

MINOR IN WRITING

MINOR IN WRITING GATEWAY COURSE: Building a Community of Writers

2 New admits to the Sweetland Minor in Writing enroll in the **Minor gateway course, Writing 200**. Taking this first course together develops a sense of cohort and a built-in community of writers. Here students develop the first iteration of an **electronic portfolio** of their writing that they will revise in the Minor capstone course and submit to complete the program. Students have a great deal of freedom in designing the portfolio, guided by questions such as: How do you want to present yourself as a writer? Who is your ideal audience? What reading experience do you want your audience to have? How interactive do you want your portfolio to be, and to what end? What media do you want to include in your portfolio, and why? They also participate in an html/css workshop to help them learn to customize their web pages.

Students in the Fall 2011 Minor gateway course have also spent their semester working on two linked projects designed to explore the relationships among genre, medium, audience, and purpose. First, they selected a piece of writing, academic or otherwise, they had written for a previous occasion; then they wrote a new piece that **re-purposed** its argument in a new genre and for a new audience; and finally, they **re-mediated** this re-purposed argument to present it in a new form. For instance, a course paper might become a young adult magazine article and then a documentary video, or a blog post might become an academic research paper and then a museum web page. Students reported being challenged as



The Minor in Writing Fall 2011 cohort.

writers by this assignment in new and compelling ways.

To learn more about the gateway course and the interests, concerns, and questions of the 2011 Minor in Writing cohort, visit the **official Minor blog** at <http://writingminor.sweetland.lsa.umich.edu/>. Here, you'll find eportfolio design plans, reflections on course readings, worries about writer's block, notes on technology, and more. Successive Minor cohorts will be posting to the blog, making it a living record of at least one community of writers at Michigan.

COMMENTS FROM THE FALL 2011 COHORT:

"I really enjoy that I am able to make the minor what I want it to be. I'm looking to get more writing experience in my field and I have the perfect opportunity to do that in this minor."

—Bethany N.
History, 2013

"I love the sense of community that the writing minor provides. This community gives you access to advisors, professors, and peers who help you grow and develop into a better writer. I also really enjoy learning about writing in mediums such as blogs and portfolios."

—Katy S.
International Studies, 2013

"I feel like I am able to guide myself through this minor instead of being confined to certain assignments/restrictions. Very different class than any others I have taken. If you enjoy writing (in any aspect) this is a great course!"

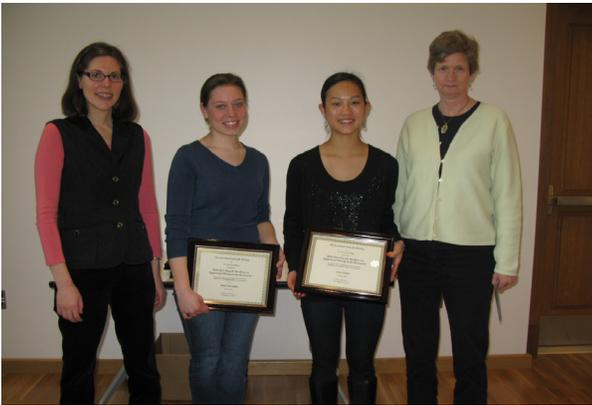
—Erica A.
Communication Studies, 2013

Erica Evesian and Josh Kim both chose to re-purpose course papers — a Communication Studies essay on new media and democracy and an English essay on the zombie phenomenon — into multimodal magazine articles for the Minor gateway course. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/scw200> to view these projects in full.

AWARD-WINNING WRITERS

UNDERGRADUATE WRITING PRIZES: Celebrating Students Across Disciplines

The Sweetland prizes in writing offer an opportunity to celebrate excellence in student writing. Prizes are awarded annually for the Outstanding Writing Portfolio, the Matt Kelley Prize for Excellence in First-Year Writing, and Excellence in Upper-Level Writing. Faculty nominate student writing in January, it is judged in February, and winners are announced and celebrated in April. The winning selections are published in both book and digital form so that they may be used as models in subsequent writing classes. To view these selections in full, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/scw2011prizes>.



Prizewinners Anna Cecciaglia and Aimee Vester accept their awards for Excellence in Upper-Level Writing in the sciences from professors Sarah Talpos and Laura Olsen. (Left) Talpos, Cecciaglia, Vester, Olsen.

