Minnesota Writing and English Conference

Engaging Students During Turbulent Times

Friday, March 28 and Saturday, March 29, 2025



University of Wisconsin, River Falls
River Falls, WI

Welcome to MnWE 2025

To register, go to Registration.

Our Theme: Engaging Students During Turbulent Times

The Minnesota Writing & English Conference's 2025 theme places our focus on students' needs, including concerns beyond the carefully crafted learning outcomes of our course outlines. As educators, we seek to understand people entering our classrooms and clicking into our course websites and provide them resonant learning opportunities, but most of us have not shared the life experiences of our younger students. And while *every* generation confronts challenges, today's college-goers have had to navigate especially rough waters. This cohort has faced climate change; pandemic isolation and learning loss; civil rights protests to police brutality here and human rights atrocities abroad; undermining of faith in democracy; intensified battles over gender identities, respect for life, and bodily autonomy; and oppressive student loan debt, just to begin the list. No wonder some students seem to have lost their zest for the essay draft due tomorrow! We do not teach/advise/tutor unless we are hopeful about the future and want our students to thrive. So *how do* we engage them and foster learning, optimism, and agency?

Our Format: Plenaries, Roundtables, and Workshops

MnWE encourages interactive sessions that provide opportunities for vibrant discussion and community building. To encourage a rich exchange of ideas, we feature two plenary sessions with multiple speakers rather than single keynotes, and our breakout sessions are roundtables and a few interactive workshops. All attendees and speakers may choose to participate in person or via Zoom, and each room will have a Zoom host who will begin the session on Zoom and monitor the chat.

- If you are part of a roundtable of 5 speakers, please plan to share your ideas for 5-7 minutes and then to engage in discussion with other speakers and audience members.
- If you are part of a roundtable with 3 or 4 speakers, please plan to share your ideas for 10 minutes each before engaging in discussion with other speakers and audience members.
- If you are offering an interactive workshop, please plan activities that include audience participation.

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MnWE.org
Minnesota Writing & English
A Consortium of Upper Midwest Colleges & Universities

MnWE 2025 Land Acknowledgement

We would like to begin the Minnesota Writing and English conference with the words of Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and member of the Kiowa tribe N. Scott Momaday: "A word has power in and of itself. It comes from nothing into sound and meaning; it gives origin to all things." Those of us in Minnesota are living and working on ancestral homelands of the Dakota and Anishinaabe people, on land that was unceded or ceded through acts of genocide, coercion, and forced removal by the United States government. Today we honor the vibrant indigenous communities who continue to contribute to literary, artistic, cultural, and educational life in Minnesota.

Below is a list of indigenous-led organizations doing important work in our communities. These resources might provide opportunities for enriching course content, community events, and learning partnerships.

Resources

- **Dream of Wild Health**
  "The mission and dream of Wild Health is to restore health and well-being in the Native community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy Indigenous foods, medicines, and lifeways."
  www.dreamofwildhealth.org
- **Indigenous Roots**
  "Indigenous Roots Cultural Center is a collective of artists and organizations dedicated to building, supporting and cultivating opportunities for Indigenous peoples and communities of color through cultural arts and activism."
  https://indigenous-roots.org/cultural-arts-center
- **Migizi**
  "MIGIZI acts as a circle of support that nurtures the development of Native American youth in order to unleash their creativity and dreams – to benefit themselves, their families and community."
  www.migizi.org
- **Minneapolis American Indian Center**
  "Our mission is lived through programs that are guided by strong Native values; this includes preserving and supporting cultural traditions through art, youth and intergenerational programs that promote healthy lifestyles."
  http://www.maicnet.org/
- ***Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS) Journal***
  Housed at the University of Minnesota, "*NAIS* is based in North America but seeks to bridge the distances across the Indigenous world. The editors of *NAIS* are committed to creating a dynamic intellectual space for the communication and dissemination of excellent scholarship related to Indigenous Studies." www.upress.umn.edu/journal-division/journals/nais
- **Native Governance Center**
  "Native-led nonprofit organization that serves Native nations in Mni Sota Makoce, North Dakota, and South Dakota. We support Native leaders as they work to rebuild their nations through our leadership development and Tribal governance support programs."
  https://nativegov.org/
- ***Yellow Medicine Review: A Journal of Indigenous Literature, Art, and Thought***
  Housed at Southwest Minnesota State University, the journal's "title *Yellow Medicine Review* is significant in that it incorporates the name of a river in Southwest Minnesota. The Dakota came together at the river to dig the yellow root of a special plant that was used for medicinal purposes, for healing. Such is the spirit of *Yellow Medicine Review*." www.yellowmedicinereview.com

Presenter Guidelines for MnWE

Thank you for presenting at MnWE 2025! Please help make our ***hybrid*** conference (simultaneously online and in person) feel like one unified gathering, not parallel real and virtual world meetings, and share your time at the microphone so that everyone has an enjoyable experience.

Information for All Presenters

Breakout Session Format

MnWE Breakouts are "roundtables." Instead of long presentations followed by hurried questions and comments at the end of the 75-minute session, we want to get more voices into the conversation sooner, including members of the audience. Each presenter will speak for 5-7 minutes (if there are only three presenters, each may speak for 10 minutes), and then at least the last half of the session will be Q&A between and among presenters and audience. In the Q&A portion, be prepared to respond to participants' and other presenters' questions and have your own questions ready to ask.

Room Host

The designated room host will manage the Zoom link, help start and end the session on time, facilitate interaction between face-to-face and online participants, and monitor each speaker's time, the Zoom chat, and raised Zoom hands. Room hosts will enable auto-transcription (closed captioning) so everyone can follow the discussion. Please speak so your voice reaches all participants and alert the host if you are having trouble hearing contributors to the conversation.

Technology

Monitors will display the Zoom session in the breakout rooms, so F2F attendees do *not* need to log in to Zoom. If you DO log in to Zoom from the breakout room, MUTE your microphone and TURN OFF your computer's volume to avoid sonic feedback.

Have files you intend to share saved on a **memory stick/USB drive** instead of assuming you will be able to plug in your laptop or access the docs from the cloud. Plugging in laptops between speakers takes time away from conversing, so it's best to upload materials to the room's computer before the session or have them ready on the flash drive.

Security

You will be emailed a registrants-only version of the program with links to Zoom sessions and also receive a password so you can access that program through our website www.mnwe.org. Please do *not* share the program or password with anyone. Only *registered* attendees may access the links. MnWE tries to keep registration costs low and break even every year, but it's harder to accomplish those goals if people sneak in or forget to register.

Information for Online Presenters

Before the Conference

Update your Zoom Profile with a current photo. Update your screen name and add your school or other affiliation. Please make your natural or virtual Zoom background *less* interesting than your words and ideas! Test your breakout session link in the online program (you must register for the conference to get those Zoom links).

On the Day of the Conference

- Minimize potential interruptions (even your adorable pets) and silence your desk notifications.
- Use headphones with a built-in mic if possible.
- Show up a few minutes early at the designated Zoom link for your breakout session and introduce yourself as a presenter to the room host, who will be your Zoom host as well.
- Avoid talking over the other presenters. Mute your mic when it is not your turn to speak.

Conference Schedule

Friday, March 28

8:30-9:05 am: MnWE Welcome
9:15-10:30 am: Concurrent Sessions A
10:45-12:00 pm: Plenary
12:00-12:45 pm: Lunch and Welcome from UW-River Falls
1:00-2:15 pm: Concurrent Sessions B
2:30-3:45 pm: Concurrent Sessions C
4:00-6:00 pm: MnWE Happy Hour/Dinner

Saturday, March 29

8:30-9:05 am: MnWE Welcome
9:15-10:30 am: Concurrent Sessions D
10:45 am-12:00 pm: Plenary
12:00-12:45 pm: Lunch
1:00-2:15 pm: Concurrent Sessions E
2:30-3:45 pm: Concurrent Sessions F
4:00-5:30 pm: MnWE Meeting and Food (all welcome)

Directions and Parking

Directions to the University of Wisconsin-River Falls

- From I-94, Take Wisconsin Highway 35 South (Exit 3 on I-94).
- Drive 9.2 miles on WI 35 South.
- Take the exit toward N Main Street.
- Exit onto N Main Street to the right.
- Stay on Main Street for 1.8 miles.
- Turn left onto Cascade Avenue.
- Drive 2 blocks to the roundabout, circle to the far left.
- Park in "Pay Lot 1."
- As you exit the roundabout, Look for the MnWE sign and turn right to enter the parking lot.
- Walk South across Cascade Ave to University Center.

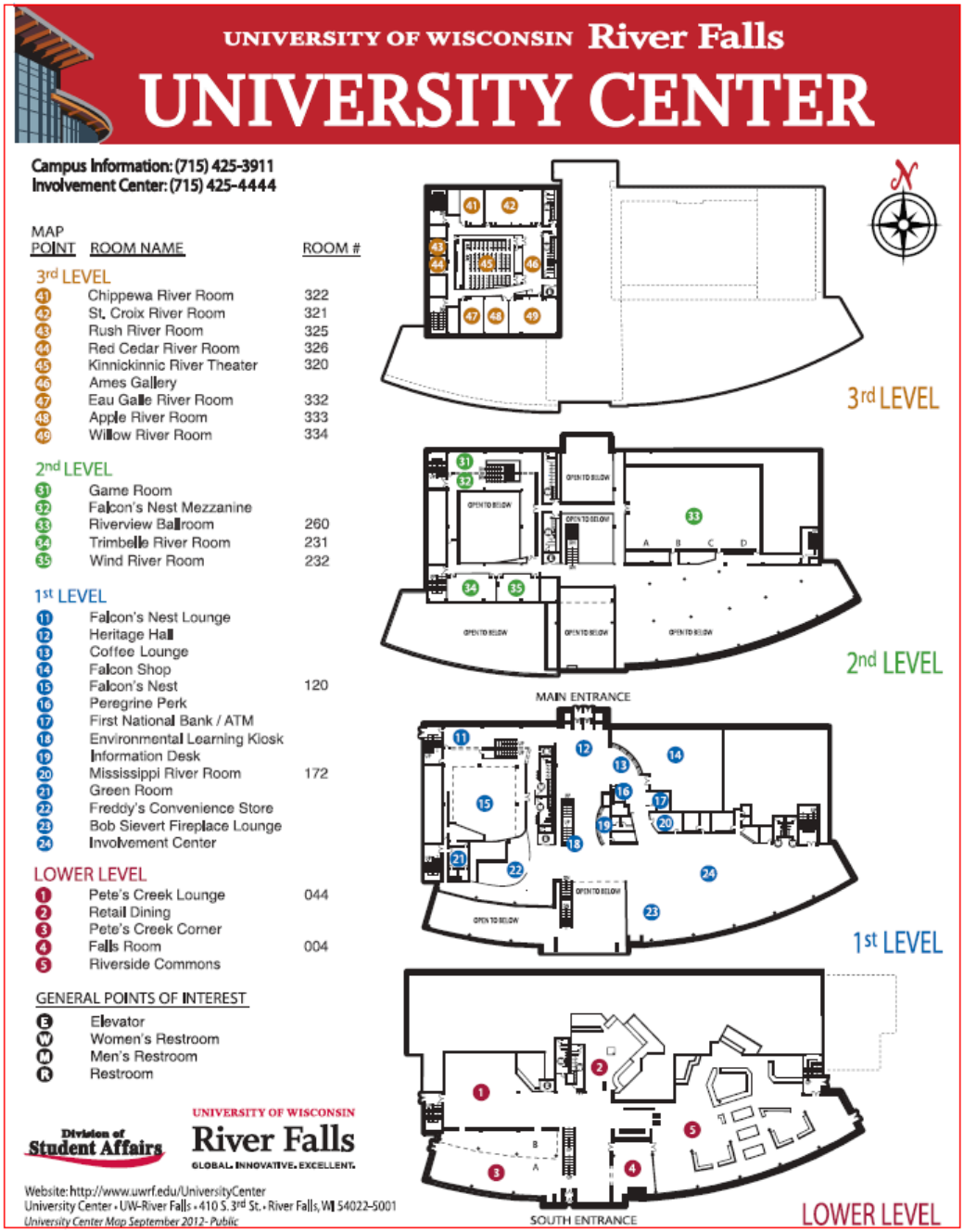
Parking: Pay Lot 1 - March 28 & 29, 2025

At the parking kiosk, use the following code:

23PVC31114

You do *not* need to pay for parking if you use this code!

