

# Newsletter

FALL 2010

*from the Director...* Anne Ruggles Gere

**After** over 30 years in Angell Hall, we have moved. The transition to our new quarters in **North Quad** brings us new neighbors (Screen Arts and Culture, Communication Studies, the Language Resource Center, and the School of Information); access to high-tech classrooms; and opportunities for programming with the undergraduates who share our building. Our new **How I Write** series, developed in collaboration with the Undergraduate English Association and Chris Gerben, a student in the Joint PhD in English and Education, gives students opportunities to hear professors describe their composing processes. In coming months, we plan other displays and demonstrations of writing.

And speaking of displays of student writing, last spring, in collaboration with the English Department Writing Program, we instituted the **First-Year Writing Prizes**, which honored students for both electronic portfolios and essays. The winning essays and eportfolios have been published in a collection, edited by Chris Gerben and Matthew Kelley, a Sweetland faculty member.

In addition to new programs, we continue to expand our research efforts. An article about our ongoing evaluation of Directed Self-Placement has been published in **Assessing Writing**, and the Spencer- and Teagle-sponsored project on writing in the disciplines continues. As you will see in the following pages, we also have new projects that investigate the Upper-Level Writing Requirement, employ corpus linguistics to study the development of student writing, and investigate the writing challenges faced by Generation 1.5 students.

Our prize-winning faculty continues to support the development of many student writers, and we are happy to welcome three new colleagues this year. You can learn more about them on page 3. We are sad to report that Helen Fox, who has taught for Sweetland and the Residential College since September 1, 1991, is reducing her teaching load in order to have more time for writing and will now teach only at the Residential College.

Our move into NQ and into new media writing led to an invitation to host the national conference of **Computers and Writing**, and we look forward to welcoming colleagues from far and near on May 19-22, 2011. Learn more at [www.sweetlandcandw2011.com](http://www.sweetlandcandw2011.com).

Check out extended articles, slideshows, and more in the online version of this newsletter: <http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>



---

1310 North Quad  
734.764.0429  
[sweetlandinfo@umich.edu](mailto:sweetlandinfo@umich.edu)  
[www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland)

**Writing Workshop** (by appointment)  
Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.: 9am-5pm  
Wednesday: 9am-12:30pm & 2:30-5pm  
Make an appointment online:  
[www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland)

**Peer Tutoring Centers** (walk-in)  
G219 Angell Hall  
Sunday-Thursday: 7-11pm  
Monday-Friday: 12-3pm

1136 Undergraduate Library  
Sunday-Wednesday: 7-10pm

1065 Alice Lloyd Hall  
Sunday-Wednesday: 7-11pm

**Online Writing Lab (OWL)**  
<http://sitemaker.umich.edu/sweetlandwritinghelp>

## COLLEEN LAPERE celebrates 30 years at UM



Sweetland's Key Administrator Colleen LaPere celebrates 30 years of service at UM this year. We are proud and honored that Colleen has chosen to spend 23 of those years at Sweetland. Many thanks and congratulations, Colleen!

2

<http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

### extended online content (click the links to explore)

- sweetland promo video (general)
- sweetland promo video (first-year students)
- writing resources for undergraduate students
- new faculty profiles
  - timothy hedges
  - david karczynski
  - shelley manis

## sweetland's 2010 interns: KATE KRIEG & RACHEL RICKARD

During our summer internship, we carried out three projects. The first was to create a short video to promote Sweetland's services to the student body: a series of interviews with faculty, peer tutors, and students who had utilized Sweetland's services in the past. These interviews yielded two promotional videos (one for the general U-M student body and one directed specifically at incoming first-year students), and left us with a more nuanced understanding of the different ways students, faculty, and tutors understand the work that Sweetland is able to do.

Our second major project was to compile an annotated research bibliography meant to strengthen the curriculum for SWC 300: Seminar in Peer Tutoring, especially material on tutoring English as a Second Language students and material concerning tutoring visual rhetoric and multimodal writing.

The third major project was a resource for students that discussed the development of successful PowerPoint presentations, including two screencasts, one on principles for creating successful PowerPoints, and the other a guide that showed these principles in action.

Throughout the internship, we were able to learn a great deal about cutting-edge writing center work, especially in the areas of multimodal writing and visual rhetoric.



David Karczynski, Shelley Manis, and Timothy Hedges.

## sweetland's new faculty: TIMOTHY HEDGES

Tim Hedges holds degrees from Cornell University, The Ohio State University, and the University of Michigan where he received a Hopwood Award for nonfiction in 2009. His short fiction has appeared or is forthcoming in *Sycamore Review*, *Harpur Palate*, *Cicada*, and *The Gettysburg Review*, among others. He has held various teaching positions in the last ten years, including a seven-year run at a public high school near Boston where he founded an award-winning student news magazine and initiated a multi-year creative writing curriculum. This past summer he worked at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts as an English instructor in a national scholarship program for minority students called (MS)[squared]. He lives near Detroit with his wife (a teacher at the International Academy in Bloomfield Hills) and his one-year-old son.

## DAVID KARCZYNSKI

Dave Karczynski is a recent graduate of the MFA program in Creative Writing at the University of Michigan, where he also was the recipient of a Zell post-graduate writing fellowship. Prior to coming to Sweetland, Dave taught first-year writing courses in the English Department and served as writer-in-residence for the University of Michigan Hospital Cancer Center, where he helped to develop a writing therapy curriculum. Dave's fiction and essays have appeared in *The Nebraska Review*, *KrakOut*, *Flyfish Journal*, and other publications. In his free time, he blogs about fly fishing at [www.swallowthefly.com](http://www.swallowthefly.com).

