Writing Portfolio

Samuel Box

Professional Writing Major

Minors in History and Political Science

Kutztown University

Professional Seminar – Spring 2015

Graduation Date: May 10, 2015
Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this portfolio is to familiarize whomever it may concern with some samples of my writing. During my time at Kutztown University and my senior year internship, I gained valuable knowledge and experience in various types of writing, including: journalistic writing, desktop publishing, office/workplace writing, magazine writing, and public relations writing. This portfolio will demonstrate those skills through the samples provided. The samples are all based off pieces completed during the various classes I took while at KU, along with pieces that were assigned to me during my internship.

Additionally, I’ve included a resume and a link to a WordPress blog that has all of these samples, this portfolio, and other things I’ve written including multiple newsletters and research papers that were too long to be included here. Before each piece is a short summary of the piece’s background and objective, along with a categorization of the piece, a heading, subheading, and word count. Although this portfolio includes a variety of different types of pieces, it should be known that my experience does not begin and end with the range of samples provided.

Thank you for reviewing this profile, and if you would like further information about me, my writings, or anything else, contact me at sbox692@gmail.com or visit samuelboxsamplework.wordpress.com.
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Objective

I am a committed and enthusiastic writing student with additional interests in history and politics. I am seeking an internship/job in the field of writing, communications, or politics to which I can offer my proficient writing skills along with my sense of creativity, critical thinking, and general knowledge. I have experience in multiple forms of writing and although I am nearing the completion of my final year of college, I am eager to learn more, become part of something bigger than myself, and constantly grow as a student, professional, and person.

Work Experience

The Central House Family Resort, Beach Lake PA (June, 2008 – August 2012)

Kitchen Worker/General Employee

- Leadership skills
- Customer Service
- Manuel Labor
- Event Preparation

Walmart (May 2013-August 2013, May 2014 – August 2014)

Front End/Cashier

- Cashiering
- Customer Service
- Misc. Work
- Money Handling

Rohrbach Library, Kutztown University (January 2015 – May 2015)

Intern

- PR Writing
- Blog posts
- Photography
- Poster Creation
- General Writing-Related Tasks

Education

August 2011 – Present  
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, Kutztown PA – Class of 2015

B.A. in Professional Writing, Minors in History and Political Science

GPA: 3.1
Major Core GPA: 3.5
History Minor GPA: 3.1
Core Courses

- Creative Writing
- Journalism
- Contemporary Issues
- Writing for the workplace
- Copy/Line Editing
- Advance Composition

Other Relevant Courses

- Introduction to Mass Communications
- Writing for Public Relations
- Scientific Writing
- Screenwriting
- Magazine Writing
- Desktop Publishing

Skills

- Experience with computers
- Good typing skills.
- Good communication skill.
- Excellent writing skills.

Interests

- History
- Politics
- Film and Television
- Traveling
- Writing

Other Activities

Writer for High School Newspaper ‘The Hornet Highlight’
August 2010 – December 2010

General Board Member of Kutztown’s Association of Campus Events (ACE)
August 2011 – January 2012
Co-Coordinator for Kutztown’s Association of Campus Events (ACE)
January 2012 – August 2012

Secretary of Perforum (Kutztown’s Theater Club)
August 2013 – December 2013
Treasurer of Perforum (Kutztown’s Theater Club)
January 2014 – May 2015
Sample #1 Summary: The first piece I’m featuring in this portfolio was a story I wrote for a journalism class that was supposed to cover an event. In addition to the event coverage, however, the story can also be read almost as an issues piece, due to the subject matter involved in the event. The event was a presentation given by Jeff Chu, who is a strong advocate for both homosexual rights and Christianity, which seems contradictory, and therein was the crux of the story. I attended the event myself and took extensive notes of what was being talked about, which was no easy feat due to the fast pace that Chu talked to us in. When it came time to actually write the piece, a difficulty I encountered was in keeping my own personal political, social, and religious beliefs from influencing the way the story was written. I then had to write the piece so that it was based off the event itself, and what was said at the event. Luckily, Chu was an eloquent and articulate speaker, and using that as the foundation allowed for the piece to stand on its own without the help of my own views.