University Center Rooms



SCHEDULE OF FRIDAY EVENTS

Friday, March 28

8:30-9:05 am

MnWE Welcome
Larry Sklaney, Conference Coordinator

Invitation to Submit to the MnWE Journal: David Beard

University Center Ballroom C&D —Zoom Link

9:15-10:30 am

Concurrent Sessions A
See next pages for details.

10:45-12:00 pm

Plenary: Teaching During Our Politically Tumultuous Times
Welcome from Chancellor John Chenoweth
Cyndi Kernahan, Ryuto Hashimoto, Liane Malinowski
University Center Ballroom C&D —Zoom Link

12:00-12:55 pm

Lunch
University Center Ballroom C&D

1:00-2:15 pm

Concurrent Sessions B

See next pages for details.

2:30-3:45 pm

Concurrent Sessions C

See next pages for details.

4:00-6:00 pm

MnWE Happy Hour/Dinner
Junior's Restaurant and Tap House

For questions or technology help, please call
Gordy Pueschner at 651-276-4786.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS A

Virtual = Presenting via Zoom

Friday, March 28, 9:15-10:30 am

1. **Students Speak!: Undergraduate Perspectives on AI Hype**
   Apple River Room 333—Zoom Link
   Mark Brenden (moderator), University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Zoë Gustafson, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Johan Harworth, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Erica Hoyt, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Brogan O'Leary, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Rowan Snay, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

2. **Two Reflective Grad Students and A WPA Talking Shop: Foregrounding Assessment Practices in Tutor Training**
   Chippewa River Room 322—Zoom Link
   Tim Fountaine, St. Cloud State University
   Alex Nagel, St. Cloud State University
   Brayden Holthaus, St. Cloud State University

3. **Sealing the Gaps: Perspectives on and Practices to Address Student Preparedness**
   Eau Galle River Room 332—Zoom Link
   Elizabeth Grbavcich, University of Wisconsin-Superior (Virtual)
   Heather Kahler, University of Wisconsin-Superior (Virtual)
   Suzannah Crandall, University of Wisconsin-Superior (Virtual)
   Heather McGrew, University of Wisconsin-Superior (Virtual)
   Kristin Riesgraf, University of Wisconsin-Superior (Virtual)
   Kevin McGrew, College of St. Scholastica (Virtual)

4. **Literature, Banned Books, and Social Justice**
   Trimbelle River Room 231—Zoom Link
   Jane Carducci, Winona State University
   Lianna Farber, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Jill Hebert Carlson, Marian University

Plenary: Teaching During Our Politically Tumultuous Times

Friday, March 28, 10:45 am - 12:00 pm

University Center Ballroom C&D —Zoom Link

The tumult across the political landscape continues to place institutions of higher education in an uncertain position. Backlash to equity and justice-oriented pedagogical and research projects have complicated the work of students and teachers seeking to negotiate the meanings of doing education in this climate. The panelists will share research and testimonials about what they see as the implications of this tumult in pedagogies across disciplines, including Writing Studies, Sociology, and Psychology. Specifically, panelists will investigate this pedagogical moment as it relates to teaching about race and racism, historical and contemporary social movements and student activism, and teaching writing in environments openly hostile to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Audience members will be invited to reflect on and share their own experiences teaching and learning in today's tumultuous political climate.







Cyndi Kernahan	Ryuto Hashimoto	Liane Malinowski

Cyndi Kernahan is Professor of Psychological Sciences and Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. A social psychologist, Cyndi's expertise is in the psychology of prejudice and racism. Her scholarly work is focused on teaching and learning about racism and prejudice and how racial bias and prejudice influence student learning and student success. Her book *Teaching about Race and Racism in the College Classroom: Notes from a White Professor* was published in 2019 as part of the Teaching and Learning in Higher Education series of West Virginia University Press.

Ryuto Hashimoto is a graduate student at Minnesota State University, Mankato with Expertise on Education and Social Movements, a researcher, educator, and community organizer. While pursuing his master's degree in Sociology: College Teaching, he works with local stakeholders to advance the community engagement and action network in Mankato and beyond. His research interests include sociology and education, higher education policy, curriculum design and evaluation, intercultural competence, and social movement.

Liane Malinowski is Assistant Professor in Writing Studies at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, where her research and teaching focus on rhetorical history, feminist rhetorics, and public writing. In her research, Liane uses archival and historical methods to investigate rhetoric about social justice, place-making, and protest. She recently completed a book manuscript titled *City Housekeeping: Women's Labor Rhetorics and Spaces for Solidarity, 1896-1911*, which will be published by Parlor Press in May 2025. Prior to moving to Minnesota in 2024, Liane was an assistant professor at the University of North Texas. Currently, she is working on essays that reflect on teaching writing and rhetoric in environments hostile to equity and inclusion.

LUNCH

UW-River Falls Welcome from Chancellor John Chenoweth

Friday, March 28, 12:00-12:55 pm

University Center Ballroom C&D

CONCURRENT SESSIONS B

Friday, March 28, 1:00-2:15 pm

1. **Care-Based and Inclusive Pedagogy**
   Apple River Room 333—Zoom Link
   Dr. Whitnee Coy, Oglala Lakota College (Virtual)
   Kiera Ball, Northern State University (Virtual)
   Daniel Ruefman, University of Wisconsin-Stout

2. **Perspectives on AI in the Classroom**
   Chippewa River Room 322—Zoom Link
   Greg Brister, Valley City State University
   John D. Schwetman, University of Minnesota-Duluth
   Stephen Markve, Independent Scholar (Virtual)

3. **Beyond the Crisis of Hope in Literacy Education**
   Eau Galle River Room 332—Zoom Link
   Patrick Bruch, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Emmanuella Afimaa, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Maddi Melchert, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Thomas Reynolds, University of Minnesota Twin Cities



CONCURRENT SESSIONS C

Friday, March 28, 2:30-3:45 pm

1. **Student Perspectives on the Value of English Studies in Troubling Times**
   Apple River Room 333—Zoom Link
   Erik Kline (moderator), University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Kassie Andreas, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Erica Hoyt, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Gianna Mundt, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Kayley Reimers, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Ella Soucy-Gosso, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

2. **Turbulence Overseas: Effective Strategies for Dealing with Study Abroad Emergencies**
   Chippewa River Room 322—Zoom Link
   Brian Lewis, Century College
   Yanmei Jiang, Century College
   Larry Sklaney, Century College
   Ryuto Hashimoto, Minnesota State University-Mankato
   Crystalyn Morton, Century College

3. **Is That a Supernatural T-Shirt Under Your Sweater?: How Acknowledging and Cultivating Fan Identities (in Students and Ourselves) Can Contribute to Cultivating Writers**
   Eau Galle River Room 332—Zoom Link
   David Beard, University of Minnesota-Duluth
   Joe Erickson, Anoka Ramsey Community College
   L. Horton, University of Minnesota-Duluth
   Kate Rolfe, Lake Superior College

MNWE HAPPY HOUR/DINNER

Friday, March 28, 4:00-6:00 pm, Junior's Restaurant and Tap House
414 S Main St; River Falls, WI 54022

SCHEDULE OF SATURDAY EVENTS

Saturday, March 29

8:30-9:05 am

MnWE Welcome

Larry Sklaney, Conference Coordinator

Invitation to Submit to the *MnWE Journal*: David Beard

Student Spotlight: Jonathan Reeves

University Center Ballroom C&D —Zoom Link

9:15-10:30 am

Concurrent Sessions D

See next pages for details.

10:45 am-12:00 pm

Plenary: Navigation Aids for Turbulent Waters

Michele Jersak, Yanmei Jiang, Richard Jewell, Mark Kjellman

University Center Ballroom C&D —Zoom Link

12:00-12:55 pm

Lunch

University Center Ballroom C&D

1:00-2:15 pm

Concurrent Sessions E

See next pages for details.

2:30-3:45 pm

Concurrent Sessions F

See next pages for details.

