



Faculty Biographies

Jacob Pinkston, M.A.

Writing an Effective Essay Professor

Jacob Pinkston has served as the Director of the Robert and Jane Weiner Writing Center at Beacon College since the beginning of the Spring 2014 semester. He was born and raised in the state of Illinois and received his BA in English-Creative Writing from Illinois College in 2008. Upon graduation, Mr. Pinkston moved to Fairbanks, AK, where he spent two years pursuing his MA in English from the University of Alaska Fairbanks and teaching the university's introductory writing courses. After graduating from UAF, he joined the Peace Corps and spent two years teaching English to high school and middle school students in Ecuador. As Director of the Writing Center, Mr. Pinkston tutors students individually on writing and assists with papers. He also occasionally teaches Beacon's introductory writing courses. In his free time, he reads graphic novels, writes juvenile fiction, hikes, and never turns down a game of pickleball.

Gretchen Dreimiller, M.A.

Writing an Effective Essay Professor

Ms. Dreimiller is originally from Albany, NY and moved to Florida in 2007, after having earned her Master degree in English and American literature from Boston College. Ms. Dreimiller began teaching at local colleges and found herself at Beacon College in the summer of 2012. She has been fortunate to hold various roles at this very special place over the past four years. At Beacon College, she began as the Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, transitioned to a newly created position as the Director of Communications, and finally, in this past academic year, was given the opportunity to return to teaching. In her current role as English Instructor, she has taught the Rhetoric and Composition & Literature courses. In her free time, Ms. Dreimiller of course enjoys reading, but also likes spending time outdoors, playing sports and games, hiking, traveling, and visiting museums.

Crystal Boone, M.S.

Learning Essentials & Self-Discovery Professor

Crystal Boone is a learning specialist and academic advisor in the Center for Student Success. She has served Beacon for eleven years. She holds a Master of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work. Ms. Boone loves being a learning specialist because it gives her the opportunity to encourage and empower her students on a weekly basis. She enjoys spending time at the beach and reading novels.



Kimberlee Paul, MEd
Learning Essentials & Self-Discovery Professor
Improving Reading Skills Professor

Kimberlee Paul has a Bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University in Elementary Education and a Master's degree from Baldwin-Wallace College in Education with a focus on Literacy. She is a Learning Specialist/Academic advisor and instructor for Reading Strategies. Her hobbies include reading and spending time with her family.

Laurie Staiger, M.S.
Learning Essentials & Self-Discovery Professor
Everyday Florida Science Professor

Laurie Staiger has worked at Beacon College for five years as a Learning Specialist, Academic Advisor and Adjunct Instructor. She holds an A.S. degree in Electronics Engineering, a B.S. degree in Elementary Education and a M.S. degree in Library and Information Science. Laurie has worked in the technology field for many years as well as working at the Orlando Science Center and Trout Lake Nature Center before beginning her current career at Beacon College. She has been a volunteer at the Central Florida Zoo for twelve years and teaches education programs, gives tours, narrates shows and performs in zoo animal encounters to educate zoo guests on the animal world which is one of her greatest passions.

Tiffany Reitz, MLS
Building Research Skills Needed for College

Tiffany Reitz is the Director of Library Services at Beacon College, and has served in this role for 4 years. Having worked in academic libraries for more than 12 years, she previously served librarian roles at Florida Hospitals' College, The Ohio State University, the University of Toledo, and Columbus State Community College. Tiffany earned a Master of Library and Information Science degree in 2008 from the University of North Texas, and a Bachelor Degree in Biological Sciences in 2004. Thriving on change, she believes that the strength of libraries is in their ability to continually redefine themselves to fit user needs. When she isn't at the Beacon Library trying to reinvent the wheel,



Tiffany devotes her time to fostering and rescuing dogs, spending time with her own 2 dogs, watching football and staying active.

Kevin Chandler, EdD, MS
Mathematics Professor
Basic Car Ownership Professor

Dr. Chandler has been running the Mathematics Lab at Beacon College for the past 3 years. Prior to coming to Beacon College, he worked as senior project engineer, and an associate professor teaching math, engineering, and statistics. Chandler holds a Doctorate in Education, a Master of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering. At Beacon College, he keeps busy sponsoring Gamma Beta Phi, and the Car Club. When he is not working, he likes spending time reading, and hiking with his dogs.