Piece Type: Event Coverage
Headline: Gay Christian journalist speaks at KU.
Subheading: Jeff Chu talked about his struggle to reconcile his sexuality with his faith.
Words: 644

Kutztown, PA – On October 10, journalist Jeff Chu came to Kutztown University to discuss his new book, “Does Jesus Really Love Me?: A Gay Christian’s Pilgrimage in Search of God in America.” As the title suggests, the book details Chu’s journey to reconcile his homosexual lifestyle with his seemingly contradictory faith in God. This journey led to him traveling more than 5,000 miles to talk with more than 300 people in 28 states. The event was part of National Coming Out Day and was sponsored by the Kutztown GLBTQ Resource Center.

At the event, Chu talked about how he grew up in a conservative family in Berkely, California, and Miami, Florida. While in high school, Chu took a religious studies class taught by a very popular young teacher named Mr. Byer. After Mr. Byer was ousted and shunned for having an extramarital affair with a man, Chu was left with, as he puts it, “the fear that, at some point in his life, the same could happen to me.”

In college, Chu attempted to assimilate himself in a thoroughly Christian and heterosexual lifestyle. He dated girls, and tried to be the epitome of a good, abstinent, Christian boyfriend. Chu joked that this proved easy since he didn’t want to kiss his girlfriends anyway.

After graduating magna cum laude from Princeton University and receiving a master’s degree from the London School of Economics, Chu became a journalist. In 2011, he decided to undertake his journey across the country to discover how other Americans lived lives as gay Christians.

While traveling, he met such figures as Mary Glaspool, the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopalian Church, and Lianna Carrera, the gay daughter of a Virginia preacher who now lives and works in Los Angeles as a stand-up comedian. Talking to KU students, Chu recalls how he repeatedly tried to renounce the faith that said his lifestyle was a sin, but was ultimately unable to do so. Chu credits Carrera with imparting onto him the maxim, “You can try to leave faith, but faith doesn’t leave you.”
One of the places Chu visited during his travels was Topeka, Kansas, home of the infamous Westboro Baptist Church. The WBC is known nationwide for their aggressive condemnation of homosexuals, and their belief that anything negative that happens in the world is a result of God’s punishment of mankind for allowing homosexuality to permeate society. Chu attended one of the Churches services and talked to several congregation members.

It was a six year old boy named Ben whom Chu found to be the most affecting subject. When Chu talked to Ben, their conversation topic was school, and how Ben didn’t want to attend it. This wasn’t out of hatred towards any gays who might be at the school, or fear of how he might be viewed or treated as a WBC member. His reason was simply that his family’s house had a trampoline and his school did not. Chu was struck by how Ben seemed to have no feelings of malice, or any feelings for that matter, towards homosexuals. During the entirety of Chu’s conversation with Ben, the first grader was holding a picket sign that said “F*** Doom Nations,” a phrase that Ben wasn’t even capable of reading.

Chu, concluded his speaking engagement by meditating on his own lack of hatred towards those who would hate him. He talked about how, despite their reprehensible practices, he viewed the families of the WBC as normal people who happened to have unfavorable perceptions. “People are never as one-dimensional as we try to make them out to be,” he said. He talked of how he remains strong in his faith by forgiving those who would write him off as a sinner doomed to hell, citing a piece of advice that someone he met on his travels imparted on him: “Thick skin, tender heart.”
Sample # 2 Summary: The purpose of this piece was more straightforward and less nuanced than the previous pieces. I simply had to attend an event and write about it. The event involved the famous poet Sharon Olds coming to Kutztown to do a reading of her poetry. The main challenge presented to me was making an account of the event seem interesting on paper. That’s not to say that I found the event itself to be uninteresting; Olds was very pleasant and read a collection of her poems that ranged from dark to funny to poignant. Writing about it without simply including passages of her work was the difficult part. I did this by starting out the piece with enough background information on Olds to make clear to the reader that she is a woman worth knowing about. This was followed by a low-key recounting of her readings. I took notes throughout the event and took special care in focusing on anything she said that wasn’t part of her actual poems. I later wrote another account of her attending a private seminar the next day that was arranged for the writing students, but this is the piece that I favor more.