## SHELLEY MANIS

Shelley Manis holds a Ph.D. in Theatre History & Criticism/Performance as Public Practice from the University of Texas at Austin, and an M.A. and B.A. in English from the University of Kansas. Her writing merges performance and rhetorical criticism, as does her work as a dramaturg. She loves teaching undergraduate writing and has for years. Most recently she taught in the Digital Writing and Research Lab at UT, where her commitment to teaching writing in and for new media began. She is particularly interested in ways new media writing can facilitate collaborative learning and enact rich, creative, and rigorous cultural criticism.

*Sweetland Interns: Rachel Rickard, a senior majoring in English and Spanish, and Kate Krieg, a senior majoring in English and minoring in Gender, Race, and Ethnicity.*

# SWEETLAND AWARD WINNERS

## 2010 first-year writing prizes



From left: Anne Gere, Christine Modey, Thomas Yeh, Jennifer Metsker, Matthew Kelley, Alex Liberman, and Naomi Silver.

This past year, Sweetland and the English Department Writing Program (EDWP) initiated a competition to honor first-year writing. In September, the Prize committee released *Excellence in First-Year Writing 2010*, a collection featuring prize-winning essays and portfolios from the inaugural First-Year Writing Prizes for 2010. These writings—submitted from first-year writing classes taken during the calendar year 2009—were chosen from 80 faculty nominations representing nine different units. The publication, edited by Matthew Kelley (Sweetland) and Chris Gerben (EDWP) includes:

- From Great Books 191: **Kathleen Telfer**, nominated by Catalina Pereda.
- From Comp Lit 122: **Alexandra Park**, nominated by Basak Candar.
- For SWC 100 Outstanding Portfolio prizes: **Thomas Yeh**, nominated by Christine Modey, and **Alex Liberman**, nominated by Jennifer Metsker.
- From EDWP, English 124: **Michael Flood**, nominated by Julie Babcock, and **Erin Piell** and **Chong Guo**, nominated by Sara Schaff.

The prizes for 2011 will include categories for upper-level writing courses in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities in addition to the first-year categories. Judging will begin in January and winners will receive \$150 and publication in the 2011 prize book which will be presented at a public reception in April.

## excellence in undergraduate education

Sweetland is a unit devoted to undergraduate education. Our mission is to support student writing at all levels and in all forms and modes through one-on-one consultations and in our classrooms, to help student writers engage a genuine purpose for writing that is conveyed thoughtfully, clearly, and artfully. Given this important aim, it is no surprise that over the last three years, Sweetland has received recognition for its teaching with seven of our faculty and staff winning departmental and College-wide prizes and awards for their contributions to undergraduate education.



From left: Raymond McDaniel, Matthew Kelley, Colleen LaPere, Patrick Manning, Louis Ciccirelli, and Alexander Ralph (not pictured: Delia DeCourcy).

Sweetland boasts two winners of the Excellence in Education Award given yearly by the College of LSA for making special contributions to the College's educational mission: Matthew Kelley in 2008 and Raymond McDaniel in 2010. McDaniel is also among Sweetland's three winners of the BEN Prize, awarded each year by the Department of English to two Lecturers who have achieved a high level of excellence in the teaching of writing; receiving the prize in 2009, he is joined by Alexander Ralph (2009) and Louis Ciccirelli (2008). Also honored in 2009, Delia DeCourcy won the David and Linda Moscow Prize for Excellence in Teaching Composition for her commitment and creativity in the writing classroom. And last but not least, Colleen LaPere and Patrick Manning won the 2009 LSA Outstanding Staff Team Award for their collaboration on revising the process that helps incoming students choose their first writing course. Congratulations to all!

## HELEN FOX RETIRING FROM SWEETLAND



In January, Helen Fox will retire from Sweetland after 20 years of service, as she reduces her teaching activities to leave more time for writing.

Helen began teaching at Sweetland (then known as the English Composition Board) in 1991 after completing her Ed.D. from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Since then, Helen has taught many Sweetland courses, including GSI training, peer tutoring, and first-year writing. Helen has never hesitated to take on critical and complicated issues with her students, such as advocating for students with disabilities and negotiating racial tension and cultural differences in the classroom and peer tutoring centers.

While it goes without saying that Helen has been an important voice in the field of Rhetoric and Composition and Critical Race Studies throughout the past two decades, she has also been an equally important voice at Sweetland, serving on many committees, including the Peer Tutor Committee and Sweetland Executive Committee, and reaching out beyond the unit to serve student writers in Detroit.

The thousands of students who have come through Sweetland in the past 20 years have benefited greatly from Helen's ideas and involvement, and we thank her for all of the work she has done here. Best wishes, Helen!

3

<http://mp/sweetlandf10newsletter>

### extended online content

(click the links to explore)

- first-year writing prize anthology, 2010
- helen fox - homepage

## extended online content

(click the links to explore)

- extended interviews with arthur f. thurnau professors on their teaching of writing

4

<http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

As part of our study of the **Upper-Level Writing Requirement**, Sweetland is interviewing faculty who have been identified as outstanding teachers of undergraduates with an **Arthur F. Thurnau Professorship**. Through talking with these excellent instructors, we are learning how they incorporate writing into their courses. Each of the faculty members quoted here participated in an extended conversation with an interviewer, and you can learn more about their views on the importance of writing in their approaches to instruction by following the link to this newsletter's online supplement: <http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

## ARTHUR F. THURNAU PROFESSORS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING INSTRUCTION IN THEIR DISCIPLINE

### Anne Ruggles Gere English & Education



"I can't imagine teaching anything without making writing central, because students' learning is so much deeper when they write about what we are studying."

