

ANNOTATIONS

English Department Alumni Newsletter



WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAIRS

This semester marks the end of Professor Anja Wanner's tenure as department chair. We thank her for three years of outstanding leadership at a time like no other. She oversaw shifts from in-person teaching to remote teaching and back, hired 18 new faculty and academic staff, chaired countless meetings on Zoom, and kept the department informed about challenges and successes in her weekly 'chair notes' newsletter. And successes there were many – graduations, promotions, publications, fellowships, teaching awards, and more. You can read about some of them in this issue of *Annotations*.

Below, Professor Wanner reflects on the past three years in a conversation with our incoming chair (and current associate chair), Professor Christa Olson. You will learn more about Professor Olson and her vision for the department in the next issue of *Annotations*.

Spring 2022

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Feature: Our award winning advising team**
- **Power of alumni giving**
- **Celebrating department excellence: graduations, teaching awards, and more!**

CO: Here's a question I have for you: you chaired the English department through the Covid-19 pandemic. What did you learn about the department and its people that you think the new chair (i.e. that I) ought to know?

AW: It was great to see everyone come together to support our students. Early in the pandemic, a group of faculty and staff formed an informal expert circle on all things online teaching – sharing best practices and holding daily consulting hours. This was before we had access to professional consultants and before the university had a Zoom license. The chair should also know that all the flexible things we did required staff in administrative roles to work many extra hours, with tight deadlines and no backup, many of them with young children at home who could not go to school or daycare. Our staff is extraordinary and deserves to be rewarded every step of the way. We also learned what we already knew, namely that different people have different needs and that changes in reliable protocols – how we meet and make decisions, how we teach, how we recruit -- affect members of our community differently. As chair, I very much missed daily impromptu meetings in my office and serendipitous conversations in the hallway, but if there's one thing we've learned it's that everyone's needs are different and that we need to ask everyone what they need to thrive in the department.

CO: What are you most proud of from your term as chair?

AW: I might go for another adjective. I'm grateful that I could play a role in adding resources to areas of the department that are immensely successful at attracting students from many different backgrounds. We put considerable resources into the Writing Center, a unit that serves the campus as a whole, by hiring 5 teaching faculty – brilliant colleagues with expertise in areas like accessibility and assessment.

We proposed a new Center for the Teaching and Research on Writing, which, for the first time, will bring all the writing programs in the department under one metaphorical roof. We made further progress at diversifying our faculty and staff by committing to a second cluster hire in Global Black Literatures, and we somehow managed to hire four new poets in one year, several of them with a spoken word background, thereby adding further strength and visibility to our highly acclaimed programs in Creative Writing. And we won distinguished teaching awards every single year!

But enough about me, what should readers of *Annotations* know about you?

CO: I've been part of the UW-Madison English department since August 2010, when I started as an Assistant Professor of Composition and Rhetoric. I always joke that I'm a strange English professor, since I research visual rhetoric (i.e. how the things we see shape our values, actions, and attitudes) and a lot of my writing is about Latin America. The first time I was ever in a literature class, I was the professor! (there's a long story there, of course). In all seriousness, though, I love to teach writing and I will happily discuss the power and perils of language with all comers, so I actually fit in pretty well here. I've held department leadership roles since 2015, first serving as the faculty director of our intermediate writing program and, most recently, as Associate Chair. Even though I will have a lot to learn in the coming months, I am starting with a solid foundation. I'm also fortunate to have wonderful mentors in the department—including you, Anja!

AW: You're very kind. We are so lucky to have strong leaders and mentors in the department. What are you looking forward to most about being chair of the English Department?

CO: The English department is a strong and vibrant place, and our staff, faculty, and students do amazing work on campus and in the broader community. Just starting to make a list of some examples left me smiling ruefully because it's so hard to choose! Should I mention dynamic large lectures that introduce students to Beowulf or Shakespeare or legal narrative? What about the First-Year Interest Groups, sophomore seminars, and capstone opportunities that put students in close contact with faculty? And then there's the research, activism, and writing that happens in every corner of the department—from members of the First Wave Program hosting an open mic to student researchers producing honors theses, from graduate students advancing research on teaching to administrative staff addressing historic injustices on campus. I feel honored that my colleagues trust me to support and sustain all those efforts.