Matt Kelley Prize for Excellence in First-Year Writing:
Elizabeth Allison: "American Pride and Prejudice: Yasuhiro Ishimoto in The Family of Man" nominated by Matt Kelley, LHSP 125; **Olivia Postelli:** "Moon Walk (1969)" nominated by Virginia Murphy, RCCore 100.

Sweetland Prize for Outstanding Writing Portfolio:
Vivien Dregely: "My (Literary and College) Journey" nominated by Matt Kelley, SWC 100; **Kathy Pham:** "Choreography of Words" nominated by Delia DeCourcy, SWC 100.

English Department Writing Program Prize:
Jake Atkinson: "Alcohol and the Laws that Govern It in the United States" nominated by Gen Creedon, ENG 125; **Katie Long:** "Smartphone Stupidity: What the Windows Mobile Phone Advertisements Tell Us" nominated by Shane Slattery-Quintanilla, ENG 125; **Emily Van Dusen:** "Fear and Self-Loathing in Ohio" nominated by Jennifer McFarlane-Harris, ENG 125; **Jessica Levy** (Honorable Mention): "Windows and Gardens" nominated by Michael Gorwitz, ENG 125.

Sweetland Prize for Excellence in Upper-Level Writing:
Social Sciences: **Anton Camaj, Eileen Divringi, Jake Gatof, Nicole Johnson, Ji Won Moon, and Azure Nowara:** "Oh SNAP! The Real Cost of Cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program" nominated by Mika LaVaque-Manty, POLSCI 381; **Jennifer Sun:** "English Proficiency and Spousal Support are Associated with Higher Self-Rated Health in a National Sample of Asian American Immigrants" nominated by Perry Silverschanz, PSYCH 391; **Sciences:** **Anna Cacciaglia:** "An Odd Kind of Sympathy" nominated by Sara Talpos, English 325; **Aimee Vester:** "Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease" nominated by Laura Olsen, MCDB 397; **Humanities:** **Deanna Willis:** "A Break from Conventionality" nominated by Matt Kelley, SWC 300; **Carly Friedman:** "Miss Ann Philips: Via Air Mail" nominated by Aric Knuth, ENG 325.

REMEMBERING MATT KELLEY, 1969-2011

At Sweetland we are accustomed to faculty mobility. Instructors often leave to take another position, to move to another state. But losing Matt Kelley last February was different. In the months since his death we have often repeated the phrase, "Matt used to do that." Looking for someone to take up one of the many responsibilities that used to rest on Matt's broad shoulders, we've been reminded again and again of how much he contributed to our unit.

First of all, Matt was an outstanding teacher. He received the LSA Excellence in Education award in 2008, but he really deserved an award for teaching every year since 2003, when he joined the Sweetland faculty. Students routinely described him as the best teacher they ever had, said he had changed their lives, claimed that he made them into writers. Students were deeply attached to Matt because he took them and their writing seriously.

When we decided to establish prizes for student writing, Matt took the lead. He organized the nomination process, recruited judges, coordinated the scoring, informed the student winners, emceed the award ceremony, and, especially, made sure that the winning essays were published in a book that could be used in first-year writing classes. One of his many legacies is the timeline we still use to orchestrate the prize process.

We miss Matt greatly, but his legacy, in the form of the **Matt Kelley Prize for Excellence in First-Year Writing**, lives on. Read more about Matt at <http://tinyurl.com/MKelley>.



CONFERENCE SETS WRITING IN MOTION

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From May 19th to the 22nd, 2011, the Sweetland Center for Writing hosted the 27th annual international Computers and Writing Conference. This year's conference, themed "Writing In Motion: Traversing Public/Private Spaces," drew record numbers of attendees – more than 500 who biked, walked, flew and drove to Ann Arbor. Over the span of three days, scholars had the opportunity to take in new media posters and installations, choose from among 133 concurrent sessions, attend an evening of new media performance, participate in three town hall meetings, and hear keynote speeches by Tim Wu, Gail Hawisher, and Katherine Hayles.

