Cheryl Wetterlind reflects on her experience at the International Writing Center Association Conference:

My experience at the IWCA conference in Denver in 2016 was incredibly enjoyable and eye opening. It was my first time attending a conference but was also my first time presenting. At first, I was nervous and had no idea what I was doing but as I read snippets of the presentations within each day, I became excited about learning what they had to say. Some of the presentations that I was interested in and was able to attend included topics on translanguaging, varying writing center pedagogy and their implementations, and gameplay in instructing tutors and assistants.

I was particularly impressed with the presentation, “Translanguaging: A New Frontier in Tutoring ESL Students,” by Charlene Pate and Josh Morse. They focused on how translanguaging focuses on the use of the first language as a supplement to the acquisition of the second language, using many forms, including comparative analysis. Graduate tutor Morse illustrated two graphic organizers that demonstrated the difference between bilingual tutoring and translanguaging tutor; where bilingual tutoring emphasizes the ESL student’s languages as parallel lines that do not intertwine, translanguaging emphasizes that the ESL student’s languages are one line that intertwine and students choose the appropriate language to use depending on the situation. This session was incredible as it was my original passion and interest in my research proposal for our Writing Center Theory and Practice course. As I sat in on these sessions, many of the concepts that the presenters spoke about, I realized I could implement in my own work with writers but also in my future teaching career.

On our final day in Denver, I presented
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our topic, “Moving Out to Bring Students In: Assisting Literary Skills of International Students in Relational Space,” with the Center for Writing Excellence Director Alan Benson and Assistant Director Andrew Suralski. In the description of our session we stated, “writing centers can serve as powerful change agents as U.S. universities explore how to accommodate and value World Englishes.” This is something that we believe drives our writing center; however, writing centers can only serve as powerful change agents if students who write in diverse varieties of English actually come into their centers. We spoke about how our strategy to bring such writers into our centers is through the Assisting Literacy Skills Program. We discussed the importance of being a center that is a tool for all writers to become better writers, the steps that led up to the creation of the program, what the program is, and ways in which we are trying to expand as a third space that welcomes writers that are not using our center. During our questioning and answering portion, it was really interesting to hear from those who came to our session speak about having the same problem and ways in which they are trying to encourage those writers to view their writing centers as a resource for help. Their advice and comments only motivated me more in implementing changes to the Assisting Literacy Skills program that could bring more awareness and promote the growth of the program. Even though our time in Denver was limited, I enjoyed every moment, from attending multiple sessions of varying contexts to presenting upon our own.

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Wetterlind Continued:

The Assisting Literacy Skills program, the brainchild of Cheryl Wetterlind, was created in spring 2016 as a way to reach out to a broad range of students at UWEC. Based out of the CWE and inspired by research Cheryl did for ENGL 397, the ALS works primarily with international students, many of whom are here for one or two semesters at most and who may not be comfortable in the CWE. “Currently,” Cheryl said, “it is more focused on the Japanese international students due to my connection with the Japanese Cultural Society,” but is open to any student with language or cultural differences. With a home in the McIntyre CWE location, the program focuses on language skills, comprehension, and academic reading and writing. Meeting twice a week for two hours, the student-driven program has a diverse staff, some of whom work with both ALS and the CWE. Operating as walk-in only, the ALS team has volunteers available during their hours to assist students as often as desired and to encourage students to come back multiple times. The ALS location encourages students to visit as often as they would like, for assistance or just to hang out and build camaraderie. With a goal of scaffolding relations between international students and the CWE, the ALS program has quickly become a vital resource to an increasingly diverse community.

Attending the Annual WCTE Convention

by Charlotte Kupsh and Jessica Moser

Charlotte: A few days before the convention, Jess, Danielle Rockwell, and I went to Memorial High School to help train the new high school writing assistants in their Literacy Center. The new writing assistants brought in pieces of their own writing and we held mock sessions with them, discussing their writing as we would in a normal session at the CWE, but stopping periodically to explain the techniques we were using.

Jessica: The students at Memorial were great, and were so excited to be a part of the literacy center.

CK: They asked a lot of good questions about how writing centers work and how to be better writing assistants. We could tell

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Meet the Newest GADs!