I also know that because the English department is such a large and varied place, we don't always know what's going on in its different corners. That's even more true in the wake of the pandemic when we've been apart and haven't had as many informal interactions. I'm looking forward to helping re-energize department community so that we're more aware of each other than ever, that we recognize and value each others' various contributions, and that we find new ways to work together on common goals.

In sum, I love being part of a department that sees current excellence as a reason to look for new opportunities to grow. One of the most important parts of my job as chair will be helping to facilitate those opportunities.

You've done such a wonderful job with that facilitation over the past three years, despite all the challenges. I know it was a huge amount of work, though.

You deserve a break! What's next for you?

AW: I will be on a research sabbatical in 22-23. I'll do a little dance when my next book – on grammar phenomena beyond the sentence -- is published in the fall, and I look forward to resuming a project on what people consider 'bad grammar' in the digital age. In the non-scholarly realm, I look forward to adding a new puppy to our family and the happy chaos that will ensue. And, of course, I look forward to reading about exciting new projects in the department under your leadership.

Stay connected with the English Department!

We love hearing from our alumni — please follow us on social media for updates on department life.

Click the icons below to visit our social media pages:



Questions? Comments?

Please contact us at
webadmin@english.wisc.edu

THE POWER OF **ALUMNI** GIVING

I consider myself to be very fortunate in receiving support through the Nancy C. Hoefs (2010–2020) and currently the Marjorie and Lorin Tiefenthaler Professorships in English. Contributions to the Department of English to support faculty research like these have a major impact beyond what I believe most people know. The faculty member who receives the award directly benefits through their research being supported. But, a possibly underappreciated aspect of this support is the security to plan future research because one knows there is financial support in place. This kind of security provides the faculty member more time (the most valuable thing) because grants to support research are less necessary.

The impact of such gifts reverberates beyond the individual faculty member who receives them. Many times, the professorship satisfies the research support needs of the faculty member which means that other sources of research support from within the department or at the college or university levels is freed up to support other projects. The faculty member may pursue research that provides opportunities for graduate (and sometimes undergraduate) students to benefit also through both experience and financial rewards (i.e., project assistants). Personally, I have been able to provide some summer funds to graduate students and allay some conference costs for these students as part of my research projects.

I am lucky to be a member of the Department of English because I get a front row seat to all of the amazing research being conducted throughout the department. All of the areas, Literary Studies, Creative Writing, Composition and Rhetoric, and English Language and Linguistics, produce ground breaking and innovative research and are supported by your donations. I see the impact of your contributions and thank you deeply for them.



Professor Eric Raimy
Marjorie and Lorin Tiefenthaler Professor of English

Our sincere thanks to the many alumni and friends who have generously supported the Department of English. Private gifts are critical to ensuring that the department maintains its stature as one of the nation's preeminent English programs. Your donations help us attract top faculty and graduate students, support promising undergraduate majors, and host a stimulating series of lectures, symposia, and other scholarly activities. Gifts of any size are most welcome and gratefully received. All our funds welcome contributions and bequests from alumni, friends, corporations, and foundations.

To give securely online, please visit
supportuw.org/giveto/english.

EXCELLENCE IN ADVISING

Advisors recognized for their impact on undergraduate English majors

Navigating a large research institution such as UW-Madison can be daunting to students under normal circumstances. Add a pandemic to the mix and it's no wonder that college students have been struggling during these challenging times. But amidst this period of upheaval, our award-winning English Department advising team, Erin Polnaszek Boyd and Caroline Hensley, stepped into their positions and immediately began supporting English majors with compassionate advising and innovative community building.

Boyd, who began her position as the undergraduate major advisor in January 2021, and Hensley, who started in her role as the career and internship advisor in July 2021, have quickly become indispensable parts of the English department. Their holistic approach to advising English majors considers not just academic coursework but the variety of other challenges that students experience on a regular basis.

"Folks think of academic advising through a curricular approach, where advisors are keeping them on track for graduation and by far that's a big component, especially during enrollment," explains Boyd. "I also just help students navigate the complexities of being a college student in the current environment — whether that's mental health challenges or concerns, difficulty navigating class environments, or out-of-class experiences that impact them."



Erin Polnaszek Boyd

Undergraduate Major Advisor



Caroline Hensley

Career and Internship Advisor

The pandemic and remote learning have exacerbated feelings of isolation amongst college students and taken a toll on the mental health of many students, an issue that has not gone unnoticed by Boyd, who has been a strong advocate for mental health support for English majors.

