# Margaret A. Syverson

Carnegie Scholar

Institutional Affiliation:
Department of Rhetoric and Writing
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## Graduate Degrees

Ph. D., English and American Literature, University of California, San Diego, 1994

M. A., Literature, University of California, San Diego, 1992

## Undergraduate Degree

B. A., English, University of Iowa Writer's Workshop, 1970

National Merit Scholar, 1966-1970

## Dissertation

Title: The Wealth of Reality: An Ecology of Composition. An analysis of composing as an ecological system. Drawing on recent interdisciplinary theories in research on complex systems, the study considers writers, readers, and texts in three different composing situations, focusing on key attributes of distribution, embodiment, emergence, and enaction.

Dissertation Director: Dr. Charles Cooper, Department of Literature, UCSD

Dissertation Honors: 1995 Conference on College Composition and Communication James Berlin Memorial Outstanding Dissertation Award.

1995 Hugh Burns Dissertation Award for outstanding research, presented by Computers and Composition Journal.

## Teaching and Administration

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| September 2006-Present | Director, Undergraduate Writing Center, and Associate Professor, Department of Rhetoric and Writing, University of Texas at Austin |
| | Director and Resident Teacher, Ordinary Mind Zen-Austin |
| January 1999-August 2004 | Director, Computer Writing and Research Lab, and Associate Professor, Division of Rhetoric and Composition, University of Texas at Austin |
| Fall, 1994-present | Assistant Professor, Division of Rhetoric and Composition, University of Texas at Austin, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in the Computer Writing and Research |

Lab

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| Fall, 1991-Spring, 1993 | Teaching Assistant, Dimensions of Culture, UCSD, a required first-year core humanities and composition course |
| Fall, 1988-Spring 1991 | Instructor, Third College Writing Program, UCSD, a required first-year composition course |

## Consulting

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| February, 1996-2005 | President of the Board, The Center for Language in Learning, which conducted research for, developed, published, and administered the Learning Record, a portfolio assessment project supported jointly by the California Department of Education, the University of California, San Diego, and the University of California, Davis |
| August, 1993-1996 | Research consultant for the Learning Record, a portfolio assessment project supported jointly by the California Department of Education, the University of California, San Diego, and the University of California, Davis |
| Winter, 1991-Winter 1992 | Editorial Consultant, *Academic Press Dictionary of Science and Technology,* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich |
| Summer, 1990 | Consultant to the State of California's CAP Assessment Program: Prepared materials for guidelines to be used in the statewide reading assessment |
| Fall 1988-Summer 1990 | Consultant to the State of California's CAP Assessment Program: Prepared materials for the statewide writing assessment, Grades 8 and 12, and directed CAP writing teams in test preparation |

## Editorial Experience

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| May, 1995-2002 | Editor, *Computers and Composition Journal* WorldWide Web site; editorial Advisory Board, Computers and Composition Journal. |
| Summer, 1990 | Assisted in the revision of Instructor's Manual and Evaluation Handbook for *St. Martin's Guide to Writing,* by Charles Cooper and Rise Axelrod |
| | Editorial Consultant, *Dictionary of Science and Technology,* Academic Press, a division of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers |
| Winter, 1990 | Assisted in the revision of *St. Martin's Guide to Writing,* by Charles Cooper and Rise Axelrod |
| Fall, 1989 | Assisted in the revision of instructor's manual, *Reading Critically, Writing Well,* by Charles Cooper and Rise Axelrod |

January, 1984-September, 1988 — With Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, publishers, as an associate editor in the HBJ Reference Books division, I was involved in research, writing, editing, and production of adult and children's reference works, supervision of contributors, and the preparation of project proposals

Publications and Papers

2008 "An Ecological View of Literacy Learning." *Literacy,* a publication of the *UK Literacy Association.* Volume 42 Number 2 July 2008. pp.109-117

2007 Learning Record revision, including entirely new applications for college-level and K-12 students, new documentation, and completely revised website (http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~syverson/olr)

2006 White papers: "From the Web to Walden: A Manifesto," "Measurement and Assessment: Not Punishment but Celebration," "Roses, grasses, chicks and children." (http://www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~syverson/olr)

2002 "Role-Playing Simulations Improve Writing." *Currents*, Spring 2002, Issue 6, at http://currents.cwrl.utexas.edu/spring02/syverson.html

2001 "Thinking Through Worlds Fair: Evolutionary Rhetoric." *Computers and Composition, 18* (2001) 163-76.

