

Meg Petersen: Distinguished Graduate Teacher for the Master of Education and CAGS Programs

by Marcia Santore, *Plymouth Week* v.7 n.29 (338 words)

Meg Petersen, associate professor of English, is a passionate advocate for the teaching of writing at all levels. She is coordinator of PSU's M.Ed. program in English and director of the Plymouth Writing Project, New Hampshire's site of the National Writing Project. Whether she is evaluating and inspiring student teachers in local middle and high schools, leading workshops for K-12 writing teachers or reviewing submissions of poetry and prose by adolescents, college students or fellow teachers, Petersen generously shares her love of language with the PSU community and the entire state of New Hampshire.

“Nothing is closer to the essence of people's lives than their language. While language may not directly influence thought, our reading and writing of words affects the way we are in the world,” says Petersen. “The full liberating potential of reading and writing are too vital for anyone to miss out on. I believe that writing—and teaching writing—is the most important work in the world.”

Her involvement with the Plymouth Writing Project has made PSU a state center for teaching writing in K-12 schools. She is founding editor of *High School Voices*, a publication and conference opportunity for high school students, and founding editor of an annual anthology of writing by teachers, produced by the Plymouth Writers Group for 10 years.

A strong leader in teacher education, Petersen created the English department's undergraduate teacher certification option and the Master of Education in the teaching of writing. She serves on PSU's Council of Teacher Education, and has been a member of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) steering committee. She holds an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree in psychology, sociology and education from Franklin Pierce College and a Ph.D. in teaching reading and writing from UNH.

Graduate Studies Associate Vice President Denise Maslakowski notes, “Meg spends a great deal of time reflecting on her own practices and shows her graduate students how to do the same. She goes above and beyond what is required to maximize her students' learning and teaching experiences.”