




September 30, 2015

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:

That the Board of Trustees approve the 2015 report on the Aetna Chair of Writing.

BACKGROUND:

The Aetna Chair of Writing is under the direction of Professor Lynn Bloom 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-20. 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 2015 annual report consists of a financial report and a narrative report by Professor Bloom.


Attachments

Office of the Executive Vice President for  
Administration and Chief Financial Officer  
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DATE: August 28, 2015

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

FROM: Charles H. Eaton   
Controller

RE: Aetna Chair of Writing

Enclosed is a financial report for the Aetna Chair of Writing program, under the direction of Professor Lynn Bloom, for fiscal year ended June 30, 2015. 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 2015 totaled \$47,380.97.

Professor Bloom has provided a narrative of the writing program's operation for fiscal year 2015, 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: L. Bloom  
R. Hasenfratz  
M. Maynard  
D. Brockway

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University of Connecticut and  
University of Connecticut Foundation  
Aetna Chair of Writing  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2015

	University	Foundation	Combined Total
Beginning Balance as of July 1, 2014	\$46,960.83	\$78,376.45	\$125,337.28
<u>Revenue</u>			
Pooled Endowment Income Allocation	0.00	34,697.53	34,697.53
Transferred From UConn Foundation	77,169.88	(77,169.88)	0.00
TOTAL REVENUES (EXPENDITURES)	77,169.88	(42,472.35)	34,697.53
<u>Expenditures</u>			
Salary & Wages	800.00	0.00	800.00
Printing and Binding	2,888.77	0.00	2,888.77
Conferences and Meetings	4,847.57	0.00	4,847.57
Travel	2,671.23	0.00	2,671.23
Outside Professional Services	6,894.00	0.00	6,894.00
TOTAL Contractual Services	17,301.57	0.00	17,301.57
Office Supplies	878.42	0.00	878.42
Books	694.98	0.00	694.98
TOTAL Commodities	1,573.40	0.00	1,573.40
Fringe Benefits	81.00	0.00	81.00
Student Aid Fees	27,625.00	0.00	27,625.00
TOTAL Sundry Charges	27,706.00	0.00	27,706.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	47,380.97	0.00	47,380.97
Ending Balance as of June 30, 2015	\$76,749.74	\$35,904.10	\$112,653.84

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 2015. 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 2015, although there were no expenses in fiscal year 2015.

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 1988 and was valued at \$873,025 at June 30, 2015, which included accumulated gains/losses on the original gift. The spendable portion of the Foundation endowed fund was \$35,904 as of June 30, 2015. 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 \$508,952 at June 30, 2015, including principal of \$500,000 and interest of \$8,952.

## Annual Report, Aetna Chair of Writing, 2014-2015

This Annual Report is the last to be submitted by Lynn Bloom, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor and inaugural holder of the Aetna Chair of Writing. She will be retiring in June after twenty-seven years at the University of Connecticut. Much of the excitement and pleasure of this endowed chair has arisen from the opportunities made possible by Aetna Endowment funds to develop, sustain, and enrich writing programs throughout the UConn system. These programs, led by distinguished faculty and school teachers throughout the state, have attained national and international prominence over the years through professional research, scholarship, teaching, and the activities of UConn's student participants, who themselves graduate to become part of this extensive network. This Aetna Chair Report should thus be read with pleasure and pride in the numerous accomplishments of programs involving and affecting many people, a resumé of what can be accomplished with a year's full funding of \$45-\$50,000.

**University: First Year Writing.** The Aetna Chair of Writing co-sponsored the tenth annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing, "Writing as Translation" on March 27, 2015. This conference has grown steadily in scope (now nationwide) and attendance, with around 120 conferees in 2015, a 20% increase over the preceding year. It featured presentations by 63 graduate students, Writing Center associates, and faculty from 36 schools, including UConn; the U.S. Military Academy, Washington State U, Northeastern U, Boston U, Penn State U, St. John's U, the universities of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts—Amherst, and Lowell, Detroit, Wisconsin-Milwaukee, CUNY Graduate Center and six other CUNY affiliates, Rhode Island College, Keene State College, Emerson College, College of the Holy Cross, Gateway Community College, Ridgefield High School, RHAM High School, and E.O. Smith High School. Keynoters Min-Zhan Lu and Bruce Horner, University of Louisville, addressed the pedagogical and human implications of their current research, "Teaching Writing as Translation: A Translingual Approach." Program available at <http://fe.uconn.edu/instructors/conference/program.php>.