4:00-5:30 pm

MnWE Meeting and Food (all welcome)

For questions or technology help, please call Gordy Pueschner at 651-276-4786.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS D

Virtual = Presenting via Zoom

Saturday, March 29, 9:15-10:30 am

1. **Building Community and Mental Health**
   Apple River Room 333—Zoom Link
   Naomi Clark, Loras College
   Sara Waddle and Zach Carlsen, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
   Larry Sklaney and JoMarie Marks, Century College

2. **Fostering Our Students' Learning Through Our Own Critical Reflection**
   Chippewa River Room 322—Zoom Link
   James Heiman, St. Cloud State University
   Matt Barton, St. Cloud State University
   Derek Thury, St. Cloud State University
   Kaden Hearne, St. Cloud State University
   Brayden Holthaus, St. Cloud State University

3. **So, Who Benefits? Critical Media Literacy for Everyday Artifacts**
   Eau Galle River Room 332—Zoom Link
   Jessica Borsi, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Alison Obright, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Taryn Seidler, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   AJ Siegel, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

4. **Writing Communities, Writing Audiences**
   St. Croix River Room 321—Zoom Link
   Adrienne Lamberti, University of Northern Iowa (Virtual)
   Marcy Bock-Eastley, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Mikayla Davis, Independent Scholar (Virtual)

5. **Multilingual Pedagogy and Scholarship**
   Trimbelle River Room 231—Zoom Link
   Melissa Giefer, Viterbo University
   Akerke Beksemer, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Aruzhan Arginbekova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Asmita Ghimire, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Michelle Cochran, Rochester Community and Technical College

6. **Navigating Learning, Tutoring, and Schooling in Turbulent Times: Student Perspectives from Century College**
   Willow River Room 334—Zoom Link
   Bianca De Alvernaz Fonseca, Century College
   Sawyer Brumm, Century College
   Mikina Aiko, Century College
   Evan Cable, Century College
   Madeline Spiess, Century College

Plenary: Navigation Aids for Turbulent Waters

Saturday, March 29, 10:45 am - 12:00pm

University Center Ballroom C&D —Zoom Link

During the pandemic, faculty at Century College expressed concerns for rising challenges that online students face regarding stress and other life issues impacting student completion and success. Interventions can be helpful, but most are implemented through in-person options. Jersak and Jiang will discuss "Cultivating the Learner During Turbulent Times." They will describe how they used Quality Matters principles to integrate holistic learner development and wellness touchpoints within the course design, guiding students through actions and reflections to develop their subjective experience of learning. Jewell will address "Calming Students: What Can Calm Students Immediately?" and lead a breathing activity for use with students. Scientific studies on deep breathing show it lowers blood pressure, decreases heart rate, and has a calming effect. Researchers found that 8 seconds was "the average human attention span in 2013," changed from 12 seconds in 2000. In the intervening years, digital phone addiction happened. Asking students to breathe deeply for a minute or two can improve their focus, help break the casual chaos of poor attention, provide energy, and prepare students to listen and work. From an academic support viewpoint, Kjellman will discuss "Narrative and Capability in Learning Centers." This presentation calls for renewed attention to narrative as an important aspect of learning integration and student academic support. Drawing from semi-structured interviews with students, he will discuss patterns of student disengagement and ways that attention to narrative might lead students to greater depth of understanding and commitment to learning.






Michele Jersak	Yanmei Jiang	Richard Jewell	Mark Kjellman

Michele Jersak is a counselor at Century College and has worked in the Minnesota State Colleges and University system for about 25 years. In addition to meeting with students one-on-one and in groups, she has taught classes in career development, leadership development and first year experience. She serves as department chair, secretary in local faculty leadership, and has been involved in campus initiatives for supporting students holistically. Michele earned her B.A. in psychology and her M.A. in Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. More recently, she earned an M.S. in Maharishi AyurVeda and Integrative Medicine through Maharishi International University where she is now a PhD student in Physiology and Health. Her professional interests include using innovative approaches to help students cultivate their ideal personal, educational, and professional lives. She is also a trained Poverty Coach through Communications Across Barriers, Certified Consciousness Advisor, Certified Yoga Instructor, and Certified Transcendental Meditation teacher.

Yanmei Jiang was raised in a small village near Mount Tai in Shandong Province (China) during the Cultural Revolution by her grandmother, a woman with a pair of bound feet and without a name of her own. Yanmei learned how to hold a pencil at seven, say her ABCs at twelve, and communicate in English at eighteen. Urged by Grandma to "learn all the words in the world and come back to teach people like me," Yanmei set her mind on becoming a teacher. She earned a master's degree in linguistics from Shanghai International Studies University. Driven by the desire to study in an environment where her interpretation of literary texts would not be restrained by ideological biases, she came to the U.S. for graduate studies in literature, rhetoric and composition, and gender studies (at Winona State University and University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee) while working as a graduate instructor in freshman writing programs. Now a faculty member in English and Gender Studies at Century College, Yanmei considers it a privilege to learn with and from students from diverse backgrounds, with wide-ranging academic skills, and on various career paths. While teaching during the pandemic awakened Yanmei to the glaring inequities in education, she also witnessed her students' incredible strengths—their resilience, perseverance, and stoic optimism. This realization engendered her determination to advocate for community college students' equitable access to success, especially in Developmental Education.

Richard Jewell taught composition, literature, humanities, and religion at St. Cloud State University and elsewhere as an adjunct, worked as a full-time composition specialist at the University of Minnesota, and, before retirement, spent eighteen years tenured in English and Humanities at Inver Hills Community College. He earned three master's degrees from St. Cloud State University and San Francisco Theological Seminary; published about a hundred articles, stories, scholarly essays, and poems; and gave several dozen presentations at MLA, CCCC, and regional and state conferences. He is co-founder and General Coordinator of MnWE and is at www.richardjewell.org.

Mark Kjellman is the Director of the Academic Skills Center at UW-Eau Claire. In addition to teaching academic success courses, he oversees the university's supplemental instruction, peer tutoring, and academic coaching programs. His current research focuses on scaffolding typologies in tutoring sessions and thirdspace models of academic support. He was previously Director of Academic Support at Saint Paul College. Before transitioning to a career in academic support, he taught first-year and advanced writing courses at Northeastern University.

LUNCH

Saturday, March 29, 12:00-12:55 pm

University Center Ballroom C&D

CONCURRENT SESSIONS E

Saturday, March 29, 1:00-2:15 pm



1. **Elevating Student Voices**
   Apple River Room 333—Zoom Link
   Beth Mehus, Valley City State University (Virtual)
   Joel Olson, Bethel University
   Fern Schiffer, St. Catherine University

2. **AI and Student Engagement**
   Chippewa River Room 322—Zoom Link
   Jency Wilson, Ottawa University
   Robert Bruss, Concordia University-Wisconsin (Virtual)
   Darrel Farmer, Chippewa Valley Technical College (Virtual)

3. **Transforming Literature and Creative Writing**
   Eau Galle River Room 332—Zoom Link
   Erik Kline, University of Wisconsin-River Falls
   Kaylin Kalk, Viterbo University
   RubyAnn Steigelmeier, Independent Scholar

4. **Fun Scary: Community Engagement Remix**
   St. Croix River Room 321—Zoom Link
   Kris Cory, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Danielle Hinrichs, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Elise Toedt, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Allison Vincent, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

5. **Rebuilding Community: Student Leadership and Collaboration in the Post-Pandemic Era**
   Willow River Room 334—Zoom Link
   Helen Castillo-Delgado, Century College
   Blessing Manka Ndam, Century College
   Frank Woode, Century College

CONCURRENT SESSIONS F

Saturday, March 29, 2:30-3:45 pm

1. **Information Literacy, Misinformation, and Ways of Knowing**
   Apple River Room 333—Zoom Link
   Noah Zanella, Carthage College (Virtual)
   Liberty Kohn, Winona State University
   Dr. Whitnee Coy, Oglala Lakota College (Virtual)



2. **Rhetorical Pedagogy and Social Change**
   Chippewa River Room 322—Zoom Link
   Shaya Kraut, Iowa State University
   Isabella Gross, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
   Emily Wicktor, Valley City State University
   Niki Ciulla, Winona State University

3. **Lost in Translation: Multilingual Experiences in Academia**
   Eau Galle River Room 332—Zoom Link
   Ryuto Hashimoto, Minnesota State-Mankato University
   Maria Given, Metropolitan State University
   Aigerim Sipenova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Torgyn Bakenova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Ainur Bilmakhanbetova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

4. **Living Through Turbulent Times: Student Perspectives**
   St. Croix River Room 321—Zoom Link
   Yalania M. Lucas, Century College
   Peng Liu, University of Minnesota Twin Cities
   Jonathan Reeves, St. Olaf College
   Sophie Liu-Othmer, U.S. Bank

5. **Beyond the Surface Narrative: Tangible Steps to Writing Centers as Safe Spaces**
   Willow River Room 334—Zoom Link
   Aubrie Warner, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
   Lee Rutzinski, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire
   Bree Muske, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

MNWE MEETING AND FOOD

Saturday, March 29, 4:00-5:30 pm

West Winds Supper Club
709 N Main St
River Falls, WI 54022

Everyone is welcome!

Please go to https://z.umn.edu/MNWEJournal to view and download issues of the MnWE Journal! The editors now are soliciting submissions from this year's and last year's MnWE presenters and anyone else who would like to contribute. See below for more details about submitting.

For the Members of MnWE

We seek to publish and promote presentations at the MnWE Conference.

For the Community of Educators

We seek to catalyze conversations about locally produced resources usable in the university, college, and K-12 classroom that will both (a) center BIPOC voices in the class and (b) encourage us to hear BIPOC voices among our students.

The Team

The editorial team consists of academics and publishers from across Minnesota and is led by David Beard (of University of Minnesota Duluth) and Carla-Elaine Johnson (of Saint Paul College).

Submissions Welcome

- Papers summarizing and developing presentations from the 2024 or 2025 MnWE Conference. At authors' requests, these may be anonymously peer-reviewed.
- Papers or brief articles submitted as part of conversations about locally produced resources that center BIPOC voices.
- Reviews of locally produced materials and resources as part of these conversations. These will be reviewed by the editorial team.
- Essays by and interviews with local producers of materials that foreground BIPOC voices as part of these conversations. These will be reviewed by the editorial team.
- Where possible, work, interviews, and other contributions by students as part of these conversations. These will be reviewed by the editorial team.

The Timeline

Submissions due by June 1, 2025
Sent to volunteer reviewers by June 15, 2025
Received from reviewers by August 1, 2025
Published online by November 2025

Questions and Submissions

Please email mnwejournal@gmail.com

Minnesota Writing and English Conference 2026!

Agency, Authenticity, and Digital Literacies

Winona State University

April 10-11, 2026



2025 Conference Evaluation Link

MnWE is "Minnesota Writing and English," a consortium of Upper Midwest college and university writing and English faculty and staff centered in Minnesota. Our annual two-day conference each spring attracts up to 200 attendees, and we send the bi-monthly "MnWE News" by email to over 2500 members in both Minnesota and around the world.