Piece Type: Event Coverage
Heading: Acclaimed Poet Visits KU
Subheading: Pulitzer-Prize winner Sharon Olds came to Kutztown for a reading and seminar.
Word Count: 714

Kutztown, PA – On Thursday, Oct.25, the critically acclaimed poet Sharon Olds visited Kutztown for a reading and signing of her works, which was followed up the next morning by a private discussion with KU writing students about her writing and writing itself.

Born on Nov. 19 in San Francisco, Olds graduated from Stanford University before earning her Ph.D. in English at Columbia University. “Satan Says,” her first published collection of poems, was published in 1980 and went on to win the San Francisco Poetry Center Award. Since then she has published a total of 11 other poetry compilations, and her work has been included in over 100 separate poetry anthologies.

In the 1980s, Olds became a professor at New York University, where she would be privileged to call herself the peer of such poetry greats as Allan Ginsberg and Ruth Stone. While at NYU, Olds established a writing workshop program at Goldwater Hospital where she and her colleagues assist the physically disabled, some whose only movement consisted of blinking their eyes, in writing works of poetry and fiction.

Olds has been the recipient of many honors and awards over the years, including the San Francisco Poetry Center Award for “Satan Says”, the National Book Critics Circle Award for “The Dead and the Living”, and the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry for her most recent book “Stag’s Leap.” The latter work also made her the first American to win the T.S. Elliot Prize for Poetry.

Olds’ reputation obviously preceded her on Thursday night, as the Georgian room of Old main was filled to the brim with fans and poetry enthusiasts excited to hear her speak. After an introduction by Dr. Andrew Vogel, Olds kicked off the night by reading “The Burnt Diary,” which tells of a girl who lost her whole family in a house fire, followed by “Past Future Perfect,” “Woman with the Lettuce” and “Ideograph.”
After this, Olds paused for a moment, and then told the audience that she had decided last minute to read a poem that she was still working on called “My Favorite Scorpios,” which conveys her inner meditations as she looks into the night sky and reflects on the various Scorpios in her life.

The tone of the room then shifted from restrained and solemn to comical. Her poem “Diagnosis,” drew laughs from the crowd as it told of her mother attempting to take her to a doctor for an unknown condition which the doctor diagnosed as a sense of humor.

Olds then began to discuss her latest book “Stag’s Leap,” which she fittingly described as an “End-of-long-marriage book.” Although the book was only published last year, the 32-year marriage whose end inspired the book has been over for more 15 years. Olds included in the book poems written both at that time and more recently.

Next, Olds spoke of how she was recently inspire to start writing odes. “Pablo Neruda’s book of odes had fallen off a shelf at a book store. Well, not really, but it was sticking out so I had to check it out,” Olds joked. Olds, who is known for her use of intimate and sometimes taboo subject matter, launched into reciting her two odes: “Ode to the Hymen,” and “Ode to my Whiteness.”

She then surprised the audience by practicing her habit of reading a poem that she’s never read publicly before, with that night’s pick being “Prayer for those gone before,” a tentative title which Olds said she would likely change. Afterwards, Olds took a short break to answer questions from the audience.

Following the break, Olds read two poems concerning her relationship with her mother: “One Secret Thing,” and “When I left her.” She then paused before smiling to the crowd and stating “I do want to read this ode and you’ll see why.” The audience wasn’t disappointed, and laughed throughout Olds’ reading of “Douchebag Ode.”

