

# Kurtis Hessel

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Program for Writing and Rhetoric, 1060 18<sup>th</sup> street  
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## Education

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**PhD** English, University of Colorado, Boulder (May 2017)

Dissertation: “Poetry and Chemistry, 1770-1830: Mingling Exploded Systems”

**MA** English, Southern Illinois University Carbondale (May 2008)

Thesis: “‘Both Remedy and Health’: The Form of Disease in Coleridge’s Criticism and *Notebooks*”

**BSC** Motion Pictures and English, University of Miami in Coral Gables (May 2005)

## Academic Teaching Appointments

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**University of Colorado Boulder**, Program for Writing and Rhetoric –Teaching Assistant Professor (January 2019 – Present)

**University of Colorado Boulder**, Division of Continuing Education – Digital Pedagogy Teaching Fellow (June 2017 – December 2018)

**University of Colorado Boulder**, Engineering Management Program – Lecturer (January 2018 – December 2018)

**University of Colorado Boulder**, Program for Writing and Rhetoric (2015-2017) and English (2008-2015) – Graduate Part-Time Instructor

## Publications

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### Peer-Reviewed Articles and Chapters

“Coleridge and Science.” *The New Cambridge Companion to Coleridge*, edited by Tim Fulford, Cambridge UP, 2022, pp. 161-177. Chapter.

“Wordsworth, Priestley, and the Revolution in Knowledge.” *The Coleridge Bulletin*, vol. 53, summer 2019, pp. 68-79. Article.

“Knowledge’s ‘gordian shape’: Keats and the Disciplines.” *Keats’s Negative Capability: New Origins and Afterlives*, edited by Brian Rejack and Michael Theune, Liverpool UP, 2019, pp. 93-107. Chapter.

“The Romantic-Era Lecture: Dividing and Reuniting the Arts and Sciences.” *Configurations*, vol. 24, no. 4, fall 2016, pp. 501-32. Article.

“*Queen Mab*, Wollstonecraft, and Spinoza: Teaching ‘Nature’s Primal Modesty.’” *European Romantic Review*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2016, pp. 351-363. Article. Co-authored with Jill Heydt-Stevenson.

“Humphry Davy’s Intergalactic Travel: Catching Sight of another Genre.” *Studies in Romanticism*, vol. 54, no. 1, spring 2015, pp. 57-78. Article.

### **Book Reviews**

Review of *Imagination and Science in Romanticism*, by Richard C. Sha. *Romanticism*, vol. 28, issue 1, 2022, pp. 105-107.

Review of *The Age of Analogy: Science and Literature Between the Darwins*, by Devin Griffiths. *Romantic Circles*, 4 May 2021, [romantic-circles.org/reviews-blog/devin-griffiths-age-analogy-science-and-literature-between-darwins-reviewed-kurtis](http://romantic-circles.org/reviews-blog/devin-griffiths-age-analogy-science-and-literature-between-darwins-reviewed-kurtis).

Review of *The Romantic Imagination and Astronomy: On All Sides Infinity*, by Dometa Wiegand Brothers. *Romantic Circles*, 2 Sept 2015, [romantic-circles.org/reviews-blog/dometa-wiegand-brothers-romantic-imagination-and-astronomy-all-sides-infinity-review](http://romantic-circles.org/reviews-blog/dometa-wiegand-brothers-romantic-imagination-and-astronomy-all-sides-infinity-review).

### **Works in Progress**

*Elements of Romanticism: Poetry and Chemistry, 1770-1830*. Monograph (in progress).

*Fear. Extinction*. Book of short stories, novellas, and essays (in progress).

## **Awards and Fellowships**

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### **Field-wide Awards and Major Fellowships**

Selected inaugural John Beer Bursar for the Coleridge Summer Conference in Cambridge, England, August 2018

James R., Ann R., and R. Jane Emerson (McCall) Student Support Fund in the Humanities, a year-long fellowship providing full support for a graduate student working on his/her dissertation. Awarded by the Graduate School at CU Boulder for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Ogilvy Travel Fellowship from the Center for British and Irish Studies at CU Boulder to research for four weeks in the archives of the Royal Institution and the British Library in London, England, August 2012.

### **Research and Conference Travel Awards**

Conference Travel Grant from the Center for British and Irish Studies at CU Boulder to present at the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism international conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba, August 2015.

Harold D. Kelling Dissertation Chapter Prize, CU Boulder English Department, 2014, for “Humphry Davy’s Intergalactic Travel: Catching Sight of Another Genre.”

Conference Travel Grant from the Center for British and Irish Studies at CU Boulder to present at the Coleridge Summer Conference in Somerset, England, July 2014.

Dean’s Graduate Student Research Grant from the Graduate school at CU Boulder in support of a research trip to England to work for six weeks at the archives of the Royal Institution, the London Metropolitan Archive, and the John Rylands Library in Manchester, August – September 2013.