The "Writing in Motion" framework generated some key issues, the most prevalent being the trajectory of the field and how past theories and practices can and should inform future praxis. The town halls took up three moments in the life of Computers and Writing: the past ("Through the Looking Glass and Back Again: A C&W Rhetrospective"), the present ("Are You a Digital Humanist?"), and the future ("The Future(s) of Computers and Writing"). Discussions arose about best practices for teaching with e-portfolios and leveraging social media and Web 2.0 technologies in and beyond the writing classroom. Active citizenship and peer sourcing made possible by new media were hot topics, as were questions of access and multiple literacies. Scholars explored how to encourage digital collaboration among students as well as how to facilitate the rising institutional legitimacy of their own digital scholarship. Packed pre-conference workshops on leveraging technologies such as blogging platforms, wikis, teaching with iPads, and gaming interfaces emphasized the ongoing commitment of the C&W community to building on established pedagogical ideas while using new media to push the teaching of writing forward purposefully and thoughtfully. Visit the official conference website at: <http://tinyurl.com/CompWritCon>.

and writing conference

KEY QUOTES FROM KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Gail Hawisher: “Like writing, our field of Computers and Writing has always been in motion—never in slow motion, I might add...”

Tim Wu: “So it was the breakup [of IBM], and the emergence of tiny companies that built things (Apple, Dell, Microsoft) that in some sense empowered individuals, that make possible a conference like this, a conference that starts from the point of thinking that computers are somehow involved in creativity.”



*Gail Hawisher,
U. Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*



*Tim Wu,
Columbia University*



*Katherine Hayles,
Duke University*

Katherine Hayles: “As we learn more about how the brain works, we need to link work about neurological consequences with pedagogical goals... English Departments risk becoming obsolete. They should become Departments of Comparative Media Studies where scrolls, manuscripts, books, computer panes, and a variety of other media can be studied.”

Responses to C&W 2011

“Computers and Writing at U of M was everything I most appreciate in a scholarly conference: it was intimate, accessible, well-run, easy to navigate, and filled with productive conversations that made me want to get right to work. My sessions invariably demand audio-visual presentation materials. The technical provisions and support at U of M were among the very best I have ever encountered at a conference.”

Bump Halbritter, Michigan State University

“One of my favorite memories of C&W 2011 was watching Gail Hawisher enjoy her featured talk at the Awards Dinner and seeing just how many folks in C&W she had touched and helped and guided in her career! If we could all leave that kind of wonderful mark on our profession, retirement would be easy! But perhaps the moment I loved most at C&W—and that made me very proud indeed—was having Cheryl Ball and Kristin Arola establish the Gail E. Hawisher and Cynthia L. Selfe Caring for the Future Award that will fund graduate student travel to Computers and Writing Conferences in the future.”

Cindy Selfe, Ohio State University

“This year’s Computers and Writing conference reminded me why this is my favorite conference: from collegial disagreements about “the digital humanities” to late night Karaoke parties in the dorms, seeing old friends and meeting new ones, to getting to preview some of the best new work that is happening in the computers and writing community. At C&W, we get rhetoric-as-action as much as interpretation. And Michigan did an excellent job of hosting (an instance of rhetoric-in-action as well), which was much appreciated and praised by the conference-goers (myself included).

Doug Eyman, George Mason University

“For the first time in its history, C&W asked presenters to post their work online, prior to the conference. This was the subject of much conversation in the panel I co-organized, a Disability Studies round table on multimodality and kairotic spaces. In particular, we explored the field’s conceptualization of disabled people as a problemated “them” in need of “our” help. We asked our audience to help us brainstorm ideas for making the C&W world a more accessible and co-participatory space, and this is a conversation that has extended well beyond the conference—with discussions covering ALT tags and interaction badges, as well as co-mentoring and re-examining what we mean by “reasonable” accommodations.

Melanie Yergeau, University of Michigan

SWEETLAND FACULTY PRIZES

Sweetland is known for excellence in teaching, and two more members of the faculty received teaching awards this year.

Gina Brandolino



Gina was recipient of the Ben Prize, which recognizes faculty who have achieved a high level of excellence in the teaching of writing, and Gina's

record in the classroom makes it clear that this was a much-deserved award. Her students regularly testify to the passion and commitment that Gina brings to her teaching. A specialist in medieval literature as well as writing, Gina has a special interest in first-generation college students.

Timothy Hedges



Tim received the David and Linda Moscow Prize for Excellence in Teaching Composition. As its title suggests, this award is des-

ignated for instructors who do an outstanding job of teaching writing. Tim, winner of a Hopwood Award for his own writing, brings a creative flair to the classroom, helping students to think about writing in new ways.