Her penultimate reading was of “Repentant Thief,” which details her experience in finding random possessions of her husband that he left in the house after their marriage ended. She closed with a piece from her notebook, “Waters,” after which she graciously thanked the audience for their warm reception and the University for having her. She then spent the next hour talking with audience members while signing books.
Sample #3 Summary: I wrote this piece in an upper-level journalism class to cover a Kutztown event while also encouraging people to go see it. The event was the play that the KU theater department was putting on that semester, Black Comedy. To write this piece I had to actually see the play and talk with the cast members and then write about it without just giving a flat summary of it. This was possible because multiple performances were being done over the course of a few weeks, so it was totally possible to see the play and write about it in time for the story to be published and reach people. I initially wrote the piece as a sort of review of the production, complete with a critique of the performances and staging and an analysis of some of the themes of the play. My professor pointed out that this was redundant to do for a play that first came out in the 60s, and also highlighted that anyone interested in seeing the play will have the ending spoiled if they read my piece. Therefore, I altered it to be more of a promotional piece, one that was focused more on just getting the unconventional premise of the play out while giving proper credit to those involved. The result is what you see here.

Piece Type: Promotional
Heading: KU Mainstage performs Peter Schaffer’s “Black Comedy”.
Subheading: The famed farce combines slapstick humor with unconventional stage techniques.
Word Count: 387

KUTZTOWN, Pa – This month, Mainstage, Kutztown University’s theater company, performed Peter Shaffer’s acclaimed farce “Black Comedy”. Putting on six shows, including a sold-out performance on Thursday, Nov. 14, the play was directed by KU’s own Professor Roxane Rix, who previously directed Mainstage’s productions of “Dog Sees God”; “Tartuffe”; and “Fuddy Meers”.

Taking place in 1960s England, the play revolves around a poor artist named Brindsley Miller, who has stolen and swapped his neighbor’s furniture with his own in order to impress both his fiancé Carol’s military colonel father, and Mr. Bamberger, a rich art collector who may buy some of Miller’s work. However, while preparing for the evening, the couple blows an electrical fuse and their flat is left in total darkness.

Hilarity ensues as the couple try to restore light to the apartment while attempting to deflect the suspicions of Carol’s father. Things get even more complicated throughout the night as Brindsley is bombarded with a series of additional visitors, including an elderly woman who lives in his building, the neighbor whose furniture he stole, an ex-lover, and a disgruntled electrician, all of whom make Brindsley more and more keen to remain in darkness.

The play takes place in its entirety in Brindsley’s apartment, around which the stage’s two tiered set is constructed around. The play unorthodoxly has an inverted lighting scheme; the opening scene sees the stage in total darkness, until the flat loses power, at which point the stage lights up in full. Although the audience can then clearly all that is occurring on stage, the actors themself act as if they are blindly walking around in the dark, which leads to many of the play’s more comical moments. This technique is further played upon whenever a character ignites a lighter, match, or flashlight, which causes the lights to dim slightly.

The play stars senior Eric Eldred as Brindsley Miller, in what is his final production with KU. Erin Dixon plays Brindsley’s fiancé, Carol Melket, with the character’s father, Colonel Melket, being played by senior Christopher LaRose. Krysta Leigh plays Brindsley’s elderly neighbor Miss Furnival, with Taylor Clark, who also constructed the set, playing Brindsley’s flamboyant neighbor Harold Gorringe. Rounding
out the cast is Carly Robinson as Brindsley’s ex-lover Clea, Steve Aguirre as the electrician, and Jamal Jordan as art collector Mr. Bamberger.
Sample #4 Summary: This profile was written for my Magazine Writing class and was meant to spotlight the president of the last major theater club at Kutztown University. It was written the semester immediately following the official Theater Department’s last year at Kutztown, so the subject seemed topical and important. When writing the piece, I initially had some difficulty with how to frame it. I had interviewed the subject extensively in a variety of settings and by the time I finished it, the piece seemed bloated with background information without having a clear and consistent narrative. I had a middle, but no beginning or end. My professor helped figure out a good way to transition into and out of the main body of the profile while still keeping the smooth narrative flow and style of the piece. I also made sure to highlight some of the more amusing or interesting quirks of the subject without making the whole piece about those quirks. This was the first assignment that required me to use a tape recorder for the interview, which was obviously helpful for keeping an accurate record of what was said, but also made it a lot easier to incorporate certain sensory details in the writing, such as voice inflection, moments of pause or laughter, and what was occurring around us as the conversation was recorded.

