


September 27, 2023

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Jeffrey P. Geoghegan, CPA 
Executive Vice President for Finance 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.”

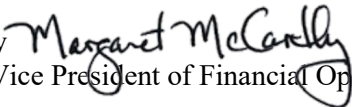
The 2023 annual report consists of a financial report and a narrative report by Professor Brueggemann.

Attachments



DATE: August 31, 2023

TO: Jeffrey Geoghegan
Executive Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

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

RE: Aetna Chair of Writing

Enclosed is a financial report for the Aetna Chair of Writing program, under the direction of Professor Brueggemann, for fiscal year ended June 30, 2023. 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 year 2023 totaled \$41,116.65.

Professor Brueggemann has provided a narrative of the writing program's operation for fiscal year 2023, 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 and
University of Connecticut Foundation
Aetna Chair of Writing
Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

	University	Foundation	Combined Total
Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2022	\$ 40,293.97	\$ 49,034.42	\$ 89,328.39
<u>Revenue</u>			
Transferred From Office of Higher Education	9,394.56	-	9,394.56
Pooled Endowment Income Allocation	-	39,608.63	39,608.63
Transferred From UConn Foundation	40,916.65	(40,916.65)	-
TOTAL REVENUE	50,311.21	(1,308.02)	49,003.19
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Salary & Wages	4,871.49	-	4,871.49
Printing and Binding	2,197.00	-	2,197.00
Travel	1,256.66	-	1,256.66
Conferences and Meetings	10,285.55	-	10,285.55
TOTAL Contractual Services	13,739.21	-	13,739.21
Office Supplies	800.95	-	800.95
TOTAL Commodities	800.95	-	800.95
Student Aid Fees	21,705.00	-	21,705.00
TOTAL Sundry Charges	21,705.00	-	21,705.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	41,116.65	-	41,116.65
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2023	\$ 49,488.53	\$ 47,726.40	\$ 97,214.93

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 \$9,394.56 in fiscal year 2023. 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 2023, although there were no expenses in fiscal year 2023.

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 \$890,314.85 at June 30, 2023, which included accumulated gains/losses on the original gift. The spendable portion of the Foundation endowed fund was \$47,726.40 as of June 30, 2023. 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 \$505,779.58 at June 30, 2022, including principal of \$500,000 and interest of \$5,779.58.

The Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing
at the University of Connecticut
Report of expenditures, support, and initiatives
August 20, 2023

Aetna Chair of Writing, General Notes, 2022-2023

Prepared by: Brenda Brueggemann, Aetna Chair of Writing

This 2022-2023 year, all Aetna Advisory Board members were asked to serve on an Aetna-supported prize committee (unless they were on sabbatical, research leave, etc.)

The annual Aetna Celebration of Student Writing Poster Fair & Awards Ceremony, that had been successfully carried out in April 2018 and April 2019, will have a (hopeful) return in April 2024 and be associated with the annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing (spearheaded by UConn's First-Year Writing program, with substantial support from the Aetna Chair of Writing).

A revision of the Graduate Student Awards funded by the Aetna Chair of Writing was undertaken and discussed at length at the annual Aetna Advisory Board meeting on May 22, 2023. It was unanimously approved by the full board. The changes will:

- Rename the overall graduate student support awards as: **Aetna Graduate Student Writing Support Awards** (Aetna GWS Awards).
- Expand the scope of the awards/funding (from the current statement: "Inquiries and engagements into the process and practice of writing in various settings—creative, literary, professional, interdisciplinary, etc." Include: research sites; conference attendance and presentations; event organizing; administrative positions and initiatives related to writing. Also include specific examples/prompts, such as:
 - AI Writing (e.g., ChatGPT), etc.
 - Writing and Cognition (which might attract graduate students studying psychology, linguistics, education, etc.)
 - Writing and Culture (which might attract LCL graduate students)
 - Writing Pedagogy Innovation (in First-Year writing but also all UConn "W" courses)
- Emphasize the importance of a "public venue" distribution for awarded projects – beyond just a brief paragraph-report about the project to the Aetna Chair of Writing.

