Wayne State University

**Professional Record**

# Last date revised: 9 February 2019

## James B. Michels

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**Department/College:** Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures/CLAS

**Present Rank:** Assistant Professor, 1976-present

**Year Awarded Tenure:** 1982

**Date and Place of Birth:** 29 September 1941, Flint Michigan

**Citizen of:** USA

**Education:**

### High School: Saint John Vianney, Flint Michigan, 1959

Graduated cum laude

Baccalaureate: University of Michigan, Flint Campus, 1965. Graduated cum laude

Majored in English; minors in history, science, Spanish

Masters: Wayne State University, Detroit MI. 1970. Masters in English.

Thesis: The Poetry of E.E. Cummings

Doctorate: Wayne State University, Detroit MI. 1979. English Literature with a cognate in linguistics. Dissertation: “Some Structuralist Approaches to James Joyce’s Ulysses”

**Faculty Appointments at Other Institutions:**

1967-1969: Macomb Community College, Warren Michigan. Instructor of English. Taught freshman and sophomore composition and literature.

* 1. Atherton Community Schools, Flint Michigan. Sixth grade teacher. Taught English, math, science, geography, history, health, spelling, etc.

**Honors and Awards:**

Winter 1999 Excellence in Teaching Award, College of Lifelong Learning, WSU

**Teaching:**

#### Years at Wayne State: 42

Years at other institutions: 2 ½ Macomb Community College

Courses Taught at Wayne State:

1. **European Existentialism 2700. Cross-listed as Russ/Ger/Ita/Fr/Spa 2700. Winter semesters 2014-2018. I coordinate and team-teach this course with colleagues. We study existentialist literature from Russian, German, Spanish, Italian and French cultures.**
2. **Italian 5570, Topics in Italian Studies: Translation of Literary texts from Italian to English and from English to Italian. CMLLC, Winter 2013. This included poetry, short story and film of such relatively modern authors as Dacia Maraini, Italo Calvino, Primo Levi, Alberto Moravia. This course involved us in the close study of the subtleties and the grammar of both Italian and English and how best to render one into the other. Course was taught in both Italian and English.** In Fall 2010 the topic for this course was Satire, which involved us in the study of such satirists as Dario Fo, Franca Rame, Sabina Guzzanti, and others. This course was taught in Italian.
3. **Italian 1010, Elementary Italian, from 2008-winter 2019. This course teaches the basics of Italian vocabulary and grammar and provides students with on-line exercises to develop mastery of these skills.**
4. **Italian 1020, CMLLC, winter 2011, 2012. This is second-semester Italian grammar and vocabulary. It continues the work of ITA 1010, extending vocabulary, introducing past-tense verb forms such as the present perfect, imperfect, reciprocal and reflexive verbs. Students write more extensively and read more complex texts.**
5. **Italian 2010, CMLLC, third semester Italian, Winter 2015. This course continues the work of Italian 1020. It reviews vocabulary and grammatical forms and introduces new verb forms, culminating in the subjunctive. Students made oral presentations in Italian. Testing was on-line.**
6. **Italian Culture and Civilization I, 2710, CMLLC, 2008-2018, fall semesters. This class teaches the origins of Italian Culture to 1500, and is taught in English. Emphasis in this course was on the Roman Kingdom, Republic, and Empire, and on the Middle Ages. We studied the Middle Ages through Umberto Eco’s novel, *The Name of the Rose*, which most students found more enjoyable than historical readings and discussions.**
7. **Italian Culture and Civilization II, 2720, CMLLC 2009-2019, winter semesters. This course teaches Italian culture from the early Renaissance to modern times. The semester begins with Boccaccio, and examines Leonardo and Galileo from modern perspectives: *The Science of* Leonardo by Frijof Capra and *The Life of Galileo* by Brecht. We are also reading a play by Dario Fo and using the film *Gomorrah* based on the book by Roberto Saviano.**
8. **Italian 1010 CMLLC, Summer 2008 in Abruzzo, Italy, and at Wayne, winter 2009, winter 2011, fall 2012. This course teaches the basics of Italian grammar and vocabulary. Students learn to read, write, listen and speak modern Italian as well as the fundamentals of modern Italian culture and geography.**
9. **Interdisciplinary Core Seminar, GIS 3991**