Summer Dissertation Fellowship from the Graduate School at CU Boulder in support of research activities

pertaining to dissertation, Summer 2012.

Conference Travel Grant from the Center for British and Irish Studies at CU Boulder to present at the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism international conference in Park City, Utah, August 2011.

Conference Travel Grant from the Center for British and Irish Studies at CU Boulder to present at the Coleridge Summer Conference in Somerset, England, July 2010.

English Department Fellowship, single course release, spring 2013, fall 2012, fall 2009 and fall 2008.

## **Conference Papers and Presentations**

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“Domesticating Chemistry.” The British Women Writers Conference, Boulder, CO, May 2024.

“From Principles to Elements: Priestley and the Revolution in Knowledge.” North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, Chicago, IL, August 2019.

“‘Born of the Air and Doomed to Flame’: Priestley and the Revolution in Knowledge.” Coleridge Summer Conference, Cambridge, England, August 2018.

“Shocking Developments! Prophetic Materials! Professor Davy’s Weird and Spine-tingling Battery!” International Conference on Romanticism, Colorado Springs, CO, October 2016.

“Knowledge’s ‘gordian shape’: Keats and the Disciplines.” North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, Berkeley, CA, August 2016.

“Romanticism on Acid: Corroding the Enlightenment.” The conference for the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts, Houston, TX, November 2015.

“‘Nature’s Primal Modesty’: Radical Restraint in Wollstonecraft’s *Vindications* and Shelley’s *Queen Mab*.” North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, Winnipeg, Manitoba, August 2015. Co-presented with Jill Heydt-Stevenson.

“Elemental Romanticism: Humphry Davy’s Sibylline Leaves.” Coleridge Summer Conference, Somerset, England, July 2014.

“Symbolic Elements and Generic Solutions: Humphry Davy’s *Consolations in Travel*.” Invited talk at the Chemical Heritage Foundation Brown Bag Lecture Series, Philadelphia, PA, March 4, 2014.

“Disintegrated Concepts: Lecture and Coleridge’s Method.” *Orating Romanticism*, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, February 28, 2014.

“‘In Thickets and Brakes Entangled’: Cowper’s Empirical Roving.” North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, Boston, MA, August 2013.

“Eroding Catastrophe in Davy’s *Consolations in Travel*.” International Conference on Romanticism, Tempe, AZ, November 2012.

“The Materials of Symbol: Traces of Revision in Coleridge’s *The Friend*.” Coleridge Summer Conference, Somerset, England, July 2012.

"Remarking the Man of Science in Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda*." The British Women Writers Conference, Boulder, CO, June 2012.

"Davy's Intergalactic Travel: Catching Sight of Another Genre." North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, Park City, UT, August 2011.

"Coleridge's 'Ruinous Genius': perhaps 'tis *not* pretty to force together / thoughts so all unlike each other." Coleridge Summer Conference, Somerset, England, July 2010.

"Byron's Romance Historiographies: Knowing and Experiencing Ruin(s)." International Conference on Romanticism, New York, NY, November 2009.

"Both remedy and health': The Form of Disease in Coleridge's Criticism and Notebooks." International Conference on Romanticism, Rochester, MI, October 2008.

"'And Ever Best Found in the Close': The Tyranny of Historical Reading in *Samson Agonistes*." Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies Conference, Chicago, IL, February 2007.

"John Clare and the Identity of the Poet." MLA Conference, Philadelphia, PA, December 2006.

## **Teaching Experience**

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### **University of Colorado at Boulder (Fall 2008 – present)**

#### **Traditional Classroom, Synchronous Remote, and Hybrid Teaching at CU**

***First Year Writing: Writing, Rhetoric, and Ideology*** (WRTG 1150), 26 sections—This course trains students in the basics of argumentative writing and rhetorical analysis. Assignments: participation, rhetorical analysis essay, ideological analysis essay, anatomy of a controversy essay (literature review about a social issue), final portfolio and reflective introduction, peer review and online posts.

***Writing on Science and Society: Science's Pathway to Popular Awareness*** (WRTG 3030), 17 sections—This course introduces students to the rhetorical conventions of contemporary disciplinary science writing. It includes discussion of how science is translated for popular audiences and a unit in which students conducted historical research to understand the "rhetorical situation" of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Assignments: participation, "Welcome to the Discipline" pamphlet, popular science evaluation essay, history and rhetoric of science essay, peer review and online posts.

***Writing on Science and Society: Writing Matter—the Rhetoric of Very Small Things*** (WRTG 3030), 4 sections—This course explores the rhetorical conventions of contemporary and historical disciplinary science writing, focusing specifically on strategies appropriate to writing about elementary units. The course features discussion of IMRaD format, study of scientific paradigms and the history of science, and consideration of science popularization. Assignments: participation, "Substantial" literature review, paradigm comparison essay, popular scientific narrative, final portfolio and reflective introduction, peer review and online posts.