"The mental health piece is very prominent in my work; I've been on campus 13 or 14 years and I've seen conversations around mental health grow tremendously among college students. At the same time we're seeing that the need for UHS counselors continues to be at high demand," said Boyd. "I try to act as a bridge and prepare myself through professional development, making connections, attending workshops, having conversations with UHS folks about what resources they do have that are more readily accessible to students. I try to act as a centering point so I can make intentional and direct referrals."

In addition to concerns about mental health, Boyd and Hensley have noticed that English majors, who will soon graduate and enter a workforce that has been radically altered by the pandemic, are also anxious about post-graduation plans. As advisors, they approach this question with the same compassion and vision that they bring to all other aspects of their position.

“A lot of students come into college thinking that the major they declare will be their job title in the future but there are luckily many more pathways available to English majors,” Hensley said.

Even with the limitations placed on in-person programming during her tenure so far as career advisor, Hensley has worked tirelessly to help English majors find community on campus and to prepare students to secure meaningful positions during and after college. She has facilitated resume workshops with the Madison Undergraduate Society for English, and created industry-specific networking groups for students to connect with peers and alumni in similar fields. She also spends a great deal of time advising students in an one-on-one setting to better understand an individual student’s interests, motivations, and goals.

Similarly, Boyd has come up with creative methods of connecting English majors with one another in a time when in-person social interactions have been limited.

“One of the things I did when I first came into the position was to launch a peer mentor program. I would take any interested English senior majors who had been on campus prior to the pandemic but navigated the pandemic and were interested in reaching back and helping newly declared transfer students and first-year students, with the idea that the students would be able to support each other in a way an advisor couldn’t,” said Boyd.

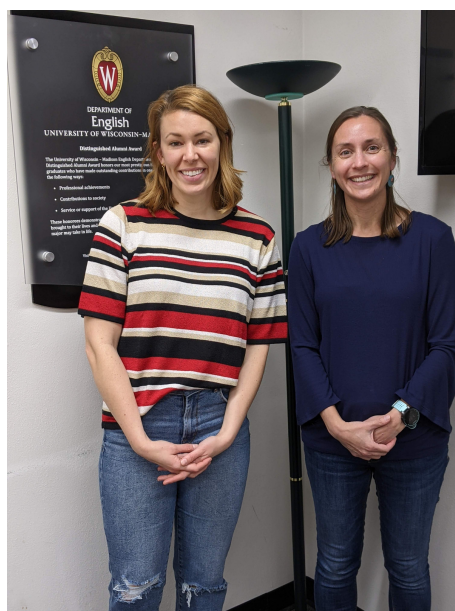


"Some students shared that [the peer mentor program] has been so helpful and that they've created a lifelong friend."

“And we’ve had really good feedback. Some students shared that this has been so helpful and that they’ve created a lifelong friend. Those are the best case scenarios but even if a student has someone beyond me that’s a reference point for them, that’s meaningful.”

The peer mentor program is just one example of the novel approaches that Boyd and Hensley have brought to their positions. Since they are both relatively new in their roles, Boyd and Hensley have taken advantage of this opportunity to innovate and to creatively serve the complex needs of English majors.

“Having fresh faces in the advising area has been really reinvigorating,” Hensley notes. “We both have some power and creative insight in how we want to reshape and promote our major and what we want to do with students.”



"The willingness to try new things, be brave and bold, not just fall into what things have always looked like, these are things I've really appreciated about Caroline," said Boyd.

This commitment and initiative in regards to serving English majors has not gone unnoticed. The outstanding work of our advising team was recently recognized by the larger UW-Madison community. Boyd is the 2022 recipient of a College of Letters and Science Early Career Advising Award and Hensley won a 2022 Graduate Student Peer Mentor Award. These well-deserved awards recognize the high degree of professionalism and thoughtfulness with which Boyd and Hensley approach their roles and their interactions with students, staff, and faculty.

"I see Erin Boyd's positive influence as it spreads across the department, improving teaching, student experience, and overall climate," notes Christa Olson, associate chair of the English department. "Erin has been proactive about enhancing equity and inclusion in the department. She goes out of her way to ensure that BIPOC students feel welcome in the English major and she works collaboratively with faculty, staff, and students to address problems when students encounter them. She is an extraordinary advocate for all English majors, highlighting their accomplishments and ensuring that the department serves them well."