- Extend support to graduate students who organize writing-related events of all kinds
- \$5,000 annually to support the GWS Awards

The Writing in the Disciplines (WID) Awards that were formerly managed by the UConn Writing Center, have now come under the direct supervision of the Aetna Chair of Writing (though no additional Department-level support has been extended for this labor and the management of the awards). For that reason, the three (3) Writing in the Disciplines Awards – for the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Science & Engineering – were all suspended in 2022-2023 while the Aetna Chair met the full Advisory Board and the English Department Administration about how to best support these awards in the years forward. On average, 80-100 submissions arrive each year for these 3 awards and the reading and evaluation of the papers received is substantial.

Aetna Chair of Writing, Discretionary Funds, 2022-2023

Prepared by: Brenda Brueggemann, Aetna Chair of Writing

Discretionary funds of \$500 total for the 2022-2023 fiscal year were used to support an additional creative writing workshop for/with UConn students and the Conference on the Teaching of Writing (CTW) keynote speaker, Stacey Waite on Thursday, April 13, 2023.

Aetna Chair of Writing, Graduate Awards, 2022-2023

Prepared by: Brenda Brueggemann, Aetna Chair of Writing

Four (4) research and travel awards were given:

1. Luisana Duarte-Almendariz (\$500)

Thanks to the Aetna Travel Award I received through UConn I was able to participate in the Kindling Words East (KWE) 2023 retreat. KWE is designed by and for writers, illustrators, and editors of children's literature. The experience was regenerative for my creative work and thanks to it, I've already progressed in my manuscript. The retreat was also extremely helpful in my own development as a children's author. I participated in workshops about school visits, writing non-fiction, and chatted with people who could relate to the benefits and struggles of being a contemporary author of color. Another advantage of participating in KWE was the networking opportunity, from which I have already set up a panel of middle-grade authors coming up on May 10th at Bank Square Books in Mystic and author visit opportunities for next academic year.

2. Madison Gehling (\$500)

On May 13, 2023, I presented my paper "'Legends are dangerous': Elective Amnesia in Young Adult Medievalism" on a special panel about young adult writing and pedagogy at the 58th annual International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan. During my presentation, I spoke about the rhetoric of elective cultural amnesia that many young adult authors address in their books—amnesia weaponized by white supremacists in positions of power to "forget" the harmful consequences of problematic power structures, racist institutions, revisionist histories, etc. I specifically argued that the complex writing style and rhetoric of these texts, written for young audiences, is particularly important in challenging this amnesia, since books like Tracy Deonn's *Legendborn* and Maggie Stiefater's *The Raven Cycle* series center young, BIPOC, queer and gender diverse voices. The characters in these texts value open dialogue, diversity, love, radical community work, and reparations; these values are positioned as the way forward. The panel was useful, and overall the conference was an incredibly valuable experience: the Q & A section of the presentation turned into an engaging conversation about dangerous political rhetoric in both the medieval academy and in contemporary pop culture. We also shared pedagogical tools and resources (specifically for teaching intro-level composition and literature courses) with each other.

3. Adam McClaim (\$262)

Attendance at, and presentation, Utopias/Dystopias Conference: "Through the Valley of the Shadow of Death": Approaching Zion through Utopia and Dystopia." In many visions and iterations, Zion is considered utopian—a place or feeling of sanctuary, peace, and wholehearted unity. The Latter-day Saint idea of Zion takes many forms: a physical space, be that Missouri, Illinois, or Utah; a metaphysical sanctuary, wherever the Saints are welcome, protected, and able to practice their beliefs; and a state of community, being "of one heart and one mind" (Moses 7:18). This paper approaches the Latter-day Saint conception of Zion through ideas and theories about utopia and dystopia

4. Luisana Duarte-Almendariz (\$500)

Travel to, and presentation at, this year's Children's Literature Association Conference (ChLA) in **Seattle, Washington from June 15–June 17, 2023**. Presentation titled: "Business as Usual (?): Depictions in children's literature of life in extreme environments and post-climate change related natural disasters." In this paper, I explore the writing of child characters who are affected and even displaced by natural disasters and how their environments are rebuilt in the aftermath.

Additionally, this year I was elected to serve in the Article Award Committee for ChLA. I'm excited to serve my term which begins during this

year's conference and lasts for three years. Even though this appointment is labeled as "service," I believe that I will greatly benefit as a student by being part of this committee. While reading academic articles has become part of my daily life, I'm still developing my skills when it comes to writing publishable papers. I look forward to becoming a critic of the articles submitted for consideration of this award and learning from my peers who are also serving in this committee.

