This month’s Professional Tutor Profile focuses on Lauren-Elise Kadel, a writing tutor in the Academic Success Center since Spring 2014. Lauren studied English and French as an undergraduate, and earned her Master’s in English from Villanova University. She is currently a doctoral candidate in English at Temple University, working on a dissertation on using African-American literacy narratives in the first-year writing classroom. Lauren also works in the writing center at Temple as a graduate Conversation Partner, helping international students work on their English speaking skills. We interviewed Lauren to learn more about her background, interests, and advice she has for students.

**INTERVIEWER**

What are your research interests?

**KADEL**

In addition to studying how African-American literacy narratives can be used as models in the first-year classroom, I am particularly interested in writing center research and literacy practices outside of the classroom. I’ve also become interested in circles of people who focus on defining good teaching practices for college-level writing. In the far future, I would like to further study teacher development.

**INTERVIEWER**

What do you do for fun?

**KADEL**

This is a hard question, because right now I’m working furiously on my dissertation at the moment and don’t have a lot of free time. In my free time, I am writing. In between writing sessions, I do practice yoga in order to stretch. Yoga not only provides a good balance in movement, but also changes my overall approach to everyday life. There’s a process in yoga that helps with writing a long project; some days mark measurable progress, and some days call for defining progress. It also helps me with overall focus.
My father is an international ballroom dance instructor, so I hope to dance more when I have the time. I’m also going to Vietnam in the summer for a month, where I hope to take a break from writing, but not from yoga!

As far as reading is concerned, I love Min-Zhan Lu’s *Shanghai Quartet* because it touches on many of my interests, such as autobiography and an intergenerational approach to language learning. My stepmother is from China and is currently writing her own autobiography. She is in the process of translating and editing it, and I am assisting her. I also love any novel by Toni Morrison, but my favorite is one most people don’t read: *A Mercy* (2008). I’m inspired by Morrison’s long literary career, and the fact that she wrote her first novel at 40.

**INTERVIEWER**

What is your favorite aspect of tutoring?

**KADEL**

I appreciate that every day is different and that every session is different. Even if it’s the same assignment coming in again, each student will have something unique to bring to the session. No two days are the same!

**INTERVIEWER**

What is one piece of advice you frequently give to students?

**KADEL**

Sometimes talking about the writing can strengthen your argument; simply giving a tutor an overview of your topic can give you further insights, which can then be reflected in your writing. You can also check to see if what you say matches how you are positioning your argument on paper.

**INTERVIEWER**

What is the best piece of advice you’ve ever received about writing?

**KADEL**
Even when you think you are done with something, if you put it away for 24 hours and come back to it you will see things you didn’t catch initially. If you don’t have time, have someone else take a look at your work. This will really help you catch things you would have missed otherwise. Tutors can help with that too!

INTERVIEWER

What would you say to a student who is reluctant to come in to the ASC?

KADEL

All of the tutors here have a process-oriented approach to writing; we are happy to see someone at any stage, even if they have no idea about where to start. Sometimes those are the best sessions. If you are stuck and don’t feel like showing someone your work, that may be the best time to come in. We can help you identify what obstacles are in your way and discuss strategies to overcome them. So don’t feel like an assignment needs to be in finished before you come in.

INTERVIEWER

Any final thoughts?

KADEL

I am really interested in home languages and how to support students in bringing them into their writing in ways that will be valued. There are lots of ways that we all use language every day, and as sophisticated language users, we can learn to build from that strength as we work to refine our writing. “Articulate your voice in a way that your audience can hear it,” is my goal when working with students, and I find that college is a time to try out different ways of doing that.

I also think that tapping into some piece of the assignment on a personal level makes for more engaging and engaged writing, and it helps students focus on the big picture of how these assignments work together to inform their identities professionally and personally.