Find out more at www.mnweconference.com.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

SESSION	DESCRIPTION
A1 **Students Speak!: Undergraduate Perspectives on AI Hype** Mark Brenden (moderator), University of Wisconsin-River Falls Zoë Gustafson, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Johan Harworth, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Erica Hoyt, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Brogan O'Leary, University of Wisconsin-River Falls Rowan Snay, University of Wisconsin-River Falls	Writing Studies today must contend with the tumult created by what Lauren Goodlad has called "AI Hype." This term describes the many disorienting rhetorical projects surrounding AI, which "fuse boosterism and doomerism" to create "a media ecosystem in which real-world harms to people and the planet must vie for attention with clickbait-friendly speculations about the supposedly existential risks of nonexistent technologies" (pg. 5). Given the capacity of GenAI chatbots to produce written texts, much AI Hype has focused on the implications for students' work in writing classes. Often we've found that students are spoken for before they are listened to when it comes to technology use. Accordingly, our roundtable of undergraduate students at UW-River Falls will contribute their perspectives to the ongoing debates concerning GenAI and Writing. Their professor will briefly introduce and moderate the roundtable before panelists share their experiences as undergraduate scholars in the age of AI Hype. Specifically, panelists will explore the problem and reflect on their experiences as they relate to the following: 1) their work in the writing center, 2) the construction of new literacy crises, 3) the concepts of work and play, 4) possible benefits of GenAI, and 5) environmental implications of even casual use. Audience members will be invited into a conversation about the many facets of AI Hype and about how to more fully involve students in the process of critically engaging emergent technologies through writing. Works Cited Goodlad, Lauren M. E. "Editor's Introduction: Humanities

A2

Two Reflective Grad Students and A WPA Talking Shop: Foregrounding Assessment Practices in Tutor Training

Tim Fountaine, St. Cloud State University

Alex Nagel, St. Cloud State University

Brayden Holthaus, St. Cloud State University

Many of the most respected, principled voices in our ranks have cautioned us not to edit student texts, and they have told us to always protect writers as the owners and primary agents of the drafts they bring. To some extent then tutor training entails fostering a kind of push-and-pull mindfulness. New tutors must acquire methods to collaborate with students to help improve the structure and readability of their written work while also restraining the human impulses our tutors may feel to edit that student's words. The proposed roundtable aims to linger on this aspect of professional development and personal self-control by engaging audience members in the conversation. We will locate a discussion of tutor training within this pedagogical tension—what we think of as movements between copyediting and developmental editing behaviors—by focusing on writing assessment activities that our center has been incorporating into staff professional development procedures.

The roundtable presenters (i.e., a writing center director and two graduate student tutors) will share concrete examples of various assessment instruments and describe how they are being used productively in both tutor training coursework and on the job: to shape tutoring practice, facilitate knowledge transfer, build community, and cultivate reflective teaching processes among staff.

A3

Sealing the Gaps: Perspectives on and Practices to Address Student Preparedness

Elizabeth Grbavcich, University of Wisconsin-Superior

Heather Kahler, University of Wisconsin-Superior

Suzannah Crandall, University of Wisconsin-Superior

Heather McGrew, University of Wisconsin-Superior

Kristin Riesgraf, University of Wisconsin-Superior

Kevin McGrew, College of St. Scholastica

This panel will discuss three primary gaps that have been increasingly noticeable: (1) gaps in college readiness skills; (2) gaps in reading literacy skills; (3) gaps in information literacy skills. Those on the panel—four instructors, a library director, and an Educational Success Center Academic Program Manager—have noted these pedagogical and behavioral challenges particularly with incoming first-year learners. Many of the shared challenges are not discipline-specific: this student population requires assistance in developing foundational behaviors and skills that are relevant to student success in all disciplines. This panel will share examples of current challenges with the three gaps mentioned above; then they will lead a discussion that will include countermeasures they have implemented in their on-campus and online courses as well as in other contexts, and they will prompt attendees to share their experiences and to ask questions.

A4

Literature, Banned Books, and Social Justice

Jane Carducci, Winona State University

Lianna Farber, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Jill Hebert Carlson, Marian University

Carducci: Engaging Students During Turbulent Times. I am offering two assignments (one or both): the structured debate and the book defense. Both of these assignments offer freshfolk composition students the opportunity to engage during these chaotic times. For the first, students interact with each other while being guided with the rule of a formal debate. The second: students select a banned book from the ALA list and engage in the current topic of book banning. They offer cultural background information, a history, and relevant information about the author and then formally defend the book.

Farber: Banned Books in Turbulent Times. Last year, Tim Walz proudly stated to the nation that Minnesota had "banned banned books." What does it mean to "ban" a book or "ban" book bans themselves? And what does it mean, when the issue is hyper-politicized, to teach books that have been banned? This presentation begins with basic (and often conflicting) definitions of what constitutes a ban or banned book, and then asks what it means to teach these books. To what extent does or should it involve teaching the contemporary issues that led to the controversy? To what extent does or should it involve teaching the more traditionally literary (form, style, syntax, etc)? In what ways can or should we balance these claims? What do we want students to learn from reading banned books? The presentation discusses a few possible answers to these questions, but also aims to show the ways in which these are questions at the heart of teaching literature itself today, and then to open the discussion to the ways in which we all must wrestle with these issues.

Hebert Carlson: Literature Fostering Empathy and Resilience in Students. Resilience and empathy come from support, connection and inspiration, so teaching stories with positive examples of those is crucial to fostering those virtues in my students…but teaching what not to emulate matters too. I teach stories about good leaders who stand up for what's right and protect their people, like Beowulf; and about corrupt leaders who only value power, like Macbeth. I teach Frankenstein to help students see that they should still be loved even if they are made to feel "different". I teach Joseph Campbell's Hero Cycle to show we all go through journeys that include dark times, from which we learn and grow. I teach "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas" and "The Lottery" to show how our society's traditions become traps, and find ways to escape them. I teach "A Modest Proposal" to show them the value of speaking up and advocating for others. I teach "The Use of Force" to help future nurses understand their patients, and more importantly, themselves. I teach them to see the meaning in these texts and then show them how that ability to interpret helps them understand something like the 2025 Super Bowl halftime show.

B1

Care-Based and Inclusive Pedagogy

Whitnee Coy, Independent Scholar

Kiera Ball, Northern State University

Daniel Ruefman, University of Wisconsin-Stout

Coy: How can culturally sustaining pedagogy help students connect their personal histories to academic learning? This presentation explores the transformative potential of culturally sustaining pedagogy in bridging students' personal histories with academic learning, particularly within Indigenous and rural communities. By centering students' lived experiences, cultural identities, and community narratives, educators can create meaningful connections between traditional curriculum and the diverse backgrounds students bring to the classroom.Key questions guiding this presentation include: How can educators design assignments that honor and integrate students' cultural knowledge? What role does storytelling, both written and oral, play in fostering a sense of belonging and academic engagement? How might culturally sustaining pedagogy help students reclaim and celebrate their identities in academic spaces? This session invites educators to reimagine academic learning as a space where personal histories and cultural knowledge thrive

Ball:This presentation will explore issues of engagement in the Composition classroom. How can we convince students that writing is important? How can we help Composition students believe that (their) words can make a difference? In my Composition classrooms, I use a three-step approach to help students engage with the writing process and take ownership of their own education. First, I have students think about, write about, and share about their values. According to Geoffrey L. Cohen, author of Belonging, "values-affirmation activities…protect students' relationships with one another, a root source of belonging, and thus [keeps] them engaged" (234-35). Secondly, I provide students with prompts that require them to interact with events and concepts from their own lives or their own scope of the world. We discuss the importance of audience, and students decide to whom to write and how best to address that particular audience. Thirdly, I ask students to reflect on their writing and writing process. It is too easy to engage in writing tasks as a part of schooling without thinking about the larger impact writing has on the world and on ourselves. Writing forces us to commit to something as we shape the next sentence or paragraph, and the process of writing—moving from draft to revision and rewriting—challenges us to think about the nature of belief.

Ruefman: Neuroscience of Storytelling: How Creative Writing Reshapes Our Minds. This presentation explores the impact of creative writing on neuroplasticity. Drawing insights from the fields of psycholinguistics and cognitive and behavioral therapy, this presentation explores how creative writing reshapes our neural networks, highlighting the intricate relationship between words, meaning making, and the complex structures of the human brain. By exploring how clinicians have employed expressive writing (e.g. poetry, short stories, personal journals, essays, etc.) to promote healing in the wake of traumatic experiences, this session will demonstrate how creative writing fosters the formation of new neural pathways and enhances existing ones to improve cognitive flexibility and problem-solving skills. After establishing a foundational understanding, this presentation will provide practical lessons to help instructors design and implement creative writing assignments that promote divergent thinking, regulate emotions, and foster personal growth among students.

B2

Perspectives on AI in the Classroom

Greg Brister, Valley City State University

John D. Schwetman, University of Minnesota-Duluth

Stephen Markve, Independent Scholar

Brister: (Re)-Inventing The University: David Bartholomae, Academic Audience, and A.I. At the last MnWE conference, I presented a paper that worked to situate the problems Large Language Models or A.I. writing poses within the wider context of composition theory (specifically "process" and "post-process" writing pedagogy). As one who teaches a course in Composition Studies for graduate students and Composition courses for undergraduates, I am interested, not only in the way LLMs have already influenced the way we teach writing, but also how we must interrogate previously accepted "commonplaces" of writing pedagogy. In particular, I have returned to "canonical" arguments, like David Bartholomae's in "Inventing the University," which argues that basic writers must learn, not only how to write grammatically "correct" prose, but to "learn to speak our language" by acknowledging the codes and conventions of academic discourse. After leading with a quote from Foucault that "every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and powers it carries with it," Bartholomae offers student-written essay examples that reveal syntactical problems in writing are inseparable from the writer's ability to assume an "authoritative" academic voice. After the emergence of LLMs and the ongoing debate of whether ChatGPT (for example) should be embraced as a tool for writing or discouraged as a plagiarism generator, I have come to see that its primary appeal to basic writers in particular may have less to do with masking grammatical or syntactical errors than how it seems to offer a way for students to mimic what they believe to be the "proper" or "privileged" codes of academic discourse. I question how Bartholomae's own suggestions (and examples) for teaching students how to "invent the university" by considering writing "commonplaces" and learning to mimic models of academic discourse may be reassessed or reconsidered in light of A.I.'s ability to "mimic" or "re-invent" the "culturally or institutionally authorized" language of the university.

Schwetman: Low-Tech Strategies to Counter High-Tech Teaching Challenges. In the past two years, I have come to regard the emergence of generative AI as a direct challenge to my primary task in the classroom, which is to empower my students to become more effective writers. Every exercise depends on direct student engagement to achieve this goal, but generative AI tempts students to evade the hard, sometimes slow, work that is such a crucial component of writing development. In this presentation, I provide an overview of my newly low-tech, post-Covid literature and writing classrooms. I discuss my calculated retreat to older modes of written work and in-class collaboration. In addition, I consider how high-tech classroom-management tools complement these efforts by enhancing feedback to students working in small groups. With a combination of pen-on-paper exercises in class and then the conversion of these exercises into scanned-in, online artefacts, I can provide students with feedback without the specter of generative AI hanging over me. The shift to low-tech assignments enables us to capitalize on the enormous privilege that students and instructors share in being able to spend time together in the same physical space. And, these low-tech skills transfer readily and easily back into high-tech contexts once students attain mastery.

