

LESA PETERSEN

Michigan | lesapetersen@gmail.com | Portfolio: lesapetersen.com

Award-winning writer, editor, communications manager, graphic designer, website content specialist, and public relations professional with expertise in creating and managing thousands of successful projects and compelling campaigns and media—largely for higher education and also for nonprofits, startups, small businesses, and Fortune 500 companies.

EDUCATION

- **M.A. English Linguistics, Purdue University.** 4.0 GPA. Focus in linguistics and semiotics.
- **B.S. Audiology and Speech Science, Purdue University.** English and philosophy minors.

TOP SKILLS AND CORE COMPETENCIES

- **MULTICHANNEL WRITING:** Branding content, feature stories, campaigns, research articles, fundraising cases, grants, impact reports, news stories, press releases, magazines, newsletters, event materials, marketing emails, mailers, brochures, speeches, social media, blogs, video scripts, radio ads, posters, taglines, billboards, textbooks, retail collateral.
- **EDITING:** English grammar and editorial style. Chicago Manual of Style, AP Style, MLA Style, and APA Style. Marketing, editorial, technical, academic, and educational content.
- **COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT:** Marketing communications plans. Management of staff, projects, events, vendors, and print production. Familiarity with metrics tools (Google Analytics, HubSpot), project-management tools (Slack, Basecamp) CRM tools, email-marketing tools (Constant Contact, Mailchimp), Google suite, Google ads.
- **PRINT AND DIGITAL DESIGN:** Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator. Canva. PowerPoint.
- **WEBSITE CONTENT:** HTML editing and production in several CMS tools (Cascade, WordPress, AEM, and proprietary), content optimization (best Google writing practices and SEO research tools like Semrush), WCAG standards, ADA accessibility guidelines.

CURRENT EXPERIENCE

UNITED WAY FOR SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN (via AQUENT) 1/23–present

Freelance writer and editor

Write and edit branding content, annual reports, event materials, feature stories, impact reports, blogs, and video scripts.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR, EDITORIAL 10/17–present

Freelance writer, senior editor, web content specialist, and graphic designer

Work with nonprofits, businesses, philanthropies, and educational institutions to provide creative concepts, writing, editing, and design for a wide range of print and digital assets.

SAMPLE HIGHER EDUCATION RECOGNITIONS

- **People's Voice Webby nomination.** Mobile experience. Content strategy and writing.
- **Educational Advertising Bronze award.** Website writing.
- **CASE Circle of Excellence National Gold.** "Innovate Indiana" statewide economic development campaign. Multichannel writing.

HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNICATIONS EXPERIENCE

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY 9/19–7/22

Development writer and editor

Inspired donors to make large gifts that supported students, research, faculty, and initiatives through the creation of original digital, print, and video fundraising projects.

PURDUE UNIVERSITY 9/17–5/20

Freelance feature writer, Marketing and Communications 10/18–5/20

Researched background, conducted interviews, and wrote stories for various school magazines.

Senior communications and media specialist, College of Science 9/17–9/18

Implemented a college-wide rebranding effort and increased audience engagement through communications, media, and events. Acted as creative director for special projects such as a multichannel space exploration campaign featuring the college's first video commercial.

INDIANA UNIVERSITY 2/03–9/17

Communications manager, School of Informatics and Computing, IU Indianapolis 12/15–9/17

Elevated the school's brand and reputation through the promotion of degree programs, faculty and student research, community programs, and public events. Oversaw a small creative team and the school's communications plan, fulfilled 500 annual print and digital projects, and acted as brand manager, editor, and creative director for all communications.

Content specialist, Office of Creative Services, IU Bloomington 8/11–12/15

Created award-winning creative projects at the IU advertising agency that included major website launches and multimedia campaigns. Performed senior-level editorial roles such as writing speeches for the university president and top administrators.

Freelance writer and graphic designer, IU Bloomington 7/09–7/11

As a primary IU contractor, developed creative projects that served schools, offices, and units.

Writer-editor, Office of Creative Services, IU Bloomington 12/05–6/09

Acted as lead writer and editor for IU undergraduate admissions and on many of the university's most visible and crucial recruitment and engagement initiatives. Developed content strategies and unique projects for university offices, schools, and units.

Director of communications, Assistant director of communications, IU Maurer School of Law, IU Bloomington 2/03–12/05

Directed the school's communications marketing plan and budget, strategic positioning, alumni magazine, press and faculty media appearances, and branding. Created projects that bolstered alumni giving, recruiting initiatives, and attendance at symposia and events. Served as art director, graphic designer, and print production manager for all communications.