

The following was included as an item as part of the Consent Agenda at the University of Connecticut Board of Trustees' meeting of September 17, 2025:

“Annual Report of the Endowed Chair Program Entitled ‘Aetna English Chair of Writing’”

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with statute, the Board of Trustees directs the submittal of the annual report prepared by the University Administration to the Office of Higher Education concerning the endowed chair expenditures for the Endowed Chair Program entitled “Aetna Chair of Writing.”

As indicated by the minutes from said meeting, on a motion by Trustee Bessette, seconded by Trustee Pollard, the Board voted unanimously to approve this item.

The resolution is presented in the agenda of the September 17, 2025, meeting in Attachment 4.



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Nicole Fournier Gelston  
Executive Secretary

September 22, 2025

September 17, 2025

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Reka Wrynn *Reka Wrynn*  
Interim Vice President for Finance

RE: Annual Report of the Endowed Chair Program Entitled "Aetna Chair of Writing"

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with statute, the Board of Trustees directs the submittal of the annual report prepared by the University Administration to the Office of Higher Education concerning the endowed chair expenditures for the Endowed Chair Program entitled "Aetna Chair of Writing".

RESOLUTION:

"Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees acknowledges receipt of the annual report concerning the endowed chair expenditures for the Endowed Chair Program entitled "Aetna Chair of Writing"; and directs the submittal of these annual reports to the Office of Higher Education."

BACKGROUND:

The Aetna Chair of Writing is under the direction of Professor Brenda Jo Brueggemann and is funded jointly by the UConn Foundation and the Office of Higher Education Investment Fund. It was established during the 1988-89 fiscal year as authorized by C.G.S. Section 10a-20a. Subsection (f) of the statute states that "the Board of Trustees shall submit annual reports to the Office of Higher Education concerning the endowed chair expenditures."


The 2025 annual report consists of a financial report and a narrative report by Professor Brueggemann.

Attachments



DATE: August 27, 2025

TO: Reka Wrynn, Interim Vice President for Finance

FROM: Margaret McCarthy   
Associate Vice President of Financial Operations and Controller

RE: Aetna Chair of Writing

Enclosed are the financial reports for the Aetna Chair of Writing program, under the direction of Professor Brueggemann, for fiscal years ended June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively. The report provides the separate financial operations of the program managed by the University and the UConn Foundation, along with the combined total. The expenditures for fiscal years 2025 and 2024 totaled \$48,332.26 and \$36,866.73, respectively.

Professor Brueggemann has provided a narrative of the writing program's operation for fiscal year 2025, which is also enclosed. Section 10a-20a (f) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires an annual report approved by the University's Board of Trustees to be submitted to the Office of Higher Education (OHE) for the Endowed Chair of Writing.

Additional notes are provided on the financial report disclosing the year-end balances of the Foundation and OHE endowment funds.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. If you should have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

University of Connecticut Foundation  
Endowed Chair in Writing  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

	University	Foundation	Combined Total
Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2024	\$ 73,177.06	\$ 50,253.80	\$ 123,430.86
<u>Revenue</u>			
Transferred From Office of Higher Education	32,735.93	-	32,735.93
Pooled Endowment Income Allocation	-	36,004.30	36,004.30
Transferred From UConn Foundation	46,025.47	(46,025.47)	-
TOTAL REVENUE	78,761.40	(10,021.17)	68,740.23
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Salary & Wages	21,044.79	-	21,044.79
Printing and Binding	2,722.09	-	2,722.09
Travel	2,159.50	-	2,159.50
Dues and Subscriptions	358.00	-	358.00
Conferences and Meetings	11,519.40	-	11,519.40
TOTAL Contractual Services	16,758.99	-	16,758.99
Books	313.18	-	313.18
Office Supplies	136.30	-	136.30
TOTAL Commodities	449.48	-	449.48
Research incentives	450.00	-	450.00
Student Aid Fees	9,629.00	-	9,629.00
TOTAL Sundry Charges	10,079.00	-	10,079.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	48,332.26	-	48,332.26
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2025	\$ 103,606.20	\$ 40,232.63	\$ 143,838.83

This endowed chair is not supported by any University funds, but the University maintains accounts which receive revenue from the Foundation and the Office of Higher Education (OHE). These University accounts disburse the funds in support of the program including all funds transferred from the Foundation and the OHE. There were transfers from the OHE totaling \$32,735.93 and \$26,134.53 in fiscal year 2025 and 2024, respectively. The first column above summarizes the University's revenue and expenditure activity for this chair. The Foundation also disburses certain expenses directly to third parties on behalf of the University as included above in the second column in fiscal year 2025, although there were no expenses in fiscal years 2025 and 2024.

The Aetna Chair of Writing has funds held at the Foundation and the OHE. The Foundation endowed fund was established with a gift of \$506,989 (amount permanently restricted) in 1986 and was valued at \$961,525.03 and \$943,501.65 at June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively. Those values include accumulated gains/losses on the original gift. The spendable portion of the Foundation endowed fund was \$40,232.63 and \$50,253.80 as of June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively. The OHE endowed fund was established with \$500,000 of state funds and is invested in the Endowed Chair Investment Fund (managed by the State Treasurer). The interest earned on this fund supports the Aetna Chair of Writing. The value of this fund was \$505,565.94 and \$514,069.45 at June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively. The value includes principal of \$500,000 and interest of \$5,565.94 and \$14,069.45 at June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively.

University of Connecticut Foundation  
Endowed Chair in Writing  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024

	University	Foundation	Combined Total
Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2023	\$ 49,488.53	\$ 47,726.40	\$ 97,214.93
<u>Revenue</u>			
Transferred From Office of Higher Education	26,134.53	-	26,134.53
Pooled Endowment Income Allocation	-	36,948.13	36,948.13
Transferred From UConn Foundation	34,420.73	(34,420.73)	-
TOTAL REVENUE	60,555.26	2,527.40	63,082.66
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Salary & Wages	16,498.40	-	16,498.40
Printing and Binding	2,963.09	-	2,963.09
Travel	4,135.33	-	4,135.33
Conferences and Meetings	8,628.79	-	8,628.79
TOTAL Contractual Services	15,727.21	-	15,727.21
Office Supplies	641.12	-	641.12
TOTAL Commodities	641.12	-	641.12
Research incentives	500.00	-	500.00
Student Aid Fees	3,500.00	-	3,500.00
TOTAL Sundry Charges	4,000.00	-	4,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	36,866.73	-	36,866.73
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2024	\$ 73,177.06	\$ 50,253.80	\$ 123,430.86

# **The Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing**

<https://english.uconn.edu/aetna-chair-of-writing/>

at the University of Connecticut

## **Report of expenditures, support and initiatives for 2024-2025**

Prepared by: Brenda Jo Brueggemann, Aetna Chair of Writing

### **Aetna Chair of Writing, General Notes, 2024-2025.**

The Aetna Chair of Writing endowment budget spreadsheet is here.