This course is considered a “core” in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program because it teaches students the basics of interdisciplinary study, i.e., the integration of two or more disciplines to approach a topic or problem. Spring/Summer, course theme is Political Satire. Winter 2003, course theme is Italy, with emphasis on the interdisciplinarity of the great artists during the Italian Renaissance. Summer 1999: Course theme is Childhood. Here Freudian psychology and literature (An American Childhood by Dillard, and Grimms Fairy Tales) are used to explore the topic of Childhood. Portfolios were used in this course in which students were encouraged to write freely about their own childhoods, and to conduct an Observation (ala Piaget) of a selected child.

1. **Capstone Conference/Seminar, GIS 3080, fall 1999.** This course teaches the basics of interdisciplinary studies to entering BIS and BTIS students. The disciplines chosen for this course are technology and literature. Students are taught to analyze both positive and negative aspects of technology in education and in daily life. Texts used are Neil Postman’s The End of Education and Aldous Huxley’s Brave New World. Among other things, this course emphasizes close reading of two very different texts: the abstract essays of Neil Postman, and the subtleties of Huxley’s literary irony and satire. The final assignment is to choose a theme common to both authors (technology, education, history, conditioning) and do a close comparative study.
2. **Senior Seminar I, II, AGS 4760, AGS 4860**. I’ve taught this course intermittently since 1985 on a variety of topics. This is an advanced course for seniors requiring research and extensive writing. A 25-page research paper is required, so this course meets the University’s Writing Intensive General Education requirement. My most recent course topic (summer 1998) was the novels of Toni Morrison, the African-American who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1993. Students read, analyzed, and researched The Bluest Eye, Sula, and Song of Solomon. My other themes for this course have been A Semiotic Approach to American Media, and Medicine and Language.
3. **Media Conference Coordinator in winter 1993 and Instructor in winter 1995.** Both conferences were attended by approximately 100 students. These courses involved an exploration of current American electronic and print media, particularly journalism. We examined such topics as media ownership, the elements of a TV news broadcast, the nature of news gathering and editing, the pressures of advertising on editorial content, and influence of media on the political process. My work as coordinator involved creating the basic design of the course, contacting and scheduling speakers (Katherine Adams of NBC news and Jack Lessenbury participated), selecting films, creating opportunities for student involvement and creating student reading and writing assignments. Students read authors to the political right and left on media issues, including Ben Bagdikian, Steve Powers, Noam Chomsky, and Neil Postman.
4. **Senior Essay I, II, ISP 4991, ISP 4996. Capstone Essay, ISP 4992.** I’ve taught these courses intermittently between 1980 and 2008. Capstone Essay is a one-semester research-essay course. Senior Essay is a two-semester sequence course in which students write an advanced research essay of approximately 50 pages. In the first semester I teach and guide the students’ research in their chosen topics (required are approximately 5 books and 15-20 scholarly articles in the field), teach MLA documentation, and oversee the organization and writing of the first chapter. In the second semester students complete the essay, revise it and undergo an oral examination. I have guided hundreds of students through this process. In the spring semester of 1998, the senior essays of 3 of my students won the ISP’s Otto Feinstein Excellence in Writing Award.
5. **Written Communication Skills, ISP 1510, ISP 3510.** 1976-2007. These are the courses I’ve taught most frequently since I’ve been in ISP since 1976. ISP 1510 teaches the basics of essay and paragraph organization, critical thinking and grammar. ISP 3510 extends and further develops these basics and introduces the research paper. Both courses emphasize the close reading of texts, which are used both as sources of ideas and as models for writing.
6. **Oral Communication Skills, ISP 1560**. 1994-Present. I teach this course every semester. It presents the basics of speech preparation and presentation. Students learn to organize a speech, analyze their audience, research a topic, think logically, listen critically, and make an articulate and animated presentation.
7. **Introduction to Interdisciplinarity, ISP 6010,** Fall 2004. This is the core seminar on interdisciplinarity for students beginning their masters work in the Masters of Interdisciplinary Studies Program. It focuses on theories of interdisciplinarity, gives several examples of it and has students work throughout the semester on one extended interdisciplinary theme. The theme in fall 2004 being Political Satire, students are learning to integrate the disciplines of politics and language, specifically satirical language.
8. **Elements of Literary Analysis**. This was an advanced reading course offered in Fall 2006 at the junior level. Emphasis was placed on reading short literary texts in class among peers and with an instructor who will model the reading process. Students developed a heightened awareness of language through slow meditations on texts. The assumption is that by improving their reading of literature, with all of its resources of figurative as well as literal language, students will improve their reading in general.

