Spring begins! As we approach the final weeks of this year, we are ready. Ready for summer. Ready and energized by partnerships with programs, faculty, students, and colleagues. Next year, the Center’s initiatives will include:

• Welcoming back Andrew Suralski, who will serve as Assistant Director.

• Welcoming the ENGL 397/597 “Writing Center Theory and Practice” fall class (22 students), with heightened attention to interdisciplinary education models and social justice-driven writing center pedagogies. We are excited to work with the top-notch students in our Fall 2018 cohort.

• Building a tutor-training model with the Intensive English Program (IEP). At two upcoming joint training sessions (with Program Coordinator Ami Christensen), IEP tutors and mentors will work with CWE Writing Assistants to discuss intercultural barriers and propose methods for working with international student writers in more empathetic ways.

• Launching a “Faculty Writing Fellows” program. Taking an inductive approach, this 2018-2019 initiative will welcome two faculty members (across the disciplines) to meet regularly with myself and Assistant Director Andrew Suralski to discuss current best practices and to teach writing within their fields. This bottom-up approach builds from the premise that faculty within a field are experts on writing—thus, we
should listen more carefully to them as opposed to coming in with a “top down” directive approach to writing-across-the-curriculum.

- Joining wider conversations in the field of writing center studies: most recently, one Writing Assistant (Maria Lynch), two Graduate Assistant Directors (Logan Frodl and Zachary Peterson), and I drafted a conference proposal to discuss issues related to a conversational approach—one so germane to writing centers—at next fall’s International Writing Center Association Conference. Specifically, we plan to explore a more theoretically complex approach to perceiving disability rights and anti-racist pedagogy as a central component of writing center pedagogy.

In addition to these partnerships, we also launched a new “Studio Tuesdays” model (see column to the right). I hope you’ll visit the space and encourage your students to do so as well.

With best wishes for a rejuvenating summer!

-Jonathan

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CWE Takes On MWCA

By Lauren Brooks

This March, I attended a conference hosted by the Midwest Writing Center Association in Omaha, Nebraska and, wow, was it exciting! Along with me for the ride were Graduate Assistants Zachary Peterson, Charlotte Kupsh, and Logan Frodl, Assistant Director Andrew Suralski, and Director Jonathan Rylander.

Fellow Writing Assistant Caroline Morris and I created a presentation titled “Curricular Boundaries: What Living Learning Communities (LLCs) and Social Justice Clubs Can Offer Writing Centers.” Together, we examined how conversations surrounding topics of social justice manifest themselves in LLCs and social justice clubs in comparison to the environment of the writing center. Through our research, we were able to identify critical differences and proposed possible implications to help improve social justice in our own writing center.

Besides my own research, I attended presentations by other students and faculty from across the Midwest. This truly opened my eyes to not only how other writing centers operate, but how expansive writing center research is. This conference, while highlighting writing centers, continuously showed me how social justice displays itself in my life and the steps I can personally take to help improve social justice discussions that I may encounter.

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Studio Tuesdays

by Zachary Peterson

Set in our McIntyre Library satellite location, Studio Tuesdays break away from the traditional format of the center. Here, our 45-minute structured appointment is flipped upside down to create a free-flowing, no-strings-attached session. The studio serves as a place where students can come to work, ask questions, or simply chill out before their next class. In short, we’ve worked to make the space even more conducive to “in between” moments—thus enabling room for students to adjust their thoughts and address questions as they develop.

At a deeper level, our studio model is driven by what writing studies scholars Rhonda Grego and Nancy Thompson have termed a “studio approach” to writing studies. Evolving within interdisciplinary frameworks for teaching and mentoring writing, this approach welcomes students to share not only their writing, but also their excitement and daily struggles with navigating complex institutional and cultural issues. At a deeper level, a studio approach intends to foster an environment where students mentor one another as much as their teachers educate them.

We hope to see you and your students in the studio this fall!
Each semester, we reach out to CWE Alumni. In this issue, Amanda DeCaire-Denk and Jacob Fishbeck tell us what they’ve been working on since their time at UWEC.

**Amanda DeCaire-Denk**

I attended the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire from 2009-2011. During this time, I earned my Master’s and Education Specialist’s degrees in School Psychology. Following my graduation, I began my career as a school psychologist working in public schools in central Wisconsin. I have worked in the Wausau School District, with a team of nine school psychologists, since 2012. My present assignment involves providing diagnostic and consultative services to an elementary, a middle, and various parochial schools throughout the district. This is my dream job!

