

Alumni Spotlight: Alex Jordan Way

Ph.D. in English (2022)



Why did you choose UofL English?

The University of Louisville had the best possible faculty for my research interests. I chose UofL to be guided by trailblazers in my field (rhetoric and composition), and as a result, I received wonderful guidance, as well as publication opportunities and the chance to co-direct the Watson Conference, a major conference in the field. Finally, I received a fellowship.

Please share a little bit about a favorite class or project you developed in English about which you are particularly proud.

I am most proud of my dissertation. The project involved traveling to Nagano, Japan to interview college students about their writing practices. The interview was conducted in Japanese, and I was able to gain interesting insights into students' composing decisions, as well as how they use technology in unique ways when composing texts.

Share your best memory of being an English student.

My best memory is when I successfully defended my dissertation. I will never forget my dissertation director saying, "Congratulations, Dr. Way." Four years of hard work culminated in this special achievement which marked the end of my tenure as a graduate student, and the beginning of a new chapter in my life.

What is the most important thing you learned while you were an English student?

The most important thing is to work well with people and make connections. Most of my publications, and all my achievements as an Assistant Director for the Watson Conference can be attributed to collaboration.

Describe your career path. How did your English education prepare you for what you are doing today?

My English education was absolutely essential. In addition to providing publications and professional development opportunities, my PhD helped me gain expertise in the field, and it was required for my current position as an Assistant Professor.

What is one of the most fascinating aspects of your job?

I am constantly impressed by the knowledge my students bring with them. They teach me so much.

What advice would you give current students or recent graduates interested in pursuing a career in your professional field?

I would say develop collaborative relationships and actively pursue publications, conference presentations, and other opportunities. Don't miss out on opportunities that could put you ahead of other candidates vying for the same position.

What advice do you have for current students who want to make the most out of their experience in the Department of English?

I just want to emphasize again the importance of collaboration and also recommend the opportunities uniquely available to UofL students. Our faculty members are our best resource; they are more than willing to meet with students on an individual basis. Our administrative opportunities for students are also worthwhile; students can work as an AD for the Watson Conference or as AD for the Composition Program, among others. These are valuable opportunities and they look great on a CV.