Brenda Jenkins, MS
Introduction to Linux Operating System Professor

Brenda Jenkins has been a Computer Information System instructor at Beacon College for the past two years. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology, and a Master in Management Information Systems from Hodges University in Florida. Her background in technology includes 15 years of experience, and over five years experience in Cyber Forensics. Brenda's hobbies include church events, reading the bible and technology textbooks, movies, dinner, spending time with my family, traveling, and learning new and exciting things in technology.

Russ Bellamy, MFA
Sculptural Casting Professor

Russell Bellamy grew up in Lexington, Kentucky. He studied art at Georgetown College and received his MFA from the University of Cincinnati. Russell has been an Assistant Professor of Art at Beacon College since 2011. He has exhibited his work throughout the United States as well as presenting in France, United Arab Emirates and New Zealand. His work is part of personal, corporate and government collections throughout the United States and Europe. Some highlights include CSX, the City of Orlando, the La Maison du Chevalier Gallery and the Donald L and Dorothy Jacob's Collection.

Simon Vaz, MBA
Introduction to Food Preparation Professor



Simon has been involved in higher education for the past twenty years teaching business/culinary/hospitality management at a number of institutions. His first teaching job in higher education was at a community college in Jamaica teaching hospitality, restaurant, and tourism management classes. After a three year stay in Jamaica, he returned to NYC to teach at The New York Restaurant School (The Art Institute of New York City). Before coming to Beacon College three years ago, Simon taught at The Art Institute of Tampa and was the Academic Director of Culinary Arts. Prior to my academic career in higher education I worked in the hospitality, insurance and banking industries.

Simon holds a Bachelor of Arts in Hospitality Management from St. Thomas University, Miami, a certificate in Computer, Technology and Applications from Columbia University, an Advanced Placement Diploma of Teaching from the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, and MBA in Management from Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, TN, and Education Specialist Degree in Instructional Leadership with an emphasis in Brain Based Learning from Nova Southeastern University, and has completed graduate work in Hospitality Management from the University of South Florida.

Simon also holds professional certifications in Hospitality Educator American Hotel and Lodging Association Educational Institute and Licentiate in Catering and Hospitality from London City and Guilds Institute. He is a member of the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association, the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association, and the American Culinary Federation.

Erik Day, MFA, MS
Digital Video Professor

After working as a freelance animator for a decade, Erik Day left production for a career in higher education, and has been an educator for over a decade. Still in his first year at Beacon, he is responsible for teaching a wide range of digital media classes including animation, videography, and photography along with design classes in gaming, publication, and advertising. Mr. Day possesses a B.F.A. in Graphic Design, an M.S. in Digital Media, and an M.F.A. in Animation. His hobbies include hiking with his dog and avoiding contact with alligators.

Michele Patestides, MA
Introduction to the Power of Mindfulness Professor

Michele Patestides has worked for Beacon College since January of 2006 and has served as a Learning Specialist/Academic Advisor, Instructor, and Founder of the Beacon College Peer Tutoring/TA Program. Prior to Beacon, she worked first in business and



gravitated to education, her calling and passion. Michele's teaching, curriculum and program development background includes working with at-risk and special education high school students in Orange County, Florida, as an Adjunct Instructor, and as a Youth Specialist with the Orange County Library System. She recently completed a professional development course through Harvard's Continuing Education Program, *Meditation and Visualization Practices for Everyday Living to Enhance Peak Performance*. Michele has bachelor's degree from Barnard College, Columbia University and a master's degree in Varying Exceptionalities from Nova Southeastern University. She has initiated and facilitates a successful student group on campus this year, The Creative-Focused Minds, where students meet weekly to practice meditation and mindfulness activities. In her spare time, Michele enjoys meditation, reading, the arts and spending time with her family, which includes her beloved 3 rescue pets.

Michael Lozano, JD

Mr. Lozano is a Learning Specialist and Academic Advisor at Beacon College. In these roles he provides academic mentoring and support designed to enhance student academic performance, as well as assisting students with their academic planning and goals.

Mr. Lozano teaches Introduction to Criminal Law and has served as Chair of the Judicial Committee, which handles matters of student conduct. He also acts as Title IX Consultant for the college.

Prior to joining Beacon in 2013, his previous positions included Director of Student Life/ Admissions at Barry University School of Law and Assistant Director of Admissions at Atlanta's John Marshall Law School. Mr. Lozano holds a BA in Humanities from Rollins College and a juris doctorate from Barry University School of Law.