	Markve: Students (and instructors) sharing AI queries as content/strategy building in research -and- segue to engaging others. Individual presentation; based on a Spring 2025 Composition course which requires AI-based research & complemented by human (!) interviews.I'm exercising/exorcising AI to see if/how it can help position students to reckon themselves as worthy mediators of ideas; profiling the development and resonance of their AI prompts to help them recognize their role in content search and (a research paper's) structural framing and in interviewing. Having spent six weeks pushing AI's buttons relentlessly, angling toward it giving as much relevant content and rhetorical strategy as possible, the class switches 'search engines'. Here, each student is paired with a local longtime octogenarian, and the process begins again. Yet now, the content-agenda is foot-off-the-pedal, driving itself and process is afoot: though 'local history' is the objective in name, civic - nay- human engagement is the unspoken motive. While we have yet to begin those engagements, just now winding up the AI portion, the human interface is within sight, and with insight, we shall proceed - ideally offering ideas on this you-worthy ideal of engaging mediation. The AI-query development is meant to get students into the art of inquiry - and I'm hoping to share its affordances in light of the students' 'human interfaces' with those four times their age; and twice as many as many of ours.

B3 **Beyond the Crisis of Hope in Literacy Education** Patrick Bruch, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Emmanuella Afimaa, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Maddi Melchert, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Thomas Reynolds, University of Minnesota Twin Cities	Our roundtable will concentrate on how contemporary circumstances are reshaping the work of higher education with a particular focus on the crisis of hope facing students in today's writing classrooms. We will first clarify the importance of direct engagement with challenges student writers face today trying to combine critical insight with optimism and a sense of meaningful agency. Next, we will discuss strategies we each have experimented with for helping students develop their writing for creating personally meaningful alternatives to this challenge of neoliberal despair. Speaker One will introduce the historical concept of "critical hope" and explore how its meanings might be shifted and developed to address today's conditions. Speaker Two will pose "rheto-tropism" as a way college writing instructors can help students reflect on, and grasp agency amidst, hyper-individualizing rhetoric. Speaker Three will discuss how AI polices in writing classrooms can be a site to foster critical and ethical AI literacy in students. The presentation will highlight the extent to which specific policy approaches support or inhibit Critical AI literacy in students. Speaker Four will share insights and pedagogical strategies encouraging recognition of and participation in discourses of wide human/nonhuman entanglement.

B4

Is That a Supernatural T-Shirt Under Your Sweater?: How Acknowledging and Cultivating Fan Identities (in Students and Ourselves) Can Contribute to Cultivating Writers

David Beard, University of Minnesota-Duluth

Joe Erickson, Anoka Ramsey Community College

L. Horton, University of Minnesota-Duluth

Kate Rolfe, Lake Superior College

In an age of AI, students are more attracted than ever to shortcuts in the writing process. Their investment diminishes as their opportunities to use AI and other technologies increases. This session seeks to reinvest the writing process with passion, increasing engagement with and from students.

By acknowledging our identities not just as teachers and librarians (to them, graders and institutional barriers to the degrees they seek), but as fans, as people with their own fires for writing, reading, and media, we seek to stoke the fires within our students.

Additionally, in a time when administrations value retention as a marker of success, acknowledging our fan identities, our hyperfixations and our special interests, we are humanized to our students. Our connections to them are stronger, and their connections to the institution become stronger -- the classroom becomes a "community of inquiry" bound even more tightly together, in the common project of reading and writing. (Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment The Internet and Higher Education, 2(2-3), 87-105.)

Students, every day, are faced with the dire and dark (in politics, in climate, and more). The classroom gives them the tools to engage in political and social change, but it can, itself, be a site for joy, as well. We will share our stories of joy in the classroom and invite the audience to reflect on their own.

C1

Student Perspectives on the Value of English Studies in Troubling Times

Erik Kline (moderator), University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Kassie Andreas, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Erica Hoyt, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Gianna Mundt, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Kayley Reimers, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Ella Soucy-Gosso, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Rose Horowitch's article "The Elite College Students Who Can't Read Books" went viral in online academic discourse when it was published in the October 2024 issue of The Atlantic Monthly. For obvious reasons, the piece particularly resonated with English instructors; it then led to a series of articles and op-eds considering not only the reading habits of undergraduates, but the value of literary study altogether. Of course, questioning the value of literary study goes back at least to Plato, who famously banished poets from his republic, but contemporary trends in education, technology, and industry have continued to put pressure on the benefits—material and otherwise—of studying writing and literature. While these conversations appear in places like The Atlantic, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and other such periodicals, the students discussed in these conversations have regularly been filtered, sidelined, or outright excluded. This roundtable will feature student perspectives on the value of English education in a changing, turbulent historical moment. Participants of this roundtable will look at reading and writing from the perspective of students, tutors, and future educators and, in considering such writers as Anne Bradstreet, Herman Melville, Annie Dillard, and others, discuss how and why English offers valuable study for troubling times.

C2 **Turbulence Overseas: Effective Strategies for Dealing with Study Abroad Emergencies** Brian Lewis, Century College Yanmei Jiang, Century College Larry Sklaney, Century College Ryuto Hashimoto, Minnesota State University-Mankato Crystalyn Morton, Century College	All of us in this group have gone on the Study Abroad trip that Century College offered to Tokyo. However, during these various trips, we've had to confront study abroad emergencies in one way or another. Some of us, due to the 2020 pandemic, had to wait nearly two years to keep our study abroad group together, and a lot of students dropped out. Others had to deal with a plane emergency with anxious students. And still others dealt with the unexpected illness of a tour guide. What can educators do when such things happen with their students overseas? We will share with you our stories, explain to you what we did, and identify if there is anything we might do differently next time. Once you will leave our session with knowledge of what to do in case of such emergencies, we hope that our stories of teaching students to negotiate different cultures will give you some inspiration and encouragement to become more involved with study abroad programs at your own institutions.
C3 **Workshop: Mindfulness Is Your Superpower: Learn to Hack Your Brain for Greater Happiness** Pam Whitfield, Rochester Community and Technical College	Mindfulness Is Your Superpower! Learn to hack your brain for greater happiness.Taking care of yourself is a pre-req to being fully present and effective in the classroom. Let's learn tools and tips to manage stress and increase resilience in your professional and personal lives. Pam will explain the science behind stress and resilience, then teach five simple techniques based in neuroscience and mindfulness research from Dr. Amit Sood and the Mayo Clinic.Practicing mindfulness only takes only a few minutes of your time, but it will shift your mindset, bring joy to your day, and improve relationships. Your brain is your most valuable real estate! So let's learn how to spend more time in your mind's penthouse and less time stuck in the basement.
D1 **Building Community and Mental Health** Naomi Clark, Loras College Sarah Waddle and Zach Carlsen, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota Larry Sklaney and JoMarie Marks, Century College	**Clark:** Trauma-informed pedagogy; executive function support. Balancing Structure and Agency: Supporting Executive Function in the Writing Classroom. As campuses welcome more students facing mental health challenges, neurodivergence, trauma, and structural barriers, composition instructors must reconsider how best to support learning. Conventional wisdom often promotes flexibility, but does unlimited flexibility truly serve students struggling with executive functioning? If avoidant students interpret "optional" as unimportant, are they missing critical support? At the same time, rigid structures risk undermining agency and autonomy.This presentation explores trauma-informed strategies that balance structure with student empowerment. Drawing on scholarship from Melissa Tayle (2021), Stephanie Gemmell (2018), and Hamilton & Petty (2023), I will discuss effective practices such as scaffolded assignments, labor-based contract grading, embedded tutors, required writing center visits, and mindfulness-based approaches. Rather than simply increasing motivation, these strategies equip students with sustainable tools for learning and self-regulation. By fostering both structure and compassion, we can create classrooms that acknowledge students' precarity while enhancing their agency. Attendees will be invited to share insights and strategies for rethinking composition pedagogy to better serve today's diverse learners. **Waddle and Carlsen**: The Value of Positive Psychology in Teaching Reading and Writing. In recent years, positive psychology has emerged as a valuable framework for enhancing learning environments and promoting student well-being. This proposal aims

	to explore the integration of positive psychology principles into the teaching of reading and writing. Positive psychology can significantly improve literacy instruction and student outcomes by focusing on strengths, positive emotions, and student engagement. Positive psychology emphasizes cultivating students' strengths and fostering a growth mindset, aligning with reading and writing education goals. When students develop a sense of competence and self-efficacy, they are more likely to approach tasks with confidence, embrace challenges, and persevere in the face of setbacks. These principles are particularly valuable in reading and writing, where students often encounter difficulties or experience frustration. A positive psychological approach can create an environment where students view mistakes as opportunities for growth rather than failures. This presentation will examine strategies for incorporating positive psychology into literacy instruction. These include promoting positive emotions through reading and writing tasks, encouraging self-reflection, and creating a classroom culture that celebrates effort and progress. Additionally, it will discuss how fostering relationships built on trust and empathy can enhance student motivation and engagement in literacy activities. By integrating positive psychology into reading and writing instruction, educators can not only improve students' academic skills but also contribute to their emotional and psychological development. This approach has the potential to create more resilient, motivated, and confident learners, thereby enhancing the overall educational experience. **Sklaney and Marks**: Creating Community through Rhythm and Ritual in the Composition Classroom. What makes you feel included? One way you belong is to know your group's rhythms and rituals. And if you [italics] are responsible for helping create communities, say for a Composition course, you might employ strategies instead of waiting for cohesion to develop organically, for students can find a classroom with reliable and rhythmic community helpful, especially in "turbulent times." Tutor JoMarie Marks and instructor Larry Sklaney will showcase some fun ways we invite Composition students to participate in our courses' rhythms and rituals and thus move more quickly from assemblages of individuals to groups of valued insiders. And we want to hear about your clever community-building strategies for face-to-face or online courses.
D2 **Fostering Our Students' Learning Through Our Own Critical Reflection** James Heiman, St. Cloud State University Matt Barton, St. Cloud State University Derek Thury, St. Cloud State University Kaden Hearne, St. Cloud State University Brayden Holthaus, St. Cloud State University	Roundtable discussion: Fostering Our Students' Learning Through Our Own Critical Reflection. Composition students are more likely to believe written language makes a difference when words transform their school experience from a site of conditioning to one for learning. Each of our five presentations argues such experiences may materialize if we transform ourselves first. That transformation, we believe, is best found through critical thinking—lessening the hold either/or thinking has on us, which often stems from our own unresolved trauma, writ large (and no one lives trauma-free). The lessons of trauma-based pedagogy, then, should inform our understanding of how any threat suggesting harm—real or not—triggers limbic system responses, predicated on binary thinking, conditioning both our students and us to retreat from potential danger. By developing personal critical reflective practice, we recognize ways we unknowingly sabotage efforts to create spaces conducive to learning, and, more importantly how to reverse course. When students care about composing, about learning, they will recognize and value developing human intelligence as a growing experience worth having. To protect that growth, students may be better motivated to endorse as policy and incorporate as practice the use of AI as a tool empowering them to become writers for learning rather than produce writing for grades.