In February 2010, Sweetland's own Director, Anne Ruggles Gere, was named an Arthur F. Thurnau Professor. Gere, the Gertrude Buck Collegiate Professor and Professor of Education and Professor of English Language and Literature, LSA, is described by her nominating committee as the consummate "teacher-scholar" who blends "using theory to improve practice and using practice as a site to incubate and develop theory." Her students commend her careful attention to their writing, her emphasis on connecting course work with current events, her ability to engage them in research, and her support of them long after graduation.

In the School of Education, Gere designed and taught courses that engage students in appreciating the intersection between educational issues and social justice through first-hand data collection, textual analysis and ethnographic fieldwork. As director of the Sweetland Center for Writing, she launched a major research program on writing at UM and revised the process by which students select their first college writing courses.



### Jim Adams Economics

"What I have students read is law cases: major opinions of the Supreme Court, of regulatory agencies and so on. And I have them read those not so much for their legal content—that is, the way they would be read as texts in a law school—but for the economic content that is contained in the economic policy issues that are in them. And...what I would like is for people to be able to...write for a policy community good, clean, easy to understand,

jargon-free prose about economic policy issues....So the kind of writing people are doing for my classes should be equally useful whether they are writing op-ed pieces for newspapers or writing legal opinions or writing for a think tank that is seeking to influence public policy or writing memoranda inside a business corporation or a government agency."

### Brian Coppola Chemistry

"You don't need arguments against multiple choice exams, a sane person should be against them in the first place. You know, you need to put people in situations. People have to write."

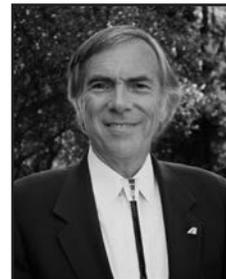


photo by George Csicsery

### Bob Megginson Mathematics

"One of the premiere things that writing does for the student is that it forces them to clarify their own ideas....There's no value in knowing what five plus three is--Excel knows that. The value is really in getting students to be able to organize their thoughts so that they can express them, and second, so that you can figure out whether they really know what they're doing."

# in the disciplines

## Laura J. Olsen Biology

"The first assignment they have is to interview their lab supervisor because it's one thing for me to say to an undergrad, 'You know, writing is really important. I do a lot of writing in my job.' And it's another thing for them then to be working in this lab with a professor or clinician and have that person also say, 'Yeah, I had to learn how to write. I use it all the time. I use it on patient files or grant applications or manuscripts.'"



## Christopher Peterson Psychology

"If a student gets out of college and knows how to write, that'll serve that student for the rest of his or her life, regardless of profession. And so I think the way to learn to write is to write, and to write with feedback. But you also have to read good writing."

## Robin Queen Linguistics

"I think the thing to do is to figure out ways to embed short bits of writing, and to provide students with ways of writing in lots of different styles. To really give them the sense that there's a lot of ways to write and you can be successful in lots of different ways. Sort of giving students that understanding and backing it up...So having students provide written material fairly frequently—short kinds of things, as well as medium-length things, as well as longer things—just having writing be part of the classroom world, not this thing that you do separate from the classroom."



## John Whittier-Ferguson English

"It feels like in some ways I don't know something until I've written about it, and I say that to my students too. So there's a way in which you can avoid certain kinds of confrontations with certain questions if you're not trying to write about them, and invariably when I write about something, I discover that it's even more puzzling and interesting than I thought it was....One of the things that each discipline has to educate its students into is what does an advanced level question look like in this field about a given object of study."

Arthur F. Thurnau Professorships are awarded annually to tenured faculty who have made outstanding contributions to undergraduate education at the University of Michigan. To visit our online gallery of portraits featuring Thurnau professors who have made a significant impact on student learning through the teaching of writing, check out the electronic version of this newsletter at <http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>.

## HOW I WRITE

The move to North Quad, with its combination of residential and academic spaces, along with the high-tech environment of the Media Gateway, has led Sweetland to begin developing programming for and with undergraduates. One initiative is the How I Write series, co-sponsored with the Department of English and coordinated by Chris Gerben, a graduate student in the Joint Ph.D. Program in English and Education.

This series is designed to give undergraduates opportunities to hear faculty members talk about their processes of writing. The first in the series was held on Monday, October 25, and featured Susan Douglas, Chair of the Department of Communication Studies and Philip Deloria, Professor of History and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education in LSA. These two speakers captivated an overflow crowd with stories about their struggles as well as their successes with writing. Other speakers will participate in this series throughout the remainder of this academic year.

In addition to this series, the undergraduate initiative will develop opportunities for students to participate in and write about community service projects and to develop their new media writing skills outside of the classroom. Announcements of future events will appear on the Sweetland website: [www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland).



Philip Deloria, Professor of History and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, and Susan Douglas, Chair of the Department of Communication Studies.

5

<http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

## extended online content (click the links to explore)

- how I write video archives

Teaching is highly valued by every member of the Sweetland faculty, and our instructors frequently receive awards for their classroom work. To provide insight into the **outstanding teaching** done by our faculty, we asked several of them to describe an **“awesome class”** they are currently teaching. As the profiles below illustrate, Sweetland faculty are often **innovative**, whether in their approach to new media writing or in their reconceptualization of more traditional texts. More details and examples of “awesome classes” are available online: <http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>.