#### **[Aetna Budgets 2022-forward.xlsx](#)**

There is a specific tab for the 2024-2025 expenditures and for the 2025-2026 requests for budget expenditures.

The 2024-2025 Aetna Advisory Board members met for the annual Advisory Board meeting on May 20, 2025. Reports from all who received Aetna funding for 2024-2025 were shared at the meeting. Requests for the 2025-2026 year ahead were also then shared and discussed.

**A final Aetna budget for 2025-2026 was proposed at \$67,715.95.** It was discussed and then unanimously approved by vote of all board members present.

The Aetna Writing in the Disciplines (WID) awards for UConn undergraduate students were renewed this year, after a two-year hiatus. The renewal of these WID awards was made possible due to a re-establishment and collaboration with the UConn Writing Center that engaged the Writing Center's three (3) Graduate Assistant Directors to each lead one of the prizes in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences. Aetna Chair discretionary funds of \$2,000 were used for this purpose.

An annual Celebration of Student Writing ceremony was also re-established and held at the lunch block of the First-Year Writing Program's annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing on Friday, April 26, 2025. Over 20 award-winning students were recognized at that event and many of the students came forward to read 2 minutes from their award-winning work.

### **Aetna Chair of Writing, Discretionary Funds, 2024-2025**

\$2,000 was used to cover stipends for the 3 Graduate Assistant Directors from the University Writing Center to take leadership on the 3 Writing in the Disciplines awards committees: Humanities, Social Sciences, and Sciences & Engineering.

### **Aetna Chair of Writing, Graduate Support for Writing Awards, 2024-2025**

\$3,000 was awarded for six (6) Graduate Support for Writing (GSW) awards to UConn's graduate students for various research and travel and workshop projects.

#### **Psyche Ready:**

Support for Qualitative Dissertation Research and Focus Groups, UConn students with mental illness academic success. \$500

I am writing to thank you for choosing me to receive the Aetna Graduate Research and Travel Award earlier this year. The \$500 I was awarded was used to reimburse interview participants for my dissertation, an IRB-approved qualitative study investigating the academic experiences of students with mental illness. I have thus far conducted 10 in-depth, open-ended interviews with UConn students, collecting over 14 hours of rich data.

Although my analysis is still preliminary, the results have already proven to be surprising, fascinating, and profound. I recently shared some of my early findings in a panel presentation at the Rhetoric Society of America (including my gratitude to this board) and I have no doubt that the findings of this project will contribute to the field of writing studies and future research supporting the success of this group of under-studied students.

Sophie Wallis Buckner:

Attendance and presentation at field's national conference. \$500

I am grateful to have received the Aetna Graduate Support for Writing Award. These funds allowed me to go to the Conference on College Composition and Communications in Baltimore, MD on April 10-12. The funds went toward my room and board Baltimore and transportation to Baltimore. Attending this conference became a great opportunity for me to extend my network, especially as I am on the job market. I met people in the area where I am looking for work and hope to continue to foster relationships. I also presented part of my dissertation, which gave me the opportunity to engage with my research on genre in a different way.

Kyle Barron:

Presenting at field's national conference on subversion in the teaching of writing. \$500

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Aetna Chair of Writing for the Aetna Graduate Writing Support Award. This vital funding enabled me to overcome the often-prohibitive cost of attending major conferences, a crucial professional development activity for graduate students. The \$500 award supported my travel and lodging expenses to attend the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in Baltimore, Maryland. There, I presented a conference paper on composition's subversive potential as part of a panel I co-organized. Attending CCCC allowed me to engage with current research through numerous sessions (directly informing my own work), network with scholars, and represent UConn in the field. This experience provided not only a valuable CV line and presentation practice essential for the academic job market, but also a formative opportunity for intellectual growth. The Aetna award was instrumental in making this possible.

Luisiana Duarte Armendáriz:

Simmons University Summer Institute on Children's Literature. \$500

I feel extremely grateful for the Aetna Travel Award I received this summer. The award I received helped me pay for the Simmons University Children's Literature Summer Institute. This was the second time I participated in this event, the first being in 2017, when I was completing my MA/MFA at Simmons University. I knew the value of this event, so I was ecstatic to find out that I received the award which allowed me to participate. The event took place over a weekend. I was able to network and engage with people who I had previously met and made valuable new connections, especially with people who I can collaborate artistically with in the future. The sessions during the institute were captivating and enabled me to understand at a deeper level the current state of the Children's

Literature field, with its opportunities and challenges. One Lunch Session I particularly enjoyed was led by Michelle Cusolito, a non-fiction writer who talked about her process of research and curation of information when delivering non-fiction to children in entertaining ways.

Ashten Vassar:

American Studies Association Conference attendance and presentation, \$500  
Receiving the Aetna Graduate Research and Travel Award allowed me to attend my first-ever national academic conference. I presented research and writing on the Mansfield Training School project, which I worked on with a dedicated team for roughly 2 years. At the conference, I was able to make valuable connections with other participants and exchange meaningful insights with people from all over the country. Attending this conference helped me gain the confidence to present publicly. It inspired me to continue pursuing writing about Disability in the field of American Studies, leading to a second conference acceptance at the New England American Studies Regional Conference this summer, where I will be presenting on medicalized violence. As a Disabled graduate student, arranging accessible accommodations can be challenging. With this generous award, I was able to attend the conference in person and have my access needs met. I am grateful for the opportunities that were made possible by the Aetna Graduate Research and Travel Award.

Adam McClain: Participation in the Eugene England Summer Institute. \$500

In June, I attended the inaugural Eugene England Summer Institute. The institute gathers advanced doctoral candidates and early career scholars for a weeklong writing retreat in the mountains of Midway, UT. It is focused on the study of Mormonism, both a religious and cultural phenomenon in the United States and the world. I believe this institute will be one of the most defining moments in my academic career: taking time to focus just on my writing and to think about it helped me shape my skills and my approach to writing that I will be taking into my dissertation writing.