To Boyd and Hensley, while the recognition is certainly appreciated, the real prize is getting to serve students and to help them achieve success on their own terms.

"I love being able to see students flourish and knowing that I got to play some small role in encouraging them to feel empowered to make decisions, to encourage them to pursue what they're interested in," Hensley said. "Even seeing things that don't outwardly look like success can also be rewarding, like a student who changes their mindset."

"In my experience, education can make such a difference in your life trajectory and so I feel just extremely motivated by witnessing students achieve that, especially knowing the struggles that they experience," said Boyd. "In study abroad I worked with students briefly, in a transformative way, but coming here to English where the relationship is longer lasting and you get to see the ultimate achievement of graduation has been very fulfilling. I've already shared with a few students that I'm a little tearful to think of them leaving. I know they're supposed to leave but it's kind of surreal. That's beyond any other reward I can think of."

Our advising team always welcomes connections from alumni! Please connect on our [LinkedIn page](#). They also would love to have more alumni participation in their career-specific networking groups. If you would like to connect with our advising team about serving English majors or any other topic, please email Erin and Caroline.

Erin: erin.polnaszek.boyd@wisc.edu
Caroline: cmhensley@wisc.edu

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Professor Joshua Calhoun and Literary Studies PhD student Elaine Cannell have been honored with a Distinguished Teaching Award and a TA award, respectively. We asked them to share some insights about teaching at UW.

Professor Joshua Calhoun

Recipient of the William H. Kiekhofer Teaching Award

What strategies do you use to engage your students and make them invested in the material that you're teaching?

I would say first, I learn and use their names. I want students to feel seen and known in my classroom, whether it's a discussion group of 15 students, or a large lecture of 250 plus students. When they feel seen and known, they understand that their contribution to whatever we're doing in the class matters. The second strategy I rely on is my infectious enthusiasm. I've come to understand that my own intellectual curiosity expresses itself in ways that engage and energize students, they know that I care about it.

A third strategy is that I invite them to see my enthusiasm and my perspective as the beginning of a conversation and not the final word in it. I invite pushback and I spend a decent amount of time in class acknowledging that their particular kinds of expertise will give them insights I can't have. So I invite them to bring their own insight and to allow that pushback to be part of the dialogue.

A fourth strategy is I run potluck-style office hours. Instead of having students wait in the hall and come in one by one, unless a student wants to talk about something privately, I invite all students who come for office hours to share the same space to come in and have a conversation. And that has allowed me to build community both in individual classrooms and sometimes across classrooms if students from different classes come to the same office hours. It's also allowed me to put an emphasis on office hours as a time for intellectual inquiry.

What do you think makes for an engaging and successful learning experience?

I think a successful learning experience requires a certain amount of discomfort. To step forward is to at least temporarily, give up balance. You give up balance as you extend one forward and that's the learning process.



So, from my perspective, I spend a decent amount of time coaching students, preparing them, and letting them know that my goal is to put them in situations where they feel lost and to be there as a guide. Not to always give them the answers. But to guide them towards answers.

To me, a successful learning experience is one in which a student willingly allows themselves to get lost. I ask students to trust me as a guide in that experience, so we can move toward the experience of feeling newly capable. The success of the learning can be both specific, maybe learning a new skill but it's also general because the student has improved their ability to learn how to learn. They learned a thing and they've learned how to learn to think in the best and most successful teaching experiences and in the process, they've become their own teacher.

What has been the most rewarding part about teaching at UW?

I love the students. That could sound cliché, but I truly mean it. The average student in my classroom wants to be there. They want to learn. They have bad days, and bad weeks, and some of them have bad semesters, but they all have an intention to learn to grow to become better. And I think they all want to change the world and that's exciting.

Another rewarding part of teaching at UW is the camaraderie of teaching — I get to discuss teaching and pedagogy with my colleagues and I love those conversations. And when I teach big lecture courses, I get to work with graduate students who are TAs in the class. We're collaborating together and I've gotten to know a number of PhD students who I might not otherwise have gotten to know and to learn and think with through the teaching process.

And I'll add one more little thing, which is a lot of semesters. I have a class that's sort of in a western section of the campus. And that means that when I go to class, I get to, like, leave Helen C. White, and then take the Lakeshore Nature Preserve path on my bike or by foot out to my class. And it's just so special that that area is a third of our campus acreage. To be able to walk or ride my bike past the lake, as my thoughts settle and I prepare for class and then again, as I come back and reflect on class, I can't think of another campus that has quite that opportunity. I had to mention that.

