

September 30, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Scott A. Jordan
Executive Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer

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 2020 annual report consists of a financial report and a narrative report by Professor Brueggemann.

Attachments



DATE: August 31, 2020

TO: Scott A. Jordan
Executive Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer

FROM: Patricia Casey
Associate Vice President, Financial Operations and Controller

RE: FY20 Report: Aetna Chair of Writing Program

Enclosed is the financial report for the Aetna Chair of Writing program, under the direction of Professor Brueggemann, for fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. The report provides a summary of the financial operations of the program managed by the University and the UConn Foundation. The expenditures for fiscal year 2020 totaled \$44,867.26.

Professor Brueggemann has provided a narrative of the writing program's operation for fiscal year 2020, 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.

Enclosures

c: B. Brueggemann
R. Hasenfratz
G. Ganz

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University of Connecticut and
University of Connecticut Foundation
Aetna Chair of Writing
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2020

	University	Foundation	Combined Total
Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2019	\$33,946.45	\$39,506.59	\$73,453.04
<u>Revenue</u>			
Pooled Endowment Income Allocation	0.00	34,017.06	34,017.06
Transferred From UConn Foundation	37,083.58	(37,083.58)	0.00
TOTAL REVENUES (EXPENDITURES)	37,083.58	(3,066.52)	34,017.06
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Salary and Wages	3,100.00	0.00	3,100.00
Printing and Binding	63.75	0.00	63.75
Conferences and Meetings	3,243.06	0.00	3,243.06
Travel	7,083.58	0.00	7,083.58
TOTAL Contractual Services	10,390.39	0.00	10,390.39
Office Supplies	376.87	0.00	376.87
TOTAL Commodities	376.87	0.00	376.87
Awards and Fellowships	31,000.00	0.00	31,000.00
TOTAL Sundry Charges	31,000.00	0.00	31,000.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	44,867.26	0.00	44,867.26
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2020	\$26,162.77	\$36,440.07	\$62,602.84

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 no transfers from the OHE in fiscal year 2020. 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 2020, although there were no expenses in fiscal year 2020.

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 \$839,248.43 at June 30, 2020, which included accumulated gains/losses on the original gift. The spendable portion of the Foundation endowed fund was \$36,440.07 as of June 30, 2020. 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 \$518,806.79 at June 30, 2020, including principal of \$500,000 and interest of \$18,806.79.

Annual Report, 2019-2020

Aetna Chair of Writing

writing.uconn.edu

PREFACE

Background: In 1986 the Aetna Foundation gave UConn a half million dollars to support the Connecticut Writing Project and related writing activities. This money was deposited in a well-managed UConn Foundation account. The State of Connecticut matched Aetna's half million dollar donation and those funds are invested in the Short-Term Investment Fund at the State of Connecticut.

Current Aetna Chair: In August 2016, Professor Brenda Jo Brueggemann arrived at the University of Connecticut to begin a new term as the Aetna Chair of Writing. Professor Brueggemann is a scholar of international reputation who works at the intersections of writing, rhetoric, disability studies, and creative nonfiction. She has edited major journals, led international scholarly associations, coordinated innovative interdisciplinary projects, received major grants, and written or edited nine books. At her previous academic institutions—most recently the University of Louisville (3 years) and before that The Ohio State University (21 years)—she won teaching awards, mentored many graduate students into successful academic careers, and founded nationally lauded programs in writing, diversity, disability, and public engagement. Professor Brueggemann is also the current co-editor of [Disability Studies Quarterly](#).