At the institute, I worked on three projects—an essay about LGB+ Latter-day Saint memoirs; a book about sexuality and spirituality in the Church; and a burgeoning project on a science fiction author of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Zenna Henderson, who was raised in the Church. With the essay, I was able to figure out that what I wanted to write is a larger history on the literature, instead of focusing on two examples as I was going. For the book, of which I had about 100,000 words written, I discovered a better academic conversation I could enter into, which will help me shorten the book (I decided to toss about half of it—which is good for the overall project!) and find a publisher more easily. For the Henderson project, I learned how to access various archival materials and what writing history is about (something that I'm excited to take into my doctoral studies).

Being around other PhD candidates and early career scholars who were *not* in my discipline helped broaden my vision of what I could accomplish with these papers and my work in general. The mentorship from the three directors—a journalist with a PhD in American religious history; a religion professor who writes on sexuality and gender; and a history professor who works on all 200 years of Mormon history—helped me see the wider goals for academic conversations. They also helped me become more accustomed to how to do

historical research (something I find lacking in myself) and pointed me in good directions for my various work in Mormon studies.

The institute focused not only on writing; it also emphasized career development. Being a scholar within Mormon studies can be very insular, and developing how to discuss the work done in the field with those outside the field is a key skill needed when on the job market.

The career development workshops—discussing the field of Mormon studies itself; talking with a university press that published Mormon studies; writing a book proposal; organizing time for writing—were especially helpful. Along with that, the many unstructured discussions with other fellows (there were 12 of us there) really helped hone my approach to writing and my approach to my field.

Although it was the first iteration of the institute, it provided a strong foundation to my development as a writer and at this pivotal time of my academic career.

**Aetna Graduate Critical Writing Award:**

Anh Le. \$500. "Witnessing Beautiful Scenes of Destruction: The Potent Urgency and Sensitivity of Beauty in African Postcolonial Writing"

**Aetna Graduate Teaching of Writing Award:**

Marie Nour Nakhle. \$500

**Aetna Celebration of Student Writing Awards 2025**

**Aetna Creative Non-Fiction Writing, \$250**

Winner: Miranda Argyros: "Untitled (red) Fragments"

Honorable Mentions

Lauren Ziolkowski : "Lantern Flies"

Jacklyn Donaldson: "Tom's Dried and Blackened Human Heart"

**Aetna Translation Award, \$250**

Winner: Catherine Keough: "The Days of Saveli"

Honorable Mention: Talbot Hook: "Don't Deprive Me of My Complexities"

**Aetna Writing for Children Award, \$250**

Winner: Kiara Korten: "Intrados"

**First-Year Writing Award, \$200**

Co-Winners:

David DeMeo: "The Disadvantages of the Banking Model of Education for Neurodiverse Student"

Andrea D'oleo: "Bilingual Education"

**Writing in the Disciplines -- Sciences & Engineering, \$200**

Co-Winners:

Ligia C. Lopez: "Ring Around the Gulf: A New Speciation Pattern for Campephilus Woodpeckers Revealed by Hispaniola Mummy"

Donal J. Heaney: "Hispaniola Woodpecker Mummy Reveals Campephilus Speciation Ring"

**Writing in the Disciplines -- Social Sciences, \$200**

Co-Winners:

Eunice Kim: "Come Play with Me: Influence of Theory of Mind, Home Environment, and Independence on Pre-School-Aged Children's Play with Others"

Anabelle S. Bergstrom: "Deadly Choices: Political, Legal, and Moral Understandings of U.S. Supreme Court Death Penalty Decisions"

Honorable Mention:

Raquel Costin, Shannon Gregg, Cristina Principe, & Jennifer Simmons: "Worry and Empathy: Exploring the Connection"

**Writing in the Disciplines – Humanities, \$200**

Co-Winners:

Sky Cummings: "Graphic Fixation and Emotional Appropriation: Leveraging AI's Limitations to Strengthen Human Writing and Learning"

Raquel Costin: "Control of Art and Intimacy in *True Stories*"

Honorable Mentions:

Mari Miller: "The Absurdist's Poem" and "Satellite Project: Unveiling the Darkness of Man"

Donal Heaney: "Lines Written upon a Dorm-room Desk, Concerning the Nature Poetry of Wordsworth"

**Avery Point Writing Retreats Report, 2024-2025.**

The Avery Point Writing Retreats were well restored in 2024-2025, after four years hiatus, thanks to the leadership of Avery Point English Department faculty member, Rebecca Troeger.

**Number of Participants by Campus:**

	9/27/24	10/25/24	11/22/24	2/7/25	3/7/25	4/4/25
<b>Avery Point</b>	5	3	5	10	11	4
<b>Storrs</b>	11	5	3	6	4	3
<b>Hartford</b>						
<b>Health</b>					1	1
<b>Stamford</b>						1

<b>Waterbury</b>			1			
<b>TOTAL:</b>	16	8	9	16	16	9

**Participant's Departments:**

Allied Health Sciences	Agricultural & Resource Economics	CT Sea Grant
Maritime studies	Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	Communication
Cooperative Extension System	Educational Psychology	English
Kinesiology	Landscape Architecture	Literatures, Cultures, and Languages
Library	Marine Sciences	Molecular and Cell Biology
Physics	Plant Science	Political Science
Psychological Sciences	Public Health Sciences	School of Business
SHaW	Sociology	University Events & Conferences
WGSS		

2024-2025 Survey Highlights							
	Sept 27	Oct 25	Nov 22	Feb 7	March 7	April 4	Totals
<b>Productivity at the retreat vs. working alone</b>							
Much more	5			3	3	3	14
A bit more	2		2		2		4
The same			1	1	1	1	4
A bit less							
Much less							
Not sure							
<b>How would you rate the atmosphere of the retreat at Avery Point?</b>							
Excellent	6		2	3	5	3	19
Very Good	1		1	1	1	1	5
Good							
Fair							
Poor							
<b>How would you rate the setting of the retreat at Avery Point?</b>							
Excellent	6		3	4	6	3	22
Very Good	1					1	2
Good							
Fair							
Poor							
<b>Would you attend another retreat?</b>							
Definitely yes	5		3	4	6	4	22
Maybe yes	2						2
Not sure							
Probably not							
<b>Number of participants surveyed</b>	16	8	9	16	16	9	74
<b>Number of participants responded</b>	7	0	3	4	6	4	24

**Sample comments from various retreat dates:**

\*Thank you for this productive and supportive opportunity. There are so few ways we can support our writing practices, and this really is a huge bonus.

\* I enjoyed the opportunity to go to Avery Point Campus and the room in which the retreat was held had a beautiful view. It was also great to be able to take a walking break to clear my head in such a beautiful location. I have suggested to my boss that our team should try to go to the next retreat.