## extended online content (click the links to explore)

- student work from swc 200: new media writing
- student work from swc 100: transition to college writing
- writing resources for undergraduate students

6

<http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

## THE RHETORIC OF BLOGGING

Based on technological experience alone, I’m perhaps the least obvious person to teach a course about blogging. I can hardly operate my cell phone, I have yet to send a text message, and at the first blush of tech-speak I tend to blank out. Yet having just concluded the first of two seven-week mini-terms, my students and I found that blogging is grounded in the same writing principles of any composition course: audience, voice, purpose. What’s distinct, as we also discovered, is the importance of visual rhetoric.

Each week my students analyzed blogs, read about blogs—everything from interviews with bloggers to inquiries into how the medium might affect cognition—and posted three new entries onto their own blog. Student blogs were as varied as the students themselves: living one’s

life according to the tasks of a self-help book; reflecting upon one’s attempts to learn Japanese; ruminations about non-essential objects that one irrationally desires, such as a two hundred-dollar alarm clock embedded in wood.

Some of my students will cease blogging now that the course has ended, but others will continue, adding their voices to the din of the hundred million other bloggers out there. Yes, blogging re-defines the traditional sense of audience; however, as one of my students succinctly put it, “It’s not what you write, but how you write it.” Which seems true of any writing.

—Alexander Ralph  
SWC 200

## INVOKING EMERSON IN SWC 100

What does Emerson’s “Self-Reliance” have to say to socially-networked 21st-century students? In my SWC 100 course, students answer that question by creating a web-based project connecting ideas from the essay to contemporary culture. Working in pairs, students paraphrase a section of the essay, annotating unfamiliar names and concepts and providing a brief introduction. Then, each pair identifies a key idea from their section (such as “Nature” or “Law” or “Prayer”) and develops a web page around that idea, using contemporary examples and analyzing how they reflect or challenge Emerson’s arguments. The project encourages students to read critically, to frame ideas and issues for other readers, and to think beyond the text to make creative connections to other times, places, and media. You can view “The Emerson Project” at <http://sites.google.com/site/swc100emersonproject>.

—Christine Modey  
SWC 100

The screenshot shows a web page titled "Emerson Project" with a search bar. The main content area is titled "The Parallel Texts" and contains an introduction and a table of parallel texts. The introduction states: "In the pages below, you'll find Emerson's original text of 'Self-Reliance' on the left, with our class's paraphrase of Emerson's text on the right. You can read the parallel texts by following the links at the bottom of this page. These parallel texts are designed to help you understand Emerson's ideas better. On this page, Amanda Lang and Christine Modey paraphrase and discuss Emerson's epigraphs." The table below lists various sections and groups with their corresponding original text and paraphrases.

Section	Original Text	Paraphrase
Section 1	"Man is his own star, and the soul that can render an honest and a perfect man, Commands all light, all influence, all fate, Nothing to him falls early or too late, Our acts our angels are, or good or ill, Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."	"Do not look for yourself outside yourself." You cannot figure out who you are by studying others.
Section 2	"Cast the burden on the rocks, Stickle him with the sharp of his heel, Winded with the hawk and the fox, Power and speed be hands and feet."	Abandon the child to nature and the child will grow strong and swift.

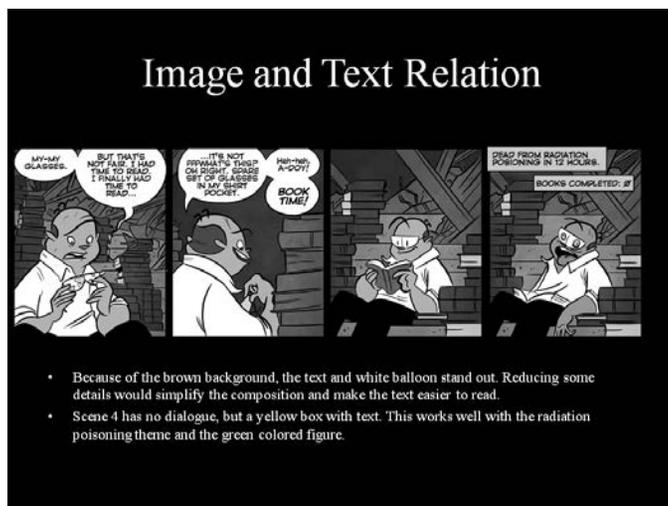
new writing resources available online!

Check them out at [www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/studentservices/writingresourcesreferences](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/studentservices/writingresourcesreferences). Our resources are designed to help writers evaluate the choices they confront as they complete different writing tasks and provide exercises to help writers explore their options. Feedback on existing resources and suggestions for new ones are welcome! Contact us at [sweetlandinfo@umich.edu](mailto:sweetlandinfo@umich.edu).

# tions in teaching

## TEACHING COMICS: FROM WRITING TO ILLUSTRATION INSTRUCTOR

I teach one of Sweetland's New Media classes; mine focuses on digital illustration, particularly the form of web comics and web serials. The class has no design or rendering prerequisites, so I have students from all disciplines. Some possess impressive Photoshop skills; some don't know a raster image from a vector drawing.



What they do have, however, is a lifetime's familiarity with the residual images of a culture increasingly steeped in highly sophisticated visual rhetoric. My job as an illustration instructor finally does resemble my more "traditional" writing instruction, at least in terms of turning a reading aptitude into a rendering skill. What the students can see becomes what they can articulate and describe, and what they can describe they can, with time and practice and much gnashing of teeth, make.