Curriculum and Course Development:

1. **Elements of Literary Analysis**. This was the provisional title for a new reading course piloted in Fall 2006 (see above in “Courses Taught”). In June 2005, I received a curriculum development grant to create a course that would improve students’ reading. It will emphasize the slow, close, out-loud reading of short literary texts by students in class with an instructor who will model the reading process. Its central idea is that by learning to read literature, by becoming aware of the resources of figurative language, students will improve their college-level reading in general. The assumption underlying this course is that the decline in the teaching of literature over the last two decades correlates with the decline in student-reading levels.

2. **Academic Assistant Program**, 1999-2002. In collaboration with others, I developed a program which places peer tutors or “academic assistants” into the classroom. These are exemplary ISP students who attend a given class, do the readings, and then help their fellow students with the course’s reading and writing assignments. This program was developed to meet the needs of working adult students with reading and writing problems but who have time constraints and cannot meet tutors outside of class. Appropriate peer tutors had to be identified from among our student body, hired and trained. Interested faculty had to be oriented an encouraged to revise their courses so as to work productively with the Assistants.

* 1. **Interdisciplinary Core Seminar,** 1994. I developed the design of this course which is now required of all ISP students. It teaches the basics of interdisciplinarity and gives students the opportunity to write and do research in which they integrate two or more disciplines.

4 **Media Conference**, 1993. In collaboration with two colleagues, I designed this conference which introduces students to a critical look at American news media: ownership, economics, advertising, news gathering, the operations of a TV news channel, etc. See above in **Teaching.**

5 **Developmental Reading and Writing, ISP 0150**. I designed this course for ISP and DCE students. It introduces students to strategies for reading comprehension and works on the basics of academic writing: grammar, sentence structure, paragraph organization and development, basic essay organization.

6 **Written Communications, ISP 1510, and Intermediate Reading and Writing, GIS 3510.** As a member of the Literacy and Critical Thought Division, I worked on the development of these, our freshman and sophomore communications courses. See above in **Teaching.**

7 **Oral Communications, ISP 1560**. Received an ISP summer curriculum development grant to work on the addition of Power Point to students’ repertoire of visual aids.

**Grants:**

In May 2005 I received a summer research grant of $3000 from the ISP to develop an advanced reading course tentatively entitled “Elements of Literary Analysis.” This course was piloted in Fall 2006.

**Publications in Refereed Journals:**

“Matière faite voix,” *Sonorités : Chronique de la chose entendue,* No.2 (December 2007), eds Roberto Barbanti and Pierre Marièton, Nîmes, Champ Social Èditions : 137-147.

“Roland Barthes: Against Language,” Etc.: A Review of General Semantics, 52, No. 2 (summer 1995): 155-173.

“Scylla and Charybdis: Revenge in James Joyce’s Ulysses,” James Joyce Quarterly, 20, No.2 (winter 1983): 175-192.

“The Role of Language in Consciousness: A Structuralist Look at ‘Proteus’ in James Joyce’s Ulysses,” Language and Style, 15, No. 1 (winter 1982): 23-32.

“Teaching Reading and Writing to Adults with Audio Cassette Tapes,” College Composition and Communication, 33 (October, 1982): 317-320.

**Publications of Conference Proceedings:**

“Songeant à un passage de Christian Bobin,” in *Le dinamiche della bellezza: Pensieri e percorsi estetici, scientifici e filosofici.* Eds. Roberto Barbanti and Luciano Boi. Rimini Italy: Raffaelli Editore, 2005: 419-426.