I came to work at the Center for Writing Excellence by way of a graduate assistantship during the 2009-2010 academic year. (Fun facts: The Center for Writing Excellence was called the University Writing Center at that time and was under the direction of Dr. Shevaun Watson. Additionally, I took part in the first National Day on Writing, held in 2009.)

When I think about the year that I spent in the CWE, I believe that the opportunity to tutor and discuss individual experiences across various writing centers.

The agents were also able to attend a variety of other sessions, including laughter in the writing center, personality types and their effect on sessions, empathy in session interactions, personal identity (gender, race, sexuality, etc) in the writing center, and ways to approach center structure. In each session, they were exposed to a lot of new ideas and strategies for approaching writing center work.

For a more detailed debriefing, come find one of our agents. Code word: Blu.

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On November 10-13th, the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) held their annual conference with a spy theme. It was headquartered in Chicago, Illinois and Secret agents Jonathan Rylander, Andrew Suralski, Charlotte Kupsh, Brianne Ackley, and Christy Thomas attended. The conference attracted writing center scholars from across the world to present and learn with their peers in the field.

Charlotte, Brianne, and Christy presented a roundtable discussion entitled “Decoding the Secrets of Working with Creative Writers.” They discussed reasons why creative writers might not be using the center, how to attract them, ways to train writing assistants to work with creative pieces, and what the ideal creative session looks like. Knowing how to incorporate creative writing into writing centers can be an enigma, so this session helped brainstorm ways to approach center structure. In each session, they were exposed to a lot of new ideas and strategies for approaching writing center work.

For a more detailed debriefing, come find one of our agents. Code word: Blu.

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Confidential: For Writing Assistant Eyes Only

By Christy Thomas and Brianne Ackley

(left to right) Brianne Ackley, Christy Thomas, Charlotte Kupsh, Jonathan Rylander, Andrew Suralski (continued on page 5)
A sad goodbye is just around the corner for the CWE. Charlotte Kupsh, an intelligent and beloved GAD, will be beginning a new chapter at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Although it will be sad to see her go, her CWE family is proud of her and will be rooting her on. Charlotte has been with the CWE as a Graduate Assistant Director for 2 years, while she has also been navigating through the English graduate program to earn an MA in English-Writing. In addition to being a graduate assistant, she was working hard on her thesis, which she hopes to get published, entitled “The Red-Bellied Beast: What Tractors, Internet Access, Barns and Beer Teach Us About Rural America.” Charlotte says that the CWE played a role in the creation of her thesis; she came in and worked with multiple Writing Assistants, especially early on in the process. She was able to utilize Writing Assistants for their input as well as using the skills she learned regarding how to brainstorm and navigate sessions to continually work hard on her thesis.

As if accomplishing grad school wasn’t enough learning for her, Charlotte will be continuing her love and passion for English by attending UNL for a PhD in English with an emphasis in Composition and Rhetoric. Choosing UNL wasn’t an easy process, but she ultimately chose it because “It felt really comfortable.” She said it felt like a larger Eau Claire, the people were all nice and welcoming, and she felt the program was a good fit. Although she says she will miss the familiarity of Eau Claire, she is excited to learn about Nebraska as a state because there are many national parks, outdoor recreation opportunities, and, of course, less snow. She is also extremely excited to design and teach her own classes right away when the program starts.

The CWE has done a lot for Charlotte and Charlotte has done a lot for the CWE. Charlotte says the moment she started reading the textbook for the Writing Center Theory and Practice course (English 397/597) during her first semester in the graduate program, she knew what she wanted to do: work with writing. Her dream job is to be a writing center director or a writing program administrator. In addition to the center making her realize what it is she wants to do, she says she also is grateful for the little things it brings every day. Charlotte says her favorite moments in the center are those were the student she is having a session with suddenly gets it and has that “light bulb” moment.

Charlotte says that the writing center also helped her personally. “It just made me a better person; it made me way more patient and now I think a lot more about how I can respect people’s autonomy and agency in not only their writing, but also in their choices outside of writing. I apply the same skills of how to navigate a session in how I navigate life.” The writing center also helped Charlotte’s professional life because it exposed her to and got her excited about her chosen career path. Not only that, but she is also grateful for the fact that the writing center also allowed Charlotte to see herself as more of a scholar than a student.