Piece Type: Profile – Magazine Style
Heading: “This isn’t slander because it’s true.”
Subheading: A Profile of the Man Who is Keeping Theater Alive at KU
Word Count: 1504

Drew Boardman is standing behind the 840 seats of Kutztown University’s Schaeffer auditorium. His gaze is keenly trained directly towards center stage. His eyes take note of each set piece: a lightning bolt-decaled hot-rod surrounded by coverall wearing greasers, a bed on which sits a gaggle of pajama-clad girls gossiping about Sandra Dee, a spotlight falling upon Frankie Avalon as he sings through a crowd of curler wearing chorus girls. There’s a curtain call, followed by a standing ovation. Drew walks onto stage and accepts his bouquet of flowers; the crowd is on their feet, thunderously applauding him. In reality, the theater is empty. Drew is alone but for the custodial worker pushing a vacuum around the dusty stage; the roar of the vacuum is the only applause Drew will receive today. Drew’s creative ambition is all that lights the dark stage.

It’s that same ambition helped make Drew the star theater pupil of his High School. It compelled him to write a stoner-comedy adaptation of Scooby Doo on a dare, a bold choice of follow-up for a troupe who had just completed its maiden production, a drama about the Columbine shootings. Ambition compelled him to grab the reigns of a student-run performing arts club that had for years played second banana to the University’s official theater program, even as the latter was phased out of the curriculum. It’s ambition that keeps Drew juggling his school work with his professional work, all while playing the male lead in a musical adaptation of Stephen King’s Carrie, and yet he still found time to write, produce, and star in his own satirical web series. He’s also barely 22.

Drew is of average height and build, with a hairline that started to recede in his freshmen year of college, but seems to at least temporarily holding steadfast. In addition to some hair, he’s also lost about 30 pounds since entering college, which he attributes to “a healthy diet of cigarettes and coffee.” He’s handsome, with a timeless smile that has enabled him to convincingly play every character from a farmhouse piglet to Danny Zucko to a grizzled old circus magician. His voice rings with just the slightest inflection of effeminacy, and his eyes convey a subtle innocence that he would swear does not exist.
“Bitches, blunts, and bath salts!” yells Drew, after his iPhone 5C’s crappy reception cuts off the conversation he was having with a potential student advisor. “I swear to god as soon as I pay my landlord back I’m buying the fucking 6 plus.” He checks his teeth in the reflection of the cracked phone screen.

Drew is attempting to find a new advisor for Perforum, the student-run theater club that he is president of. In addition to the stepping down of their previous advisor, Perforum began the semester with the loss of its former performance space, and the temporary disaffiliation of its Vice President, all shortcomings Drew failed to forecast when he won the Perforum Presidency last April, all dilemmas he now must solve. His next call is from James Haggerty, Drew’s best friend and “partner in crime,” who is waiting in the parking lot to carpool with Drew to their Carrie rehearsal in Reading. To say that Drew’s life revolves around the theater is no understatement, and Drew admits that he can’t remember a time when it wasn’t a big part of his life.

“I always grew up around music, and I would also always act out Disney movies, so I guess that’s where I first started to get into it.” In comparing Disney movies to traditional theater, Drew submitted that “Some of the Disney Renaissance movies are the closest things you can get to perfect musicals. I mean Beauty and The Beast was on Broadway for like 13 years. The Lion King’s been their even longer than that.” He pauses before scratching his chin with his non-cigarette hand, adding “Of course it’s also basically Hamlet so there’s that.”

Originally hailing from Rome, PA, Drew was only two years old when he and his family moved to Nashville Tennessee, where his father was looking to pursue a career in country music.

“My dad is my hero. He’s a lot like me; a little less gay, I hope, since he’s married to my mom and all.”