As part of our study of the Upper-Level Writing Requirement (ULWR), 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. The Thurnau professors Sweetland interviewed indicate that writing is an important skill for students to know and plays a significant role in how students learn the content of disciplinary courses. Thurnau professors say that writing is a way for students to reflect on their own understanding and clarify their ideas. If you would like more information about these Thurnau professors and what they suggest about writing in their courses, please visit Sweetland's web site: <http://tinyurl.com/Thurnau>.

ARTHUR F. THURNAU PROFESSORS ON WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES

Thad Polk Cognitive Psychology

"I feel like teaching good writing is more important than teaching virtually any content material. Writing about course content is one of the best ways to learn it and analyze it. It's one thing to read a textbook about some experiments or something; it's another to actually have to describe those experiments to somebody else in written form. And I think the exercise of doing that really consolidates your understanding of the material."



Terrence McDonald History



"In my experience, students are dying to be taught how to write well. I have never had a student who said, "I don't want to write well." I have frequently had a student who has said, "before your class no one had ever paid so much attention to my writing"... So, my view is that... students are writing all the time...they're writing email, they're writing texts... They write constantly. They write thousands of words a week! They write much more than I did as a young person....Now, they need to be taught how to write in an academic style, and in particular, in professional genres—and they're happy to learn."

SWEETLAND FELLOWS SEMINAR

The Sweetland Fellows Seminar brings together faculty (Senior Fellows) and graduate student instructors (Junior Fellows) from multiple disciplines who share a commitment to integrating writing in their courses. Fellows will: confer with local and national visiting speakers; learn ways of helping students become better writers; discuss concerns about teaching in the age of the Internet; learn how to integrate writing in their courses; and examine approaches to incorporating writing across the disciplines. The application deadline for 2013 is Wednesday, March 7. More information can be found on our website: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/forinstructors/sweetlandfellowsseminar>.

ance in teaching writing

Al Young Sociology

"One of the great disappointments I have with higher education is that I think we have surrendered a commitment to writing. I can't tell you how often I've heard colleagues say they don't issue term papers because students don't write well and I'm thinking, 'maybe you should teach them how to write well'... we need to recommit or commit to [writing] for the first time... You've lost the battle if you've decided that college students don't write well, and hence are not going to deal with writing, so embrace the challenge.... To the extent possible, commit time [to] rewriting. The only way it gets better is if it's done over and over again, but we're impatient because we all have a sense of what we want to teach, and how much we want students to learn, but they learn at a slower rate than what we teach, and you... have [to have] enough time for that."



Paul Courant Economics and Information

"The best way to know that you've learned something is to teach it. But the best way to teach it in most settings is to write it... You know that you know something because you've taught it, and writing is a way to frame an argument relatively compactly, showing that you can back up what you have to say. That's just good practice in our trade."

Tim McKay Physics

"We don't think of physics as a subject where you have to learn a lot of facts. The number of principles that are really relevant that you actually do have to learn in physics is very small... You know, it doesn't take very long to learn [Newton's] three laws. What takes a long time is to learn how to use these things... to take a new situation that you've never seen before and to apply a simple set of rules to analyze them, to understand what will happen, to think about what the limits of that are. So when we're teaching, we're trying to get people to the point where they can do something, not where they know a list of facts, [but] where they have a set of skills they can use. That's something like what you try to do when you're teaching people how to write. You're not teaching them a writing. The paper itself doesn't matter. I mean, it's good, but the thing you're trying to do is help them become a person who could create writing, and there's all this process stuff involved for someone to be a good writer."



ULWR RESEARCH

Funded by a Whitaker I grant from CRLT, and initiated as part of a College review of undergraduate education requirements, Sweetland has been studying the LSA Upper-Level Writing Requirement (ULWR). Begun in 1978, the ULWR was intended to offer students the opportunity to practice the writing conventions of their chosen concentration. 30-some years later, that aim remains true, but our analysis of institutional data suggests that almost 60% of students complete the requirement outside of their primary department, and almost 80% complete it in their senior year, as they are exiting the university.

In meetings over the past year with representatives from every LSA department that offers a ULWR course, we have discussed this data and other measures that create a "portrait" of the individual department. We have learned much about how departments view the role of writing in their disciplines, and also about the challenges of teaching writing across the curriculum. We have been pleased to learn of innovative programs already in place, as well as new ones undertaken as a result of our conversations. Currently, we are rounding out this picture with survey data of students' experiences of the ULWR and faculty goals and responsibilities, and with focus groups and interviews with students, faculty, and GSIs.