1999 *The Wealth of Reality, An Ecology of Composition,* Southern Illinois University Press.

1999 *Assessing Literacy with the Learning Record: A Handbook for Teachers, Grades K-12.* Mary Barr, Margaret Syverson, Anne McKittrick. Heinemann.

1999 *Assessing Literacy with the Learning Record: A Handbook for Teachers, Grades K-6.* Mary Barr, Dana A. Craig, Delores Fisette. Heinemann, 1999.

1998 "Patterns and Process of Reasoning in Virtual Worlds." *Virtual Worlds And Simulation Conference (VWSIM '98).* ed. Christopher Landauer and Kirstie Bellman. Simulation Series Vol. 30 No. 2. San Diego: Society for Computer Simulation International, 1998. 107-112.

1998 Syverson, P., M. Leusebrink, C. Guyer, M. Joyce. "Walk four ways one time: Narrative coherencies." *Pre/Text 16* (1-2), 1995.

1996 Beyond Portfolios: The Online Learning Record, web site on evaluating learning in online environments, approximately 250 pages, published at www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~syverson/olr.

1996 "Problems in Evaluating Learning in MOOs and MUDs: Preliminary Working Models." Technical Report for Computer Aided Education and Technology Initiative. Prepared under the CAETI grant funded by ARPA and published at www.cwrl.utexas.edu/~syverson/caeti.

1996 "Integration of the Learning Record in computer-Enhanced Classrooms." in *The Primary Language Record and the California Learning Record in Use.* Proceedings from the PLR/CLR International Seminar. Winfield Cooper and Mary Barr, eds., Center for Language in Learning, 1995.

1994 "The Wealth of Reality: An Ecology of Composition." Dissertation: UMI.

1992 "Sarah Reznikoff: Pure Gold in the Archive." *Archive Newsletter,* Winter, N. 50. pp. 17-20

1992 "The Community of Memory: A Reznikoff Family Chronicle." *Sagetrieb,* Vol. 11, N. 1 & 2, Spring/Fall 1992 double issue, pp. 127-170

1992 "Noriko and Kirsten: I Could Have Been Another Tennessee Williams!" profile of two eighth-grade writers, in *Children's Voices,* ed. Sally Hudson-Ross and Mara Casey, Heinemann Boynton-Cook

1988 *The Lincoln Writing Dictionary,* Christopher G. Morris, Editor-in-Chief, Margaret A. Syverson, Associate Editor. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich and Holt Rhinehart Winston

Selected Conference Presentations

2009 "The Learning Record for Multimodal Learning" 2009 Conference on College Composition and Communication

Invited talk: "Social Justice in Education: Evidence-Based Assessment with the Learning Record," Oxford Round Table 2009, Oxford, England

2008 "The Embodied Teacher," Hakomi Conference, Boulder, CO

2003 "The Learning Record," New Media Conference

2002 "The Making of The Wealth of Reality" University of Illinois Center for Writing Studies, Urbana-Champaign

"Collaborative Learning and the LRO," 2002 Computers and Writing Online Conference

"The Learning Record Online," Sharing What Works, UT Center for Teaching Effectiveness

Princeton Roundtable "Who Owns Teaching?" sponsored by the Knight Collaborative, Institute for Research on Higher Education

"Measure for Measure:" Open Source and Assessment, Computers and Writing, Normal, IL

"The Learning Record Online" AAHE Annual Meeting

2001 "The Learning Record Online" AAHE Conference on Faculty Roles and Rewards. Tampa, February 3, 2001

2000 "The Heart of the Matter: Humane Evaluation Using the Learning Record." Modern Language Association, December 27, Washington, D.C.