2018-2019 Aetna Advisory Board Members (21):

Kyle Barron, English PhD student
Pam Bedore, Writing Program Coordinator, Avery Point campus
Lisa Blansett, Associate Director, First-Year Writing Program, Storrs campus
Scott Campbell, Writing Program Coordinator, Hartford campus
Ellen Carillo, Writing Program Coordinator, Waterbury campus
Jason Courtmanche, Director, Connecticut Writing Project
Tom Deans, Director, University Writing Center
Hannah Dostal, Neag School of Education, Deaf literacy
Anke Finger, German and Digital Media Studies
Sean Forbes, Director, Creative Writing Program
Serkan Gorkemli, Writing Program Coordinator, Stamford campus
Sara Harrington, Associate Director, UConn Libraries
Yohei Igarashi, English Department, UCHI/DHMS Director
Carole Ann Jackson, Sociology PhD student
Blair T. Johnson, Psychology
Douglas Kaufman, Neag School of Education
Kathy Knapp, English Department
Bob Hasenfratz, English Department (Head)
Melanie Hepburn, Business Manager, English Department
Victoria Ford Smith, English Department, Director of Graduate Studies
Anna Ziering, English PhD student

Events and activities focused on writing that are sponsored by the Aetna endowment touch a wide range of departments across UConn, and some extend well beyond campus to enrich the teaching of writing across the State of Connecticut. The annual report that follows is divided into two major sections:

1. New Initiatives and Events supported in the 2019-2020 annual academic year
2. 2019-2020 Reports to the Aetna Chair from those who received funding

I. NEW INITIATIVES AND EVENTS IN 2019-2020

Website:

The Aetna Chair's website was considerably updated and now features, among other things, video interviews with the 2018-2019 graduate research, travel, writing, and teaching award winners. The award recipients discussed their Aetna-funded projects, the ways in which they access writing, and the "dreams" they have for increased support towards graduate student writing at UConn. The video-recorded conversations were condensed and compiled into a series of three videos: <https://writing.uconn.edu/aetna-grad-awards-conversations/>

SCHARP grant application completed:

Writing x Technology. In Dec. 2019 The Aetna Chair worked with a team of interested campus-wide collaborators and completed an application for the [UConn Scholarship and Collaboration in the Humanities and Arts Research \(SCHARP\) "Breakthrough" Award](#) for a research and event project on *Writing x Technology*. The requested funds for this project were \$50,000. Because of COVID-19, the award has still not been determined or finalized.

COVID-19 closures and disruption.

Unfortunately, there is not much to report for this academic year due to the COVID-19 campus closure of UConn at Spring Break in mid-March 2020 which put an end to the many big writing events that always take place annually and that are funded, in full or part, by the Aetna Chair of Writing endowment:

- The annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing (scheduled for April 17)
- The annual Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction (scheduled for April 9)
- The 3rd annual Aetna Celebration of Student Writing and Awards Ceremony (scheduled for April 27). Instead of an Awards Ceremony we created a ["Virtual Awards Ceremony"](#) at the Aetna Chair's website where students who won awards were invited to contribute any of the following:
 - a photo, preferably UConn-related
 - a brief "backstory" of how their award-winning submission had come to fruition
 - a 5 min. audio or video recording from their award-winning piece.

Most award winners were eager to contribute to this historic Virtual Celebration -- the first time there have been extended and dedicated features for the many Aetna student writing prizes at the website!

Continued graduate research/writing focus and enhancement.

Before UConn's on-campus closure in mid-March 2020 considerable funding and awards for UConn's graduate students conducting writing-focused research and teaching were also maintained.

Eight (8) **graduate research and travel awards** were distributed this year totally \$3,600:

1. Kyle Barron. Presentation at the International Writing Centers Association meeting in Columbus OH: "The Flash Tutoring Project @ UConn" [\$500]
2. Sophia Buckner. Presentation at the International Writing Centers Association meeting in Columbus OH: "The Flash Tutoring Project @ UConn" [\$500]
3. Kathryn Warrender-Hill. Presentation at the International Writing Centers Association meeting in Columbus OH: "The Flash Tutoring Project @ UConn" [\$500]
4. Kerry Carnahan. "We Make the Syllabus: Doing Harney and Moten's 'Study' in First-Year Writing" at the 2020 Modern Language Association (MLA) convention in Seattle, WA
5. Nicole Lawrence. "Collaboration in Student Composition and Learning" at the 2020 Modern Language Association (MLA) convention in Seattle, WA [\$400]
6. Kaylee Mootz. "Diverse Destinies: Envisioning Futures for Youth of Color" Co-Sponsored by the Children's Literature Association and the Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States Modern Language Association, Seattle, WA, January 2020 [\$400]
7. Arpita Mandal. "Writing Rhetorically and Audience Awareness." at the 2020 Modern Language Association (MLA) convention in Seattle WA [\$400]
8. Gabriel Morrison. Research/interview coding for a dissertation chapter study during the spring 2020 semester entitled "Writing Across Technology and Borders." [\$500]