George Herriman's *Krazy Kat*, which many have persuasively argued is the finest expression of American popular culture, is a serpentine tangle of language, structure and image, clever and plaintive by turns. If students can "read" this "text" with a speed and proficiency acquired from long experience with the logic of the seen, those gifts will serve them equally well in the analysis of both pure language and pure image – and more pointedly, they will know how the two are truly one.

If in the process of elaborating these gifts they craft existential reports of the human condition as writ on the countenance of a stoic platypus, so much the better!

—Raymond McDaniel  
SWC 200

7

<http://mp/sweetlandf10newsletter>

**extended online content**  
(click the links to explore)

- student work from swc 200: new media writing
- student work from swc 400: advanced writing and research

## STUDENT-LED WORKSHOPS AND SELF-EFFICACY IN SWC 400

When I teach writing to upper-level science students, I like to start out each semester with lots of information about the theory, structure, and conventions of scientific writing. My students seem to appreciate all the guidelines and rules. But as the semester advances, we shift our focus to the students' own writing.

Last week, with the end of the semester in sight, we were workshoping student papers. I always try to direct each workshop, keeping the students focused on specific examples and constructive comments, but in that class I didn't have to say a word. They were running the workshop

on their own, talking about everything from organization to word choice, and making insightful, helpful suggestions.

Seeing my students take control of their writing and editing processes is my favorite part of each semester. After last week's workshop I commented on how they had been, on their own, carrying on a constructive, informative conversation about each others' writing. They seemed surprised. They hadn't noticed that over the term they'd internalized all those guidelines and conventions, and could now begin to think of themselves as writers and editors.

—Alan Hogg  
SWC 400

## social media @ sweetland

Like us on Facebook: search "sweetland"  
Follow us on Twitter: @umsweetland  
Read our blog: <http://umsweetland.wordpress.com>  
Check out our YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/user/umsweetland](http://www.youtube.com/user/umsweetland)

## extended online content (click the links to explore)

- additional information on:
  - syncOWL
  - tutoring best practices
  - writing and meta-cognitive strategies
  - generation 1.5

8

<http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

**Ongoing** research at Sweetland includes several projects, each of which is focused on a topic central to improving student writing. An evaluation of **Upper-Level Writing Requirement** courses will lead to changes designed to enhance student learning in these courses. A study of **Generation 1.5 students** will enable Sweetland to provide more support for students who are not entirely comfortable with academic writing in English. **Corpus linguistic analysis** of incoming student writing will provide a basis for understanding how student writers develop across their undergraduate years.

## best practices for synchronous online peer tutoring in writing

In Winter 2010, Sweetland received a Level II Grant from LSA Instructional Support Services to fund our synchronous Online Writing Lab (syncOWL) and a study of best practices for synchronous online tutoring. During syncOWL sessions, Peer Tutors collaborate with students live through Skype and Google Docs. The syncOWL developers—Carrie Luke, Nicole Premo, Lindsay Nieman, and Amy Fingerle—presented their initial findings at the 2010 Computers and Writing Conference at Purdue University in May. SyncOWL sessions are currently offered on Monday-Wednesday nights, and our research is ongoing. For more information about the syncOWL, visit our website: [www.sitemaker.umich.edu/sweetlandwritinghelp](http://www.sitemaker.umich.edu/sweetlandwritinghelp), or contact Carrie Luke at [clluke@umich.edu](mailto:clluke@umich.edu).

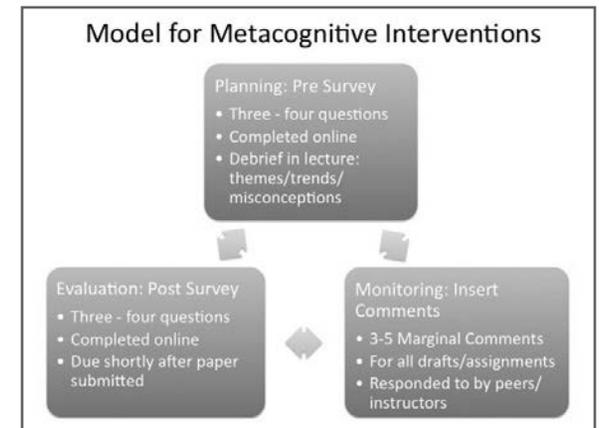
## assessment of tutoring best practices at sweetland

An ongoing research project at the Sweetland Center for Writing, “Assessment of Best Practices in Writing Tutoring,” continues this fall. Our team of researchers—faculty members Judy Dyer (ELI) and Christine Modey (Sweetland) and UROP students Rachel Neuenfeldt, Veronica Petroelje, and Tesnime Selmane—are coding transcripts of undergraduate Writing Workshop sessions. In particular, they are identifying the various types of questions faculty ask student writers during their time together. Once the transcripts are coded, they will be compiled in a corpus that will permit computer searching using concordancing software, allowing researchers at Michigan and beyond to identify patterns of questioning and other discourse markers in the transcripts. Judy Dyer will present some of this research at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta in April 2011.



## the impact of metacognitive strategies within writing in the disciplines

This collaboration between the Sweetland Center for Writing and the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, funded by the Teagle and Spencer Foundations, investigates to what extent engagement in metacognitive activities helps students better understand course content and discipline-specific modes of thinking and writing.



Now in its third year, our study's Upper-Level Writing Requirement faculty are asking their students to use a three-part reflective process of “Planning,” “Monitoring,” and “Evaluation” for each course paper they write. Designed to create a sustained dialogue between instructors and students around student writing, these exercises suggest impact on student and instructor engagement and satisfaction with the course, and also on increased student confidence in their understanding of what it means to think like a member of the discipline.

