driven by *their* learning styles, not necessarily always what and whom I studied in grad school and for which I have yellowed legal pad notes done in felt-tip pen and on archaic mimeographs, although these often hold important pedagogy, needing only to be updated, presented in various new means. I teach a lot of the developmental "Intro. to Rhetorical Skills" composition classes, where I first meet such *engaging* students as Heather Cook, James Ragaland and Taylor Smith. Heather, a single mom, started here with me this past spring and succeeded all the way thus far to winning a Lee Brandon Award for developmental writers; likewise, Taylor earned an honorable mention in the same competition during her first semester of Comp. class. James is from Africa and speaks the King's English well: a delightful young man assimilating beautifully to BCCC and the USA by markedly improving his writing skills: he is currently writing a large Composition II research paper on the major works of Frank Norris, *McTeague* and *The Octopus*, and the labor movement. When a teacher and a student work *together* to find the right mesh of learning styles and instruction, *the sky* really is the limit.

Key is to present the material in a variety of ways, text, audio, visual, recitation, seminar and debate, yes, using multiple means to "get through," but also to rethink course policies that might *exclude*. Universal design learning seeks to do this: consider ones "lateness" and "attendance policies" for instance; is there a way to incentivize promptness and regular attendance, rather than to punish the student who depends in sometimes non prompt public transportation (SEPTA busses here) or one who takes county-supported assistive van transport and then struggles as fast as he or she can down long, crowded, pre-ADA-compliant hallways on crutches and on two prosthetic lower legs lost in a war we sent them to? Such scenarios are real world, whole-person acts of small or large student bravery that are sometimes stunning in their tenacity and noble beyond words. The Universal design principle that, in making accommodations for those with disabilities, via adaptive technology and awareness of varied learning preferences, *is also a principle that benefits all* of our students in *their* and *our* mastery of the material. That said, for many if not most of our students, the Socratic method of questioning (and seeking answers) remains an important part of pedagogy in any discipline, the Levich method made course specific and compelling: no exile or hemlock drinking necessary! All writing can be creative, not the least of which is done by these under-achieving-thus-far students, and, when they catch their wind, when their attitudes and natural curiosity are positive, they are capable of lapping even those more previously educationally precocious. Their back-stories, where they have come from geographically and psychically, their narratives, genuinely fascinate me and help me see how best to teach them, and I want these whole people to *love* the material, really *their potentials*, as much as I do.

Many of these good but sometimes under-prepared Comp. 107 students advance and follow me all the way to the capstone Comp. 111 course where we use student literary panels to engage the whole class in deep reading of our material, study the literature of life in the genre's, and where we write deeply-funded research papers that *matter* to the student's lives. Jazmyn Johnson faced obstacles to her education, yet she excelled this year in our Comp 111 course, proving herself a first-rate researcher who did an excellent Maya Angelou literary research paper. Jazmyn is currently under consideration for the BCCC Foundation's Floyd Tuition Scholarship for African American students. As a support letter writer, I of course hope that she gets it. Stacy Flack, who just shined this Spring in her Pearl Buck research study, Arlynn Mackie, *who published her first trade novel while still in high school* and who wowed her Student Research Conference audience last semester (*No Nonsense*), and Fumba Kumara, another delightful student from Africa, are examples of the hundreds of Bucks students who chose to join in or stay with me through the composition sequence. I am proud of them and of their transfer and graduate school ambitions; some of them likewise become seduced by creative writing, transferring, like Casey McCairnes, to good universities like Temple, Penn State, and University of Pennsylvania, LaSalle, Haverford and the like. We are blessed in this metro area to have numerous quality universities, with many of which we have seem-less transfer articulation and dual admissions agreements.

I also have the delight of teaching Creative Writing 1 and II courses every semester, Intercession, and summer, typically online, where I have helped students as geographically distant as BCCC employees' children living in Japan