\*Avery Point is so scenic. I really enjoyed looking out at the water while working on my poetry. I had a great time with great people.

\*I think the setup was amazing. The environment was very conducive to working in silence and I think the setup in which we don't look at each other really helped.

\*Thank you. It felt necessary to have time to process my work in a professional atmosphere, encouraged by others doing the same in a shared (respectful, beautiful) space, and then connecting with a wide range of faculty/staff from the various campuses. The lunch time conversations felt so rich and respectful around our table and helped me feel less isolated as an adjunct.

\*I find the atmosphere to be very productive: it's collegial (lots of shared discussion), but it's also focused and quiet. I liked having access to coffee/tea all morning, because I often write with a hot beverage as part of the process. Maybe more quiet snack-y type things? And although I didn't take advantage of the offered walk this time, I do think it's a great idea (walking, thinking, and talking are definitely shown to be productive in the research!). Thank you again for hosting this productive event.

\*I hope it will happen more often! Thank you for organizing!

\*This retreat was a welcome opportunity to set aside an entire day to focus on writing. I would definitely participate again if it is offered next academic year. The atmosphere was like a library, where many others are working productively but quietly. I felt supported in my progress by the fact that I was respecting the community spirit of the collective but quiet work environment, and I enjoyed chatting at lunch with others about their ongoing projects. Thank you to the organizer and funders at Avery Point!

\*This was great and helped me to finally get some editing done that I had been putting off.

\*I find the retreats so helpful. Over the course of 3 retreats, I was able to complete this paper. In the future, access to a printer and having hot water for tea throughout the day would be added bonuses. But overall, this is just such a valuable time and space. Thank you for having us!

\*I thoroughly appreciated a concentrated amount of time to work on a project uninterrupted. Having multiple other people also working around me, helped to keep me on track and focused as well. The natural light and seascape, provided a soothing atmosphere that allowed for my creativity to engage. Lastly, I am based out of the Storrs campus, and I enjoyed this opportunity to be at Avery Point, and interact with the broader UConn community.

### **Connecticut Writing Project, 2024-2025**

There was no formal report from the CWP this year due to leadership transition and the loss of longtime CWP Director, Jason Courtmanche. Jane Cook and Danielle Pieretti were welcomed to the board, with Cook discussing her work with the Connecticut Writing Project in the last number of years, and in this year of transition; Pieretti then introduced herself as the incoming director of the Connecticut Writing Project. The Connecticut Writing Project requested their standard award from The Aetna Chair Endowment: \$24,000.

### **UConn Creative Writing Program, 2024-2025.**

Amount Requested: \$9,000.                      Amount Spent: \$ 6,488.63

- The Aetna Writer-in-Residence (Poet): \$1,500

Due to an illness, Carlo Matos was not healthy enough to travel to Storrs, Connecticut from Chicago, Illinois, so his reading at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore in Storrs Center for the evening of Thursday, February 20, 2025 was cancelled. Matos did hold conferences with six students via Zoom on Friday, February 21, 2025.

Student testimonials from those individual conferences:

“I had such a great workshop with Dr. Matos. When I told him that poetry has never been my strong suit, he gave me a lot of concrete advice that really contextualized

what it's like to write poetry and attempt to publish it. I also asked for a piece of advice about a novel I've been working through--specifically focusing on perspective. I very much liked the strategy he recommended. He dishes compliments and suggestions with similar enthusiasm. You can tell he's very passionate about his students."

-Temisan Ekperigin, undergraduate student

"Workshopping with Carlo Matos was one of the most impactful experiences I've had in the UConn English department. Matos provided substantive thoughtful feedback and questions for my work. He found small spots in my poetry that were simple changes but made them infinitely better. Throughout, he gave me the space to dive into my thinking and develop thematically rich ideas that made me excited to keep writing. The chance to work with such a talented poet while I am trying to grow as a writer was huge for me. I am deeply appreciative of the creative writing program for creating this opportunity for students."

-Jenna Ulizio, undergraduate student

"My tutorial with Carlo Matos was absolutely delightful. Throughout the session, Carlo actively listened to the concerns and questions that I had about my work. He attentively returned to those concerns (such as, how to powerfully conclude a poem), providing multiple avenues for revision. He not only provided honest and insightful feedback on each of my poems, describing his experience as reader and mentor, but also expressed curiosity regarding my process, aesthetics, and approaches to language. Carlo strikes the perfect balance, in giving sincere praise as well as actionable, constructive, and smart suggestions, paired with clear examples. For instance, I found his insights on how to structurally link poems together, extremely helpful. Overall, I am grateful for this opportunity to have learned from Carlo; I want to thank Dr. Sean Forbes and the Aetna Chair of Writing for making these opportunities possible."

-Anh Le, graduate student

- Poetic Journeys event : \$988.63

Under the direction of Kyle Barron, who served this academic year as the Graduate Assistant Director of the Creative Writing Program, and in collaboration with undergraduate students from the UConn Design Center Studio under the direction of Professor Dina Benbrahim, six posters were designed featuring short excerpts of poems by three undergraduate students and three graduate students, respectively: Anshul Rastogi, Charlotte Ungar, Grace Xiong, Aidan Wood, sterling-elizabeth arcadia, and Sophie Wallis Buckner. The Poetic Journeys Release Party was held on Thursday, April 17, 2025, at 5:00

pm in the Austin building, room 217. This year's posters can be viewed online via the Poetic Journeys web gallery: <https://poeticjourneys.uconn.edu/galleries/>.

- Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction event: \$1,000

The spring 2025 Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction was held via a Zoom webinar on Thursday, March 6, 2025 with our featured writer: Lamy H. The celebration honored and recognized the winner of the 2025 Aetna Creative Nonfiction Award: graduate student Miranda Argyros, who read an excerpt from her winning nonfiction essay.

- Long River Review Production: \$2,000

This marked the 28th edition of the Long River Review, UConn's award-winning art and literary journal. Under the direction of faculty advisor Professor Sean Frederick Forbes, 17 undergraduate student-editors worked tirelessly to produce the journal in collaboration with the five undergraduate student-graphic designers at the UConn Design Center Studio. 700 copies were printed. The Release Party took place on Thursday, May 1, 2025, at 5:00 PM at the Barnes & Noble Bookstore, Storrs Center.

- Aetna Creative Nonfiction Award: \$250. Awarded to Miranda Argyros
- Aetna Translation Prize: \$250. Awarded to Catherine Keough
- Aetna Children's Literature Prize: \$250. Awarded to Kiara Korten
- Long River Review Graduate Writing Prize: \$250. Awarded to Miranda Argyros

### **First-Year Writing Program, 2024-2025.**

Last year, we were awarded \$7,500 by the Aetna Advisory Board. The following sections outline how that funding was used.