This winter we plan to release a report of our findings, as well as some suggested revisions to the requirement. Stay tuned!

2012 SWEETLAND FELLOWS

Senior Fellows: Amy Carroll, American Culture, Latina/o Studies, and English; Benjamin Paloff, Slavic and Comparative Literature; Sara Aciego, Earth and Environmental Sciences; Barbara Koremenos, Political Science; Lila Naydan, Sweetland; Anne Ruggles Gere, Sweetland. **Junior Fellows:** Sarah Conrad Gothie, American Culture; Jessica Robbins, Anthropology; Carolyn Dekker, English; Trevor Kilgore, History; Erin Baribeau, Political Science; Bonnie Washick, Political Science; Philip Cheng, Psychology.

research on writing

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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, and research on the **Dissertation Writing Institute** will enhance the support we offer to graduate students.



Paul Barron's Spring 2011 Dissertation Writing Institute group. For more information about the Dissertation Writing Institute, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/DWIinfo>.

dissecting the Dissertation Writing Institute

This year, Louis Cicciarelli and Paul Barron received an Investigating Student Learning (ISL) grant from CRLT to study Sweetland's Dissertation Writing Institute (DWI). For those who aren't familiar with it, the Institute provides an office and a stipend so that graduate students can make significant progress on their dissertations and speed their time-to-completion. In addition to time and space, the eight-week program combines one-on-one sessions with writing consultants, accountability meetings, and interdisciplinary workshops aimed at instilling effective writing practices. Since 2003, when Cicciarelli helped found the Institute, similar programs have gained popularity in universities across the country.

Composition scholars have focused increasingly on investigating ways to support graduate student writers. Sweetland's program has proven to be successful, as evidenced by student responses and by completion rates (which show 75% of participants finish in two years). However, it is not so clear which aspects of the program are most effective.

Research began in 2009 with pre-program surveys asking graduate students an array of questions on their writing practices, the type of writing support they receive, and their confidence in completing the dissertation. Post-program surveys ask fellows which aspects of the program they found most useful and whether their writing practices have changed. The ISL grant from CRLT is allowing Barron and Cicciarelli, with the help of Ben Gunsberg (doctoral candidate in the Joint Program in English and Education), to analyze this data and pursue two research questions: 1) How does the DWI change reported writing behavior from the perspective of graduate student participants? 2) Which features of the DWI do students report as supporting these changes?

Since funds for programs targeting graduate student writers are often limited, answers to these questions may be useful in maximizing resources and extending help to more students. As Sweetland's DWI has become more well-known, several institutions are initiating writing programs of this type. Along with Gunsberg and former DWI participant Dr. Annie Hesp, Barron and Cicciarelli will share findings from their research at the conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in St. Louis.

Students from Louis Cicciarelli's Spring 2011 Dissertation Writing Institute group.



investigating tutoring practices

As part of a larger study funded by a CRLT Whitaker I grant to investigate tutoring practices in the writing center, Christine Modey (Sweetland), Judy Dyer (English Language Institute) and Holger Limberg (University of Oldenburg) presented a paper at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Atlanta in April 2011. The goal of the study was to describe and assess the effectiveness of instructors' questions in Sweetland's Writing Workshop, both in terms of student perceptions of their learning, and in terms of their ability to implement suggested revision strategies in subsequent drafts. Through a close analysis of question types in one workshop session the presenters showed that much of the teaching (and learning) in Writing Workshop occurs by means of questions (which prompt thought or recall), resulting both in longer student turns in the interaction and in a better final paper.

developing a new approach to writing assessment

The essays matriculating students write for the Directed Self-Placement process provide a rich source of information about the strengths and weaknesses student writers bring to the University. In an effort to establish a benchmark from which students' growth in writing can be measured as well as to determine whether students are making appropriate choices for their first writing classes, Sweetland has developed an innovative combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment. The qualitative part analyzes the rhetorical moves that students employ in making an evidence-based argument. The quantitative part uses the method called corpus linguistics, an approach that brings together a corpus or collection of texts with a concordancer or software program that analyzes language patterns and lists results. This combination makes it possible to see—at the level of the sentence—how students are achieving various effects (or not) in their writing.

identifying & working with multilingual students

The University of Michigan has an increasing number of students who graduated from US high schools and have a native language other than English. Unlike international students, who are easy to identify and who undergo a testing process that indicates the help they need to write effectively, multilingual students who have lived in the US for an extended time often remain invisible to their instructors. Sometimes called Generation 1.5 because of their in-between status, exhibiting cultural and linguistic ties both to the US and to the languages and practices of their home communities, these are frequently excellent students who stumble when asked to do academic writing. Because these students remain largely unidentified, it has been difficult to provide the support they need to develop as writers. As a first step toward supporting multilingual students, Sweetland has conducted a series of surveys, interviews and focus groups with these students to learn more about their experiences and needs as writers.