After being rejected by two major Country music record companies, both of whom claimed that they would have signed his father if he were just ten years younger, the family moved back to Rome, where Drew still hangs his hat today. Describing Rome as “classic Pennsyl-tucky,” Drew goes on about how he starred in various children’s theater productions throughout his elementary and middle school years before taking part in a community production of The Sound of Music, which he calls his first legitimate production.

“I’ve always been really into theater, but the Sound of Musical was where I did it and it just clicked. I remember my first line was ‘I am Friedrick, I am 13, and I am a boy.’” Going into High School, Drew performed in every musical he could, including Beauty in the Beast, Grease, and Sugar, which is a musical adaptation of the classic comedy Some Like It Hot.

“I played the lead in all of them,” Drew proudly proclaims, before quickly dropping a casual “Oops,” as if he’s playfully broken some promise of false modesty that he’s never claimed to make. Indeed, the extant of Drew’s humility reaches no further than admitting he has none.
“Oh I’m absolutely full of myself and you can totally write that I said that at the top of the article in bold red letters.” While involved in his High School theater scene, Drew signed official letters and documents as the President of the Drama department, a nonexistent position.

“My Senior Year of High School, my dream was Juliard, as was the dream of any kid in theater.” The Juliard School in New York City is one of the most prestigious performance schools in the world, never having more than about 850 students enrolled at a time.

“I filled out my entire application and everything was submitted but the $150 application fee. I asked my mom for the money and she told me “I’m not going to pay $150 for you to apply to a school you’ll never get in.” A few weeks later, Drew’s drama teacher received a letter from Juliard claiming that they were interested one of her students who had not yet completed the application process. They advised that Drew pay the application fee and attend an audition on January 17, 2010, a date Drew is able to recite from memory.

“But my parents were still like ‘Nah’, so that was kind of a defining moment in my life. They wanted me to go to Penn State originally, so to piss them off, after I was accepted, I didn’t go!” Drew decided to attend Kutztown, but by the time he got there the Theater department was already circling the drain, at least by Drew’s standards.

“This isn’t slander because it’s true,” Drew assures. “I came to accepted students day and the head of the theater department was talking to a group of us, and after he asked which among us were theater kids he said ‘I don’t know much about theater but I might be able to help you a little.’ Drew’s expression changes to one of anger, confusion, and offense, with a hint of are-you-fucking-kidding-me.

“Fuck you,” he says to the nameless, absent professor. “You got your Masters from Tisch, the best Theater Masters Program in the country so fuck your ‘I don’t know much about theater.’ His tie was tucked into his pants, I hated him immediately.”

Shortly thereafter, Drew changed his major to professional writing. A year later, Tim Carlin, one of Drew’s friends in the department, called Drew asking him to audition for the play he was directing because, as Drew puts it, “They were desperate for guys. Hey, who isn’t.” Drew auditioned, got the part, and was suddenly a de-facto member of Perforum. By the end of the semester, he was the group’s public relations executive. That time next year, he was President, inheriting what he called a “sinking ship.”

Now, several months into Drew’s presidential tenure, Perforum has new advisor, a new vice-president, and a new performance space. Drew was able to lock down Schaeffer auditorium, a significant improvement from the club’s prior space, the much smaller Rickenbach theater.

“Even the theater department wasn’t allowed to use Shaeffer, and now the little theater club that could has it for a weekend.” As Drew drives up college boulevard, savoring a red light to glance longingly at the steps of the newly renovated auditorium, he starts to hum the chorus of “You’re the one that I want” his eyes once again observing a performance only he can see.
“This club may have been a sinking ship, but now it has a captain that can steer it into the sunrise.”
**Internship Samples #1 and #2 Summary:** The following are two pieces written during my internship that are both closely related, so I’ve included them both together. They both concern a website called the LearningExpress Library. It’s a website that serves a wide range of purposes and functions, but basically it’s an educational tool for high school students, college students, teachers, professors, and even adult non-students. My initial assignment, which was the first assignment of my internship in fact, was to learn the ins and outs of the website and then write a blog post explaining it. The second piece, which happened to be one of my last internship assignments, was pretty much the same, except I had to talk about the updates to the site. Basically they were plug pieces directed towards Kutztown students and faculty, and because I genuinely thought they were fun and easy-to-use resources, it wasn’t a tough site to sell.