Also featured at the ["Virtual Celebration" area of the Aetna Chair's website](#) are the winners of the **Graduate Critical Writing Award**. This year's winners were:

- 1st Place: Julia Brush, Department of English. "Poeisis Ex Machina: Cyborg Poetics and Digital Humanities" (\$500)
- 2nd Place: Danielle Dumaine, Department of History. "The Apartment Workshop: Diane di Prima in New York City, 1953-1966" (\$250)
- Honorable Mention: Nathan Braccio, Department of History, "The Rise of Surveyors and the Decline of Algonquin Guidance: The Creation of a New, English, Spatial Epistemology in America, 1635-1660" (\$100)
- Honorable Mention: Olivia Marcus, Department of Anthropology "A sense of scents: perfumes and healing in Peruvian mestizo shamanism" (\$100)

Finally, the **Graduate Teaching of Writing Award** was also awarded this year to the following:

Winner: Gabriel Morrison, Department of English (\$500)

Aetna Commendation for Excellence in the Teaching of Writing:

Amy Fehr, Department of English (\$100)

Manuel Ramirez, Department of Sociology (\$100)

II. 2019-2020 REPORTS to the Aetna Chair

Programs receiving Aetna Chair support/funds in 2017-2018 include the following:

1. The Connecticut Writing Project
2. The Creative Writing Program
3. The First-Year Writing Program
4. UConn Regional Campus Writing Programs
 - a. Avery Point campus
 - b. Hartford campus
 - c. Stamford campus
 - d. Waterbury campus
5. University Writing Center
6. Writing Internship Program
7. Graduate Student Awards
8. Writing Prizes

The following is a brief summary of major reports from those who received Aetna Chair funding in 2019-2020.

1. The Connecticut Writing Project (CWP)

The \$24,000 allocated to the CWP by the Aetna Advisory Board for the 2019-20 academic year was combined with grant funding from the Connecticut State Department of Education to provide 15 Fellowships to teachers and graduate students to attend the 2020 Invitational Summer Institute, and to provide honoraria to three Teacher-Consultants of the CWP to assist the Director in running the Summer Institute. The foundational program of the CWP is an annual [Invitational Summer Institute](#). Each Summer Institute runs for seven hours a day, five days a week, for four weeks, and participants earn six graduate credits in English (though some participants who do not need the credits participate for non-credit-bearing professional development, alone). Participating teachers conduct inquiry projects that require them to study current research in the teaching of writing and compile a portfolio of their own writing. Thus, the focus is a combination of theory and practice.

Their intended inquiry projects focus on reading, creative writing, bilingualism, digital media, college-level writing, interdisciplinary writing, writing centers, and social justice.

For the 2019-2020 funding period, the CWP Summer Institute has migrated online. Approval was received in early April from UConn's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to move online, and 15 applications were received. Virtual interviews were conducted in April and 12 Fellowships were offered. All 12 teachers accepted. We are using the \$25,000 from Aetna supplemented by \$3,000 from the CWP's discretionary funds to offer 6 for-credit Fellowships and 6 not-for-credit Fellowships. Three of this summer's CWP Institute participants are pre-service teachers, either entering graduate school or just completing their MA. The other nine are veterans with anywhere from 2 to 20+ years of teaching experience. All but one are secondary English teachers. (The one is a 6th grade classroom teacher.) They are from a mix of urban, suburban, and rural districts. Their initial research project ideas are

on Assessment, Writing in the Content Areas, Reading, Social and Emotional Learning, and Multimodal Literacy. The CWP Summer Institute will run from June 22 to July 17, 2020.