Graduate Teaching of Writing Award for 2022-2023 (\$500): Hannah Taylor (English)

The committee reading applications for this award found Hannah Taylor's materials to be robust, detailed, well-supported, ambitious, and thought-provoking. A thoughtful syllabus and intriguing writing assignment were offered that connected to the course's larger learning objects; an impressive faculty observation letter for teaching was included; an engaged course inquiry and reading list grounded the course.

Graduate Critical Writing Award for 2022-2023 (\$500): Mackenzie Bergan (English)

The Aetna Graduate Critical Essay Prize Committee is pleased to award this year's prize to Mackenzie Bergan for her essay, "Theorizing the Uncanny Adaptation through *Hamlet*." The committee felt Bergan's paper demonstrates a deep familiarity with the scholarly conversation surrounding Shakespearean adaptation, and video game adaptation, specifically. One member of the committee highlighted the "comprehensive way in which the writer applies the concepts of the 'uncanny' and 'haunting' to *Elsinore*." Another found "the subject and style of the essay...enjoyable for both academic and general audiences." Bergan's observation that *Elsinore* allows viewers/players to "help shape where and how the uncanny familiarity...progresses and evolves" (13) reveals a crucial component of adaptation more generally: the constitutive role of the audience. By ultimately theorizing "uncanny adaptation" through the participatory medium of the video game, Bergan helps clarify the way an audience's prior knowledge of and cultural connection to a source text is essential to the "success" of the adaptation. The concept of the "uncanny adaptation" has the potential for wider application and invites further investigation in relation to *Hamlet* or other Shakespearean tragedies.

Connecticut Writing Project 2022-2023, Aetna Chair Support

Prepared by: Jason Courtmanche, CT Writing Project Director

For the 2022 CWP participants, there are only three final Inquiry Projects because these are the groupings the teachers ended up in for their final projects.

For 2023, you see only their proposed Inquiry Projects. That some are the same is because we make suggestions during the interview process (College-Level Writing, Multimodal Composition, Reading/Writing Connection, and Writing for Social Justice were the broad topics we suggested this year). The teachers will ultimately form partnerships, and the Inquiry project titles will become more nuanced.

Fellowship Recipients 2022

Mike Ewing	Fairchild Wheeler Interdistrict Magnet High School, Bridgeport	Writing Marathons
Mary Archambault	Pomfret Community School	Creative Writing: Break Down Barriers and Empower Students
Chris Buck	UMass-Amherst PhD Candidate	Writing Marathons
Patrick Gosselin	Eillington High School	Creative Writing: Break Down Barriers and Empower Students
Amythest Hamby	Farmington High School	Trauma Informed Teaching
Julianna Iacovelli	UConn, Neag Grad Student	Trauma Informed Teaching
Alex Klein	Killingly High School	Innovative Approaches to Teaching Students About Misinformation
Joe Tarantino	University High School of Science and Engineering, Hartford	Writing Marathons
Ashley Taylor	Griswold High School	Writing Marathons
Julia Ward	UConn BA in English, TCPCG student	Trauma Informed Teaching

Fellowship Recipients 2023

Beth Richmond	Charles Murphy Elementary School, Oakdale	Remedial reading and Dyslexia
Dan Murphy	Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy, Stamford	Multimodal Composition
Emily Genser	Conard High School, West Hartford	Multimodal Composition
Kyra Arena	UConn, Neag grad student	Writing and Social Action
Lexi Munger	Northwest Regional High School, Winsted	Increasing Student Confidence and Passion for Writing
Stacey Landowne	Fairfield Warde High School	The Reading/Writing Connection and How it is Impacted by Technology
Jane Tulley	Ridgefield High School	College-Level Writing and Multimodal Composition
Bailey Hosko	Killingly Intermediate School	The Reading/Writing Connection

UConn Creative Writing Program, 2022-2023, Aetna Chair Support

Prepared by: Sean Forbes, Creative Writing Program Director

Aetna Money Spent from Creative Writing Program FY 2022-2023

Amount Requested: \$9,000

Amount Used: \$8,682.63

Aetna Writer-in-Residence Program (Poet): \$3,000

(Author honorarium \$3,000)