## generation 1.5

Michigan students bring a variety of language and learning experiences into the classroom. With support from an Investigating Student Learning Grant from CRLT, Anne Gere and a team of Sweetland researchers are gathering information about the diverse language experiences of students who have immigrated to the U.S. during the course of their schooling and are in the process of gaining greater English proficiency (sometimes known as “Generation 1.5” students). The goal of the study is to identify and develop strategies for providing them the support that will enable them to become more effective writers.

*Best Practices in Writing Tutoring research team from left to right: Rachel Neuenfeldt, Judy Dyer, Christine Modey, Tesnime Selmane, and Veronica Petroelje.*

## upper-level writing requirement evaluation

As part of the College of LSA's process of evaluating all College requirements, we have begun an evaluation of the Upper-Level Writing Requirement (ULWR) with support from a Whitaker I Grant from CRLT. The first phase of this evaluation consists of developing data-derived portraits of the ULWR in each department and then meeting with representatives of the department to discuss what the data from the past five years shows about the department's implementation of the requirement. In some cases these conversations lead departments to rethink aspects of their curriculum, and in every case the conversations offer a new perspective on how students in the department are addressing the ULWR.

### When do LSA students complete their ULWR (2005-2010)?

Freshman	0%
Sophomore	3%
Junior	19%
Senior	78%

### Where do LSA students complete their ULWR (2005-2010)?

In primary department	42%
Outside primary department	58%

Sweetland has also surveyed faculty who teach courses that satisfy the ULWR, and interviews will be scheduled with a sub-set of those who responded to the survey. The information drawn from these surveys and interviews, along with the data included in departmental portraits and the conversations with individual departments will provide the basis for subsequent decisions about ways to make the ULWR more effective across the entire College. Among the specific issues to be addressed are these:

- What trends in implementation of the ULWR are visible across the past five years?
- How might Sweetland enhance support for faculty who want to mount a ULWR course?
- How might the training of GSIs who teach ULWR courses be improved?
- What does satisfying the ULWR contribute to the experience of undergraduates across the College?
- What can we learn about the ULWR from materials used by departments as well as portfolios of work produced by students?

We welcome reflections on the ULWR from instructors and students. To share your thinking, send a message to [sweetlandinfo@umich.edu](mailto:sweetlandinfo@umich.edu).

## corpus linguistics project

A Rackham Summer Research Grant enabled us to launch a study of student writing that uses computer-aided tools of corpus linguistics. Because matriculating students submit evidence-based arguments in electronic form prior to orientation as part of the Directed Self-Placement (DSP) process, we have an electronic corpus of over 2 million words of student writing on which we can perform analysis. Using a subset of the corpus, we have identified the moves that characterize a successful argument, and we will use these findings to develop further markers of effective and less effective writing. In the long term, we plan to use these electronic tools to follow a few students of varying abilities to learn more about how they develop as writers.

*Graduate Student Research Assistants  
Anne Porter and Christie Toth.*



## graduate student research assistants

### ANNE PORTER & CHRISTIE TOTH

The Research Team works to enhance the quality of courses and services offered by Sweetland, while developing projects that advance contemporary conversations in the field of rhetoric and composition. Led by Anne Ruggles Gere, this team—which includes Naomi Silver, Colleen LaPere, and Patrick Manning—is assisted by two graduate students from the Joint Program in English and Education (JPEE), Anne Porter and Christie Toth. Anne is in her third year, and Christie is in her second year of doctoral studies. Both are currently assisting with research related to UM's implementation of Directed Self-Placement, the Upper-Level Writing Requirement, writing issues among multilingual "Generation 1.5" students at UM, and the reconceptualization of the idea of writing confidence. In her own work, Anne explores the notion of writing ecologies, and Christie's research interests relate to writing instruction at community colleges and non-assimilative writing pedagogies at tribally controlled colleges. Christie also notes that, after taking her first-year exam to Writing Workshop four times in one month, she's proud to be able to say that she's not just a GSRA at Sweetland: she's also a client.

9 <http://mp/sweetlandf10newsletter>

### extended online content

*(click the links to explore)*

- additional information on:
  - ulwr assessment
  - corpus linguistics

# SWEETLAND REPRESENTED AT THE 2010 IWCA / NCPTW CONFERENCE IN BALTIMORE

**extended online content**  
(click the links to explore)

10

<http://j.mp/sweetlandF10newsletter>

- [iwca/ncptw slideshow](#)
- [matt kelley - blog post on the 2010 ncptw](#)
- [peer tutor initiatives](#)
- [sweetland fellows seminar](#)

**“Safe Harbors or Open Seas? Navigating Currents in Writing Center Work”** was the theme for the combined meeting of the International Writing Centers Association and National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing held in Baltimore, Maryland over November 4-6, 2010. Both the safe harbor and the open sea attracted 1000 people from the U.S. and beyond, among whom were eight peer tutors from the Sweetland Center for Writing.