D3

So, Who Benefits? Critical Media Literacy for Everyday Artifacts

Jessica Borsi, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Alison Obright, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Taryn Seidler, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

AJ Siegel, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

With our students inundated by rapid and often frightening changes, small everyday messages often go under-examined. However, these familiar social media, technological, and cultural artifacts carry great potential in the classroom when used as tools to develop critical media literacy skills. Our panel members mobilize everything from the United Healthcare CEO shooting to AI policies and Squid Game 2 Crocs to critically engage students with the media and current events that actively shape the world around them. A common question we ask is, "Who does this benefit?": A simple frame through which students can dig into the rhetorical complexity of seemingly self-explanatory and even innocuous events. Through activities like rhetorical analysis, collaborative creative writing, and multimodal analysis, we integrate critical media literacy into first-year and technical writing instruction to give students the tools to critically engage with popular artifacts and understand how their voices can help shape the conversation. Our collection of classroom practices illustrates how the political, technological, and cultural can (and should) be brought into the composition classroom to support students' critical engagement with the world.

D4

Writing Communities, Writing Audiences

Adrienne Lamberti,
University of Northern Iowa

Marcy Bock Eastley,
University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Mikayla Davis,
Independent Scholar

Lamberti: Hybrid Service-Learning Models: Bridging the Gap in the Post-Pandemic Writing Classroom. This presentation builds on my 2024 comments at MnWE (a discussion of pandemic-era service-learning challenges) by focusing on the implementation of hybrid service-learning models for the writing classroom. These models are meant to address student engagement and the changing nature of client/student relationships. One of the benefits of service-learning is its ability to connect academic learning with “real-world” applications, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and community engagement among students. Hybrid service-learning models can further this benefit by allowing students to engage with a broader range of community partners, including those who may not be accessible through traditional in-person methods. The expanded reach both facilitates the students’ learning experience and broadens the impact of their service projects.The flexibility of hybrid service-learning projects also allows them to be tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of students. This adaptability, I’ve found, tends to increase students’ interest in the projects. I will describe how my students work on projects that are directly relevant to their interests and career goals, while developing critical writing and communication skills.

Bock Eastley: Engaging with authentic audiences in the writing classroom. As teachers, we strive to engage students in authentic and practical experiences. Many times, this can be challenging within the constraints of a classroom setting. In this presentation, I offer teaching strategies that give students an opportunity to lend their voices to solving real problems in the communities they inhabit. Specifically, I share classroom assignments and activities designed to engage students with audiences they encounter in their everyday lives and empower students to use their writing as a means to influence change. In these assignments, students explore their various communities and consider organizations that are personally meaningful to them. Students identify problems they are interested in solving and conduct research to determine and share potential solutions. Additionally, students engage in a variety of collaborative activities that reflect the realities of working with multiple audiences. The teaching strategies I share can offer students a more authentic learning experience and give students the opportunity to experience first-hand how their work in a writing class can make a difference in the world around them.

Davis: World-Building Community in Composition Classrooms. In this presentation I discuss how creating a "world" within the classroom can help students connect course content to real world application while also creating a space where students have agency and engagement with each other. By having students create a "world" in which they need to communicate, they can better understand their audience and the rules they need to follow to address that audience, since that audience is their creation. A self-made world also lets students choose how their writing connects to their goals and their interests without it seeming like the instructor is pandering to them. By allowing students to create the assessment criteria of successful communication, they also must critically think about their writing goals and how they know when they are met. In all of this, students are also working with each other to create these worlds and its rules, encouraging them to collaborate and communicate in productive ways.

D5

Multilingual Pedagogy and Scholarship

Melissa Giefer, Viterbo University

Akerke Beksemer, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Aruzhan Arginbekova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Michelle Cochran, Rochester Community and Technical College

Asmita Ghimire, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Giefer: Rethinking Language Support in Higher Education. Many universities focus language support on international students, while multilingual domestic students often lack structured assistance and may not receive help until they are struggling or at risk of failing coursework. While institutions may offer ESL courses, tutoring, and testing accommodations, these resources are often not as widely promoted or available to domestic students who speak English as an additional language. This discussion explores how Viterbo University is implementing an early intervention system to address this gap. By allowing multilingual domestic students to self-identify during the admissions process and training admissions counselors and academic advisors to connect students with tailored language support—whether through ESL classes, content tutoring, or accommodations—the goal is to reduce academic struggles and improve persistence to graduation. Session participants are encouraged to share how their institutions support domestic multilingual students and to discuss strategies for ensuring more equitable language assistance across higher education.

Beksemer: Challenges and Difficulties of Teaching English in Non-English Speaking Countries: The Case of Kazakhstan. The global spread of English has led to an increasing demand for English language education worldwide, including in non-English speaking countries such as Kazakhstan. However, teaching English in these contexts presents a unique set of challenges and difficulties for educators. This paper aims to explore the key challenges faced by English language teachers in Kazakhstan and recommend strategies to address these issues. One of the primary challenges in teaching English in Kazakhstan is the linguistic and cultural differences between the English language and the local languages and cultures. (Idrissova M) Kazakh and Russian are the predominant languages in Kazakhstan, and the cultural norms and values of the country differ significantly from those of English-speaking countries. (Akhmad S) As a result, students may struggle to comprehend and communicate in English, particularly in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Furthermore, the differences in communication styles, body language, and social expectations can create barriers to effective language learning and can lead to misunderstandings and frustrations for both teachers and students.Another significant challenge in teaching English in Kazakhstan is the wide range of proficiency levels among students. In many classrooms, there are students with varying levels of English proficiency, from complete beginners to those who are more advanced. This diversity can make it challenging for teachers to design and deliver lessons that cater to the needs of all students, as they must balance the needs of the more proficient students with those of the less proficient ones.

Arginbekova: Comparative analysis of punctuation norms in Russian and English languages. Learning English for Russian-speaking students in the United States presents many challenges, one of which is the difference in punctuation rules. Russian and English structure sentences differently, and punctuation marks often serve different functions. This leads to errors that can affect academic performance and the perception of written language by native English speakers. One of the most common problems is the discrepancy in the use of commas. In Russian, commas are placed in complex sentences according to strict rules, while in English they depend on style and intonation. Russian-speaking students often either put too many commas, similar to their native language, or omit them where they are needed in an English text. This is especially noticeable in academic essays, where punctuation errors can lower a grade. Another challenge is the different use of quotation marks. Russian uses quotation marks - «», while English uses quotation marks - "", and the American and British variants have different rules for placing commas and periods within them. This can lead to confusion when formatting quotations and dialogue in written works. The semicolon also causes difficulties, since it is rarely used in Russian, but in English it plays an important role in compound sentences. Russian-speaking students often replace it with commas or periods, which can disrupt the logical coherence of the text. Differences in the use of dashes and hyphens further complicate the situation. In Russian, the dash is widely used to separate parts of a sentence, while in English it is often replaced by commas, colons, or semicolons. In addition, English distinguishes between short (en dash) and long (em

	dash) dashes, which creates additional difficulties for those accustomed to one form. These discrepancies complicate the adaptation of Russian-speaking students to the US academic environment. Incorrect punctuation can lead to misunderstandings from teachers, lower grades for written assignments, and the need for additional work on language literacy. **Cochran**: What does culturally responsive teaching in reading and writing look like in a diverse community college classroom? Across the country reading classes within community colleges are disappearing while reading scores for 12th graders entering community college show that 63% need remediation to be able to read and understand college level material. Our students enter our 2-year open enrollment community college with a wide range of diverse needs. This presentation will focus on students who enter college with a wide gap in their reading and writing development. Our course integrates multilingual learners with native English speakers. The individualized curriculum is designed to address component skills of reading and progress monitoring. Reading coaching takes place in small groups with oral and silent reading, writing, speaking and listening during every class period. Our student persistence and completion rate for this course is 82% of those enrolled. **Ghimire**: With the advancement in generative AI technologies, as scholars have started thinking about using AI and integrating it in the classroom, international students are often left out--left out in the sense that they are first accused of using AI in their writing and are the first one to be penalized, and, second, there is little scholarship that includes international, bilingual and multilingual students and their experiences. Based on my recent publications in computers and composition titled "Utilizing ChatGPT to Integrate World Englishes and Diverse Knowledge: A Transnational Perspective in Critical Artificial Intelligence Literacy," I propose implementing a transnational post-digital pedagogy and critical AI literacy to better incorporate the linguistic norms, voices, and lived experiences of international, multilingual, and marginalized students in the classroom—especially when using ChatGPT or other generative AI platforms. I draw from scholars in critical AI literacy, post-digital critical literacy, and transnationalism to propose two metacognitive activities. These activities are designed to support students during the revision phase of writing assignments, helping them bring their own English language skills into the classroom. Through this project, I argue that engaging in critical dialogue with ChatGPT and reflecting on fact-checking and revision are powerful ways to help students cultivate a transnational habitus. Ultimately, I believe that adopting a transnational post-digital critical pedagogy and critical AI literacy in the writing process benefits both national and international students by encouraging the inclusion of diverse linguistic norms and global perspectives.

D6

Navigating Learning, Tutoring, and Schooling in Turbulent Times: Student Perspectives from Century College

Bianca De Alvernaz Fonseca, Century College

Sawyer Brumm, Century College

Mikina Aiko, Century College

Evan Cable, Century College

Madeline Spiess, Century College

In times of uncertainty, students must adapt to rapidly changing educational landscapes, shifting expectations, and evolving support systems. This panel brings together students from diverse majors and academic years at Century College, a community college that serves a broad spectrum of learners. Panelists will share their experiences navigating learning, tutoring, and schooling in the face of challenges such as the pandemic's lasting effects, economic instability, and shifting institutional policies. Through personal narratives and critical reflections, students will explore how these factors have shaped their academic journeys, engagement with tutoring resources, and overall educational resilience. This session aims to foster a deeper understanding of student experiences in turbulent times while highlighting the role of community colleges in providing accessible, adaptable, and student-centered learning environments.

E1

Elevating Student Voices

Beth Mehus, Valley City State University

Joel Olson, Bethel University

Fern Schiffer, St. Catherine University

Mehus: Digitalizing and Promoting Student Writing to Inspire a New Generation in Turbulent Times. My project focused on digitizing The Forge, Valley City State University's campus literary journal, and creating a dedicated website to expand its reach. The goal was to offer a website that complemented the print journal, which had recently won a national award. The department was then able to connect with a broader audience through a unique opportunity. In my research, I explored various design strategies and focused on creating a layout that ensured the content was easy to navigate. I also examined the best practices for web accessibility, which included optimizing the site for screen readers and ensuring the responsiveness for all devices. In addition, the project explored how to inspire a new generation of writers. Even through the turmoil that our society presented, writing remained a tool for self-expression and connection. Keeping these goals in mind, I developed a resource that will serve me in my future career as an aspiring English educator. The project explored compelling questions such as, what strategies would encourage the engagement of young writers? How can we foster an environment that promotes creativity despite the culture of our current cultural climate? And how could the incorporation of both mediums expand the reach of the department?