Jessica Moser
by Kate Lyn Sabelko

The CWE is thrilled to welcome Jessica Moser to our team of Graduate Assistant Directors! Having previously worked as a Writing Assistant from 2008 to 2012, Jessica is no stranger to the CWE. After teaching seventh and eighth grade writing and language arts for two years in the Cadott School District, Jessica made the decision to get her Masters in Creative Writing. She is passionate about teaching and creative writing, and her positive experience as an undergrad at UW-Eau Claire was part of the reason Jessica chose to return.

Though academia claims most of Jessica's time, she also enjoys reading, art projects, Netflix, and playing with her adorable pug, Oliver. As a creative writing student and aspiring Young Adult fiction writer, it's no surprise that reading made her list of hobbies. Jessica lists J.K. Rowling and YA writers Sarah Dessen and Laurie Halse Anderson as some of her favorite authors. An all-star list! Jessica is a perfect match for the CWE, and we're delighted that she's part of our team. Welcome back, Jessica!

Charlotte Kupsh
by Kimberly Theisen

The CWE is pleased to welcome one of the new GADs for this year, Charlotte Kupsh! Charlotte is from Richland Center, Wisconsin, which she describes as “one of those tiny Wisconsin towns no one's ever heard of.” However, she isn't a stranger to Eau Claire, as she graduated from UW-Eau Claire in 2014 with a BA in creative writing and political science. Charlotte loves that the professors at UW-Eau Claire have close connections with their students and that they truly prioritize working with them. Additionally, she enjoys the community on campus and the community of Eau Claire as a whole. She loves that as a whole we are always looking for ways to improve the city and, therefore, is looking forward to seeing how the city changes over the next few years.

After graduating in 2014, Charlotte moved to Madison and worked as a tech writer for a software company. She is currently in the process of getting her MA in writing. In the future, Charlotte wants to have a career that involves writing. She is currently thinking about teaching freshmen-level composition after she graduates. Her current favorite author is Jhumpa Lahiri because she is a very powerful and descriptive writer. Charlotte describes Lahiri’s work as both inspirational and intimidating. As a graduate student, she doesn't have much free time, but when she does a lot of her activities involve food. She loves cooking and eating at new restaurants. She is also constantly listening to NPR and podcasts. If there is one thing that she wants people to know about her it is that she loves politics. We are excited to have you, Charlotte!

Samantha Foss
by Kelly Anthony

The CWE is incredibly excited to welcome Samantha Foss as one of our newest GADs! Hailing from Reedsburg, WI, Sam completed her undergrad here at UWEC with a degree in critical studies in literature and a minor in language studies. Back for more, Sam is now pursuing her Master's in literature and textual interpretation. She is beginning to write her thesis and loves to talk about it in order to gather feedback.

When she's not working on her thesis or in the CWE, Sam enjoys knitting and reading. If a movie biography were made of her life, she would like to think her character would be played by Audrey Hepburn, but believes Emma Stone would give a more accurate depiction. When considering celebrities, she expresses a hatred for Will Ferrell because he tries too hard to be funny. Sam likes to write critical analyses of short stories and novels that inspire people to question aspects of society or their own actions and beliefs. Sam’s mom, who she considers her hero, has been a constant source of encouragement in her life. Sam says, “I would not be doing what I am doing or be the person that I am if not for her.” Sam thoroughly enjoys working with students through the CWE, and she hopes to pursue a PhD and eventually teach at a university like UWEC. Sam chose UWEC because of its challenging and supportive academic community. She reflects, “Attending UWEC is one of the best choices I ever made.” We are very happy to have you here, Sam!

For more information on what the CWE staff is working on, or to view our available resources, please visit: uwec.edu/writing
CWE Students of Note
by Samantha Foss

Say congrats, good luck, and farewell to some of our writing assistants!

Kate Niestrom was our sole December graduate, though Caroline Morris, Kimberly Theisen, Kelly Anthony, and Kenneth Olson are studying abroad this semester, with Kenneth and Kelly doing extra work while abroad: Kenneth will be researching writing centers during his time in Germany and Kelly will be creating a blog for students currently studying Spanish while she is in Spain.

Danielle Rockwell and David Kocik will be presenting their research on the CWE and Research Center Collaboration at the Wisconsin Association of Academic Librarians Conference in April, 2017.