The spring Aetna Writer-in-Residence Program was held in-person on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 6:30 PM at the UConn Bookstore, Storrs Center. Our featured reader was poet **Chen Chen**. Chen is the author of two books of poetry, *Your Emergency Contact Has Experienced an Emergency* (2022) and *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities* (2017), which was longlisted for the National Book Award and won the Thom Gunn Award, among other honors. His work appears in many

publications, including *Poetry* and three editions of *The Best American Poetry*. He has received two Pushcart Prizes and fellowships from Kundiman, the National Endowment for the Arts, and United States Artists. He was the 2018-2022 Jacob Ziskind Poet-in-Residence at Brandeis University and currently teaches for the low-residency MFA programs at New England College and Stonecoast.

On Thursday, March 2, 2023, Chen met with six students for 45-minute one-on-one tutorials. Each student submitted a manuscript of 5-pages of poetry to be workshopped with Chen. The six students (two graduate students and four undergraduate students) were: **Frankie Devevo, Autumn Michels, Kayla Simon, Julia Brush, Anh Le, and Aayushi Agarwal.**

Here are a few testimonials:

“I've rarely felt so capable and inspired as I did after my tutorial with Chen. He was so gentle with my work, so careful. When he identified elements that weren't working for him, he asked me to explain my thinking so we could talk about how to realize my vision. And when he found a surprising phrase or vivid image, he was quick to articulate their strength. To have a poet I've studied and who I admire treat my work with such respect made my writing feel real and legitimate in a way it hadn't before.”

-Frankie Devevo, Undergraduate English major

“Chen Chen is a poet I look up to, so I was beyond excited when I found out that I would get the chance to get his feedback on my writing. I've had writer's block for some time now, so I was nervous about the upcoming revision process, but ten minutes into our conversation that fear was gone. He didn't give me structural suggestions, but rather small ones that felt manageable, minimally impactful in a way that would greatly improve my poems. I really appreciated his insight, and I am so grateful I was able to talk to him.”

-Aayushi Agaral, Undergraduate English major

“My experience workshopping with Chen Chen is a piece of my time in the UConn English program that I am going to remember forever. Chen provided such thoughtful and encouraging feedback when workshopping my poems. His suggestions were small and manageable fixes that are going to make my poems better in monumental ways; he pinpointed aspects of my poem that I could immediately tell would make the piece better once his suggestions were implemented in my own writing voice. I left the workshop feeling both excited to revise these poems and confident in my future writing! The personal significance of having the chance to work one-on-one with such a talented and respected poet cannot be understated, and I am infinitely grateful to the creative writing program for this opportunity.”

-Kayla Simon, Undergraduate English major

“It is not often that one has the opportunity to meet with a published poet, particularly a contemporary poet. Meeting with Chen Chen was an incredible experience. He took time and care to read through each of the poems I submitted and relayed extremely valuable advice and suggestions so I may better enhance my writing. The tutorial also allowed me to discuss how publishing works in the poetry genre and I gained extremely useful information from his first-hand knowledge. I am very grateful to have been able to meet with Chen Chen and know that my writing will only improve from his influence.”

-Autumn Michels, Undergraduate English major

“My one-on-one session with Chen Chen has solidified my desire to further pursue creative writing—not only in my graduate studies, but throughout my lifetime. His feedback on my five poems has aided me with strengthening my craft by guiding me to adopt a more flexible approach to writing poetry. Chen was calm, generous, kind, and receptive to the effect I was attempting to create with each poem, each stanza, each image. His advice about revision, which was to feel excited about the possible directions that a piece can take rather than becoming attached to its original form, is applicable to my life. This opportunity to work with such a talented, skillful, and sensitive poet whose voice needs to be further amplified in our society is something that I don’t take for granted. Thank you to the Creative Writing Program and the Aetna Chair of Writing for giving me the opportunity to share with Chen my work.”

-Anh Le, Graduate English student

Poetic Journeys: \$932.63

Printing and reception for UConn Poetry Transportation project.

Under the direction of Daniel Healy 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 three undergraduate students and three graduate students, respectively: **Madison Bigelow, Sophia Ciraldo, Rylee Thomas, Christopher Bolster, Mykelle S. Coleman, and Anh Le.** The *Poetic Journeys* Release Party was held on Thursday, April 20, 2023, at 5:00 PM in the Stern Lounge of the Austin building.

Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction: \$2,000

(Author honorarium \$2,000)

The spring 2023 Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction was held via a Zoom webinar on Thursday, March 23, 2023 with our featured writer: **Elissa Washuta.** The celebration honored and recognized two undergraduate student co-winners of the 2023 Aetna Creative Nonfiction Award, **Celine Agbotey** and **Jules Dowling**, who both read excerpts from their winning nonfiction essays.

Elissa Washuta is a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. Her essay collection *White Magic* was selected as a finalist for the PEN/Open Book Award, longlisted for the PEN/Jean Stein Award, and named among the best books of 2021 by *TIME*, the New York Public Library, and NPR. She is the author of *My Body Is a Book of Rules* and *Starvation Mode*, and with Theresa Warburton, she co-edited the anthology *Shapes of Native Nonfiction: Collected Essays by Contemporary Writers*. Her honors include a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, a Creative Capital award, and the Artist Trust Arts Innovator Award. She is an associate professor at the Ohio State University, where she teaches in the MFA Program in Creative Writing.

Long River Review Production: \$2,000

Partial support —other funding to come from Creative Writing Program, the Collins Prize, and journal sales.

This marked the 26th edition of the *Long River Review*, UConn's award-winning art and literary journal. Under the direction of faculty advisor Sean Frederick Forbes, 15 undergraduate students worked tirelessly to produce the journal in collaboration with the UConn Design Center Studio. 400 copies were printed. The Release Party took place on Thursday, April 27, 2023, at 7:00 PM at the UConn Bookstore, Storrs Center, 1 Royce Circle.

Aetna Creative Nonfiction Award: \$250

Awarded to Celine Agbotey and Jules Dowling, co-winners, \$125 each

Aetna Translation Prize: \$250

Awarded to Glorimarie Peña Alicea

Aetna Children’s Literature Prize: \$250

Awarded to Luisana Duarte Armendáriz

Long River Review Graduate Writing Award: \$250

*Committee decided not to award a prize this year.

First-Year Writing Program, UConn: Aetna Chair Support, 2022-2023

Prepared by: Lisa Blansett, FYW Director

Last year, 2022-2023, we were awarded \$7,000 by the Aetna Advisory Board. The following sections outline how that funding was used.

1. **Conference on the Teaching of Writing (\$2,000):** In 2023, we were able to return to an in-person conference on the Storrs Campus to host "What a Difference Makes." We have learned that the return to in-person work requires a period of transition, but we were pleasantly surprised to host 74 registrants at the conference from institutions across the US. We added some new features this year, including "poster sessions" where which faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates shared work they were doing in poster format. We hope to continue celebrating undergraduate work at the conference. For the conference, we were able to secure Dr. Stacey Waite, editor of *Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers* (a college reader) and [*Inventing the Discipline: Student Work in Composition Studies*](#) (defining the field of writing studies and first-year composition); author of *Teaching Queer: Radical Possibilities for Writing and Knowing*, as well as several books of poetry: *Butch Geography*, *the lake has no saint*, *Love Poem to Androgyny*, and *Choke*. Dr. Waite spent two days at UConn, facilitating a poetry workshop for

University of Connecticut First-Year Writing Program's
Conference on the Teaching of Writing

What a Difference Makes

Friday, April 14th, 2023
UConn Student Union, Storrs, CT

Join us as we investigate the possibilities of difference to consider "What a Difference Makes" and to imagine the generative potential of difference in the teaching of writing and the writing classroom.

Our definition of **DIFFERENCE** encompasses Differences in identities, experiences, social groups, languages, social practices, curricula, and pedagogies, as well as in thought and action.

Keynote Speaker
STACEY WAITE
poet, educator, scholar

Sponsored by the Aetna Chair of Writing, Creative Writing Program; Dean for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences; Department of English; Rainbow Center; University of Connecticut Humanities Institute; Women's Center, and the Department of Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies.

Please reach out to fywconference@uconn.edu if you have any questions.