Olson: PSEO Student Experiences. For my dissertation study, Understanding the Lived Experiences of Minnesota's PSEO Students: A Qualitative Exploration, I interviewed eight former PSEO students. As a high school English teacher, I worried that PSEO students were leaving the nest too early, but what I learned from the study participants surprised me. Rather than feeling unprepared for college, the people I interviewed suggested that their high schools were holding them back, both academically and experientially. My research suggested that PSEO students did not feel challenged by a watered-down high school curriculum, and that they were disenfranchised by arbitrary, authoritarian rule-mongering. The participants in the study said they felt ready to take on more responsibility, and as a high school teacher, I had observed how gifted students were left unchallenged. Educators can only engage young people by giving credence to their experiences and showing interest in what matters to them. As teachers, we must make space for the voices of the young. We should not act like the "sage on the stage" but instead get to know our students and try to facilitate the success of each individual.

Schiffer: Tell Me How You Really Feel: Creative Writing Tutoring as Resistance. The first weeks of Donald Trump's second administration saw several executive actions focused on censoring speech concerning marginalized people. Fighting censorship requires exercising our free speech to tell the truth, a task which increasingly bears risk and requires bravery. Using the "pedagogy of discomfort" (Boler, 1999) along with the framework of "brave space" (Arao & Clemens, 2016), we see that effective education requires emotional vulnerability. I argue, as a creative writer, that creative writing is a medium that requires that "comfort with discomfort." I argue, as a peer writing tutor, that the writing center is perfectly situated to foster resistance to that censorship through the use of a brave space that is approachable to those who aren't used to talking back. The writing center is naturally a brave space because sharing all written work, not just creative, has inherent emotional risk. While many tutors (for various reasons) feel unprepared to tutor creative writing (Cassorla, 2004; Ozer, 2020), I believe that sharing creative works in the writing center is a natural outgrowth of the brave space inherent to our practices. In this way, tutoring sessions on creative projects can be models that train everyone to speak truth to power.

E2

AI and Student Engagement

Jency Wilson, Ottawa University

Robert Bruss, Concordia University-Wisconsin

Darrel Farmer, Chippewa Valley Technical College

Wilson: Literacy and Power: Politically Problematizing AI in the FYW Classroom. This presentation explores responses to generative AI in the first-year writing classroom which neither deny the existence of AI nor incorporate its use into coursework. Rather, my approach is to contextualize AI for FYW students as the latest iteration of a long legacy of withholding and weaponizing literacy against marginalized demographics in western – and specifically American – history. The presentation will entail an overview of the first unit of my FYW courses, titled "Literacy and Power," including a review of the texts, lesson plans, and assessments used. In it, I'll also discuss some of the outcomes emerging and challenges presented by approaching the subject in this way. Artificial intelligence figures into the conclusion of this unit, which calls upon writing about literacy from authors such as Jimmy Santiago Baca, Louise Erdrich, James Baldwin, Malcolm X, and Frederick Douglass to inform discussions of equity and access in education, the power of individual voice in advocacy, and literacy/education as subject to political forces. This unit and this presentation invite discussion on how best to resist the exacerbation of "post-literate subjectivity," as Mark Fisher describes it in Capitalist Realism (2009), at the hands of AI by grounding students' writing in the context of their own autonomy and (potential) political power.

Bruss: Leveraging ChatGPT for Student Engagement in Literature Courses. New generative AI technologies like ChatGPT or Gemini pose a number of challenges for English courses, but I have been experimenting with it in my literature classrooms. I want to share results of my most promising approach, one that fosters critical thinking and encourages more student engagement with assigned texts, rather than using AI as an efficiency tool. I use ChatGPT to make comprehension quizzes for my general education literature classes. I generate them on the fly, and I take them alongside the students in class. These quizzes still serve the purpose of traditional ones, helping me gauge whether students read and understood the assigned reading, but this approach also opens up many new opportunities. I ask students to consider whether each question is a good question or not, and since I didn't write them, they actually answer. We often start discussions with students who disagree with ChatGPT's answers or think it has missed the most important details of the text. As a result, students have become more empowered to disagree and discuss their interpretations, and they are regularly grappling with the limits and weaknesses of generative AI.

Farmer: Emphasizing Student Agency Through The Use of AI Prompts. I am interested in speaking about the role of human intelligence in AI writing. The best practices in prompt writing and the pursuit of knowledge through human to AI interaction can be a highly educational experience. For all the hype about AI being something special or unique, the truth is that it is just another tool at a student's disposal to develop, enhance, or engage complicated ideas. I would like to talk about a synthesis of best practices for teaching students how to write AI prompts and ways that we can use prompt writing in the classroom to engage and empower students to emphasize their agency in using AI as a collaborative learning tool.

E3

Transforming Literature and Creative Writing

Erik Kline, University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Kaylin Kalk, Viterbo University

RubyAnn Steigelmeier, Independent Scholar

Kline: Case Studies in Annotation and Engagement with Students of Literature. Textbook costs are a barrier for many students. Open-access publishing and textbook rental programs have mitigated some impact, but they are imperfect options (Baron, 2014; Liming, 2018). Concurrently, students in upper-division English courses often do not engage with works at an expected level, which has an outsized impact on the teaching and learning of literatur e, where a constructive dynamic between student and text is essential (Showalter, 2009; pg. 35). This presentation will report the results and implications of a study I conducted in the 2023-2024 academic year, a study that investigates how providing students with textbooks to own and annotate might counteract some of the engagement challenges students of literature face. In this pilot study, English majors from three different literature courses are provided textbooks and surveyed about reading experiences. Preliminary results suggest that this practice provides students a sense of more meaningful personal learning and more engaged and dynamic classroom communities.

Kalk: Title- Symbol, Structure, Story: Using Tarot to Improve Close Reading and Textual Analysis Skills. Close reading requires students to analyze language, structure, and meaning within a text—but what if we could make this process more engaging and intuitive? This presentation explores the surprising parallels between close reading and tarot reading, demonstrating how tarot can serve as a powerful tool for literary analysis. Both practices require interpreting symbols, identifying patterns, and considering multiple perspectives, skills that are essential for deep textual engagement. Through this session, we will examine how tarot's archetypal imagery and narrative structure can encourage students to think critically about literature. Participants will explore strategies for using tarot cards as discussion prompts, helping students make thematic connections, analyze character motivations, and question authorial choices. We will also consider how tarot's reliance on intuition and symbolism can foster more confident, creative engagement with texts. This workshop-style session will include hands-on activities, where attendees will practice using tarot-inspired questions to approach literary passages. Whether you're new to tarot or an experienced reader, this session will provide fresh, adaptable methods for enhancing close reading skills in any classroom. Join us as we unlock new ways to see—and interpret—the stories before us

Steigelmeier: Local Product Placement in Literature: Testing an Updated Business Model for Authors. One of the most common advertising strategies used by large media companies is product placement, with research showing that product placement is an effective marketing strategy. Secondly, statistics on cultural tourism directly show links between the production of creative works and economic benefit to the area in which they are presented, resulting in an annual impact of $123.6 billion with rural areas benefiting more than urban ones. 30% of adults report that specific art or a cultural event influenced their choice of destination during travel within the previous year. My presentation explores potential benefits to authors who employ product placement as a strategy for community and local economic development, especially in the self-publishing sector. Attendees will be encouraged to engage in a discussion of challenges and potential pitfalls for this business model. As the presenter, I'll be drawing on my background of successfully funded grant projects and experience in local economic development projects to facilitate the discussion.

E4 **Fun Scary: Community Engagement Remix** Kris Cory, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Danielle Hinrichs, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Elise Toedt, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Allison Vincent, University of Minnesota Twin Cities	The session invites critical engagement with the work of designing mutually beneficial, sustainable partnerships for community-engaged learning in first-year writing courses. We feature program-level frameworks and instructor insights from four pilot sections at a large R1 public university that invite first-year students into writing through a social justice-focused, project-based experience. Our university's First-Year Writing (FYW) program is piloting four sections of community-engaged courses that build long-term, project-based partnerships with social justice-oriented organizations focused on environmental justice and sustainability, disability advocacy, equity-driven college preparation, and community-based theater. We take up Knight's (2022) and Shah's (2020) work to guide our efforts in developing processes that engage the messiness of building community and creating trust and reciprocity with partner organizations. In this roundtable, a FYW associate director and three faculty members will share components of their approaches to the design, facilitation, and evaluation of pilot courses (at programmatic and course levels) that engages FYW frameworks and FYW student experiences. We answer the question: How does community-engaged learning work in first-year writing? The session will address strategies for developing and delivering curriculum aligned with our program's guiding frameworks and with partner organization goals, and fostering relationships between faculty, students, and partner organizations. Panelists will share survey, curriculum, and anecdotal data with an aim to facilitate dialogue, questions, feedback, and inspiration!
E5 **Rebuilding Community: Student Leadership and Collaboration in the Post-Pandemic Era** Helen Castillo-Delgado, Century College Blessing Manka Ndam, Century College Frank Woode, Century College	The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted campus life, making it more challenging than ever to build and sustain student communities. This panel features student leaders from Century College who have taken on the task of revitalizing student engagement and fostering collaboration across different student organizations. Panelists will share their experiences in rebuilding a sense of belonging, strengthening student networks, and creating inclusive spaces for peer support and advocacy. Through their leadership, they have worked to bridge divides, coordinate cross-organizational initiatives, and adapt to the evolving needs of students in a post-pandemic landscape. This session will provide valuable insights into the role of student-led initiatives in reimagining campus life and offer strategies for collaboration and engagement that can be applied across higher education settings.

F1

Information Literacy, Misinformation, and Ways of Knowing

Noah Zanella, Carthage College

Liberty Kohn, Winona State University

Dr. Whitnee Coy, Oglala Tribal College

Zanella: Students today are confronted with a world that presents itself as a tangled net of stories and ideologies from which there is no escaping. Everywhere you look, the landscape of social media and political rhetoric is inundated with content that has one goal: to convince you of a narrative. In this "post-fact" world, information (or misinformation) is only valuable insofar as it does or does not serve this goal. How can we help students try to get out from under this net? In this presentation, I will explore why conventional approaches to teaching rhetoric and personal essays may not give students sufficient tools to navigate the sociopolitical discourse of the 21st century, and I will present some practical approaches to expanding students' sense of how an essay creates meaning.

Kohn: This individual presentation will illustrate how I used rhetorical frameworks from misinformation research to teach students information literacy and media literacy, validity of sources, and common frameworks used by disinformers to create political division and distrust toward citizens and institutions. While my course included readings on the specific strategies above, a simpler introduction to these strategies and frameworks for any classroom can be attained by having students play through the University of Cambridge-created and U.S. State Department-funded anti-misinformation game GetBadNews. My presentation will introduce the common misinformation frames in GetBadNews and the social science research on “prebunking” misinformation. The presentation will focus on misinformation frames of the acronym DEPICT: Discredit, Emotion, Polarization, Impersonation, Conspiracy, Trolling. This acronym and these common rhetorical frameworks provide students an understanding of modern social media’s manipulation strategies. Time permitting, I’ll detail several assignments I used in class to help students write in multiple genres using one or more of the frames from DEPICT. Atypical assignments include collectively writing a season of a podcast as well as writing public information for the Minnesota Attorney General's office.