Four tutors, Autumn Chapoff, Kristen Bialik, Colleen Cirocco and Stefanie Gibson created a panel to address whether tutoring centers provide enough multi-disciplinary tutoring. Titled “The Peer Tutoring Center: A Dock for All Disciplines,” their panel consisted of a multimedia component and an interactive discussion. Presenting on her own, Meghan Zingales talked about Michigan’s Online Writing Lab, both its traditional OWL and its new syncOWL. She asked the audience to consider whether the goal of reaching many students through the use of online media overpowers the goal of effectively helping each individual student. Shauna Russell participated in a Scholar-to-



*Sweetland Peer Tutors (from left): Autumn Chapoff, Shauna Russell, Bradley Estes, Colleen Cirocco, Kristen Bialik, Sarah Friedman, and Meghan Zingales (not pictured: Stefanie Gibson).*

Scholar session, using her studies in linguistics to provide “A Critical Approach to the Lower/Higher Order Concern Framework for Non-Native English Writers.” Sarah Friedman and Brad Estes teamed up with Sweetland faculty members Matthew Kelley and George Cooper to address issues of directive and non-directive tutoring. Their session, focused on tutor training and pedagogy, was titled “Currents in Writing Center Pedagogy: Undertow from

the Principle of Non-Directive Tutoring.” Last but not least, Sweetland Associate Director, Naomi Silver, collaborated with a cohort of Big Ten writing center directors to address “Issues Facing Writing Centers at Large Research Universities.” These eleven conference participants returned to Ann Arbor tired but exhilarated from three days of interaction with writing center colleagues from around the world.

## PEER TUTORS FORM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A group of Sweetland peer tutors established the Peer Tutor Advisory Committee (PTAC) during the Winter 2010 semester with the goal of increasing communication between Sweetland faculty and peer tutors. Additionally, our goals have included increasing our ownership of the

peer tutoring centers (PTCs), building greater community amongst peer tutors, and continually improving the tutoring experience for both students and tutors. Since inception, we have introduced a peer tutor presence at faculty committee meetings, implemented a student suggestion system, improved in-take forms, and increased the overall efficiency of the Center. This semester, we look forward to assisting the Sweetland resource committee in creating PTC resources, improving the physical environments of the centers, and providing further community building activities. Our meetings are always open and we encourage students and faculty alike to join us. We meet every other Thursday from 6-7pm in G219 Angell Hall.



## 2011 SWEETLAND FELLOWS

**Junior Fellows:** **Daniel Birchok**, Anthropology & History; **Dan Blim**, Musicology; **Katie Brion**, History of Art; **Brian Dowdle**, Asian Language & Cultures; **Cameron Gibelyou**, Physics; **Zak Lancaster**, English & Education; **Andrea McDonnell**, Political Science; **David Medeiros**, Linguistics.

**Senior Fellows:** **Lynn Anderson**, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology; **Sueann Caulfield**, History; **Edward Chang**, Clinical Psychology; **Shelley Manis**, Sweetland Center for Writing.

Visit our website to learn more about the Sweetland Fellows Seminar:  
<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland>

# SWEETLAND FACULTY & STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

**Paul Barron** will present with colleagues Louis Ciccirelli and Annie Hesp—with Anne Gere serving as Chair—on Sweetland's Dissertation Writing Institute at the 2011 Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta, GA.

**Gina Brandolino** presented a paper titled "Margery and 'the Juice': Teaching The Book of Margery Kempe using OJ Simpson's if I Did It" at the 45th International Congress on Medieval Studies, which took place in May 2010. She also co-organized and moderated the panel discussion "Teaching Off the Grid: The Promise and Perils of Using Non-Canonical Texts in the Classroom," and co-organized two sessions at the Congress in honor of the work of her dissertation chairperson, Lawrence M. Clopper.

**Louis Ciccirelli** will present at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in April on Sweetland's Dissertation Writing Institute, with Paul Barron, Annie Hesp, and Anne Gere as Chair.

**George Cooper** presented "Currents in Writing Center Pedagogy: undertow from the principle of non-directive tutoring" with several Sweetland colleagues at the International Writing Centers Association/National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing in November in Baltimore.

**Delia DeCourcy** recently presented a day-long workshop to 40 English teachers from the Oakland County Public Schools called "Preparing Students for College Writing."

**Judy Dyer** presented "The Use of Questions in Writing Workshop" to the UM Corpus Linguistics Group in May 2010 with Sweetland colleague Christine Modey and Holger Limburg from the University of Oldenburg; the trio will also present a paper at the 2011 Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta, GA.

**Helen Fox** gave the talk "How Culture Affects Writing" at Auburn University in February, and led two CRLT Seminars on "When Race Breaks Out: Conversations about Race and Racism in College Classrooms." Her review of the educational film "Coexist" appeared in the Fall 2010 edition of *Peace Chronicle*, and her piece "Writing for the U.S. University" will appear in the forthcoming *Handbook of College and University Teaching: Global Perspectives* from Sage Publications.

**Timothy Hedges** had a short story appear in the Winter 2010 issue of *Harpur Palate* and has had short stories accepted for future publication in *Cottonwood* and *The Gettysburg Review*.

**Alan Hogg** designed and edited *A History of the University of Michigan Biological Station: 1909-2009* by David Gates (2010).

**Lizzie Hutton's** book of poems *She'd Waited Millennia* will be released from New Issues Press in Fall 2011, as runner up for their annual poetry prize.

**Perry Janes** won a 2009 Hopwood Award in Poetry and the Paul and Sonia Handelman Award for Poetry. His poems also appeared in *The Collagist*.

**Matthew Kelley** received three grants this year: a CRLT Instructional Development Grant, an Arts at Michigan Grant, and a John Steinbeck Center Travel Grant. He also presented the paper "Ladies Home

Journal and A Russian Journal: John Steinbeck's Narrative of Domestic Containment" at the American Literature Association symposium, and co-edited *Excellence in First-Year Writing 2010*, a collection of UM prize-winning papers from first-year students.