Elaine Cannell, recipient of a campus-wide teaching assistant award for innovation in teaching

What does innovative teaching mean to you? What sort of innovative teaching strategies have you tried to use in your own classroom?



I think innovative teaching means not only deploying creative methods in any initial course design, but also maintaining the adaptability and passion to seek more effective pedagogical practices semester after semester. I strive for this by checking in with students and asking them what they need, and then reflecting on the best ways to get those needs met.

For example, in the fall of 2020, the pandemic provided a pressing need for innovative pedagogy. I answered this call as a TA for a 4-credit Comm B literature course. I knew it would be difficult for students to feel supported and engaged in larger Zoom classes, so I innovatively developed a blended format that broke my two large sections into four smaller pods. My students formed more intimate, tight-knit communities than they could have in a larger online class: they kept their cameras on, held productive small-group breakout discussions, grappled collectively with challenging course texts and concepts, and laughed together.

What do you think makes for an engaging and successful learning experience?

Trust and laughter. I think that it is super important to develop trust in a classroom so that students do not feel like they are being judged or silenced. In my experience, some of the best ways to create trust are to a) allow students to create their own guidelines for class discussion, including determining how they will demonstrate respect and care for one another, b) be as transparent as possible with your expectations as a teacher so that the secret to success in your classroom is not a "secret" at all, and c) learn students' names and encourage them to learn each other's names and personalities through small group activities and minimally-embarrassing icebreakers.

What has been the most rewarding part about teaching at UW?

Cheesy, but: the most rewarding part is how teaching helps me rediscover my love for literature. When you have to do it for your research, the shine of reading can be dimmed quite a bit. My students teach me so much—they shed new light on texts I have encountered many times before, and remind me what it is like to be astonished by art. There is nothing more satisfying than feeling that astonishment myself all over again, especially when they share powerful insights that I have never before considered. Definitely the best part.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

The Distinguished Alumni Award honors the graduates of the UW English department who have made outstanding contributions in one or more of the following ways:

- Professional achievements
- Contributions to society
- Service or support of the University of Wisconsin



Dr. Edward S. Holmes

This year's recipient of the English Department's Distinguished Alumni Award is Dr. Edward S. Holmes. Dr. Holmes hails from the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he completed his undergraduate degrees in English and political science, a Master of Social Work degree and a PhD in educational leadership and policy analysis. Dr. Holmes is well known for founding, producing, and directing the Ebony Expression Cultural Awareness Project, a performance arts group for which he received city, county, and congressional recognition. This innovative program was dedicated to the talent development of African American youth and the education of communities across the state about the richness, significance, and contributions of Black culture to American society.

His 40-year career in the Madison community has focused on the implementation of creative community-based arts and educational programs as well as the creation of inclusive, engaging, academically successful public schools. Holmes received Wisconsin's prestigious Milken Educator of the Year award in 2003 for his work in the revitalization of Wright Middle School, Madison Metropolitan School District's first charter school. He went on to successfully lead West High School for a decade, one of the top public high schools in the state and nation. He received Wisconsin's first Martin Luther King Heritage Award for his work at Neighborhood House and the South Madison Neighborhood Centers, which served some of Madison's first multi-cultural, multi-racial low-income communities.

Dr. Holmes serves as Chief Equity and Innovation Officer at Overture Center for the Arts and a member of the shared Executive Leadership Team, a creative non-traditional leadership model that challenges the notion that an organization must have a single president and CEO to achieve success.

EARLY

CAREER

ALUMNI

AWARD

The Early Career Alumni Award recognizes alumni who have demonstrated exceptional success in their chosen field within the first ten years after obtaining their degree. This success can be demonstrated in several ways. Examples include, but are not limited to, professional achievements, contributions to society, service, or support of the University of Wisconsin. The honorees demonstrate the value that their English education has had on their lives and the rewarding paths that an English major may take initially upon graduation.

Deshawn McKinney is a writer who proudly reps his home of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. A First Wave and PEOPLE scholar, he earned a BA in Creative Writing at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2017. He is a recipient of both the Truman Scholarship, which he earned for his grassroots work in Madison, as well as the Marshall Scholarship for graduate study in the United Kingdom. Deshawn has performed for audiences around the world, from Jamaica to England. His debut chapbook, *father forgive me*, was published by Black Sunflowers Poetry Press in 2021.