**Conference on the Teaching of Writing (\$3,500):** In 2024, we collaborated with the Aetna Chair of Writing to again incorporate the Aetna Celebration of Student Writing, and joined forces with Early College Experience English to produce a full, two-day conference that featured six panel and workshop sessions, a keynote, and—new this year—a “Research Slam” that featured the work of undergraduate, graduate, and faculty researchers across UConn and the region in UConn's Werth Tower, a mixed-use building that houses the Innovation Program, Learning Communities, the Innovation Zone, and undergraduate students. Attendance more than twice last year's numbers; we hosted 168 participants from across the region. As this year's Conference was the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual iteration, we also had special sessions, including one devoted to the memory of Jason Courtmanche, our beloved colleague and champion of First-Year Writing and ECE. The “Courtmanche Conversations,” attracted twenty friends and colleagues for a session that was both tearful and healing. In recognition of the Conference's long history as a graduate-student-driven event, we invited former Assistant Directors to return and discuss their work, their experiences, their memories, and their advice. This year, the graduate Conference Planning Committee

included Jarrod DePrado, Jackie Donaldson, Ash Johnston, Ruba Bouzan, and our Assistant Director, Marie Nour Nakhle. Together they ensured the conference rooms were set up; technology was working; people were badged, merched, and oriented; and that the conference was widely advertised and promoted, which attracted a large number of first-time attendees. They also evaluated all conference proposals and assembled the many panels. The graduate students gain a significant benefit in the form of professional development, and we, too, are supported by their many contributions.

Our keynote speaker this year was Dr. Stephanie West-Puckett, Associate Professor of Writing & Rhetoric and the Director of the First-Year Writing Program at the University of Rhode Island, where her research explores writing assessment, queer rhetorical interventions, cultural rhetorics, and participatory design. Her scholarship challenges traditional assessment structures, advocating for practices that embrace complexity, creativity, and the diverse rhetorical traditions of student writers. Her book, *Failing Sideways: Queer Possibilities for Writing Assessment*, (University Press of Colorado, 2023) won the CCCC 2024 Lavendar Rhetorics Award, which recognizes Excellence in Queer Scholarship annually. Her keynote address “Hell Yes, Joy is a Strategy: Reclaiming Play in Writing Assessment” provided a new (and joyful) approach to course and program assessment. She also ran a hands-on (paper was folded! Pyraminx were spun!) teaching workshop that was attended by instructors of many courses from the high schools, to community colleges, to several large public institutions in the region. We will continue working to improve the Conference, paying particular attention to ensuring the Conference is accessible to all.

**Cross-Campus Writing Program Administrator's Monthly Working Retreats: \$1500.** The Cross-Campus Writing Program Administrator's Monthly Working Retreats have proven very productive. Not only does the regular work ensure that instructors and WPAs from all campuses contribute to the work of First-Year Writing, but we also generated materials and scholarship for the program. Our Text Constellations documents create an archive and index of texts that aligns several sample “Course Inquiries” with selections of texts that we (individually and collectively) have used in our classes. Many of the Text Constellations now also have one-page “Enactments,” which each member of the CCWPA has generated. These Enactments provide brief descriptions of how an instructor selected texts aligned with the Course Inquiry and how the assignments help enact work with each of the texts. Our Text Constellations have also served as a document in the Teagle Grant we applied for. (The grant application has made it through two rounds and is now entering the third round.) We are also developing a published version of this work that will help instructors in FYW through both ECE on all UConn campuses incorporate texts and other materials into their courses, and to make use of those texts in ways that further the mission of our FYW courses.

### ***Ongoing Program and Course Assessments***

During these meetings, we have aligned course syllabi for ENGL 1004 with the learning objectives we revised last year in CCWPA meetings for the course. Oliver Hiob and Heon

Jeon created a grid we can use to check alignments with other instructors' iterations of ENGL 1004. We reviewed several of those other instructors' current syllabi and wrote supportive directions for updating their syllabi to align with the current learning objectives.

In addition to ensuring all ENGL 1004 courses are aligned with program goals and practices, we engaged in further ongoing program assessment by selecting several syllabi and assignments from various campuses to review each meeting. These reviews foster discussion and collaboration in ways that help the program overall. From our reviews, we write reviews and letters to the instructors aimed at providing positive support for further work on their courses. We are particularly interested in helping instructors across all campuses to develop meaningful inquiries that guide their courses and to craft assignments that align with the goals and practices of FYW. We intend to request funds to help move those instructors from being a "letter recipient" to successfully aligning their courses.

To facilitate the work and support all-day commitments from participants, we've ordered lunch for all participants.

### **Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Research Project and Professional Development (\$3,500)**

Although Howard Fisher was accepted into the 2025 Dartmouth Summer Seminar for Writing Research, he will be deferring his participation until next year. To ensure we use our funding for the purposes we intended in our proposal last year, we are using the funds to complete our Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project's data analysis. As described in our request for funding last year, we gathered meaningful data that has led to fruitful analysis, but we will need to finish our data analysis in the next two weeks as the final stages of analysis and publication for this work. The research has shown that students embrace developing intellectual projects that bring together each course's shared inquiry and the students' relevant experiences, framed in academic and public-facing terms, circulated in multiple media.

As we work toward re-integrating the Studio and Seminar Components of the ENGL 1007 course, we are also creating professional development materials and online modules for all adjunct faculty across campuses. Although we foresee that we may not complete this work within this fiscal year, and because our work over the academic year was hampered by staffing shortages for family emergencies and illnesses, we are kicking off that work in the next week.

### **UConn Writing Center, 2024-2025.**

We were allocated \$800, which we had planned to spend on the following:

- \$400 to fund tutor research and travel to conferences. The Northeast Writing Center Association conference will be up and running again in 2025 after a year off in 2024. We will

make requests to the Office of Undergraduate Research, but they cannot always fully fund all students who wish to go to the conference.

· \$400 for the “Flipped Writing Center” initiative, led by Kathleen Tonry. This is a new program that invites instructors to visit the Writing Center to have one of their assignments workshopped as a condition to allowing them to mandate that all their students meet with a tutor as part of a major assignment drafting/revising sequence. We’ll offer this option to both FYW and W instructors. This \$400 could help us fund an open house and some planning and promotional events.