**Undergraduate writing at UConn regional campuses.** Since 2002 Writing Directors have been appointed at each of the regional campuses: Pamela Bedore (Avery Point), Scott Campbell (Hartford—in Storrs 2012-15), Ellen Carillo (Waterbury), Serkan Gorkemli (Stamford), and Kathy Knapp (Torrington). Aetna funding has enhanced various programs such as Academic Integrity Week and faculty development workshops (Waterbury, Stamford), and graduate and faculty writing bootcamps (Avery Point). In 2014-15 the Litchfield County Writers' Project (Torrington-based), aided by Aetna funding, in September sponsored Writers in Conversation, featuring Ted Thompson, author of *Land of Steady Habits* (2014); and in April held a workshop on how to get published, led by well-published Valerie Peterson. These events bring statewide visibility to the Bloomsbury-esque LCWP.

**Creative Writing.** The Aetna Endowment supports publication of the award-winning *Long River Review* (student literary magazine); and several Long River awards: Graduate Writing, Kristina Reardon ; Children’s Literature, Christiana Salah ; Art/Photography, Anton Nikiforov, (Photography). The Aetna Translation Award, newly established in 2014-15, went to Nathan Herter. Other Aetna awards include the Aetna Creative Works in Progress, to doctoral student Miller Oberman, already distinguished nationally for her work; and two Aetna Creative nonfiction Awards, Graduate, Abby Fagan; Undergraduate Ellie Hudd. Aetna funds also support Poetic Journeys (poetry on campus buses, in Babbidge Library, and the Austin Building); and a host of speakers and guest teachers.

The Aetna funded short-term writer-in-residence program enables students to work with (and be inspired by) widely published, award-winning authors with international reputations, who also give public readings during their residencies. Fiction writer Jo-Ann Mapson served as Aetna Writer-in-Residence in fall 2014 and poet Camille T. Dungy in spring 2015. The Aetna Celebration of Creative Nonfiction on April 16 featured guest speaker Rigoberto González, author of sixteen books and recipient of numerous awards, ranging from the American Book Award (for *Butterfly Boy: Memoirs of a Chicano Mariposa*), the Lambda Literary Award and the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize (for *Unpeopled Eden*), and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

**University Writing Center.** In 2011 the University Writing Center was awarded a “Writing Program Certificate of Excellence” by the Conference on College Composition and Communication, an honor of national distinction. Aetna Endowment funding helps the Writing Center to sustain, as the award commended, its “rich, complex, and ambitious program touching multiple aspects of students’ writing lives.” This year the Aetna Endowment funded books for the Writing Center library and the production of original training videos to help our tutors better serve both international students and first-year students. It also funded parts of our October 2015 Secondary School Writing Centers Conference (140 participants from 16 different schools) and the whole of our spring 2015 “Unconference,” which brought together 25 writing center tutors and administrators from 5 different colleges and universities in Connecticut to collaborate on professional development.

The annual Writing in the Disciplines contest continues to be a significant factor in student professional development and recognition. From among 80 entries across the campus, the following prizes were awarded. Humanities: First Place, Samantha Ruggerio (English; Honorable Mention, Julia Berry (English). Social Sciences: First Place, Patrick Hannon (Political Science), Marissa Piccolo (Educational Psychology); Honorable Mentions: Robyn Caron (Political Science), Michael Cinque (Economics), Svitlana Shevchenko (Anthropology). Science and Engineering: First Place, Mackenzie Poskus (Chemistry); Honorable Mentions: Brenda Daly (Animal Science), Matthew Fox (Molecular and Cell Biology), Katery Hyatt (Physiology and Neurobiology), and Emma LaVigne (Animal Science).

Three Dissertation Bootcamps per year and monthly Graduate Student Writing Retreats are now permanently funded by the Graduate School, but both were created through seed grants from the Aetna Chair of Writing. Smaller allotments of Aetna funding have allowed us to experiment with the formats. This year, for example, we invited a yoga instructor to conduct sessions during the bootcamps. Aetna funding allowed both Graduate Assistant Writing Center Directors Kristina Reardon and Melissa Bugdal to attend the 2015 Conference on College Composition in Tampa. In conjunction with this conference, with Writing Center Director Tom Deans they presented a paper at the 2015 International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) Collaborative @ CCCC on an empirical study of writing center session reports that is now being prepared for publication.