Currently, Deshawn McKinney serves on the Board of Visitors for Student Affairs at UW and has recently returned to Wisconsin to serve as a Director of Development at the Wisconsin Foundation and Alumni Association.



Deshawn McKinney

Danez Smith is a Black, Queer, Poz writer & performer from St. Paul, MN. Danez is the author of *Homie* (Graywolf Press, 2020), *Don't Call Us Dead* (Graywolf Press, 2017)—winner of the Forward Prize for Best Collection, the Midwest Booksellers Choice Award, and a finalist for the National Book Award—and *[insert] boy* (YesYes Books, 2014)—winner of the Kate Tufts Discovery Award and the Lambda Literary Award for Gay Poetry. They are the recipient of fellowships from the Poetry Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, the Montalvo Arts Center, Cave Canem, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Danez's work has been featured widely including on *Buzzfeed*, *the New York Times*, *PBS NewsHour*, *Best American Poetry*, *Poetry Magazine*, and on the *Late Show with Stephen Colbert*. Danez has been featured as part of Forbes' annual 30 under 30 list and is the winner of a Pushcart Prize. They are a member of the Dark Noise Collective and is the co-host of *VS* with Franny Choi, a podcast sponsored by the Poetry Foundation and Postloudness.



Danez Smith



Kristin Prewitt

Kristin Prewitt grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a degree in English Literature. As an undergraduate, she developed a passion for the nexus between the humanities, health system transformation, and activism. She graduated from the University of South Florida with a dual M.D. and M.P.H. in Epidemiology degree. She is currently an OB/GYN resident physician at Oregon Health & Science University. Her research interests include high-risk obstetrics, substance use, abortion, and adolescent medicine. Her career has led her to serve on the board of directors for an international abortion nonprofit; work at the Florida Department of Health in Infectious Disease Epidemiology; and engage in activism through organizational partnerships and talks. She's most interested in how destigmatized patient care can be a fulcrum for personal healing and social change.

Oh the places they'll go!

Congratulations to the class of 2022

At our award ceremony this spring, along with the Distinguished Alumni and Early Career Award, some of our many exceptional graduating English majors were also recognized for their achievements. Thank you to the benefactors of the scholarships and awards we have awarded this past year! Your generosity is sincerely appreciated.

These are just some of the exceptional graduates from the class of 2022 — our graduating class is comprised of poets and journalists, of future doctors and educators, of data scientists and translators. They truly exemplify the wide range of possibilities and opportunities available to English majors and the benefits of a humanities education. We can't wait to see what they accomplish in the future! Please visit [this page](#) to learn more about all of our graduating English majors.

Congratulations to the class of 2022!

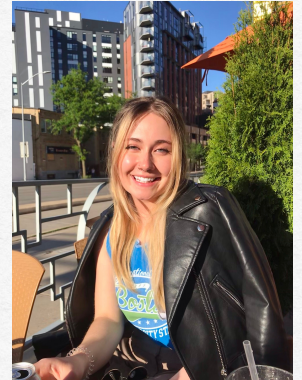
Barbara Hanna

*Recipient of the Vivian
Mowry English Scholarship*



Julia Zeimentz

*Recipient of the Mary Brabyn
Wackman Scholarship*



Samuel Wood

*Recipient of the William F. Vilas Prize
Helen Black Bennett Memorial Scholarship
Mary Brabyn Wackman Scholarship*



Miles Roth

*Recipient of the Vivian
Mowry English Scholarship*



LEADERS ACROSS CAMPUS

Our department members are recognized with campus-wide awards

Nancy Linh Karls

*Co-Director of the Writing Center and
Writing Across the Curriculum*



Photo: Althea Dotzour

Recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Leadership

The superb work of Nancy Linh Karls has improved the quality of writing of students, faculty and staff at all levels of the university. Far beyond campus, she's made a profound impact through community outreach.

Karls has been part of the core leadership team of The Writing Center and its Writing Across the Curriculum program for 17 years, serving as co-director of both since 2019. Tireless and upbeat, Karls has helped institute best practices in multilingualism and multiculturalism while greatly bolstering the acclaimed center's staffing and offerings.