GSRA's Sarah Swofford and Christie Toth

graduate student research assistants

SARAH SWOFFORD & CHRISTIE TOTH

This year, Sarah Swofford joined Sweetland as a Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA). Sarah is a second year doctoral student in the Joint Program in English and Education, and her research interests center around language ideologies and the importance of local contexts in composition. Sarah joins Sweetland's returning GSRA, Christie Toth, who is a third year doctoral student in the Joint Program in English and Education and researches composition pedagogy in tribally controlled colleges. Sarah and Christie are excited to be a part of Sweetland's research team, which investigates undergraduate student writing experiences at the University of Michigan from placement to first-year writing to disciplinary writing instruction in Upper-Level Writing Requirement courses.



SWEETLAND WELCOMES NEW FACULTY...

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Julie Babcock has an MFA in poetry from Purdue University and a Ph.D. in American literature and fiction writing from the University of Illinois Chicago. She has received fellowships from the Indiana Arts Commission and the Vermont Studio Center. Her fiction, poetry and reviews appear in *The Iowa Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Rain Taxi*, and elsewhere. At Sweetland, she enjoys helping students use good questions to write purposeful, necessary papers.

Jamie L. Jones comes to Sweetland from Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she recently received her Ph.D. in the History of American Civilization from Harvard University. Jamie's current research investigates the cultural significance of obsolete technologies and dead industries. Here at the University of Michigan, Jamie is teaching in the Lloyd Hall Scholars Program, the Department of English, and Sweetland's Writing Workshop. Before embarking in academia, Jamie worked as a journalist and travel writer.

Lila Naydan earned her Ph.D. in English at Stony Brook University, where she studied colonial through contemporary American literature and religion. She has tutored writers in centers at Penn State and Stony Brook University, University of Delaware and SUNY College. At Sweetland, Lila directs the Peer Tutoring Program and chairs the Peer Tutoring Committee. She sees writing centers and the dedicated tutors who work in them as the most valuable resource at the university.

Dana Nichols completed her Ph.D. in English at the University of Louisville in 2005. She served four years as an Assistant Professor of English at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York, where she developed a new writing major. Her research interests include rhetoric, composition, critical whiteness theory and critical race theory. Dana lives with her family in Ann Arbor, MI.



Sweetland's newest faculty members (front row) Lila Naydan, Julie Babcock. (back row) Dana Nichols, Jamie Jones, Shawna Rushford-Spence.

Shawna Rushford-Spence comes to the Sweetland Center for Writing from Miami University of Ohio, where she recently received her Ph.D. in American Literature. After receiving her degree, Shawna worked at Miami University Hamilton and taught first-year writing, American literature and disability studies classes. Her research interests include nineteenth and twentieth-century American literature and culture and rhetorics of disability. She is currently settling into Ann Arbor with her family and enjoying teaching in the Writing Workshop at Sweetland.

...BUT WILL MISS RETIRING GEORGE COOPER



George Cooper with his favorite office artwork: a painting by this wife, JoAnn.

"George Cooper embodies what education should be about. He encourages students to voice their opinions and think rather than simply memorize. He is an excellent teacher, and I definitely learned more in this class than any other."

"George Cooper is one of the most intuitive and delightful professors that I have ever

had. His dedication and willingness to help are unprecedented."

Student comments like these are very common when George Cooper is the subject. A member of the Sweetland faculty since 1986 and a recipient of LSA's Matthews Underclass Teaching Award, George has helped several generations of students become more confident and effective writers. He is known as a teacher who cares deeply about his students, is respectful of them, and at the same time challenges them to do their best work. He brings music into the classroom and shows students how to do close readings of the lyrics; he helps shy students find their voices; and he continually rethinks his teaching in

order to help students become better writers.

