Public speaking takes many forms - from lectures and job talks to introductions and elevator pitches - but long or short, academic or non-academic, every oral presentation must meet certain criteria if the speaker’s message is to resonate. Good ideas that are poorly articulated will not command respect; sound arguments that are delivered haltingly will not prove persuasive. To ensure that your words are well received both at Princeton and beyond, please join us for a workshop focused on professional presentation skills - principles and techniques that will increase your verbal fluency while easing the fear that many experience when asked to speak in public. Emphasis will be placed on audience engagement; the importance of concision, clarity, and color; and the critical role of gesture and voice control, among other topics. Please RSVP at http://bit.ly/1cyTh34.

John S. Weeren is founding director of Princeton Writes, a program designed to enhance the practical communication skills of our University community. Through classes, tutorials, and other forms of support, as well as an interactive website (pwrites.princeton.edu), Princeton Writes is committed to fostering a culture that values the written word and uses it effectively in the workplace and other non-academic settings. Launched in 2013, this program traces its beginnings to a class John designed for the Office of Human Resources’ Management Development Certificate Program while serving as President Shirley M. Tilghman’s speechwriter. The popularity of this class and those that followed confirmed the need for a University-wide resource of this kind, and at the end of President Tilghman’s tenure, John made Princeton Writes his full-time focus.

John holds a bachelor’s degree with first class honors in history and Spanish from the University of King’s College and Dalhousie University and a master’s degree in history from the University of British Columbia, and he wrote extensively in both academic and professional contexts before joining President Tilghman’s staff in 2004.

He began his career as an archivist, first in Canada, where he was raised, and then in the United States, the country of his birth. John’s association with Princeton began in 1994, when he joined the Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library as a project archivist. In 1998 he was named head of public services, a position he held until 2001, when he moved to the Lehigh Valley. There he served as Moravian College’s first professional archivist. On his return in 2004, President Tilghman noted, “In addition to being an excellent writer, John brings a deep knowledge and appreciation of Princeton’s history and a broad interest in the life of the campus” – qualities that continue to serve him well at the helm of Princeton Writes.