

This Year's Grads



Lesley Anderson

Lesley, like many Professional Writing majors, took a roundabout route to the program. Her academic career began at Clark University with an Art major, veered into Computer Science, involved a transfer to WPI, and ultimately a major change to Professional Writing (then called Technical, Scientific and Professional Communication).

Lesley's love of art and theater pervades everything she does. At Clark she exercised her dramatic abilities as Snoopy in *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and later she acted in WPI's production of *The Rivals*. The next year she sang with the on campus a capella group the Audiophiles, and during the summer, she again exercised her singing and acting abilities as leading lady in a community production of *Brigadoon*. Ask her about it and she pours forth praise for the production, the experience, and the people. At the same time, her artistic abilities have provided her with the ability to create visual designs for her MQP and for classes, as well as leading her to take new art courses offered for the new gaming design major at WPI.



At WPI, Lesley has worked as a peer tutor and as an E-marketing intern. After graduation, Lesley will begin a job with American Power Conversion as a white paper author.



Kathleen Ferguson

Kathleen, like Lesley, followed a rather torturous academic path to Professional Writing: She began at Clark University as a Biology major, switching to English after a year. That year, she began exploring other options that allowed her to find the mean between science and writing. When she found WPI's Professional Writing program, it proved a perfect fit. She has focused on classes that support environmental advocacy work, both in biology and ethics, and hopes to find a job after graduating with nonprofit group writing about environmental issues as a result of her experiences in London working on her MQP.



Kathleen has put her academic training to use, working as a science writer for the Electrical and Computer Engineering department, designing brochures for the Center for Communication Across the Curriculum as well as working there as a tutor, and for the Professional Writing program doing visual designs and writing. She has also been involved in the on-campus Christian group, Christian Bible Fellowship, as a women's Bible study leader for the last year. In her leisure time, Kathleen reads novels, takes walks, writes blogs available online at kf.rainydaycommunications.net, and hones her photography skills.

**Matthew Melia**

Matt does not fit easily into one single classification. Dissatisfied with the restrictiveness of the Mechanical Engineering major, encouraged by his Professional Writing major roommate, and seeking an opportunity to combine an interest in writing, design, and sociology, Matt found the Professional Writing program.

The experiences he had in those classes provided Matt with several of his jobs. He has worked for Media Relations at WPI, as a writing tutor, and in the library (“Plenty of reading material,” he says) and now full-time for Meditech teaching their software to hospital employees. Then again, his jobs at a bowling alley and as an apple orchard monitor didn’t have much to do with Professional Writing—but fit perfectly with Matt’s personality.

In addition to his jobs, Matt volunteered as a Public Relations director for a Worcester non-profit company during his senior year. Matt considers that experience a highlight of college. He also fondly recalls his first class with Professor John Trimbur, an ethics class with Professor Sanbonmatsu, and Writing in the Professions with Scott Runstrom. And, of course, he always seized the opportunity to hang out at the fountain in the spring, play his guitar, and listen to what he describes as “underground music.”

**Lawrence Scharpf**

Lawrence spent half of his WPI career as an Electrical and Computer Engineering major. Yet his tendency to prefer writing reports to designing circuits led him to question that choice, and ultimately brought him to the Professional Writing program.

Once settled as a Professional Writing major, Lawrence discovered an interest in patent law, which he describes as an opportunity to write about finished technologies rather than personally inventing them. Lawrence has worked to distinguish himself as a writer and found that technical writing is a natural fit with his abilities. The style of writing common in technical documents appeals to Lawrence. He’ll take his skill at reading, writing, and understanding that type of language to Notre Dame next academic year as he pursues a law degree there.



In his spare time at WPI, Lawrence participated on the ballroom dance team—a natural transition from 15 years of Irish step dancing. He adds, with a wry smile, that the ballroom dance team is a great way to meet people at WPI, especially girls: “It’s probably the only club with more women than men in it.” Lawrence’s interest in music led him to host Sunday night show on WPI’s radio station. Now Lawrence works as the technical director of the WWPI in addition to working as a regular DJ.