2000 "The Learning Record: For All the Right Reasons." Cross City Campaign National Conference, "Changing Urban High Schools." October 28, Baltimore, MD.

2000 "Building a Wildlife Preserve: Administering a Complex Lab When Violence Is Not an Option" Computers and Writing conference, Fort Worth, May 26, 2000

2000 "Designing environments for optimal cognitive development" Computers and Writing conference, Fort Worth, May 26, 2000

"The Online Learning Record: Architecture and Design" Carnegie Scholars Meeting, June 18-30, 2000

1999 "Worlds Fair: Imagined Futures" Computers and Writing Conference, May 1999

1998 University of California, Berkeley Summer 1998 Faculty Instructional Technology Institute, August 12-14, Berkeley, CA. Invited keynote address, "Information Architecture."

1998 Conference on College Composition and Communication, April 1-4, 1998, Chicago, IL. "An Introduction to Cognition in the Wild."

1998 Virtual Worlds Simulation and Modeling Conference, Western States Multiconference, San Diego, CA, January 11-14. "Patterns and Process of Reasoning in Virtual Worlds."

1997 Colloquium on Using the Learning Record, Claremont Graduate University, October 31-November 1 "What's Happening with the Learning Record Online?"

1997 Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 12-15, 1997 "What Are Teachers and Students Learning in MOOs and MUDs? A Workshop on Research in Online Environments."

1997 Computers and Writing Conference, June 4-9, 1997, Honolulu, Hawaii. "An Interactive Conversation on Graduate Programs in Computers and English Studies: What do our M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s Need to Excel?"

1997 "Beyond Portfolios: The Online Learning Record." AAHE Conference on Assessment and Quality, June 11-15, 1997, Miami Beach, FL.

1996 Presentation at CCCC in Milwaukee, "Learning In Virtual Environments:Report On Work In Progress"

Presentation at Computers and Writing Conference, Logan Utah, "Virtual Learning Environments for Writers, Teachers, and Researchers"

1996 "Integration of the Learning Record in computer-Enhanced Classrooms." PLR/CLR International Seminar, New York, New York.

1996 "The California Learning Record: Using Technology," a presentation for the Illinois State Board of Education Center for Accountability and Quality Assurance, at the Illinois Student Learning Record Workshop, La Jolla, CA Feb. 18-20.

1995 Presentations at CCCC in Washington, D. C., March 23-25:

"An Ecological Approach to Coherence"

"From Turn-of-the-Century Yiddish Manuscripts to E-mail: Longing, Absence, and Desire"

1995 Presentation at Computers and Writing Conference, El Paso, Texas, May 18-21:

"Evaluation and the Computer Classroom: An Inquiry into Humane Methods of Assessing Learning in Emerging Systems"

Awards and Honors

2007 IITAP Silver Award for Resource Development for the Learning Record project.

2002 Faculty Research Award for development of the Learning Record Online interface

2001 McGraw-Hill Technology Design Award for the Learning Record Online, presented at the annual Computers and Writing Conference.

Knight-Ridder Round Table on Teaching with Technology, Panelist, Princeton

2000 Innovation in Instructional Technology Award for the Worlds Fair project, presented by the Center for Instructional

Technology, University of Texas

Carnegie Scholar, Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

1998 University Cooperative Society Subvention Award for publication of *The Wealth of Reality* with Southern Illinois University Press

## Funding

2006 Faculty Research Award: The Learning Record

2005 Dean's Fellowship for Research on Zen Rhetoric, Great Vow Zen Monastery, Oregon

2004 Faculty Research Award: Book project: Rhetoric and Transformational Change

2002 Faculty Research Award: The Learning Record

2000 University of Texas Special Research Grant. $750 awarded

2000 College of Liberal Arts funding to support development of the Learning Record Online. $40,000 awarded.

2000 Innovations in Instructional Technology Award, UT Austin, for "Worlds Fair." $1,000 awarded

1999-2000 Carnegie Scholars grant for developing a national archive and infrastructure to support the documenting of student progress and achievement across disciplines, using the Learning Record model. $6,000 plus travel awarded.