**Graduate Programs.** The graduate courses in Autobiography (as a literary genre, and as a mode of writing), and in Rhetorical Theory and Composition Research were inaugurated in 1988-89, and have been augmented since 2002 by a variety of rhetoric and composition courses in Classical and Modern Rhetoric such as “Writing Across and Beyond the Curriculum” and the team-taught “Research Methods in Composition Studies,” as well as other graduate creative writing courses in nonfiction and essay writing. Aetna funds the Graduate Teaching Award, which in 2015 went to Emily Tucker.

As discussed above, Aetna Endowment funds send students to professional conferences. In addition, Aetna funding will support Melissa Bugdal’s attendance at the prestigious Dartmouth Summer Seminar on Writing Research, July 26-August 7, 2015, conducted by a nationally distinguished quantitative research faculty. Its focus on “Data-Driven Inquiry: Process, Methods, Results” (<http://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/research/summer-seminar-2015-call-applications>) will inform and enhance Ms. Bugdal’s dissertation research on how first-year student writers at UConn transfer their rhetorical knowledge to their later writing, particularly in writing-intensive courses. Such national involvement has helped numerous students who have served as Writing Program administrators to receive tenure track jobs.

**Critical and First Year Essay Prizes.** Now in its twenty-fifth year, the annual Aetna Writing Prize Award evening has evolved into a particularly happy and festive gathering of faculty, students, parents, administrators, and Aetna Fellows. On October 23, 2014 Lynn Bloom, Aetna Chair of Writing and Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor and a dozen of her current Creative Nonfiction Students (English 3703) gave a dramatic choral reading of “Why True Stories Matter,” which interwove student and instructor reading and writing—an enactment of Dr. Bloom’s philosophy, pedagogy, and storytelling.

The following prizes were awarded, this year all to students on the Storrs campus. Aetna Graduate Essay Awards: First Place, Rachel Silvia; Second Place, Maria Seger; Third Place (tie), Joseph Darda and Alex Gatten; Honorable Mention, Emma Burris-Janssen. First-Year Writing:

Aetna, First Place, John Peters; Aetna Second Place, Marisol Gallo; Aetna Third Place, Dominique Martin. Ratcliffe-Hicks funded the Honorable Mention, awarded to Sarah Coughlin. Connecticut Writing Project Teacher-Consultant Writing Awards were as follows. Poetry: First Place, Amy Nocton, RHAM High School; Honorable Mentions: Kim Kraner, Avon High School; David Polochanin, Gideon Welles Middle School; Steve Straight, Manchester Community College. Fiction: First Place, E. Charles Vousden (Manchester High); Honorable Mention, Kimberly Mach (Memorial Middle School). Creative Nonfiction: First Place, Mary Ellen Ellsworth (John Wallace Middle School); Honorable Mentions: Jane Cook (Stanton Network School, Brooklyn Elementary and Middle Schools); Elizabeth Simison (Bacon Academy), Bernhard Schreiber (Ashford School). The winning entries of the Connecticut Writing Project contest were published in *Teacher-Writer*, <http://cwp.uconn.edu/writings-by-teachers/> with a print run of 100 copies.

**Publications.** Aetna Endowment funds and collaboration among student writers, teachers, editors, designers, Aetna student interns and the Writing Specialist's manuscript preparation, have made possible the publication of *Essay CONNections*, compilations of UCONN Freshman English Prize Essays. The first four volumes are available in hardcopy: 1990-94 (103 pp.); Vol. 2 1995-98 (128 pp.); Vol. 3, 1999-2002 (132 pp.); Volume 4, 2003-06 (176 pp.). In 2010 financial constraints caused us to switch to online publication, beginning with Volume 5, 2007-2010. However, we have had to take down this link because paper mills were stealing and selling the prizewinning work. (We are investigating ways to circumvent this.) Free copies of the hardcopy volumes are distributed at UConn-sponsored writing conferences, and to all teachers of First Year Writing at all UConn campuses to provide exemplary models for successive First Year Writing classes. Copies may be obtained from [Lori.Corsini-Nelson@UConn.edu](mailto:Lori.Corsini-Nelson@UConn.edu).