« Ville-anti-ville : La politique de la piazza de Dario Fo. » in *Poétiques, esthétiques et politiques de la ville : colloque international,* 27-29 January 2005. Editor: Pascal Gabellone. Montpellier France, to appear.

“Roland Barthes and the Cosmo Cover Girl,” in Semiotics 1985, ed. John Deely. New York: University Press of America, 1985: 195-202.

**Published Translations:**

**“On a Single Color”: “Saying Red,” “Doing Red,” “Turning Red . . . Praying Red”; “A Question of Measure”: “Length,” “Breadth,” “Height.” Translations from the Italian of six short stories by Simona Capra. Original titles: “Di un unico colore”: “Rosso dire,” “Rosso fare,” “Rosso re”; “Una questione di misure”: “Lunghezza,” “Larghezza,” “Altezza.” In *Di un onesto sentire* by Simona Capra. Ed. Fabio Biondi. Mondaino Italy: L’arboreto Edizioni, 2012: 72-92.**

**“Mexicói Utica: Fragment no. 17” in *Open City*, (a journal of modern international literature). Eds. Thomas Beller and Joanna Yas. Winter 2010-2011: 123-128. A translation of “Mexicói utca: frammento n. 17” by Giuseppe O. Longo.**

“Conjectures about Hell,” in *Open City* (literary journal), No. 25. Eds Thomas Beller and Joanna Yas, summer 2008: 183-190. Translation from the Italian of “Congetture sull’inferno,” by Giuseppe O. Longo, in *Congetture sull’inferno,* Faenza Italy: Mobydick, 1995: 26-35. (3rd year)

Saint Francis of Assisi, Marcel Duchamp: Rudiments for an Aesth-ethic, a translation of San Francesco d’Assisi, Marcel Duchamp:Rudimenti per un’est-etica by Roberto Barbanti, ed. Danilo Montanari, Ravenna Italy, 2001.

**Publication in a Catalogue for an Artistic Exposition:**

“Pierre Mariétan et le lac souterrain de Saint-Léonard,” in the catalogue *Ángel Duarte, Hommage à Zurbarán (Peinture)et Pierre Mariétan, Voix captives (Musique).* Sponsored by the Musée cantonal des beaux-arts Sion, Switzerland, 2004.

**Publications of Creative Work:**

“Without Waking the Children” (poem), Michigan Hot Apples (1973): 28.

“Survivor Guilt,” “In Rising Sunlight,” “My Woman” (poems), riverrun 1, No. 1 (1971): 13-15.

“The Sex Crimes of a Short Teenage Catholic” (short story), riverrun 1, No.2 (1972): 19-23.

“Final Clamor for Attention” (short story), Reflector (1970): 4-9.

**Presentations at National and International Conferences:**

“La poésie, et l’influence du langage sur la perception du son” Conference entitled “L’environment sonore” Sion Switzerland, August 2004. Presented in French.

“James Joyce as an Italian Writer” Association of Integrative Studies Conference, Detroit Michigan, October 2003.

“Le fragment : Antiforme ou compagnon de route ?” Pharos Conference in Urbino Italy, September 2002.

“La Beauté? Faire silence” Conference entitled “L’environment sonore” Vissoie, Switzerland, August 2001. Presented in French

“Songeant à un passage de Christian Bobin.” Conference entitled “What is Beauty in the Sciences, Art and Philosophy, San Leo, Italy, April 2001. Presented in French

“Science and *Signifiance* in the Work of Roland Barthes.” Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Semiotic Society of America, Chicago, Oct/Nov. 1992.

“Joyce’s Language and the Denial of the Law.” Joyce and the Law Symposium in Vancouver. B.C., June 1991.

“Local Color and Personal Perfume: The Agency of the Letter in Finnegans Wake. James Joyce International Symposium in Monaco, June 1990.

“Finnegans Wake and the Seme-Self, or Outplaying the Subject.” Fiftification of the Publication of Finnegans Wake (Fiftieth anniversary), Berkeley California, July 1989.