and as close as New Hope and home-place Newtown. Immersing myself in all the Creative Writing courses, I want students to see first-hand the heights to which *their language* can *soar*, so I encourage their attendance at writers' events like the ones that I formerly helped arrange. In past years, I have taken my students to meet with the likes of practicing poets Robert Pinsky, Greg Dijkian and the aforementioned novelist/*Giant* Carolyn See. More recently, it was Andre Dubus III. Many years ago, as mentioned, it was Gwendolyn Brooks and William Stafford, and these experiences are watershed ones for my students as well as for me. I always host an end of the semester Coffeehouse and party for my online creative writing students to share their work with a live audience comprised of other classes and sometimes of professionals like Maria Mazotti-Gillan, from Patterson CC and also Director of the SUNY, Binghamton Creative Writing Program. Last semester, I invited Dr. Bursk in along with a former BCCC student alumni poet. My networking connections in Creative Writing extend to my living *Giants* who graciously help me bring *real experiences* with writers to our classrooms. My outreach, due in large part to them, includes previous teaching at the Summer Philadelphia Writing Conference, and where I continue to help get Bucks Creative Writing current and former students, like Carol Rubidoux, formerly of the "*Courier Times*," and Diane Davis-Dixon, currently writing professionally for the same paper, tuition-waiver scholarships. Diane, Creative Writing I and II student for 2011-2012, is one of my best ever creative writers, rivaling even *wunderbar* Alison Springle, and was awarded a full tuition scholarship to the 2012 summer PWC. Someday, she may join the ranks of successful Philadelphia Writers Conference former students like Jennifer Weiner, of "chick lit" fame (*Good in Bed, In Her Shoes*). In addition, Diane won the poetry category of our BCCC in-house Gene Penland Prize. Former student Joy Waldinger is also thriving in her art and writing Temple transfer ambitions, likewise shining in the Penland Prize Awards, winning in fiction and personal essay categories, writing her life but working the controls of fiction and creative non-fiction.

Finally, Intro to Short Fiction students tell me that the academic debate panels I use as the *core* of the course for *student deep engagement with the material* and for *academic pre-writing* are the most rigorous yet rewarding pedagogy they've been through. I would be happy to provide the student-led panel- discussion guidelines I developed to both conform to and to liberate from in both face-to-face and online classes (Swartz, Freeman (2007) "Using Panels to Create both Classroom Acts and Artifacts and to Serve as Prewriting for Academic Writing" *Fundamentals of Reasoning* Horizon Custom Publishers). Recently, Seth Canata graced my Literature 277 course, winning a departmental scholarship for "Most Improved Literature Student." He is currently looking into MFA programs like the Iowa one and others, having found his bliss in writing and literature. But nearest to my heart is the student for whom Dr. Chris Bursk and I created a BCCC Foundation Scholarship years ago and with whom I wish to make my end: former student *Giant Ray Reilly*... Ray was a delightful, quintessential "mature" community college student when he first graced our campus in the mid- to- late-1980's, when big hair bands sadly ruled. Struggling with the kinds of family and self-esteem issues that plague many students, Ray, while a brilliant soul, would sometimes self-sabotage by not turning in a last paper or by not taking a final in a non-English course, self-sabotage. Some of us gave him "A's" anyway; some of us had to him "F's" in that incarnation. In Creative Writing, Ray earned every bit of his "A," writing his life, telling it with his "slant." After Ray dropped out for a time, his study skills and further maturity, his *learning how to learn* essentially, really blossomed. His *attitude* was always exemplary, and, had he taken the O.P.I., his altruism scale would have been off the charts. The Ray Reilly of the early 1990's was one of the two best BCCC students I've ever encountered (Alison Springle is the other), Ray being Dr. Bursk's and my Matt Damon playing the undiscovered genius role in "Good Will Hunting." With Ray's deep fundings of difficult life experience, tempered with high motivation and a brilliant mind, there was no stopping him the second time around the wheel at BCCC. He became the earned "A" student he always was in potential; he edited the student newspaper; he served as an extremely socially- conscious student President of the Human Right Club, which sponsored frequent landmark campus events, not the least of which were those bringing politicians running for office to campus to *earn* votes, and those bringing topical authors to campus as well as to dialogue with large groups of inspired students. Re-invented Ray, in short, was as pure in soul as rainwater, a pure educational joy, a natural poet. He transferred successfully for the second time to a nearby university; earned his B.A.; paid it forward culturally first by working for the City of Philadelphia as a Social Worker, then, later, after certification, as a Head Start teacher, whose very young and eager charges called him affectionately and with love "Mr. Ray." I am crying unabashedly here in advanced middle-age, but crying *here and now* from mostly joy and fond remembrance of what community college students can and often do... and from "Remembrance of (Good) Things Past." Sorry Proust... Middle-age has made me emotional, my body stretching longer behind me in and out of time and place, as the way grows wider, more precious.