1998 Grant to support publication of *The Wealth of Reality,* from the University Cooperative Society. $2,000 awarded.

1995-1997 Grant for research under the CAETI program sponsored by ARPA, for the proposal "Evaluating Learning in Virtual Environments." $200,000 awarded.

1996 Summer Research Award for support while revising the dissertation for publication.

## Professional Associations

National Council of Teachers of English

College Composition and Communication

Soto Zen Buddhist Association, a national association of ordained Zen teachers and priests

## Committee Service

Ph.D. dissertation committees: Ray Watkins (Chair), Daniel Anderson, Albert Rouzie, Tonya Browning, Pam McQuesten, Keith Warren, Michael Chorost, Ray Watkins, Robert Linné, Ron Benton, Joanna Wolfe, Charles Nelson, R.W. Burniske, Lisa Hernandez, Doug Norman, Bill Wolff (Chair), Olin Bjork, Tom Nelson, Curt Reese (co-chair).

M. A. Committees: Will Gundy, Cynthia Brantley-Johnson

Plan II Honors Thesis reader: Rebecca Sims, Claire Benedikt, Brandon Wiley

Committees: The Computers and College Composition and Communication Committee for NCTE, the English Department's Computer Use Committee, the Graduate Curriculum and Program Committee. I have also served on

the University's ITAC committee and the Student Computer Access committee.

## Further Training

In the course of my research as well as in pursuit of deeper understanding of my administrative and mentoring roles, I've completed several courses of training and certification, including my ordination as a Zen priest, facilitator certification for Right Use of Power, facilitator certification for Appreciative Inquiry, and completion of Level III training in Hakomi Therapy, body-centered psychotherapy. I've completed Spiral Dynamics training and I'm currently developing that certification. I am currently working with and learning about Internal Family Systems therapy with Flint Sparks.

## Research Interests

- Recent research across disciplines in chaos theory, complexity, and emergent properties, and its potential application in rhetoric and composition
- Distributed cognition and complex systems in technology-enhanced environments
- Ecodynamics
- Information architecture
- Knowledge ecologies
- Scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education
- Rhetoric and transformational change in Zen training, psychotherapy, organizations, and nonviolent communication

## Zen Practice and Teaching

I have been a practicing Zen Buddhist for 40 years, with intensive work as a Zen student for over 18 years, with Zen teachers Joko Beck, Flint Sparks, Jan Chozen Bays and Hogen Bays. In my role as resident teacher for the Ordinary Mind Group, I provide individual and community spiritual direction, lead meditation retreats, and offer classes and workshops, as well as leading daily meditation practice and Sunday services.

- Practicing Zen Buddhist since 1966
- Zen Student of Joko Beck since 1990
  - Authorized as a Zen teacher by Joko Beck, August, 2006
- Established Ordinary Mind Zen group, Spring 1995 (see http://ordinarymindaustin.blogspot.com)
- Zen Student of Flint Sparks, since September, 2001
- Priest ordination, AZC, August 21, 2004, in the lineage of Shunryu Suzuki Roshi
- Residential Zen practice, AZC, August 2004-January 2005, with Flint Sparks and Barbara Kohn.
- Zen monastic training, Great Vow Zen Monastery, Clatskanie, OR, January-July 2005, with Jan Chozen Bays and Hogen Bays, abbots.
- Zen Teaching: I regularly offer various classes at Austin Zen Center and Seton Cove, as well as Zen Rhetoric and Nonviolent Communication classes at UT