**Piece Type:** Blog Post – Announcement/Tutorial  
**Heading:** KU Now has Access to LearningExpress Library.  
**Subheading:** Website provides valuable tools that are useful to students and non-students alike.  
**Word Count:** 295  
**By:** Samuel Box

One of the many helpful resources that the KU community has access to is the LearningExpress Library. The LearningExpress Library is a website that provides a variety of resources intended to assist not only younger students but also adults in a number of capacities.

Younger visitors to the site will find tools that can help them to prepare for and succeed in college, including practice quizzes that review your math, language, and science skills, and tests that prepare students for SATs and placement exams, among others. The LearningExpress Career Center has similar tools that can prepare visitors for specific occupations, and also provides detailed information on a diverse array of career paths.

LearningExpress also has a page specifically for users who primarily speak Spanish, which features tests similar to the aforementioned skillbuilders, but also includes features that prepare users for achieving high school equivalency, or even practice for the United States citizenship test.

To access The Learning Express Library, click on the Learning Express Library link and register for an account. The link can be found on the Rohrbach Library’s list of databases. It’s important to access it through this list so that the URL includes the login information that lets you access it as a KU user.

If you are accessing the site off-campus, use the same link from the database list and log in with your KU email and password so that the site knows that you’re associated with the university. Then simply log in using your existing account or register for one if you haven’t done so already, and you are ready to make full use of LearningExpress.

This website is an extremely helpful tool and all members of the KU community would be wise to take advantage of it.
Starting in April, LearningExpress Library will be receiving an update that includes a wide range of new features and enhancements. The update includes changes that improve the system’s performance, navigation and user friendliness.

The overall layout of the website itself has been altered to make it easier to browse through its various pages, and the search engine has also been revamped to provide results quicker. The site has also been optimized to make pages load faster and its applications, such as the practice tests, run smoother. Additionally, the website has now been optimized to be easily accessible on any devices, including phones or tablets, meaning it’s easier than ever to take LearningExpress wherever you go.

Some of the new resources added include:

- 10 new helpful e-books
- Praxis Core Mathematics and Reading Practice Tests
- Over three dozen High School Math Practice Tests
- A practice exercise that improves critical thinking skills in just 20 minutes a day.

These changes and improvements make the LearningExpress Library an even more invaluable resource than it was before.
Internship Sample #3 Summary: Like the last two pieces, this piece was a blog assignment meant to illustrate a pair of new resources that the library was testing for the semester. As with the LearningExpress piece, part of writing about the two new databases was trying out the databases for myself and becoming familiar enough with them to write about them without the descriptions seeming overwrought or complicated. Since it’s harder to make interesting two databases than an educational website, I focused on the more non-database-esque aspects of the sites, such as how the Point of View Reference Center could be used to study for and research a variety of different issues. This could highlight the usefulness of the database to any students of political science, journalism, or social studies that might be reading the blog. The same could be said for the Data-Planet site, except for economics and business students. The fact that the latter database draws upon literally billions of data points also made it easier to make it seem interesting.

Piece Type: Blog Post – Announcement  
Heading: New and Innovative Databases Being Trialed.  
Subheading: The POV Reference Center and Data-Planet open the door to new methods of researching.  
Word Count: 418  
By Samuel Box

From now until the end of March, KU students and faculty will have access to several new innovative and interesting online databases through EBSCO and Data-Planet.

The first database is the Points of View Reference Center, where you can essentially receive a quick crash course in more than 370 political, social, and public issues and topics cataloged in 35 different categories. In a simple but comprehensive one-page summary, each topic is given:

- Background Information
- Definitions for some of the specific terms used in the discussion
- The issue’s history and current status
- Various opposing views on the subject
- A bibliography of sources used for writing the paper, many of which are journals and books available for search on EBSCO

The POV Reference Center is perfect for political science students who are looking for the various sides of a certain argument, journalism students who need to write about a particular issue they’re not familiar with, or just anyone who wishes to educated themselves on every topic from flag burning, to the Arab Spring, to concussions in professional sports.