**Danielle LaVaque-Manty** co-authored a paper with Abigail Stewart that was published in *The Next Twenty-Five Years: Affirmative Action and Higher Education in the United States and South Africa* last December; she gave a presentation on "The Language of Video Games" at the Computers and Writing conference at Purdue in May; and one of her flash fictions appeared in an anthology called *Fast Forward: The Mix Tape* in July.

**Carrie Luke** presented "Creating a Neutral Space: Piloting a Synchronous Online Tutoring Service" with Amy Fingerle, Lindsay Nieman, and Nicole Premo at the 2010 Computers and Writing Conference at Purdue University. She was also awarded a graduate assistantship from Eastern Michigan University.

**Patrick Manning's** article "The Communist Party, the Popular Front and Reimagining 'America' in Lloyd Brown's *Iron City*" was published in the *Pennsylvania Literary Journal*.

**Raymond McDaniel** was a recipient of the 2010 LSA Excellence in Undergraduate Education Award.

**Jennifer Metsker** had a poetry sequence published in the Winter issue of *The Concher*, and two poems published in the Summer 2010 issue of *Dunes Review*, and she received a Course Connections grant from Arts at Michigan to fund a day in Detroit for her Lloyd Hall Scholars Program students. She served as the Associate Editor for the *Bear River Review*, an anthology of writers who have attended the Bear River Writers' Conference.

**Anne Porter** presented "Neoliberal Reconfigurations of Literacy as White Property: The Bush-era Advancing Global Literacy Campaign" at the 10th Annual Critical Race and Anti-Colonial Studies Conference On Race-Making and the State at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. She also collaborated with Anne Gere, Laura Aull, and Tim Green on an article that was published in the October issue of *Assessing Writing*, entitled "Assessing the Validity of Directed Self-Placement at a Large University."

**Alexander Ralph** received a Course Connections grant from Arts at Michigan for his Lloyd Hall Scholars Program course on Detroit.

**Naomi Silver** presented work on writing centers as sponsors of new media writing on a panel with former Sweetland colleagues Jennifer Michaels and Christopher Schmidt at the 2010 CCCC in Louisville, KY, and at the 2010 Computers and Writing conference at Purdue University. With research team colleagues from Sweetland and CRLT, she also presented results from the second year of a study on metacognition in writing in the disciplines courses at the annual meeting of the research colloquium on the Systematic Improvement of Higher Education in Research Universities in June at Duke University.

**Carol Tell** received a Global Course Connections grant from the Center for Global and Intercultural Studies to take a group of students from her Lloyd Hall Scholars Program writing class to Ireland for ten days in May.

11

<http://mp/sweetlandf10newsletter>

**extended online content**  
(click the links to explore)

- [faculty and staff profiles](#)

## NORTH QUAD: SWEETLAND'S NEW HOME

Traditional architecture, innovative technology come together in cutting-edge facility.

In late July, the Sweetland Center for Writing moved from its long-time home in Angell Hall to the new North Quadrangle Residential and Academic Complex. Located on the site of Ann Arbor's first public library, this building—designed by the architectural team of Einhorn Yaffee Prescott and Robert A.M. Stern Architects—was envisioned as bringing together traditional and cutting-edge elements in design, use, and pedagogy: brick-lined courtyards open onto high-tech, modular performance and collaboration spaces; seminar-style classrooms house media-rich instructor podia; and the new building itself physically incorporates elements of the Frieze and Carnegie structures it replaces.

For Sweetland, the new space is a fitting venue for many recent changes to our Center: our development in 2008 of a New Media Writing curriculum (SWC 200), with courses focusing on topics ranging from the rhetoric of blogging to photo and audio essays to viral video rhetoric; our shift to an online appointment-scheduling software for our Writing Workshop conferences; our development of a synchronous online writing lab (the syncOWL) that allows real-time distance conferencing with our peer tutors; the addition of an electronic portfolio component to all of our SWC 100: Transition to College Writing Courses; and other exciting initiatives we have detailed in these pages.

For the third time in our history, we also have a new name: the Gayle Morris Sweetland Center for Writing. Signifying the broad reach of our programs and services—not only one-on-one writing conferences, but also University writing requirements, Fellows Seminars and Dissertation



*Sweetland work-study student Amy Kaminski staffs the front desk while students wait for Writing Workshop appointments in Sweetland's new lobby.*

Writing Institutes, faculty consultations and GSI training, research on writing, and much more—our new name captures the best of our mission, to support student writing at all levels and in all modes, through a wide-angle lens.

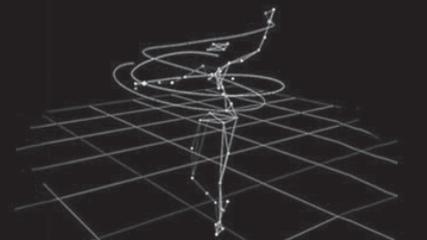
As we settle into this new home—physically on the periphery of central campus, but conceptually at the center of the University's future—we are busier and more purposeful than ever. Our large, colorful lobby bustles with writers; our classrooms, with their collaborative MediaScape workspaces, overflow with student energy and ideas; and our spacious new break room keeps us fed, caffeinated, and in touch with one another. Come visit us in our new home!

Check out a slideshow of Sweetland's new space at <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/aboutus>.

**COMPUTERS & WRITING 2011**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN | MAY 19-22

**WRITING IN MOTION**

TRAVERSING PUBLIC PRIVATE SPACES



**WWW.SWEETLANDCANDW2011.COM**