David, along with Madeline Gray, Abby Strom, and Cheryl Wetterlind are student teaching this semester and are preparing for graduation this spring.

Melanie Daas travelled to Costa Rica in January with the Social Work Department to help organize a new internship partnership and won the Excellence in Social Work Award.

Taylor Allen is the new vice-president of events for the American Marketing Association.

Two of our GADs, Jessica Moser and Samuel Hovda, are working on their respective theses this spring.

UWEC Celebrates the National Day on Writing
by Sara Mihor

On October 20, 2016, the Center for Writing Excellence hosted a series of events across campus designed to attract any type of writer. Writing assistants set up stations in Davies, Hibbard Hall, and McIntyre Library with the goal of getting the students at UW–Eau Claire to participate in the 10th annual National Day on Writing by letting their creative side come out.

Hundreds of cookies were baked for the Haiku for Cookies station in Davies. The cookies were exchanged for student-written three-line poems. Assured the Haikus could be ridiculous and about anything, most writers wrote about the coming winter, their love for cookies, or their desire to get through the semester as painlessly as possible. Some even got in the festive spirit and wrote about the next holiday on their calendars: Always watching you/Creepy, smiling gourd/Happy Halloween!

The Shakespearean Insults booth took place in McIntyre Library again this year, and it attracted quite the crowd. Writing assistants sat and listened while they were insulted in the most peculiar ways by the students who stopped and took part in the event. A few favorites were “You yeasty onion-eyed death token” and “loggerheaded common-kissing hugger-mugger.” With creative phrases such as these, who wouldn’t want to be insulted in Shakespearean language?

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Also in the McIntyre Library, students worked with writing assistants and graduate students to create a collaborative story ranging from any strange or questionable topics the writers could think of. What started off as a story of a pickle quickly turned into one involving Hogwarts, the Fire Nation (from Avatar: The Last Airbender), Kevin Hart, and selfies in front of a beautiful sunset. This story is also featured on the glass walls of the McIntyre Writing Center space.

Over in Hibbard Hall was the Two Sentence Horror Stories station. What could be scarier than the short, haunting tales of sleep-depraved and stressed college students? Well, one student had the answer: “My computer got a virus. Now Internet Explorer is my only browser.” There is nothing more terrifying than that. Those stories sure gave the writing assistants quite the fright, and they gave the writers a much-needed stress release.

As is tradition, this year’s National Day of Writing ended with an open read at The Cabin, hosted by the CWE’s very own Kiah Sexton. Members of NOTA, staff and faculty, and UWEC students took to the stage to share their writing with their peers. The UWEC Bookstore provided prizes for readers, ranging from dictionaries, thesauruses, travel mugs, and journals.

Watch out for next year’s National Day on Writing, when the CWE is sure to have new ideas planned to help celebrate.
WA Presents at NCPTW
by Madeline Gray

In November I presented at the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, in Tacoma, Washington. My research was “The Cost of Thoughtless Inclusion: How Required Appointments Can Negatively Affect Tutors.” During my research, I found an abundance of research on the various ways that required appointments are beneficial – they increase the visibility of the center, they provide aid to students who need it, and they help retain students. However, I could not find information on how Writing Assistants were impacted by required appointments, which I saw as a critical oversight. While it is important for writing centers to include all kinds of writers, it is just as important that the center is inclusive to – and supportive of – its tutors. With this in mind, I decided to broach the topic myself.

Most writing centers say they will help students at any stage of the writing process. This often brings to mind the image of motivated student writers anxious to improve their work. The reality is that “any student at any stage” includes students who do not want help from the writing center, and who may actually resist making changes to their writing, but who are required to be there by their professors. While professors may require appointments for admirable reasons, I found that required writers approach their time in the center differently than those who voluntarily make appointments, and the differences in student engagement are detrimental to the tutors they work with.

My presentation focused on how the majority of required appointments are shorter than voluntary ones because they tend to be more directive. WAs feel that required writers are less engaged, and they feel obligated to drive the session more than usual. In addition, the majority of WAs felt that required writers were less open to making changes to their writing, forcing the WA to do most of the “heavy lifting” during the appointment.