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undergraduates, a writing-pedagogy workshop for graduate instructors, and a poetry reading on Thursday; on Friday, Dr. Waite delivered the keynote address. The success of the two-day event has suggested we consider collaborating with other units both inside the English Department and across campuses to permanently expand the conference and its offerings.

2. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Research Project (\$2,500):

We are completing analysis of the grant-supported Scholarship of Teaching and Learning project. Although Pandemic restrictions had hampered student participation, we gathered meaningful data that has led to fruitful analysis, facilitated in part by the Director's participation in the 2022 Dartmouth Summer Seminar in Writing Research. The funding we received is currently supporting 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. The research also demonstrated good teaching requires support and development, so we have put some of the funding (\$1,000) into supporting instructional development for a two-day workshop scheduled for May 30-31.

3. Consultant-facilitators to support the CLAS Teaching Enhancement Grant we won in summer of 2022 (\$2,500). Because of staffing constraints, particularly the absence of an Associate Director of FYW, we paused the collection of adjunct-faculty course development proposals and the consulting period until June 2023. These funds are being used to put the 2022-23 FYW APiR hires into consulting roles for this program. The CLAS Teaching Enhancement Grant is funding support for the "FYW Adjunct-Faculty Course Development Award." Adjunct faculty who teach FYW are invited to submit a proposal to develop an inquiry, assignment sequence, and course activities using the approach, framework, and learning objectives for FYW. The deadline for submissions is May 22. A panel of cross-campus WPAs will select up to 6 adjunct faculty to be awarded a modest stipend (\$775), and work directly with those instructors to develop strong, individualized courses that can serve as models for UConn FYW courses. The Aetna contribution will cover the new FYW APiRs who will serve as consultants to the adjunct faculty.

Lisa Blansett, Director of First-Year Writing

Christopher Bolster, Departing Assistant Director of First-Year Writing

Luisana Duarte Armendariz, Continuing Assistant Director of First-Year Writing

Mckenzie Bergan, Entering Assistant Director of First-Year Writing (Fall 2023)

Writing Center, Aetna Funding Report for 2022-23

Prepared by: Tom Deans, Writing Center Director

Last May 2022, the Aetna Advisory Board approved \$800 for the following purposes:

- \$400 to fund an honorarium for an outside workshop or webinar leader.

In May 2022, a few weeks after the 2022 Aetna Board meeting, we brought in Noreen Lape, author of *Internationalizing the Writing Center*, to lead an online workshop with our leadership team—but we ended up being able to slip this into the 2021-22 funding cycle. We did not bring in another speaker or workshop leader during the 2022-23 academic year, so **we did not spend this \$400 allocation.**

- \$400 to fund student research projects and conference travel, with the usual caveat that we will first make good faith efforts to secure funds from other sources.

We did undertake successful undergraduate and graduate writing center research that resulted in 2 presentations at the Northeast Writing Center Association Annual Conference in Durham, NH (one on multilingualism in the writing center and one on a pilot of AI technologies/ChatGPT in the writing center) and 2 at the International Writing Center Association Annual Conference in Vancouver (one workshop on our “Centering Writing”/creative writing staff development and one on using AI in STEM graduate writing support). These panels included faculty, staff, graduate, and undergraduate researchers, but we were able to secure travel funding for everyone through other sources: the Office of Undergraduate Research, the Graduate School, UCPEA professional development fund, and a faculty research fund. **So this allocation went unspent too.**

UConn-Hartford Campus, Aetna Chair Report, 2022-2023

Prepared by Scott Campbell, Writing Coordinator

The year that is ending now was fraught with setbacks and challenges; most notably, about 40% of our FYW teaching staff turned over and our library has been closed since January because of a flood. As a consequence, much of the training and support for FYW teaching this year has been in a more on-demand and case-by-case mode, and we have not been able to find a time to meet together as a unit. I conferred with these

instructors, and the consensus was that an early fall semester preparatory meeting is preferable to a late or post-semester meeting. (We had been meeting in Aprils and Mays in previous years.) In short, **we did not use the Aetna funding** that was allocated for our workshop this year, and, as you will see in the funding request, I am hoping to use those funds for a new, more formalized “onboarding” meeting at the beginning of the academic year.

Request was for \$900, and we spent none of that.