We did not spend the funds as expected because the NEWCA conference was cancelled for 2025, and instead our tutors pivoted to doing presentations at the FYW Conference on the Teaching of Writing and the LANGSA Conference, both on campus, so no need for travel.

While we moved ahead with the Flipped Writing Center pilot this year, we did not end up needing extra funds for an open house.

Instead, we spent the \$800 toward honoraria for three speakers from California State University Fullerton to lead an online workshop on how their writing center advocates for linguistic justice policies. The session was in fall 2024 and ran 90 minutes, with the first half devoted to CSUF sharing the research they have completed and the program they have built; the latter half was devoted to questions from our team. Administrative staff, graduate tutors, and undergraduate tutors from the Writing Center attended. This workshop informed not only our own center’s policies but also the LANGSA conference presentation developed by Writing Center tutors in spring 2025.

### **UConn Waterbury Campus, 2024-2025.**

The Waterbury campus appreciates the funding provided by the Aetna Chair of Writing for Academic Year 24-25. Thanks to this funding, FYW faculty members were able to receive \$75 as compensation (to put toward books) for their participation in our meetings and professional development workshops. The funding also supported refreshments during the Writing Center Open House in the spring and the Writing Center Open House in the fall. The latter is part of Academic Integrity Awareness Week.

Compensation (books) for adjunct faculty: \$224.13

Refreshments for Writing Center Open Houses: \$29.96 in the fall; \$38.96 in the spring=  
\$68.92

Total spent: \$293.05.

Total Requested: \$375

## **Aetna Endowed Chair Report to the UConn Provost**

In addition to the annual Aetna Endowment's Chair Report requested by the UConn Foundation and the UConn Board of Trustees, the Aetna Chair is also asked to create a second report for the Provost's Office that substantially differs in content and approach. That report to the UConn Provost is included below.

**What exciting projects have your students worked on this year, and how has your position played a positive role in their outcomes?**

The Department of English @ UConn maintains a corner of its overall website focused on the [Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing](#); that website area contains some (but not all) of the essence and scope of the Aetna Endowed Chair initiatives, projects, funded elements.

**[Mansfield Training School Research Project](#), ongoing into its 3rd year now.**

*\*note: this website will transition to a new updated, expanded Aurora-based website in September 2025.*

- ENGL/AMST 2274 class (Disability Studies in American Literature and Culture) Fall 2024 created an exhibit: The History & Legacy of Disability Institutionalization Posters/infographics. The exhibit was shared at the UConn Humanities Institute space.
- Independent study with Human Rights graduate student, Ashten Vassar Cain, on memorializing the Mansfield Training School residents, deceased.
- Working closely with two UConn undergraduate students, Hannah & Gabby, through the [Office of Undergraduate Research Summer SHARE](#) research apprenticeship program; each student contributed 90 hours (180 total hours) over summer 2025 that I oversaw as their faculty apprentice-mentor.

### **[Disability and Access Collective \(DAC\) Blog](#)**

This blog project ended its second year this summer 2025. To date, eight (8) different UConn students – both graduate and undergraduate students – have worked collaboratively on developing, writing for, and editing the contributions of others. Its goals and mission: see the collaborative statement at the website:

<https://disabilityaccesscollective.blog/2023/04/23/what-is-the-dac-blog/>

My own statement at the blog (note, it is accompanied by student writer-editorial team statements that I believe carry equal weight to my own):

The DAC blog is a place to feature not only academic but also advocacy-activist and community work, starting with the UConn campus. And perhaps, in the future, growing outside the Storrs city limits. Not only to UConn's regional campuses (wouldn't that be great?) but even to other college campuses where disability events, activism, advocacy, intellectual work is taking place.

But for now: start local.

The DAC Blog is also a place to feature student work, community, activism, skills. From the ground up –rather than, say, a Disability Studies program sanctioned by the upper administration and then requiring hundreds of forms and bullet-pointed lists to navigate. Those aren't shiny things –and we are drawn to shiny things!

This blog is a place of collaboration, of collegiality, of teams of us mushing husky-style together in our sled across the tundra of Disability & Access Land. (I hope you can picture a small murder of crows driving a husky sled here!) And finally, the DAC Blog is a place for gathering –in clever, trickster, communicative, shiny-things, and “murderous” ways.

We have published just over 70 pieces in two years and we have 350 regular subscribers to date.

### **Graduate Support for Writing and Research**

- This past year, four (4) of the graduate/PhD students I advise completed their dissertations and did so with support from the Aetna Graduate Support for Writing and Research funds (others who were not my advisees received this GSW support as well).
- All GSW applications are read and discussed/voted on by the full 21-member Aetna Advisory Board (I don't make determinations on my own)

### **What social, global, or industry challenge(s) are you trying to address through your research?**

[The Mansfield Training School Research Project](#) – recovering and remembering and addressing reparations for the 133-year history of the Mansfield Training School (which carried 5 other names before that) and is now owned by UConn, and known as The UConn Depot Campus.

Connected to the MTS project: in Summer 2024, I convened the Histories and Legacies of Disability Institutionalization in the U.S. 2-day symposium with 9 different scholars from across the U.S. –scholars in History, Anthropology, Native and Indigenous Studies, American Studies. (The 2-day symposium project was supported by a \$5000 Summer Research Grant from CLAS.)

Focusing on matters of access, attitudes, awareness around disability on campus and in our social fabric/lives – through the [Disability and Access Collective Blog](#), my teaching, and service on two university-wide committees.

### **How have you enhanced the academic programs here at UConn through your endowed position?**

- Developed a new 3020W (writing-intensive) course, Professional and Technical Writing for Social Justice, and successfully cross-listed that course between the new Department of Social and Critical Inquiry (SCI) and the Department of English
- Offered and awarded approximately a dozen student writing prizes, at both undergraduate and graduate levels

**In your position, how are you making an impact at UConn, in the State of Connecticut, and/or the greater world?**

I want to believe that I have advanced the awareness and attention to both disability (identity, issues) and the significance of skilled writing on UConn’s campus and as a subject of impact and intersection in the humanities – writing, literature, art, social & critical inquiry, human rights, history.

- I was a week-long [invited faculty speaker @ Arizona State University](#) in Oct. 2024. (See more details below.)
- Shepherded a featured extended session at the annual [American Studies Association conference](#) (Baltimore MD, Nov. 2024) focused on the Mansfield Training School project.
- Invited participant in the two-day June 2025 [Fudeko Project](#) convening (UConn Hartford campus) – and asked to give a presentation on both access issues and the importance of writing. At its core, the mission of the Fudeko Project is as follows: “The Fudeko Project helps Japanese American former incarcerated share their stories with loved ones.”