### III. FINDINGS AND A CAREER SUMMED UP AND ONGOING...

... In 2006, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reviewed the reissued edition of my novel on the true story of Ishi, making it "Editor's Choice," calling it "a wise and wonderful book," and saying "if this book does not occasionally move you to tears, then you are in need of a heart transplant" (Wilson (2006) "Editor's Pick" Sunday Book Review Section "*The Philadelphia Inquirer*"). But it is not a book that is dearest to my heart: it's Ray's legacy, along with all of the great Bucks students like him. Later books were born for this college as contributing fundraisers for the *Ray Reilly Memorial Scholarship* that annually benefits ACT 101 qualified students here, those who "face physical or financial obstacles" to college. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* also said of one of these novels, *Parade of Days*, that the "main characters'



memorable stories stay with you for days.” My students stay with me for *years*, the memories that we make together echoing *forever*. I continue to tour the area in Ray’s and in BCCC’s name with new books, including the 2011 short story collection “*Irish Wake: in Loving Memory of Us All*,” from which I again donated royalties in 2011-12 based on five area appearances and six newspaper and magazine articles about the book and the student scholarship.

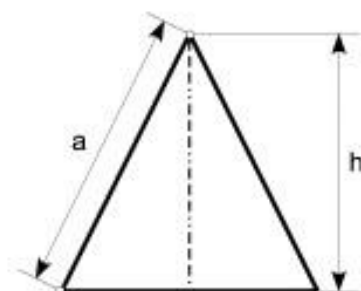
Just as I did with Ray, I share the whole, personal writing process, stumbling blocks and all, with my students, usually by the middle of the semester, when they have had their own struggles and successes and then look at me as a slightly smarter (only slightly) and older (a lot) colleague. I also support the Allen Hoey and Herb Perkins-Frederick newer student scholarships that Dr. Bursk has likewise created at BCCC, both monetarily and by participating in occasional fundraising activities, because I loved them, and because I want our students to know of their creative work. I currently serve as the Executive Secretary for the Board of the Two Year College Association’s Northeast Region (TYCA, NCTE-NE), present at the conferences semi-annually, and serve as a poetry reviewer for the same organization’s national journal: *Teaching English in the Two Year College*. Beyond presenting and taking in wonderful colleagues’ ideas, like Pat Engle’s, at *TYCE, NE*, I look for new opportunities to participate in other professional growth to stay current, including doing literature Podcasts for Cengage Learning, reviewing texts for Bedford/St. Martins, likewise reviewing articles for the “Journal of Language Teaching and Research,” presenting and volunteering at the recent *Innovations for Education* conference held in Philadelphia. More importantly, I do these things not only for professional and personal development but also to bring what I learn from others into the *communal classroom* where the whole is always larger than the sum of the parts. This is all part of practicing what one hopes to preach.

One of the greatest lines in all of sports was uttered in the 1970’s by the Philadelphia Flyers’ own coach, Fred Shero, who opined in the locker room on the morning of the Flyer’s Stanley Cup Final Series’ deciding game: “If we win today, we walk together forever.” I love the momentousness of the line, as all teachers know when they step into the face-to-face or virtual classroom that teaching is potentially *momentous* too. I say “If we can learn *together* today, in this *team*’s safe place for trying out ideas and for following them for as far as they can go, then we *are together* forever, running together side-by-side on the dialectic track of real education.” I only wish I had Fred Shero’s conciseness.

One could do a lot worse than to make good teaching their life, their *bliss*. Our amazing students and the privilege of teaching and learning from them are what keeps me smiling, keeps me gladly here at BCCC. Bucks’ students and the classroom *magic* they provide, with a little nurturing from me, *are*, without hyperbole, *my home* and are part of my extended family. I can’t imagine life without that incredible nexus of sharing with our students. To all my beloved and missed *Giants* and students who now know more than I about the hereafter, I take *solace* in the fact that the literature they created *is always spoken and written of in the present tense*, alive and vibrant, as it should be. I’m thinking now that it’s time to give this old laptop’s new keyboard a break, and I sense that you may agree. Here’s to good teaching and good learning for a lifetime, for the rest of our lives and beyond. Cheers. Aki Tsub. Sayonara. Namaste. Aloha, I like that one best: hello and goodbye in the same word, with the promise of lots of life ahead of Ernest Gaines’ “a lesson before dying.” Aloha.

Author’s note: if for some unforeseen reason, you’ve not heard enough talk stories, readers can check me out as James Andrew Freeman in [www.contemporaryauthors.com](http://www.contemporaryauthors.com). A recent sample poem, for which I share the process of composing, editing and “marketing” with students as they write their own poems from grocery lists, practice paintings and practice photography as well as from tactile prompts like a king salmon or a bunch of bananas, is accessible via the TYCA National Poetry Month link for 2012-13 [www.tyca.org/](http://www.tyca.org/) or via [This one Natl Poetry Month Rainbow Volcanic Hill James Freeman 1.MOV - Shortcut.zip](#) pasted into your favorite browser’s search box. Easier to open and view, on Voice-thread, are these short model videos by one who has, if he is any good at all, learned from *Giants*: <https://voicethread.com/share/4658331/> (poetry prompt); <http://voicethread.com/share/4657001/> (poetry prompt); and <https://voicethread.com/share/4656967/> (Robert Frost’s “The Tuft of Flowers” poetry prompt).