2. The Creative Writing Program (Department of English)

Poetic Journeys: \$1,000

Printing and reception for UConn Poetry Transportation project. Under the direction of Aaron Proudfoot 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, six posters were designed featuring short excerpts of poems by two undergraduate students and four graduate students respectively: Violet Duval, Sydney Guerrero, Maurice Rodriguez, Daniel Healy, Julia Brush, and Sophia Buckner.

Please note that the posters have yet to be printed as we are waiting for permission from the UConn Business Office.

Long River Review Production: \$2,000

Partial support—other funding comes from Creative Writing Program, the Collins Prize, and journal sales. This marked the 23rd edition of the *Long River Review*, UConn's award-winning art and literary journal. Under the direction of faculty advisor Darcie Dennigan, 21 undergraduate students worked tirelessly to produce the journal in collaboration with the UConn Design Center Studio. The Virtual Release Party via Zoom was held on Tuesday, April 28th.

Please note that the journals have yet to be printed as we are waiting for permission from the UConn Business Office.

3. The First-Year Writing Program

The Aetna Chair of Writing works closely with the First-Year Writing (FYW) Program at UConn since she also currently serves as the Director of that program as well. While she meets weekly then in pre-established FYW staff meetings and other events the program carries out, she does not advise on the FYW budget request to the Aetna Chair. That request is discussed among the other FYW staff members and then formally submitted by Lisa Blansett, Associate Director, First-Year Writing Program. The annual FYW Program report to the Aetna Chair is also submitted by Professor Lisa Blansett, Associate Director, FYW.

39th Annual Lilly Conference on College Teaching

In Fall 2019, First-Year Writing presented at the 39th Annual Lilly Conference on College Teaching at Miami University in Oxford, OH. With David Des Armier in CETL, we organized and facilitated a pre-Conference workshop titled, "Active + Accessible: Multimodal Teaching and Learning— Approaches to a First-Year Writing Course." The workshop introduced participants to our new curriculum by asking them to create a visual map or exhibit using our Course Moves. We spent approximately \$2,000 on conference registration fees, travel, and accommodations.

2020 CCCC Annual Convention

We organized an Engaged Learning Experience (ELE) for the 2020 CCCC Annual Convention. However, the convention was cancelled due to COVID-19. We plan to revise and adapt our proposal for the planned ELE, "Designing Inclusive Multimodal Spaces" for the 2021 CCCC Annual Convention. We spent approximately \$1,300 on non-refundable airline tickets.

4. Regional Campus Writing Programs

Because the current Aetna Chair of Writing is also the Director of UConn's First-Year Writing Program overall, she has the opportunity to meet frequently with all of the regional campus writing program coordinators. The Aetna funds support various initiatives on several of the UConn regional campuses. For example, at **Avery Point** (under leadership by Dr. Pam Bedore) a monthly Friday Writing Retreat is hosted. Five of these retreats were held before Covid-19 canceled the last two. 61 participants joined the five (5) different retreats in 2018-2019. At the **Waterbury** campus (with initiatives organized by Dr. Ellen Carillo), Aetna funds supported 2 key writing initiatives: (1) Academic Integrity Awareness Week; and (2) The Thank You Card Project (approximately 50 participants).

At the **Stamford campus** (under leadership by Serkan Gorkemli) \$1,300 from Aetna funds was used for 10 different workshops training 13 part-time instructors about the new FYW curriculum during Spring 2020. One workshop theme focusing on curricular revision and syllabus re-design and the other on multi-modal writing pedagogies and assignments. During these 10 workshops, 13 UConn Stamford-FYW instructors reviewed information regarding the curriculum revision, sample syllabi, and assignments from the FYW sections at the Storrs campus, and they discussed revising their existing curriculum to fit the new course design, with the specific goal of teaching one multimodal assignment during the academic year 2020-2021.

The **Hartford** campus writing program did not make use of Aetna funds in the 2019-2020 year because their planned use of Aetna funds for an event on sound-related writing pedagogies was disrupted by Covid-19.