**What does it mean to you to hold this position?**

The Aetna Chair/Endowment sustains, supports, advances, and advocates for significant funding/support to the following:

[The Connecticut Writing Project](#)

[UConn’s Creative Writing Program](#)

[UConn’s First-Year Writing Program](#)

[UConn’s Writing Center](#) and its professional development and workshop opportunities for its tutors and for UConn students at large

[Faculty-student Writing retreats hosted at the Avery Point campus](#)

Approximately a dozen annual writing prizes for UConn students, across many categories and modalities: Creative non-fiction; Translation; Writing for Children; First-Year Writing; Writing in the Humanities; Writing in the Social Sciences; Writing in the Sciences & Engineering; Graduate Support for Writing Awards. All these awards are recognized at an annual Aetna Celebration of Student Writing event included in the [Annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing](#).

## **What is your favorite thing about being an endowed faculty member at the University of Connecticut?**

It was always the case – but perhaps more so than ever in the history of the Aetna Endowment funds – that the endowment can offer still-existing, available, ongoing (restricted) funding and resources that are available to support speakers, prizes, workshops, teachers, conferences and conversations around writing. This year, more than ever, that seems important in these deeply austere and politicized times. Aetna Endowment funding and opportunities are/will still allow and encourage:

Connecticut teachers to participate in (with some funding awards) the Connecticut Writing Project’s summer courses;

the UConn Creative Writing Program to still bring in celebrated writers and engage UConn students with them – in several different events/programs;

the award-winning First-Year Writing Program to continue its (20+-year) annual Spring conference;

the popular and restorative Avery Point writing retreats for UConn faculty and students;

and the awarding of approximately 15-different writing/research support prizes to UConn’s graduate and undergraduate students.

Summarized: the Aetna Chair of Writing endowment continues to focus on, and sustain and champion, the work that *writing* does/makes across a university campus.

## **What recent awards, publications, and/or recognition in the press have you received this academic year? Please share applicable links for donors to learn more.**

I was invited to Arizona State University as a visiting one-week faculty member, Oct. 2024, for the [Inaugural Bolmarcich Memorial Lecture](#) and accompanying events. In addition to presenting a public-academic keynote lecture, “Framing Disability (Access, Agency, Archives, Art),” attended by about 350 people, I also guest taught an American Sign Language 101 class (focused on the idea of “between” identities in deaf-hearing worlds), and lead a half-day interactive workshop at the ASU Museum of Art on “Disability in the Art Museum,” and participated in two extended meetings with the ASU Administration (Provost’s Office) around access on campus, and a student reception-gathering as well.

On May 13, 2025, I lead a [NYC Academy for Teachers](#) all-day workshop on “[Deaf Art in America](#)” hosted by the [Whitney Museum of American Art](#) and featuring their current exhibit on [Christine Sun Kim, “All Day All Night.”](#) Eighteen (18) NYC teachers – in art, humanities and technology – participated in the all-day on-site workshop at the Whitney with me.

For the ninth (9th) year running, I was invited again to be on the Faculty at the [Bread Loaf School of English](#), BLSE (Middlebury, Vermont) – a 105-year old Master’s Program in Literary Studies (and the largest M.A. program in English studies in the world – to teach two

online graduate seminars for them (Summer 2025). My two seminars were: “*Jane Eyre’s* World,” and “Disability in Classic YA American Literature.” BLSE students/participants are largely middle and high school humanities, language/literature, and fine arts teachers from across the entire U.S. (My two online courses enrolled students/teachers from all 4 U.S. time zones and London as well.)

Finally, I served/am serving my fourth (4th) year as an [elected member](#) of the [Modern Language Association’s Executive Council](#) (16 members), representing the global 22,000-member MLA at large and serving further on two of its major committees, attending and presenting at its annual 2025 convention (in New Orleans), attending in-person its three different Executive Council 2-day meetings— while also often meeting and enduring “the slings and arrows” (see: *Hamlet*) with the governmental retraction of its significant NEH grants and partnerships and its divided and yet committed membership weighing in, heavily, on the ongoing conflict between Gaza/Hamas/Palestine and Israel.

### **Publications & featured presentations:**

#### **SCHOLARLY RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS IN PROCESS**

##### **[The Disability and Access Collective \(DAC\) Blog.](#)**

A multimodal open-access blog, currently staffed with five (5) undergraduate/graduate students at the University of Connecticut who moderate and edit blog material received and also write some of their own blog posts. First developed in Spring 2023 and continuing, with funding from UConn’s College of Liberal Arts & Sciences DEI Initiative. Yes, perhaps, “it’s only a blog.” Perhaps. The undergraduate editor-writer team understands it, however, as a vibrant site of *shared* equity, access, justice, inclusion, diversity, expression, innovation, research, care, compassion, respect, and power-from-practice. A collaboratively written feature post where we outline what the DAC blog is, and what it intends to carry forward, is here: <https://disabilityaccesscollective.blog/2023/04/23/what-is-the-dac-blog/>

##### ***Disability, Access, and the Teaching of Writing (second expanded edition).***

An updated and greatly expanded second edition of the 2008 *Disability and the Teaching of Writing* “critical sourcebook” published with Bedford St. Martin’s; it has been one of the most popular texts at the intersections of Writing Studies and Disability Studies but is now no longer in print. This second edition is a collaborative editorial project I am carrying out with eight other (more junior) colleagues who are working at the intersections of disability studies and writing studies. Progress to date: we have a signed contract from the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE); the manuscript is in final production stages and expected early Fall 2025.

##### **[The Mansfield Training School Memorial and Museum.](#)**

A collaborative “disability recovery, memorialization, justice” project that began with former UConn Honors student advisee, Jessica Gallagher (now finishing a dual MLIS and Archival Preservation Program at Simmons University) and 10 other UConn undergraduate student research assistants to date. We are engaged in a historical, rhetorical, cross-institutional, and multiple-identities archeology of the Mansfield Training Institute’s (formerly The Connecticut School for Imbeciles at Lakeville from 1860-1914 and then also

The Connecticut Training School for the Feeble Minded at Lakeville from 1915-1917) and the University of Connecticut. The former MTS sits 3.8 miles west of UConn's main campus at Storrs, CT, sprawling across 350 acres, and is currently known as "The Depot Campus" –although it is not an active campus site. We are creating an extensive timeline of the MTS from 1860-2021 (see, still under development: [Mansfield Training School Timeline](#)) while we also focus extensively on the 1960s, the decade that UConn took up considerable cross-institutional connections with the MTS under President Homer Babbidge. While we are engaged in a much larger historical project around the MTS –still unpacking voluminous boxes of materials at both the UConn Libraries and the Dodd Research Center on UConn's campus and also at the State of Connecticut Library in downtown Hartford – we are also specifically focus on the intersection between UConn and MTS that continues to this day but was particularly robust in the 1960s. A website featuring the timeline, sample artifacts and our annotations is currently available and under development. Grants have been obtained to support: the initial archival research; the project's memorial/museum website development; a future 3-day symposium on "The History and Legacies of Disability Institutionalization in the U.S." ; and a traveling poster-board exhibit for schools, conferences, and local, regional, national history museums. The project collaboratively engages 4-6 UConn undergraduate students as researchers, writers, developers, and community-academic activists.