Although the CWE is sad to see her go, we are proud to have such an admirable GAD that is just as grateful for the CWE as we are for her.
students helped me develop a stronger command of the written English language—all while helping others develop theirs. I began my graduate studies in school psychology with no concept of the written language demands that my chosen career would necessitate. On any given day, I must write multiple reports in a manner that is accessible to the average reader, yet clearly articulates students’ strengths and weaknesses as well as the measures educators should take to support their students’ educational opportunities. I can thank the CWE for my greater fluency in this skill. I also had the opportunity to cultivate basic webpage development skills during my time with the CWE, as I was responsible for the creation and management of the CWE’s webpage.

When asked for final thoughts on the CWE, my reflections led me to this: only after leaving UWEC did I come to recognize the true value of the CWE. I’ve worked in public schools for seven years now, and conversations about helping students develop college and career ready skills always circle around to the need for effective oral and written communication skills. I believe that students’ communication skills are only beginning to develop during their K-12 years. Their post-secondary years are accompanied by greater critical thinking abilities, which implies more detailed thought processes, and more frequent opportunities to refine their written expression skills while conveying these thoughts in writing. This, compounded with the diverse backgrounds and educational experiences we all possess, makes an educational resource such as the CWE all the more important. It is heartening to see that the University Writing Center (with one director, two graduate assistants, and a handful of writing assistants) has expanded into the enterprise that it is today as the Center for Writing Excellence!

**Jacob Fishbeck**

I was a political science major at UWEC, and I worked in the writing center for two years starting in fall of 2010. Since graduating from UWEC in December 2012, I have held a few different jobs.

The first was working at the Como Park Zoo & Conservatory in St. Paul...

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Alumni News
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while I tried to figure out what I wanted to do with my life. (Ha!) I thought I wanted to go to law school, so I also worked at a law firm in Roseville, Minnesota. I soon changed my mind about law school, though, and decided to explore a career in public policy, specifically in the nonprofit sphere.

In 2014 I was accepted into a young professionals’ program called the Koch Summer Fellows Program. I did my summer fellowship at a nonprofit in Logan, Utah, called Strata. Strata produces public policy research on environmental issues using a perspective based largely on public choice economics. After completing my fellowship, Strata hired me as a full-time policy analyst.

While I was at Strata, I managed a team of undergraduate student researchers as we produced policy reports and other research products. I believe my experience as a writing tutor at UWEC was integral in mentoring my team, especially since Strata’s student researchers work in every stage of the research and writing process.

In the summer of 2017, I moved to Washington, DC, where I now live, and I work as a production editor at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. Mercatus uses a free-market economics perspective to produce research on a wide variety of public policy issues. As a production editor, I do copyediting, typesetting, proofreading, and other tasks related to the publishing of Mercatus research. This job is a bit more technical than the previous job, dealing more with the mechanics of writing, but I still leverage my experience as a tutor all the time.

WA Achievements
(continued from page 5)

Rachyl Hietpas is the recipient for the Ralph E. Duxbury Biological Sciences scholarship.

Studying Abroad
Ben Burke is travelling to Heredia, Costa Rica; Monica Vargas and Kimmy Wild are going on Central European tours; Alison Jozwiak is studying in Limerick, Ireland; Cassie Hampshire is studying in Lyon, France; and Brianne Ackley is travelling to Ireland.

Campus Leadership
John Paluta is the NOTA Prose Intern; Frank Rineck is the Vice President of the Backwards Thinkers Society improv group; Taylor Allen is the Co-President of AMA; Kimmy Wild is the Vice President of Operation Smile Club; Andrea Wendt is the Vice President of Hall Council in Thomas Hall & Vice President of PRIDE; Annie Titus is the President of PRIDE and director of the Eau Queer Film Festival; Rachyl Hietpas is a peer guide for international student orientation.

Frank Rineck is working with the Chippewa Valley Theatre Guild; Charlotte Kupsh is the Prose Editor for Barstow & Grand; AJ Kannal is taking a summer creative writing workshop course; Zachary Peterson defended his MA Prospectus in Spring of 2018; Jake Ratanawong is studying for his MCAT in August.