UConn-Waterbury Campus, Aetna Chair Support, 2022-2023

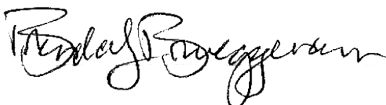
Prepared by Ellen Carillo, Writing Coordinator

The Waterbury campus appreciates the funding provided by the Aetna Chair of Writing for Academic Year 22-23. 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 Academic Integrity Awareness in which 191 students participated. I did not, however, hold the Thank-You Project event, for which I requested funding. The timing of that event would have conflicted with the Thanksgiving event our new director planned. Additionally, half of the first-year writing instructors did not request compensation for their attendance at events/meetings, which is another reason why there is such a discrepancy between the request and what was spent.

Total Requested: \$700

Total Spent: \$315.02

Respectfully submitted,



Brenda Jo Brueggemann

Professor, English & American Studies & WGSS

Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing

The University of Connecticut

August 21, 2023

ENDOWED FACULTY ANNUAL IMPACT

INSTRUCTIONS

Please share your accomplishments by completing the form below by June 30.

Please write in a first person narrative and utilize a conversational style of writing, using a layperson's language to the extent possible. See an example here.

If there are any questions regarding the report or the form submission, please contact The UConn Foundation Office of Donor Relations and Stewardship at chairreports@foundation.uconn.edu.

Endowed Chair/Professorship Title* - Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing

Faculty Name* - Brenda Jo Brueggemann

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Greeting and Thank You Message*

Thanks to the Aetna Corporation for the initial funding toward this endowment, with further support from the Connecticut Office of Higher Education and with the additional resources offered by UConn's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS), this past academic year has been particularly productive and impactful year for the Aetna Endowed Chair of Writing. It was my sixth year in this position after having joined the faculty at UConn in August 2016. In my second year holding the position (2017-2018), the UConn Foundation worked with me to arrange a lunch meeting with a chief officer at the Aetna Corporation. That introductory opportunity was much appreciated.

Teaching and Research Highlights*

My **research** projects and successes were notably expanded this year in advancing six new projects: (1) the Graduate Pandemic Narratives project in collaboration with three UConn graduate students, and supported by Aetna endowment funds; (2) exhibit co-curation and completion of all interpretive labels and an exhibit catalogue essay (“Accessing Deaf Art”) for the Terra Foundation for the American Arts’ new exhibit, “Deaf Art in America: Shaped by the American Dream”; (3) senior editor on a collaborative editorship of a new and significantly expanded 2nd edition of *Disability and the Teaching of Writing* (in proposal with the National Council of Teachers of English); (4) development and launch of a new international [Disability Studies Community Blog](#), with significant build contributions from UConn’s [Greenhouse Studios](#) and Student Design Center; (5) continued collaboration on the Aesthetics, Bioethics, and Rhetorics of Access in Art and Cultural Museums project with my colleagues Rosemarie Garland-Thomson (Emory) and Georgina Kleege (Berkeley) with two publications from that project forthcoming in Fall 2022; and finally, (6) a new multimodal, sociological-historical study of the cross-institutional connections between the Univ. of Connecticut and the former “Mansfield Training School and Hospital” that occupied the current grounds of the “UConn Depot Campus” for over 130 years. This last project and the new DSC Blog have also been generously supported by UConn’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

It was a remarkable year of **teaching** for me, even though the Aetna Endowed Chair position has (so far) relieved me of two courses annually (thus, I only teach two courses per year at UConn). In an intensive 6-week summer term, I was, once again, on the faculty at the [Bread Loaf School of English](#)-- for my 6th summer in a row; I was also asked by the BLSE graduating seniors to deliver their commencement address. In Fall 2021, I volunteered myself to teach on the Waterbury campus (and loved every minute of it) –delivering the first-ever Disability Studies course there. In Spring 2022, I carried out a triple-cross-listed graduate seminar on Disability in American Literature and Culture, that enrolled 12 graduate students from five different programs/departments.

Outside of the direct classroom I also served as the faculty mentor for a current [University Scholar](#) (Elisa Shaholli) and a Senior Honors Thesis supervisor (Jessica Gallagher). Both students have forthcoming academic journal publications (in Fall 2022) from their work under my advisement. I also oversaw two undergraduate independent studies experiences and four different undergraduate writing internships, who worked with me in my role as editor of *Disability Studies Quarterly*.