The other EBSCO databases we now have are each subject specific, with each featuring thousands of journals and hundreds of books. The new databases are:

- America: History and Life with Full Text
- Applied Science & Technology Source
- Business Source Complete
- Education Source
- Historical Abstracts with Full Text
The other two databases we now have access to come to us from Data-Planet. They are the Statistical Datasets and the Statistical Ready Reference. The Datasets provide a wide range of visual aids, including:

- Charts
- Graphs
- Tables
- Maps

The visuals feature more than 18.9 billion data points collected from over 70 source organizations. Types of data you can find include crude oil prices over time, salary statistics, sports statistics, and countless, countless others, each presented in an easy to understand visual figure. All of the data can be manipulated to show only certain stats and criteria that you require, and most charts can be presented in whatever type of graph suits you, such as line, pie, or bar graphs. The Ready Reference Database is essentially an easy method of navigating and searching through the various data graphs for a specific piece of information or study.

It’s important to note that the Data-Planet databases are only accessible on-campus. The POV Reference Center will be available till March 23rd, and the Data-Planet sources will be available until March 31st. Be sure to take full advantage of these extremely useful resources while KU still has access to them.
Internship Sample #4 Summary: This last piece had its origins in a smaller piece that I was writing about the new art that was being displayed around the library, but gradually decided that it warranted further attention, and so it evolved into a longer profile on the artist who painted the display. The profile was to be featured in the library newsletter, so I was writing it for an audience that included students, faculty, and anyone else who might read it. I interviewed the artist, Amanda Golden, through Facebook, and asked her a variety of interview questions typical to a short profile of this nature (who are your inspirations, what do you want to do post-graduation, etc.) I based the profile off of her responses. It was generally easier than other profiles I’ve written in the past since it focused more on her art than her own personality. I’ve included the pictures of her art that was included in the newsletter to better illustrate her unconventional style.

Piece Type: Profile for Newsletter
Heading: Art Student’s Display Dazzles Library
Subheading: Amanda Golden’s series of paintings is wacky, weird, and wonderful.
Word Count: 389
By Samuel Box

This semester, the library featured a series of paintings by resident KU fine arts major Amanda Golden. The paintings are part of a series called “I am Bunny,” characterized by vibrant colors and atypical character design, and have proven to be delightful eye candy for library-goers.

Golden’s chosen method of painting involves a technique called dry brushing, which, as one might guess, involves painting with a dry brush rather than one soaked in water. Then, using only a small amount of paint, Golden rubs the brush against the canvas instead of doing regular strokes. This gives the artwork a “rough, energetic texture,” and allows viewers to see the different layers of color on the canvas rather than the smoother texture that a wet brush would leave.

The characters Golden has created draw inspiration from anime-style characters and Golden’s self-admitted rejection of realism. Golden claims that her tendency to emulate anime in her work has always been met by resistance or rejection by her professor. Golden is proud of her interests, however, and so she “developed [her] own personal style that still reflects them, but in a more unique, and painterly way.”

Golden says that aside from anime, her main single artistic influence is Jamie Hewett, the main artist behind the popular animated virtual band Gorillaz, who Golden says excels at making things ugly. “Anyone can make a pretty picture. It takes true skill to make things ugly, but still appealing.”

Golden characterizes the message behind her paintings as going against the established norm. Golden says that after years of talking with various artists and art professors, she’s found that “everyone is in love with the idea of gallery painting, art in a clean space surrounded by rich people and intelligent art critics, however, this is not the modern art world.” She says that just by going on the internet, you can find thousands of beautiful and skillfully made pieces of art that concern just about any subject, all without the need of a gallery setting.

The display in the library, titled “I am Bunny,” draws its name from Golden’s blog, where she was known to her Japanese fans as Bunny, which she used as a pseudonym for publishing different paintings and animations. After she graduates, Golden intends to teach English abroad while continuing her artistic career through the internet.