George has played a key role in Sweetland's Peer Tutoring Program, teaching the course required of all prospective tutors, mentoring tutors as they begin to work with their peers, and, even taking Peer Tutors to national conferences. In 2006 he hosted, on behalf of Sweetland, the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, involving students in all phases of its planning and organizing. He has also mentored many graduate students in the Department of English, offering suggestions for teaching, visiting their classes, and encouraging their efforts to become effective instructors.

Over the years, George has also been an ambassador from Sweetland to many constituencies both on and off campus, including the Michigan Community Scholars Program (MCSP), the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), evaluation of the Quantitative Reasoning requirement, Detroit's Mackenzie High School, and the breakfast program at St. Andrews. George has announced that this year will be his last at Sweetland, as he retires to pursue other interests. While it is very difficult to imagine our Center without George's steady presence, we know that wherever he goes others will benefit immeasurably from his energy and commitment as he re-invests himself.

SWEETLAND FACULTY & STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Julie Babcock presented the paper “Journal Writing and the Confrontation of Self” in the multi-genre pedagogy panel at AWP in February. In May, she was on fellowship at the Vermont Studio Center. This year her poetry manuscript was a finalist for the Bull City Press first book award and her poetry and fiction appeared or was accepted in *The Journal*, *Sou’wester*, *Gargoyle*, *Slipstream*, *Storglossia*, and *Waccamaw*.

Paul Barron and **Louis Ciccirelli** received a 2011 Investigating Student Learning Grant from the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching to examine the Dissertation Writing Institute and better identify practices critical in effectively changing dissertation writing behavior.

Gina Brandolino published the article “Margery and ‘the Juice’: Teaching The Book of Margery Kempe Using OJ Simpson’s *If I Did It*” in the journal *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching*. Another article, “God’s Gluttons: Middle English Devotional Texts, Interiority, and Indulgence,” was accepted for publication in the journal *Studies in Philology*. Gina and Nate Smith (Central Michigan University) are guest-editing an issue of the journal *Pedagogy* on teaching non-canonical medieval texts. Gina also mentored a student in the University of Michigan’s Summer Research Opportunity Program.

Judy Dyer took a second trip to the University of Mentouri in Constantine, North Algeria in November to work with teachers and graduate students writing and teaching new English language teaching materials for undergraduates in the business program. In May four graduate students from Constantine spent one month in Ann Arbor working with Judy and colleague Carolyn Madden on their Ph.D. dissertations and materials for the project.

Timothy Hedges received the David and Linda Moscow Prize for Excellence in Teaching Composition in Winter 2011. His essay about teaching, entitled “The Things You Can Not Say,” was published online at *Superstition Review* in December 2010. Tim’s short story “Civil Twilight” appeared in the Summer 2011 issue of the *Gettysburg Review*. His forthcoming publications include a short story in *Jabberwock Review* and an essay (about teaching) in *Third Coast*.

Jamie Jones published an article in the October edition of *Common-place*, an online journal about 19th-century American culture. The article discusses technology, obsolescence, the power of deadlines, and a contemporary artist’s attempt to create a new illustration for every page of Melville’s *Moby-Dick*. Her article can be found online at the *Common-place* website.

T Hetzel had the poem “Descendant” published in the journal “*Cyphers*” (Dublin).

Alan Hogg has been invited to serve on the editorial board of the *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*.

Danielle LaVaque-Manty presented “Metacognition in Action: A Writing in the Disciplines Case Study” with **Naomi Silver** at the Teagle/Spencer Systematic Improvement Project Annual Meeting in June 2010, “Metacognition in the Margins: The Role of Self-Monitoring in Improving Student Interest in Writing Feedback” at *Writing Research across Borders II* in February 2011, and “Using Metacognition to Foster Students’ Disciplinary Thinking and Writing Skills” with Matt Kaplan, Deborah Meizlish, and Naomi Silver at the University of Michigan’s Provost’s Seminar on Teaching and Learning in March 2011. She also presented a workshop, “What the Games Say: Teaching Rhetoric Through Game Design” at *Computers and Writing* in May 2011.

Shelley Manis presented a paper titled “Rhetoric on its Feet, Performance on the Page” on a panel moderated by Andrea Lunsford during the 2011 CCCC conference in Atlanta. She also co-chaired the *Computers & Writing 2011 Conference* hosted by the Sweetland Center, “Writing in Motion: Traversing Public/Private Spaces,” with **Anne Gere** and **Naomi Silver**.