My presentation also included details on the fears and anxieties that almost 80% of WAs felt when working with required writers. WAs noted three distinct categories of fear: fear of writer disengagement and the impact on the session, fear of the extra pressures accompanying required appointments, and the fear of completing tutor reports knowing that professors would be reading them.

The final piece of my presentation provided recommendations to help writing centers avoid these negative impacts. I recommend that centers offer increased education on how required appointments differ from voluntary appointments (specifically the directive tutoring style), giving new tutors increased practice with tutor reports, practicing smart scheduling so the same tutor isn’t overrun with required appointments, and working with the faculty assigning required appointments to get a better understanding of their goals. Hopefully these suggestions will make writing centers a more inclusive space for all, especially the people that work in them.

NCTPW was a great experience, both presenting my own research, and learning from others. I would encourage everyone to submit their research and attend this conference!
The CWE likes to keep up with UWEC Alumni who worked with us either as a GAD or as an undergraduate WA. In this issue, we caught up with former GAD, Daniel Henke, and former WA, Ashley Salas, who were kind enough to take time out of their busy schedules to let us know what amazing things they have been doing since their time with the CWE.

**Daniel Henke**  
by Alison Jozwiak

Daniel Henke graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, in 2013 with an MA in English literature and textual interpretation. While at UWEC, Daniel spent time as a graduate assistant in the English department and as a graduate assistant director in the Center for Writing Excellence. Currently, Daniel is a PhD student in the Rhetoric and Professional Communication program at Iowa State University, where he also teaches speech communication. His definitive goal is, “to become a director of a writing center at a four-year university and teach rhetoric and composition.”

Before coming to Iowa State University, he spent the last two years teaching English literature, composition, and English as a second language at the University of Wisconsin-Richland. In addition to his teaching duties, he was also the director of the writing center, known as the Woodman Learning Center. In making the decision to continue his education at Iowa State University, Daniel, “always wanted a PhD, and continuing educational endeavors for another five years enhances [his] research, practice, and skills to become a better educator and administrator.”

Daniel is deeply interested in existential Absurdism and Albert Camus. Daniel’s research interests are vast, but he “enjoy[s] connecting Camus’ writing with multiple theoretical approaches to better make sense and understand Camus’ writing.” He is also interested in writing center theory and practice, Marxism, psychoanalytical theory, postcolonialism, and compositional studies. Currently, his research aims at “making Absurdism more appropriate and useful when applied to contemporary practices.” He finds interest in relating these practices to the work that is done in writing centers. Daniel actively tries to publish his work; he is featured in multiple scholarly journals and has presented his findings at conferences across the nation.

As an advocate of higher education, Daniel finds the importance in “challeng[ing] preconceived notions and paradigms and look[ing] at things from multiple perspectives.” In regards to the UWEC community, he advises, “You may not always be right, and that’s okay, but understand the importance of working with others, while respecting your own individuality and autonomy…Be yourself, but take time to learn and appreciate others.”

**Ashley Salas**  
by Samantha Foss

Ashley Salas is a former writing assistant who graduated in May of 2015 with a BA in Spanish and Latin American Studies. Her time in the CWE was spent working with students who were writing in English and Spanish, so it is with little surprise that we learn that she moved to Saltillo, Mexico to work at the Berlitz language center.

After working there for a year and a half, Ashley began teaching English to 3rd and 5th grade students while also giving private language lessons. She notes that the school uses a “high scope method” to engage students in lessons and make learning a little more fun for them.

Ashley has been able to apply her experience from the CWE to her work in Mexico as she helps students improve their writing skills. In the future, she hopes to travel around Mexico and Europe before developing a writing club in a middle-high school (grades 6-9) that will aim at helping students write high school and college application essays. Ashley reflects that what stuck with her from working at the CWE has been the focus on ideas instead of editing. She says “[it] is very important for people learning English because they think that grammar is the only important thing, or that they just want you to edit it for them, however they need to learn and understand how to critique and correct their own work.” Good luck to Ashley as she continues to do great work!

Keep an eye out for the NOTA, CWE, and UWEC Bookstore collaborative Spring Writing Contest! This year’s theme is “100 or Centennial” to help further celebrate 100 years of UWEC striving for Excellence in Education. With an intentionally open-ended theme, the contest is sure to showcase campus creativity!