#### APPENDIX I. THE ARISTOTELIAN RHETORICAL TRIANGLE SENDER (WRITER, SPEAKER, SINGER, ETC.)



Audience (Reader, Listener, etc.)  
Topic(a) (subject matter)

Attitude (of Sender toward Topic) is primarily a function on the **right leg** (“**h**”) of the Isosceles Triangle and may be graphed as *positive* (upward angle from sender to topic), *neutral*, a flat line from sender to topic--**h**, or as *negative*, a downward vector.

Tone, a function of what the Sender knows of his/her audience, characterized by the Sender’s *diction choices* judged appropriate to the Audience, is primarily a function on the **left leg** (“**a**”) of the Triangle and may be graphed as a line of exaggerated-length between Sender and Audience, determined by **formal** diction characterized by polysyllabic words, many words per sentence, clausal embedding, and formal rhetorical distance between the communicants, as a mid-length line between Sender and Audience for **neutral** formality diction between Sender and Audience—**a**--relations, or as a short line between **a** characterized by *informal diction* like slang, predominately short words/simple sentences, even elliptical fragments, occasional profanity and the punctuation, pauses of breath.

## APPENDIX II. WILLIAM STAFFORD’S LOVELY GIFT POEM

### “The Dream of Now”

Your life your life by the light you find  
and follow it on as well as you can,  
carrying through darkness wherever you go  
your one little fire that will start again.

(Stafford, “Dream” in *Learning to Live in the World: Earth Poems* 1994)

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**James Andrew Freeman**, born in Montreal, Canada, the son of a military father then in Medical School at McGill University and a teacher mother, James Andrew Freeman was born March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1956. He earned a Master of Arts in English with a teaching writing concentration (MATW) from Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA, USA, in Dec., 1980 with High Honors, completed the literature program concentration in June, 1981; earned a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy with a literature minor at Reed College in Portland, OR in June, 1978, Phi Beta Kappa; and an Associate of Arts degree in English journalism at Shasta College, Redding, CA in June 1976 with High Honors.

He has taught creative writing, composition and literature at Bucks County Community College as Professor of Language and Literature in Newtown, PA since 1982; taught etymology, debate forensics, Greek mythology, brain physiology, model rocketry, creative writing and SAT verbal preparation at the George School/Thomas Edison University Summer Academic Residential Camps in Newtown, PA from 1987-1998; taught English at Southern Oregon University in Ashland, OR from 1981-82 as Visiting Assistant Professor and Writing Center Director; at Humboldt State University as a Lecturer in English and Philosophy from 1978-1981; taught writing, photography and wilderness experience for the Federal Upward Bound High School Summer Program in Arcata, CA in 1978-1981; and tutored writing at Shasta College from 1974-1976. He is widely published with 17 books and numerous articles, including *Irish Wake: In Loving Memory of Us All*

(Baltimore, MD: PublishAmerica, 2011); *Ishi's Journey from the Center to the Edge of the World* (Happy Camp, CA: Naturegraph, 2006, 1992); and *Never the Same River Twice* (with Phyllis Carol Agins, Winter Park, FL: Charles B. McFadden, 1995). Attitude, personality orientation, learning preferences, universal design and growth in writing ability heuristics research are his pedagogical passions, in addition to growing an active creative writing career. He presents frequently at teachers' conferences, such as at the Asilomar, CA Teachers of English annual seminar, the Philadelphia Writing Conference, and the Two Year College Northeast Region annual conferences.

Professor Freeman is a member of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and he serves as a voting member on the board of the Two Year College Association, northeast region (TYCA-NE) as Executive Secretary. He also serves as a reviewer for the same organization's publication, *Teaching English in the Two Year College* (TETYC), and he frequently reviews proposed texts and does podcasts for Cengage Learning and Bedford St. Martins' publishers. He contributed chapters to Prof. Michael Schwartz's *Fundamentals of Reasoning* philosophy and critical thinking textbook (Redding, CA: Horizon Books, 2007), and he won Bucks County Community College's Faculty Professional Development Award in 2006.