5. The Writing Center

Supported \$600 for Aetna Writing in the Disciplines Awards: 3 awards @ \$200 each. (The Aetna Writing in the Disciplines Award winners are also featured at the [Aetna Virtual Celebration of Student Writing](#) and outlined in more detail below. An additional \$900 was requested in support of an annual speaker/event that was canceled due to Covid-19

7. Graduate Student Research, Travel, Critical Writing, Teaching Awards

Outlined in Section I. above.

8. Writing Prizes

First-Year Writing Awards. (all winners are featured at the [Aetna Virtual Celebration of Student Writing](#) with many students reading 5 mins. from their writing projects)

- 1st Place: Palakjot Bedi, "A Uniting Aspiration: The Political Revolution of John Lennon's 'Imagine.'" Instructor: Julia Wold
- 2nd Place: Owen Spangler. "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema and the Transformation of Philip Dick." Instructor: Julia Brush

Writing in the Disciplines Awards (All winners are featured at the [Aetna Virtual Celebration of Student Writing](#) with many students offering a photo and a “backstory” for their writing projects.)

Humanities

Co-Winners:

- Rebecca Maher. "On Such a Full 'C'" Instructor: Clare Eby, English
- Brianna Dyer "Genocide in Xinjiang." Instructor: Jack Barry, Global Training & Development Institute

Honorable Mentions:

- Laurane Fumex. "Louis Althusser through a Totalitarian Lens." Instructor: Charles Venator-Santiago, Political Science
- Kanika Malani. "Removal of Children from Their Families and Homes in India as a Result of Child Labor." Instructor: Françoise Dussart, Anthropology
- Kayla Simon. "Ophelia, I Want a Bigger Boat: Analyzing the Importance of Jordan Peele's *Us* in Contemporary America." Instructor: Kathy Knapp, English

Social Sciences

Winner:

- Frederick Augur. "Six Years to Life: The Impact of Term Length on Judicial Independence." Instructors: Virginia Hettinger and Jennifer Sterling-Folker, Political Science

Honorable Mentions:

- Julie Brisson. "Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction as Burnout Prevention for Therapists: A Randomized Controlled Trial." Instructor: Samantha Lawrence, Human Development & Family Studies
- Lindsay de Brito. "The Proof is in the Partisanship: How Race Demonstrates Gerrymandering." Instructor: Jeffrey Ladewig, Political Science
- Simone Fournier. "Death Anxiety and End of Life Care in Older Adults." Instructor: Edna Brown, Human Development & Family Studies

Sciences and Engineering

Co-Winners:

- Brandon Smith. "Habitat preference of Asian shore crabs (*Hemigrapsus sanguineus*) in relation to rock size and location within the rocky intertidal zone." Instructor: Morgan Tingley, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
- Michael Taylor. "Trophic Cascades: The Dynamics of the Web of Life in a Changing World." Instructor: Dr. Carlos Garcia-Robledo, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

Honorable Mentions:

- Stephanie Bleasdale. "Modern Society and Sleep: The Blue Light Warning." Instructor: Dr. Colleen Spurling, Molecular & Cell Biology
- William Duffey. "Critical Micellar Concentration and Formation in Soap and its Effects on Conductivity of Water." Instructor: KarenAnn Caldwell, Chemistry
- Ashley Roy. "Connecticut Conservationist." Instructor: Gabriel Morrison, English

Creative Writing Awards. (All winners are featured at the [Aetna Virtual Celebration of Student Writing](#) with many students reading 5 mins. from their writing projects)

- Aetna Graduate Creative Nonfiction Prize: Quinn Molloy. (\$250)
- Aetna Undergraduate Creative Nonfiction Prize: Aner Bajraktarevic. (\$250)
- Aetna Translation Prize: Ain Jeong. (\$250)
- Aetna Children's Literature Prize: Kelly Rafferty. (\$250)
- *Long River Review* Graduate Writing Award: Maurice Rodriguez. (\$250)

Respectfully submitted,



Brenda Jo Brueggemann

Professor, Department of English
Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing
Director, First-Year Writing Program
June 29, 2020