***Topics in Writing: Issues in Higher Education, or How to Shape Your University*** (WRTG 3020), 3 sections—This course asks students to reconsider their relationship to the university as an institution by conducting research into controversial issues in higher education. It includes instruction on archival research methods and composition, as well as discussion of the rhetorical complexities of engaging activist public audiences. Assignments: reflective essay on the purpose of higher education, research essay on a

controversial issue, group project developing advocacy campaign around a prominent issue, peer review and online posts.

**Topics in Writing: “Repealing Large Codes of Fraud and Woe” – Writing Nature, Rewriting Society** (WRTG 3020), 6 sections – This course surveys prominent examples of nature writing to cultivate a deeper understanding of the genre, while also training students in compositional techniques imperative to the genre. It features thorough instruction in the techniques of effective description and the use of figurative language, exploration of Toulmin argumentation and the construction of evaluative arguments, and techniques for researching and writing across disciplinary boundaries. Assignments: descriptive essay about a local natural space, formal evaluative essay on a piece of nature writing, research essay on the social dimensions of an environmental topic, final portfolio and reflective introduction, peer review and online posts.

**Engineering Communication** (EMEN 5830), graduate-level course, 3 sections—This course provides graduate students in CU’s College of Engineering and Applied Science with instruction in written and verbal modes of communication necessary for effective leadership in tech and engineering fields. In addition to providing instruction in the basics of rhetoric, composition, and presentation, this course highlights common genres (reports, memos, executive summaries) in the engineering field. Assignments: participation, journal, four presentations, personal essay, research paper, executive summary.

**History and Literature of Georgian England: Remixing the Long Eighteenth Century** (ENGL 3164), 1 section—This upper-level course introduces students to literary texts in multiple genres written between 1660 and 1830, while surveying important historical contexts. Students explore how our works could be reimagined to emphasize their present-day relevance. Assignments: participation, collaborative podcast, recorded poetry reading, historical research essay, literary analysis essay.

**British Literary Masterpieces: “Genres of Knowledge”** (ENGL 1500), 2 sections—This course studies English literature written between 1600 and 1850 in terms of its relation to other ways of knowing (science, religion, politics, etc.). Assignments: participation, two short essays and one longer paper, exams and on-line posting.

**Shakespeare for Non-Majors** (ENGL 3000), 9 sections—In this introductory course, non-majors read eight plays, including *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *The Winter’s Tale*, and *The Tempest*. It also includes a secondary focus on the uses to which Shakespeare has been put in film and popular culture. Assignments: participation, two short essays and one longer paper, exams and on-line posting.

**Introduction to Women’s Literature (1550-1850)** (ENGL 1260), 6 sections—This course takes up several foci, including women writers’ engagements with religious devotion, amatory desire, and political action. It considers texts such as Aemilia Lanyer’s *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* and Aphra Behn’s *The Rover*, among others. Assignments: participation, two short essays and one longer paper, exams and on-line posting.

**Modern and Contemporary Literature** (ENGL 3060), 4 sections—This course scrutinizes works that are multi-generic in construction. It includes a number of cross-period “lyric workshops” in which students read examples of lyric poetry produced at various moments in literary history in order to get a richer view of the genre’s permutations. Assignments: participation, two short essays and one longer paper, exams and on-line posting.

### **Asynchronous Online Teaching at CU**

**Freshman Writing Seminar** (ENGL 1001), 1 section—This class focuses on teaching writing by analyzing and writing about literary texts. It opens with an intensive unit on writing and rhetoric before shifting to consider four sequential case studies on Wordsworth and Coleridge’s *Lyrical Ballads*, Mary Shelley’s

*Frankenstein*, Jean Toomer's *Cane*, and Muriel Rukeyser's "The Book of the Dead." Each work is paired with popular journalistic essays that draw upon these texts to address contemporary issues. Assignments: posting, revision and reflection assignments, Personal Essay, Putting Literature to Work Essay.

***History and Literature of Georgian England: Remixing the Long Eighteenth Century*** (ENGL 3164), 1 section—see description listed above under "Traditional Classroom."

***Shakespeare for Non-Majors*** (ENGL 3000), 2 sections—see description listed above under "Traditional Classroom."

***Enlightenment Women Imagining Science*** (ENGL 1260), 1 section—This course surveys 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century women writers who responded to the sciences of their era. Students read works by Margaret Cavendish, Eliza Haywood, Anna Barbauld, Mary Wollstonecraft, Eleanor Porden, Jane Marcet, and Sarah Hoare. The course also includes contemporary authors Ursula Le Guin and Adrienne Rich. Assignments: posting, quizzes, Literary Analysis Essay, Critical Introduction Project, Annotations.