Publications, Conferences, and Awards*

Conferences across the academic landscape were still in slow pandemic recovery, although I did attend and deliver research papers at both the Modern Language Association's annual convention and Ohio State University's "Multiple Perspectives on Access, Disability, and Inclusion" conference. I also delivered the following academic/public events:

the graduation address at Middlebury College's [Bread Loaf School of English](#); an invited research presentation at Western University of Ontario; [two workshops](#) at University of Hartford (on access and Universal Design for Learning); an invited public reading from my *Posting Mabel* book (in progress) at the [Cleveland Public Library](#); moderator and organizer for The UConn Foundation and Alumni's event, [#This is America: The Seen and Unseen Realities for People with Disabilities](#); and a "master class" for [The Academy for Teachers](#) in NYC.

Awards received this year included: the UConn-[CLAS Undergraduate Mentoring Award](#) (\$1000); a [Provost/GEOC grant](#) for new course development on two courses in professional writing (\$8,000); a CLAS summer research fund award for the UConn-MTS Cross-Institutional Memorial project (\$7800); and a WGSS summer research fund for the Aesthetics, Bioethics, and Rhetorics of Access in Art and Cultural Museums (\$1000).

Service and Public Engagement*

Several of the speaking roles listed above were also service/public engagement events. In addition, and in relation to further educational service beyond my work at UConn, I serve as a founding member on the Board of Directors for [Erase the Space](#), and as the director for the Bread Loaf School of English's new "[Curriculum for Change](#)." I continue my substantial editorial role at [Disability Studies Quarterly](#) (in a 6-year term from 2018-2024), the oldest journal and journal of record in the field of Disability Studies; and this 2021-2022 year, I spearheaded an expansion of *DSQ* by creating a new academic-activist-artist-community space, the Disability Studies Community ([DSC](#)) [Blog](#). (That blog development was in collaboration with UConn students from Greenhouse Studios and the Design Studio lab.) Finally, in January 2022, I was elected to the Modern Language Association's [Executive Council](#) (board of directors) and will serve a four-year term there (until 2026); that international field service at MLA also includes serving on the [Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee](#), and as adviser to the [Committee on Information Technology](#)

Academic Programs and Faculty Development (Optional)

There were four primary engagements this past year that centered on academic programs and faculty development. First, I continued my service on UConn's General Education Oversight Committee (GEOC), also serving in a role as the co-chair of their Committee on Information, Digital, and Media Literacies. Second, I helped organize and present at UConn's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) "[May Days](#)" event – a roundtable on engaging systems of access and inclusion in university

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classrooms. Third, I served on the CLAS new task force on “accessibility.” And finally, fourth, and most significant and wide-reaching, I was designated an Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) Faculty Affiliate for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in 2021-2022 and in that role I carried out the following:

a report on best practices in DEI strategic planning from 18 other peer/benchmark institutions; an extended conversation with Univ. of Michigan’s Chief Diversity Officer; a faculty event that featured 4 UConn units with particularly excellent DEI plans or initiatives; four graduate student networking events –two for first generation graduate students and two for graduate students disabilities (these were the first such events ever at UConn); the development of a new graduate student fellowship, the AIDE (Access, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity) fellows; and a summary report and bibliography on “Access @ UConn.”

Looking Ahead*

I am always looking ahead! In Fall 2022, we should finish up the Graduate Pandemic Narrative Project and launch its new website, while also aiming to do a few conference presentations and an academic research article around it. Before the year’s end, the Mansfield Training School-UConn Memorial and Museum will also be launched (thanks to generous summer research support from CLAS @ UConn), and we will have a book proposal out to several university presses about that cross-institutional history as well. Other research projects listed above will also continue but the most important “look-ahead” for me is in the further growth of the newly released Disability Studies Community Blog. I plan to apply for two different grants to support and grow that blog – one internal UConn grant and one external federal grant. Along with that blog growth, I hope to collaborate with others at UConn about building a disability studies program/initiative that would also serve not only the Storrs campus, but the Stamford and Waterbury students.

I do have some concerns about how these things will all be done while also carrying out some large field roles on the MLA Executive Council and as editor of *Disability Studies Quarterly* –while my department has also asked me to return to a 3-course teaching load. But I am always looking, eagerly, ahead!