**State of Connecticut: Connecticut Writing Project.** UConn's Connecticut Writing Project is the only site in the nation with an endowment, a half million dollars generously provided by the Aetna Foundation (begun in 1985), initially with matching funds from the State of Connecticut Office of Higher Education (though the interest from this account has been negligible for the past six years). For the past twenty-seven years, the Aetna Chair of Writing Endowment has provided \$24-30,000 to fund invitational fellowships for teachers participating the Connecticut Writing Project five-week Summer Institute. Over the years, Fellows have included teachers from all levels, kindergarten-college, and a wide range of schools, from high need to college. Summer Institute Aetna Fellows in 2014 were Karen Butler (Sports and Medical Sciences Academy, Hartford), Emily DeFord (Glastonbury High School), Jason Efland (Suffield High), Ethan Fortuna (Suffield High), Kim Kraner (Avon High), Ruth Macijauskas (Two Rivers Magnet Middle School), Lauren Midgette (Bulkley High), Amy Nocton (RHAM High), Danielle Pieratti (South Windsor High), Robert Pirrie (E.O. Smith High), Elizabeth Simison (Bacon Academy). The Aetna Endowment will fund seventeen fellowships in the summer of 2015. Teachers of second, fourth, and sixth grades, French, ESOL and Special Education will complement the larger contingent of secondary school English teachers, and (atypical for the Summer Institute) an

English Department head, a State Department of Education Department of Education administrator, and an administrator from a community college. A cumulative total of 506 Fellows has over the past third of a century influenced hundreds of other writing teachers and thousands of student writers.

The variety of subsequent awards and appointments for Summer Institute participants attests to their impressive qualities as educators and administrators. These include Connecticut Teacher of the Year awards; graduate fellowships for bilingual education, masters, doctoral, and post-doctoral work; positions as department head, program director, and dean; publications of their own (including a novel), journal editorship (*ALAN Review*, *Massachusetts Review*), awards for Teaching Writing (College Board) and Human and Civil Rights (Connecticut Education Association); and Scholastic Writing Awards for their students.

One consequence of a robust program is its ability to engender additional funding from other sources. Thus the Connecticut Writing Project's demonstrated success led to an award from its parent umbrella organization, the National Writing Project: a 2014-16 Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Teacher Leadership Development Grant of \$20,000. This will provide funds for established Teacher-Leaders of the CWP to run programs such as *Connecticut Student Writers* magazine. Currently in its 27<sup>th</sup> year, CSW received 1100 submissions of K-12 student writing from more than 500 teachers, and will honor 250 student writers at a Recognition Night in May, and in a print run of 500 copies <http://cwp.uconn.edu/ct-student-writers-magazine-2/>. This award will also provide research mini-grants to all new teachers participating in the CWP-Storrs Invitational Summer Institutes in 2014, 2015, and 2016.

It is particularly important for the future of the Connecticut Writing Project that Director Jason Courtmanche was reappointed in 2013-14 for a third three year term; he is the 2013 recipient of the Institute for Teaching and Learning Teaching Scholar Award. Dr. Courtmanche has sustained successful collaborations with First Year Writing, Creative Writing, the Early College Experience and First Year Experience Programs; the Neag School of Education, Teachers for a New Era, area schools, and UConn's Writing Center. Collaboration with the latter in 2014-15 involved running a Secondary School Outreach Program with intensive work in one middle school, and a fall tutorial conference. Program participants represented 19 high schools and two middle schools; they included 44 teachers, three UConn faculty, and 14 UConn undergraduate tutors; 105 high school student tutors attended. Of particular significance is Dr. Courtmanche's involvement in the inaugural working group of the Modern Language K-16 Alliances.

***New England, Nation, and International Activities:***

**Composition Studies Conferences:** As indicated above, Aetna funds the annual First Year Writing Program Conference on the Teaching of Writing, and mini-conferences for writing tutors.



**Inter/National Outreach:** In January 2013 Dr. Bloom was awarded a five-year Fulbright Specialist appointment, allowing her to serve twice as a writing/American literature consultant in any Fulbright-funded program in the world. She has been selected as a Fulbright proposal reviewer for 2015, thereby extending her Specialist appointment through 2018. She was invited by Professor Anne McKim of English Department at the University of Waikato (Hamilton); Dr. McKim had been a Neag Professor at UConn; so this fortuitous scholarly symbiosis was made possible by another endowment. Sponsored by the University of Waikato, in July-August 2013 Dr. Bloom gave eighteen presentations in twenty-seven days at Waikato, and at the University of Auckland, Massey University-Auckland, and the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University (Wellington). Often in conjunction with New Zealand Poet Laureates and other distinguished creative writers, she spoke on creative nonfiction, food writing, travel writing, medical writing. Dr. Bloom has been appointed Honorary Professor in the Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, Faculty of Education, at the University of Waikato, 2013-16; further international collaboration is in the planning stages.