We have received ~\$48,000 total funding support for this project to date: College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Summer Research Grant (Summer 2022, \$7,700); UConn Senate and Office of Vice President for Research JEDI (Justice, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion) initiative (March 2023, \$20,000); College of Liberal Arts and Sciences DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion) support grant (Fall 2023, \$5,000); UConn Humanities Institute (UCHI) research grant (Fall 2023, \$4,500).

Office of Undergraduate Research, UConn, [Summer SHARE research apprentice](#) program. Two students awarded, Summer 2025, for the Mansfield Training School Project (\$2,970 student stipends; \$1000 faculty stipend) for [archival research and writing](#) on the Mansfield Training School project.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (UConn). DEI project award for 2-day Summer 2024 symposium, "The History and Legacies of Disability Institutionalization in the U.S." (Summer 2024, \$4,800)

### **Books, Edited or Co-Edited**

*Disability, Access, and the Teaching of Writing*. Co-editor on the "Disability, Access and the Teaching of Writing Collective" (Stephanie Wheeler, Molly Ubbesen, Lauren Obermark, Tracy Morse, Craig Myers, Brenda Brueggemann, Elizabeth Brewer Austin, Dev Bose). NCTE Press, forthcoming Fall 2025.

### **Chapters in Books**

"A Hard Day at Hartheim: Locating Ourselves in the Nazi's T-4 Euthanasia Site at

Hartheim Castle,” with Georgina Kleege and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson. Afterword essay in *Cultural Stations of Disability*. Ed. David Bolt. Routledge, forthcoming Nov. 2025.

“The Rhetorical Motives and Models of Disability (and) Identification,” invited chapter for Routledge volume, *Disability and Rhetoric* (under contract). co-authored with Danielle Susi-Dittmore (U. Utah). Elizabeth Brewer Austin, Editor. [in progress, draft submitted & accepted].

“Disability Studies: In a Positive Psychology Perspective.” with Jessica A. Gallahger. Eds. Erin Andrews, Kara Ayers, Dana Dunn, and Michael Wehmeyer. [forthcoming, Fall 2025] in *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology and Disability*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Oxford UP.

“Disability Studies and Rhetoric.” *Cambridge History of Rhetoric: Volume V 1900- present* (Daniel M. Gross, Steven Mailloux, LuMing Mao, Eds.) [forthcoming, Dec. 2025]

## CONFERENCE PAPERS AND COLLOQUIA

### Academic and Public Lectures or Creative Readings: by Invitation

“[Deaf Art in America: Identity, Access, Community](#)” Master Class for the Academy for Teachers, at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC, May 12, 2025 [forthcoming]

[UConn Accessibility Summit](#), “Access Issues in the Disability Archives,” May 19, 2025.

The Inaugural [Bolmarcich Lecture at Arizona State University](#) (Lincoln Center for Applied Ethics and College of Liberal Arts & Sciences). October 28, 2024. + additional workshop on “Disability, Access, the Arts” at the ASU Art Museum, October 29, 2024.

Center for American Literary Studies (CALs) at Pennsylvania State University.

“Unprecedented” series event on “Isolation/Communication” Nov, 12, 2024.

Topic: “Disability and Isolation in American YA Literature.”

### Conference Presentations, refereed

“Collaborating for Joy: The Collective Editorial Work of *Disability, Access and the Teaching of Writing*.” Conference on the Teaching of Writing, UConn, April 25, 2025.

“Teaching Deaf Women’s Comportment in Literature, Language, Film, History.” Modern Language Association (MLA) annual convention, New Orleans, LA., Jan. 9-12, 2025.

“A Site of Conscience: The ‘Haunting’ Legacy of the Mansfield Training School. (UConn’s Depot Campus)” American Studies Association annual conference, Baltimore, MD.

November 14-17, 2024.

### Other professional service

External Reviewer, UMass, English Department, March 30-April 1, 2025.

Advisory board member, Erase the Space, 2018–current.

<https://www.erasethespace.org/>.

**Looking ahead, please share any exciting plans or goals you have for yourself in this endowed position. (Required)**

- I intend to support and focus on writing-intensive courses in the [WGSS program](#) and the new [Department of Social and Critical Inquiry \(DSCI\)](#), where I now also have a 50% appointment since its formation this 2024-2025 year.
- I will offer support and committed faculty focus for connecting First-Year-Writing with UConn's "W" courses and offering more curricular and conceptual cohesion across \*writing\* at UConn.
- [Mansfield Training School \(UConn Depot Campus\) project](#)
  - The new website 2.0 (on Aurora) will go live in September 2025. We've been working on it all year.
    - New posts, expanded content will appear at the new site
  - Increased Media attention to MTS, its legacies, memorialization, and future. Already working with two Connecticut newspapers for stories connected to the release of the new website.
  - Expanding the connection between MTS to other sites & research projects like it: Topeka (Kansas) State Hospital; Columbus (OH) State Hospital; Indiana State Hospital; the Willowbrook Mile Memorial and Archives on Staten Island at the College of Staten Island.
  - Starting the oral history /narrative collection project in Fall 2025, continuing Spring and Summer 2026
  - Curating an exhibit of John McGill's documentary photography from MTS, 1969-1972 (when he was a student at UConn).
  - Shepherding a 2-day Symposium on the History & Legacies of Disability Institutionalization in the U.S. (for 2025-2026) – although there is no available realistic funding opportunities to support this at the time.
- Turning the [Disability and Access Collective \(DAC\)](#) blog publication into a WGSS-based for-credit internship opportunity with a newsletter one-time blog publication each semester
- Fall 2025 WGSS 3254W Feminist Disability Studies class: will create an exhibit on UConn's Handicapped Homemaker Project! Dodd Archives plans to carry the exhibit and do a story on their work with his archived UConn research project from 1955-1960.