Jennifer Metsker designed and piloted the School of Art and Design’s new upper-level writing class. She also published an art review for the Gallery Project titled “Extremes” at the *Gallery Project: Now You See Them, Now You Don’t, and Vice Versa* and presented at the *Computers and Writing Conference*. Her presentation was called “Before and After: Process as Product in the Eportfolio.”

Christine Modey Published (with Judy Dyer) “Centering Writing: How the English Language Institute and the Sweetland Writing Center Make Writing Central for ESL Students at the University of Michigan” in *Before and After the Tutorial: Writing Centers and Institutional Relationships* by Robert T. Koch Jr., William J. Macauley Jr., et. al. (part of the Hampton Press series on Research and Teaching in Rhetoric and Composition). Last year, Dyer and Modey again mentored three UROP students.

Lila Naydan won the President’s Award to Distinguished Doctoral Students and Meyer Award at Stony Brook University. She presented “Imaging Atrocity: The Function of Pictures in Literary Narratives about 9/11” at *Making Meaning of 9/11: Local Impacts, Global Implications, and Jewish and Postmodern Impulses to Retell* in Philip Roth’s *American Pastoral* at the 2011 Northeast MLA Convention. Also, *The John Updike Review* published Naydan’s article, “Justification by Temperate Faith Alone.”

Carol Tell with colleagues Jennifer Yim and Christine Bass, received a Whitaker I grant to create a formal assessment for the Michigan Learning Communities. She also presented a paper at the 2011 *Computers and Writing Conference* titled “Writing in the ‘Real World’: Reflection on Blogging in a College Classroom.”

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The Sweetland Center for Writing's Peer Tutoring Program opened two new tutoring locations at the start of Fall 2011. Michigan undergraduates can now collaborate with trained peer writing tutors in Bursley and Couzens dormitories on the north and medical campuses.

Peer Tutoring Centers
(walk-in)

2322 Bursley Hall
Sunday-Tuesday: 7-10pm

1136 Undergrad. Library
Sunday-Wednesday: 7-10pm

1220 Couzens Hall
Sunday-Wednesday 7-11pm

G219 Angell Hall
Sunday-Thursday: 7-11pm
Monday-Friday: 12-3p

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

How I Write

1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH / 7PM / 2435 NO

How I Write is a monthly speaker series featuring local authors, academics and community members discussing their successes and struggles with the writing process. All events are free, open to the public, and conclude with informal discussion and Q&A. Past speakers include: Philip Deloria, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, and Susan Douglas, Chair of the Department of Communication Studies; Oran Hesterman, author of *Fair Food Network*; and Ann Arbor slam poet Jeff Kass.



*Cassie Basler and
Megan Spitz*

A note from Sweetland's Summer Interns

We had an excellent experience as the Sweetland Center for Writing's interns this past summer. As seasoned peer tutors, we both cared about Sweetland's peer tutoring program and were eager to help improve it. Our main self-proposed task was to renovate the peer tutoring center in Angell Hall. We also helped make suggestions for Sweetland's website, checked to ensure that transfer courses accepted for the First-Year Writing Requirement were still valid, and helped establish a more thorough and consistent social media network. We really enjoyed our experience as interns, feeling well respected by the faculty and staff. We are grateful to be continuing to work at Sweetland, Cassie as our website and publicity person, and Megan as the interim peer tutor program coordinator. Thanks, Sweetland, for a great summer! We highly recommend this summer internship to anyone in the Peer Tutor program. Be sure to check Sweetland's website for applications in March!

Cassie Basler, English and German 2012

Megan Spitz, Psychology 2011

Upper-Level Writing Course Proposal Workshop

FEBRUARY 3RD, 2012 / 10AM-12PM

The Sweetland Center for Writing will host a faculty workshop for any faculty members who are proposing courses for the Upper-Level Writing Requirement (ULWR). At this hands-on workshop, participants will receive feedback on their proposals, meet with experienced ULWR faculty, learn about available ULWR instructor resources and support, and explore best practices in the teaching of writing in the disciplines.

Workshop on Blogs in the Classroom

MARCH 9TH, 2012 / 10AM-12PM

During this workshop, co-sponsored by CRLT, experienced faculty will share the innovative ways they use blogging in their courses. Participants will discuss logistical and pedagogical considerations as they discover how blogging can be a helpful writing opportunity for students. Resources on how to start a class blog and how to assess student blogging will be provided.