***Modern and Contemporary Literature: The Weird 20*** (ENGL 3060), 2 sections—This course uses 20<sup>th</sup> century "weird fiction," horror, and science fiction to introduce students to the split in literary culture between high and low culture texts, while also discussing how critics form canons. It surveys authors of the literary pulp *Weird Tales*, such as H.P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith, considering their relationship to high-modernist contemporaries. We also study 19<sup>th</sup>-century precursors like Poe and Mary Shelley, and contemporary inheritors, including Shirley Jackson, and Octavia Butler. Assignments: posting, research essay, close-reading essay, canonicity essay.

### **Honors Thesis Committee Membership**

Christina Bishop, Undergraduate Honors Thesis – Psychology and Neuroscience – Committee Chair: Michael P. Saddoris; Members: Michael Baratta (Spring 2024).

Anthony Garcia, Undergraduate Honors Thesis – Psychology and Neuroscience – Committee Chair: Daniel Barth; Members: Albert Kim (Spring 2024).

Anoush Ralapanawe, Undergraduate Honors Thesis – English – Committee Chair: Karim Mattar; Members: Ben Robertson (Spring 2024).

Nathaniel Bunnell, Undergraduate Honors Thesis – Biochemistry – Committee Chair: Robert Kuchta; Members: Jeffrey Cameron (Spring 2022).

Jordan Summers, Undergraduate Honors Thesis – Biochemistry – Committee Chair: Karolin Luger; Members: Jeffrey Cameron, Joseph Falke (Spring 2021).

### **Southern Illinois University Carbondale (Fall 2006 – Spring 2008)**

***The Western Literary Tradition*** (ENGL 121), 1 section—This course examines the roles of tradition and tragedy in Western literature, from Sophocles to Virginia Woolf. Assignments: participation, three formal essays, weekly responses, and exams.

***English Composition II: The War on Terror*** (ENGL 102), 2 sections—This course teaches the basics of argumentation by considering the rhetoric surrounding 9/11 and the War on Terror. Assignments: participation, five formal essays, and a final portfolio.

## Academic Service and Activities

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### University of Colorado at Boulder

Committee work:

- Upper Division Curriculum Committee, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, August 2023 – present
  - Judge student submissions for department awards.
  - Contribute development suggestions and approve new upper-level courses.
  - Participate in conversations, research, and planning around strategic initiatives for reforming the upper-division curriculum.
- Disciplinary Dialogues Committee, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, June 2021 – May 2023
  - Conduct research into the discursive and institutional conventions of chemistry in preparation for interdepartmental dialogues intended to generate new curricular opportunities for writing across the disciplines.
- Digital Literacy/Information Literacy Committee, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, January 2019 – May 2021
  - Develop the program's approach to information literacy in upper-level writing courses for the Program for Writing and Rhetoric.
  - Design new courses and new course materials.

Administrative Assistant, Office of Faculty Affairs, February 2017 – February 2018: fulfill administrative tasks related to faculty tenure cases, maintain a database of faculty awards, and write copy for the CU Faculty Awards Brochure and for CUExpert, the public-facing portal for the Faculty Information System.

Archival Assistant, Office of Faculty Affairs, May – August 2015 and May – August 2016: create the archival structure for 35 years' worth of CU departmental review documents in addition to digitizing print materials and providing quality control scrutiny for previously processed reviews.

Graduate Student Representative, CU English Department, 2011 – 2012: create and serve as inaugural representative to the English Graduate Student Council (EGSC) for the English Department at CU, a body meant to serve as the graduate student voice in departmental administrative matters and the overall facilitator of graduate student culture and community. Duties and services:

- Attend faculty meetings and report minutes to the larger graduate student community.
- Organize and serve (through 2017) in the EGSC mentoring program, in which advanced PhD students mentor incoming MA and PhD students.
- Arrange graduate student collaborative writing sessions, practice exams for students approaching their comprehensive exams, and various community events.

### Beyond the University of Colorado at Boulder

North American Society for the Study of Romanticism Graduate Caucus Executive Board, 2009—2015: Along with graduate students at a number of universities, I worked to establish a graduate caucus for NASSR. Responsibilities:

- Draft and revise bylaws in committee.
- Produce promotional material using Adobe Pagemaker for inclusion in conference folders.
- Work in committee to arrange speakers for the professionalization panel at the NASSR conference.

British Women Writers Conference 2012, Conference Planning Committee: I worked with two other CU graduate students and a faculty advisor to plan and execute the conference. My particular duties:

- Read paper proposals and decide on attendees.
- Work with the scheduling committee to arrange panels.

- Contact participants and arrange moderators for unchaired panels.
- Perform supervisory and logistical tasks during the conference.