Drawing special praise is her longtime leadership of two efforts within The Writing Center, the popular Dissertation Writing Camp for graduate students and the Madison Writing Assistance program. The latter provides free, weekly, one-to-one writing assistance to Madison-area residents at local libraries and neighborhood centers — truly the Wisconsin Idea in action.

Michael Bernard-Donals

*Chaim Perelman Professor of Rhetoric and
Culture and Nancy C. Hoefs Professor of English*



Recipient of the Hilldale Award

Michael Bernard-Donals is a well-recognized scholar at the intersection of Jewish studies, rhetoric, public memory and culture. He has written 10 books and dozens of essays on topics such as the public memory of the Holocaust and Jewish rhetoric that have proven influential across these disciplines.

Equally well-regarded as a teacher and mentor, Bernard-Donals earned the English department's Graduate Student Association's award for excellence in 2000. He has directed 31 dissertations in English and served on an additional 70 PhD committees. Today, he is helping launch the Center for Teaching and Research on Writing, which will further refine the university's writing programs in the coming years.

Bernard-Donals has also served the university in several leadership roles. He was chair of the English department from 2004 to 2008. As vice provost for faculty and staff for seven years, Bernard-Donals helped relaunch the Cluster Hiring Initiative and the Target of Opportunity program, both designed to recruit and retain top-notch and diverse faculty across the university.

IN MEMORIAM

Kelly Cherry

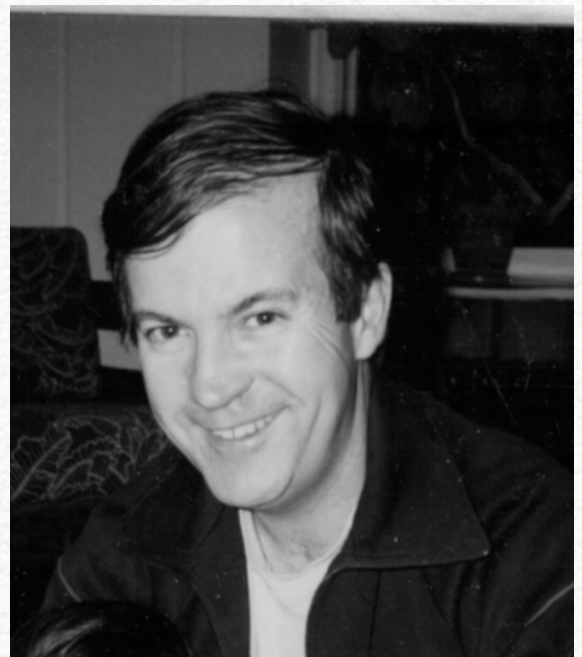


Kelly Cherry, the Eudora Welty Professor Emerita in English and Evjue-Bascom Professor Emerita in the Humanities, died on March 18, 2022. Ms. Cherry made her home in Halifax County. Ms. Cherry was a novelist, poet and essayist. She was named the state's Poet Laureate by Gov. Bob McDonnell in 2010.

She published twenty-one books of fiction (novels, short stories), poetry, and nonfiction (memoir, essay, criticism), nine chapbooks, and translations of two classical plays.

Bob Eccles

Bob Eccles, who served twelve years on the English Board of Visitors (2009-2020) and was a long-term and generous supporter of the English department, passed away in March 2022. Eccles was a prominent lawyer working on employment and labor law. He was a partner at the Washington, DC offices of O'Melveny & Myers, leading the firm's Employee Benefits practice. Eccles' mark on this department extends well beyond his service on the Board of Visitors. His father, a Shakespearean, was a professor here and his mother was an editor at the UW Press. The Eccles family established two named funds in honor of Bob's parents. Though he attended Harvard University for his undergraduate degree and for law school, Eccles retained a strong tie with Madison, UW, and the English department, maintaining enthusiastic interest in department teaching and scholarship.



IN MEMORIAM

Sandra Arfa



Former ESL director Sandra ('Sandy') Marion Arfa passed away in May 2022. Sandy was a full-time staff member of the English as a Second Program since 1980 and its director for 15 years, until her retirement in 2021.

Under Sandy's leadership the ESL program grew in size and scope to serve the entire university, providing English language instruction for undergraduate and graduate students, and training for future ESL teachers through the TESOL certificate program and the master's program in Applied English Linguistics. Her leadership and service to the University of Wisconsin-Madison were recognized with the Judith Craig Distinguished Service Award in 2013-14.