Coy: How might Indigenous ways of knowing reshape how we think about information literacy and research? This presentation examines the profound impact Indigenous ways of knowing can have on reimagining information literacy and research practices. Rooted in relationality, storytelling, and respect for community knowledge, Indigenous epistemologies challenge dominant paradigms of research that often prioritize individualism and objectivity. By integrating these perspectives, educators and researchers can create more inclusive frameworks for teaching and practicing information literacy. Key questions include: How can Indigenous ways of knowing guide students to see research as a relational and reciprocal process? What role does oral tradition and storytelling play in expanding the concept of credible sources? How can educators support students in navigating both Western and Indigenous epistemologies to critically evaluate and synthesize information? This presentation will include a discussion of practical strategies for incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems into research assignments and library practices. Participants will also engage in a reflective activity to consider how their own teaching methods can honor and integrate diverse ways of knowing. By the session’s end, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how Indigenous approaches to knowledge can enrich the practice of information literacy and help students engage in research that is ethical, inclusive, and culturally sustaining.

F2

Rhetorical Pedagogy and Social Change

Shaya Kraut, Iowa State University (Virtual)

Isabella Gross, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Emily Wicktor, Valley City State University

Niki Ciulla, Winona State University

Kraut: My idea is quite simple and by no means original. In my five minutes I would like to share about using debates to teach a rhetorical analysis unit. This semester I decided to try a suggestion from a student last semester, and have students prepare short (5 minute) debate presentations in groups on bills that have either recently been decided or will be decided in 2025. The rhetorical analysis essay they write will be based on the rhetorical strategies of another group, rather than on an article or speech. I gave them a list of interesting bills here in Iowa, but encouraged them to look for others, especially in their home state if not from Iowa. Given our current political situation I wanted to incorporate civic literacy/empowerment, but in a way that would not create hostility or violate Iowa's policies about class topics. At this point we have held the debates; the essays are next. The level of engagement so far has been delightful. There were some hiccups, but overall I was so inspired and grateful for students' collaboration and thoughtful consideration of both issues and rhetorical strategies.

Gross: Grounding Notes: Text Analysis with Body Techniques. This presentation will describe how I teach my students to approach a rhetorical text. Students "feel," "listen," and "notice" the text by taking notes on specific reactions their bodies have when they read. In a time when governments and societies regard bodies as numbers and not as living beings, these techniques help students to encounter complex texts with curiosity and authenticity, and open them up to a realm within which they can move with confidence; to feel the autonomous experience of being a reader/rhetor in tandem with the conversation a collective reader/rhetor, via the experience of reading. I will explain how my students have felt truly affected by rhetoric and thus begin to recognize and understand their place amongst other voices, and use past texts and student responses as examples.

Wicktor: English Studies in an Age of Rhetorical Sorrow. One of my former graduate school linguistics professors claimed, "There are no synonyms." This short but profound statement has resonated with me for decades but never more so than in this moment. In 2016, in my previous role at a different university, I was responsible for teaching the English Capstone course, and I used "English Studies in an Age of Rhetorical Distress" as a guiding theme for the research- and writing-based course serving as capper for the English major. At that time, "distress" was the right word for me as the capstone professor and for the students working through their final/best critical practices and thoughts indicative of their degree. The word spoke to a present friction that felt gritty, tactile, and it imparted hope in the value and possibilities of resistance. Distress might (and should) be remedied, addressed, assuaged. Now, however, post-pandemic and on the verge of the same (perhaps worse) transition of presidential power, "distress" is not the right word. Technically, "sorrow" is a synonym for "distress" but to see the current moment, for myself and for my students, as an age of rhetorical sorrow is painfully right. The value and possibility in resistance is still there, but remedying, addressing, and assuaging rhetorical sorrow is markedly different work, for myself and for my students. To approach this new/different age of rhetorical sorrow, I find myself returning to the foundational rhetorical texts and theory readings of my graduate school experiences (notably Bizzell and Herzberg's _The Rhetorical Tradition_), to reclaim or forge the necessary pathway of resistance that counters the darker/sadder content embedded/submerged in the rightfully titled English Studies in an Age of Rhetorical Sorrow. (Individual presentation.)

	Ciulla: The Role of Writing Instructors in Systems Change. About a decade ago I went to a talk given by a prominent author and publisher. The talk was meant to answer the question, "Does Literature Make a Damn Bit of Difference?" and that was also the title of the talk. I walked away from that event feeling fairly unsatisfied, since the question, which I longed to hear the answer to, was taken as a given. But I've continued my interest over the years, and I now begin to put together some of the pieces using systems theory and knowledge gained from studying writing pedagogy and environmental communication. The question, for me, has shifted a bit to what role Writing and English teachers play in systems change. I'd like to present some of the theories I've formed built from reading systems theorists such as Donnela Meadows and agents of cultural change (including teachers) such as Robin Wall Kimmerer, Rebecca Solnit, and Derrick Jensen.

F3

Lost in Translation: Multilingual Experiences in Academia

Ryuto Hashimoto, Minnesota State-Mankato University

Maria Given, Metropolitan State University

Aigerim Sipenova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Torgyn Bakenova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Ainur Bilmakhanbetova, Visiting Scholar, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

Hashimoto: "From ESOL Student to Education Researcher: How Lived Experience Shapes a Research Agenda." I began my higher education journey as an ESOL student and experienced linguistic and cultural barriers in an unfamiliar academic system. After completing my ESOL courses, I worked as an academic composition tutor and worked with students with diverse social identities as they adapted to college-level writing. I'm going to reflect on how my identity as a former ESOL student and tutor shaped my current research agenda in education. I invite discussion on the role of lived experience on construction of the identity as a researcher.

Given: I welcome an opportunity to share about lived experiences as an English Language Learner, as someone pursuing an Urban Elementary K-6 BS, and as a multilingual student who has "funds of knowledge" with regards to supporting our culturally diverse scholars. I will share the resource "Unite for Literacy," explore the Historically Relevant Literacy framework, and advocate for Culturally Responsive Education in learning partnerships with our diverse scholars and their families.

Sipenova: Lost in Translation: Navigating Language and Cultural Nuances as an International Scholar. As an international scholar who has spent years learning English outside of English-speaking countries, arriving in the U.S. has been both an exciting and eye-opening experience. While I am fluent in English, I have encountered unexpected moments of miscommunication—not in grammar or vocabulary, but in cultural nuances and social conventions. From responding too literally to casual expressions to struggling with the fine line between politeness and sincerity, I have found myself both amused and perplexed by everyday interactions. In this presentation, I will share humorous and insightful experiences, such as my confusion when a stranger asked, "What are you up to?" or when I failed to recognize the infamous Minnesota phrase, "You betcha!" These moments highlight how language extends beyond words—it is deeply rooted in culture, social expectations, and unspoken cues. Through these reflections, I aim to spark a discussion on how language learners and international scholars adapt to these subtle yet impactful differences. How do we learn to "read between the lines" in a new cultural context? What strategies help bridge these gaps? I invite attendees to explore the intersection of language, culture, and communication in a globalized world.

Bakenova: Common Linguistic Challenges for Kazakhstani Scholars in Academic English. I would like to discuss common linguistic challenges faced by Kazakhstani scholars when writing in English. Even for those with extensive academic experience in English, some patterns from native languages still influence writing and communication. I will highlight some examples that I think may be useful for educators and students working in multilingual academic settings. One key challenge is false cognates - words that look or sound similar in two languages but have different meanings. For example: Actual in English means "real" or "existing," but in Russian and Kazakh, the equivalent word means "relevant". Dear can mean both "expensive" and "beloved" in Russian, while in English, these meanings are represented by different words: dear (for people) and expensive (for cost). Magazine in English means "journal" in Russian the meaning is "shop". Fabric in English means "cloth", in Russian the meaning is "factory. These are just a couple of examples, but in reality, there are many more. Therefore, I believe, knowing them in advance is a big advantage for teachers who teach English to Russian-speaking students.

	Bilmakhanbetova: "The Challenge of Writing and Translating Academic Articles into English: A Personal Experience." Publishing in international journals is challenging for non-native English-speaking researchers. Translating academic work while preserving meaning, clarity, and precision is complex. The process starts with reviewing relevant articles, but direct translations can distort meaning. Key concepts and structures often do not align between languages, making interpretation difficult. Initially, I write in my native language for clarity. Early machine translations were inaccurate, but AI-powered tools now assist with translation and revision. Instead of translating entire texts, I break them into passages to ensure accuracy. Beyond technical challenges, the psychological burden is significant. Anxiety over rejection due to language issues adds stress. Many researchers seek professional editing or native speakers' feedback. Recognizing this, journals offer paid language services to enhance clarity. Even those proficient in English rely on editing, as academic writing requires adherence to specific conventions. It's not just about grammar but mastering scholarly communication.
F4 **Living Through Turbulent Times: Student Perspectives** Yalania M. Lucas, Century College Peng Liu, University of Minnesota Twin Cities Jonathan Reeves, St. Olaf College Sophie Liu-Othmer, U.S. Bank	This panel provides participants with the chance to hear powerful narratives from at least four authors who have endured turbulent times. Yalania Lucas recounts her touching experience of losing two family members to cancer while facing her own health struggles, demonstrating how fear and anxiety can shape our outlook on the future. Peng Liu shares her reflections on being part of a group consumed by grief and anger regarding the situation in Palestine. Sophie Liu-Othmer describes how mushroom foraging allows individuals to connect with nature's healing properties. Additionally, the panel will include a story from Jonathan Reeves, who finds solace in classrooms and immerses himself in his studies as a means of escaping the outside world. The session concludes with an audience discussion to enhance participant engagement and insight.
F5 **Beyond the Surface Narrative: Tangible Steps to Writing Centers as Safe Spaces** Aubrie Warner, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Lee Rutzinski, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Bree Muske, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire	A common mantra in writing centers (and scholarship) is that we are safe spaces on campus. In conversation-based peer tutoring, student writers can explore voice, identity, and their ideas without worry about a grade. This working is rewarding because we believe we are here to empower writers. However, we must acknowledge that writing centers are also part of the institution, which is built upon systemic inequities. Scholars such as Hawks and Meadows (2023) have critiqued the narrative of writing centers as safe spaces and called for transformative justice. This roundtable, comprised of a writing center administrator and undergraduate tutors, will explore and facilitate conversation on how we can take actionable steps and be the co-conspirators marginalized students and faculty need us to be. Topics include but are not limited to: reflecting on our biases as administrators and tutors, creating inclusive spaces, responding to problematic faculty feedback on student writing, and navigating how "public" our writing centers are.