Other international activities include: a BBC-TV Witness Program interview with Dr. Bloom on "The Man Who Changed Parenting," March 4, 2015 [www.bbc.com/news/magazine-31622146](http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-31622146), about her research on the living subject of *Doctor Spock: Biography of a Conservative Radical*. In June, 2015 Dr. Bloom will discuss "Negotiating Collaboration" at the conference of the International Auto/Biography Association-Americas Chapter in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**Research:** Aetna funding has contributed to the research of the twenty one books and one hundred thirty articles that Dr. Bloom has published since arriving at UConn in 1988, including *The Seven Deadly Virtues and Other Lively Essays: Coming of Age as a Writer, Teacher, Risk Taker* (U of South Carolina Press 2008); and *Writers Without Borders: Writing and Teaching Writing in Troubled Times* (Parlor Press 2008), and *The Essay Connection* (10<sup>th</sup> ed 2013). Aetna funding has also supported Dr. Bloom's ongoing research. Her most recent publications are "Why the Worst Trips Make the Best Stories: The Comic Travels of Geoffrey Wolff (On the Beach) and Jonathan Franzen (On the Knife-Edge of Solitude)," in *Assay: A Journal of Nonfiction Studies* 1.2 (Spring 2015); and "Bodies of Knowledge: Ethics and Engagement in an Undergraduate Disability Studies Course." *Pedagogy* 14.2 (Spring 2014):179-98. The latter was derived from teaching English 2274 W, a writing-intensive course that through disability autobiographies, films, theory, public documents, journals, the *New York Times* and TED talks addresses issues of human rights, disability studies, ethics, literature, politics, economics, public policy, bioengineering, and health care delivery. All of these strands are interwoven in her current work on creative nonfiction in the manuscript in progress, *Lives, Liberties, and Pursuits of Happiness*, under preliminary contract with the University of Iowa Press, an ideal venue. Dr. Bloom addressed one aspect of this topic in "Savory, Tart, and Bitter: The Robust Rhetoric of Feminist Food Writers" at the College Conference on Composition and Communication in Tampa in March; and another in "Trail Mix: The Joys of Culinary Travel Writing," at the

American Society of Travel Writers section of the American Literature Association in Boston in May. She serves on advisory boards of *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, *JAC (Journal of Advanced Composition)*, and the *Journal of Basic Writing*.

**Future directions:** In addition to sustaining the activities identified in this report, the Aetna Chair has future plans to support writing activities in interdisciplinary programs including the School of Fine Arts, Irish Studies (both funded in earlier years) and new venues such as the Human Rights Institute, Asian-American Studies, Nursing, and Judaic Studies. We also anticipate collaboration with newly-hired faculty in Digital Media.

**Current status:** Aetna Endowment funds, supplemented by a small amount of interest from the matching state grant, have enabled us to sustain the myriad of activities identified here on the \$48,000 budget for FY 2016 (appended p 8). These have been aided by the English Department office staff under the direction of Melanie Hepburn, English Department Administrative Manager. The University of Connecticut can be justifiably proud of the activities of its undergraduate and graduate students and faculty in rhetoric and composition on state, regional, national, and international levels, made possible in part by the Aetna Chair of Writing Endowment.

I would like to express appreciation for the pleasure and privilege of being the first holder of the Aetna Chair of Writing at the University of Connecticut, which is also the first endowed chair of writing in the nation. This is a position endowed with possibilities for innovation, creativity, and major contributions to writing (academic and creative), writing research, and the teaching of writing at all levels. The visibility of this position signals the commitment of the University of Connecticut to excellent writing throughout the state, the nation, and the world—a truly incandescent honor to be cherished and sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Z. Bloom, Aetna Chair of Writing  
Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor  
May 9, 2015

**Budget for FY 2016**

Connecticut Writing Project	\$24,000
Creative Writing	10,000
Campus Writing Center [prizes, bootcamps, celebration, speakers]	2,000
First Year Writing [professional development, conference]	1,500
Writing Internships Program	500
Interdisciplinary programs [unspent in FY 15; delete in FY16]	-
Regional campus writing funding:	
Waterbury [workshops \$450]; Avery Point [workshops \$500];	950
Aetna Prizes - Teaching Awards, Grad Critical Essay, First Year Writing [\$1,500 for CNF, translation and children's lit subsumed under CW]	1,500
Student travel [not to exceed \$500/student]	2,000
Aetna Chair [research and discretionary expenses]	200
Discretionary	2,550
<b>Total Budget for FY 2016</b>	<b>\$45,200</b>