“Flaubert and Joyce: The Opposite of Stupidity.” Foreign Language Conference, Lexington Kentucky, April 1989.

“Roland Barthes and the Cosmo Cover Girl.” Tenth Annual Meeting of the Semiotic Society of America, Reading PA, 1985.

“Stephen’s Kevin Egan Reverie in ‘Proteus’: A Structuralist Analysis.” New Mexico James Joyce Symposium, Albuquerque NM, 1981.

“Notes on Audio Cassette Tapes: Literacy and Adult Education.” To Educate the People Consortium, Kansas City, 1981.

“’Scylla and Charybdis’: Hamlet 1904.” Provincetown James Joyce Symposium, Provincetown MA, 1980.

**Michigan Presentations:**

**“Quest’Italia s’ha da fare: A Brief History of the Italian Risorgimento and Its Major Characters” Wayne State University, 18 October 2011.**

**“The Italian Risorgimento (Resurgence).” Wayne State University, 26 March 2011.**

Participant in Panel Discussion on On-Line Teaching and Learning with colleagues from the Interdisciplinary Studies Program. Technology and Teaching Conference, Wayne State University, Detroit MI, March 2001.

“Teaching Writing to Adults Using Contemporary World Literature” with Michael Laughlan. Midwest Institute for International Studies and Foreign Languages.” Kalamazoo Community College, Kalamazoo MI, June 1994.

**Presentations of Creative Work:**

“Maria’s Mambo.” Homeless Benefit Readings, Macomb Community College, Warren MI, November 1998.

“The Rain of Queen Judith.” ISP Faculty Retreat, Wayne State University, Detroit MI, 1995.

“Survivor Guilt,” “Josh, Age 12” (poems). ISP Faculty Writing Festival, Wayne State University, Detroit MI 1994.

“J. Haulk and Wheezal” (short story). Macomb Community College, Warren MI, 1982.

“Mapping My Way to You” and other poems. McGregor Library. Highland Park MI, 1972.

“Purchase Agreement” (short story). McGregor Library, Highland Park MI. 1971.

“My Father” and other poems. University of Michigan, Flint Campus, Flint MI, 1968.

**Service**

**University Committees:**

Nominations Committee, fall 1999. Responsibilities include finding eligible faculty

members from ISP to serve on 9 University committees and meeting with University

colleagues to create a slate of candidates for these committees, to be presented to the Provost for her final selection.

**Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures**

**Assessment Committee representing the Italian Area, Winter 2014.**

**Responsibilities include creating a mission statement for the Italian Area,**

**formulating desired learning outcomes, creating a curriculum map, researching**

**means of evaluating student progress towards learning goals, submitting results**

**on CMLLC Blackboard website.**

**Convener for the Italian Area, 2008-2014. Duties include convening meetings of the Italian area, scheduling area courses, representing the Italian area on the Graduate, Policy, and Program Review committees.**

Undergraduate Advisor for Romance Languages, CMLLC, 2009-2010 academic year. I met weekly with students studying Romance languages. Guided students through the process of declaring majors and minors in Italian, Spanish and French. Advised students on courses needed to complete their programs, did degree audits every semester for students planning to graduate, worked with the Transfer Office to determine the transferability of courses from other universities, resolved problems that came up with individual students, set up and monitored the Assessment of Knowledge exams for graduating seniors.

**Graduate Committee, CMLLC, 2010-2012. Worked on policy for Graduate Teaching Assistants**

Tenure and Promotion, CMLLC, 2008-2009 academic year. Considered applications for sabbaticals and tenure. Responsibilities included reading and evaluating the feasibility of sabbatical projects, reading scholarly work, letters of recommendations, and the teaching records of tenure applicants.

**Policy Committee, CMLLC, 2008-2019. Evaluate with committee colleagues proposals for changes to existing courses, revisions in departmental bylaws and policies regarding senior lecturers. Advise the director on changes needed in fluctuating economic times. We are about to work on finding a new Chair for CMLLC.**

**Salary Committee, CMLLC, Winter 2015, 2016, 2017. Evaluate colleagues CV’s Three-Year Windows and Set Scores to determine salary adjustments.**

**Interdisciplinary Studies Program Committees:**

Faculty Assembly Chair, fall 99/winter 2000 and winter 2001. Responsibilities include the following: calling and chairing meetings of the faculty as a whole to discuss Program issues; creating the ballot and conducting the vote for ISP committees; sitting on the University Nominations Committee.

Salary Committee, academic years 1996/97 and winter/fall 2000, winter 2004, 2006. Responsibilities include reading and evaluating ISP faculty professional records and student evaluations. The committee then ranks faculty members in the areas of scholarship, teaching and service for submission to the Dean who uses them in his determinations of merit increases.

Promotion and Tenure Committee, academic years 1997/98, 1999/2000, 2003/2004, 2005/2006, 2006-2007. Responsibilities include evaluating Professional Records of candidates applying either for promotion or tenure. Candidates are evaluated in the areas of scholarship, teaching and service. This committee is also responsible for evaluating faculty sabbatical applications. Attention is paid to the quality and feasibility of the proposed project, the value of the project to the candidate’s career and the results of the previous sabbatical. Members of the committee also mentor candidates in the writing of their proposals.

Faculty Search Committee, 1997/98. This committee involved numerous meetings and preparations for meetings in which the following things were accomplished: an advertisement for a faculty position in the ISP Science and Technology Divisijon was designed; potential minority candidates were identified, telephoned and encouraged to apply; applications for the position were reviewed; a list of 6 candidates were selected for interviews; candidates were met with in day-long sessions; meetings were held to determine a final list of 3 candidates to be sent to the Director and the Dean.

Coordinator, Literacy and Critical Thought Division, 1986/87, 91/92, 93/94, 97/98, 01/02, 03/04 This coordinatorship is perhaps the most time-and-energy consuming of all our divisional coordinatorships. There are the usual demands of attending Coordinators’ meetings, preparing and scheduling divisional meetings, and arranging full-time faculty teaching assignments. He must also write annual reviews for untenured faculty members. In addition, the coordinator must locate, hire and assign classes to approximately 10 adjunct faculty members. The latter teach GST 2710, GIS 1510, GIS, 1560, AGS 4991, AGS 4992, AGS 4996, GIS 2030.

Curriculum Committee, chair 1995; member 1993, 2001/2002, 2003/2004, 2005/2006. This committee is responsible for proposing and evaluating faculty curriculum initiatives. New courses are considered in and of themselves as well as for how well they would integrate into our program of interdisciplinary studies. Determinations must also be made as to whether certain courses meet General Education requirements. In 1995 we worked on an Honors Program. As Chair in 2003, I have been responsible for the oversight of General Education Reviews for 8 courses.

Academic Standing Committee, fall 1995, 2001-2002. In 1995 we were responsible for reading and evaluating 10 Senior Essays (50-page manuscripts) to determine winners of the Feinstein Award for Excellence in Senior Writing. This is the ongoing responsibility of the committee. In fall 2001 we were responsible for settling grades disputes between students and faculty of ISP.

Name Change Committee, Chair, fall 1989. Our current name, the Interdisciplinary Studies Program, is the result of the work of this committee. We were responsible for the following: negotiating the complex process of determining a name appropriate to a College withing Wayne State University; conducting a comparative study of other U.S. university programs with interdisciplinary designations; meeting periodically with the ISP faculty to elicit their suggestions and ultimately to secure their approval for our final choice.

**Other Service Assignments:**

**May 2011: Reviewing films for the Italian film festival which takes place at various areas in Detroit and the Detroit metropolitan area in spring.**

English Proficiency Exam Tutorials. Annually from 1989 until recently I have done a 1 ½ hour presentation to the New Student Conference to orient ISP students to this examination. I have also conducted, annually, small group sessions for ISP students.

Interviewing of Adjunct faculty. As Chair and as a member of the Literacy and Critical Thought division, I conduct interviews with my colleagues as necessary to fill part-time positions in the ISP and DCE programs.

AAUP Council Representative for ISP in fall 1989.