



English Newsletter

May 2026

Chair's Year-End Note



This month we celebrate our graduates. Two weeks ago thirty English students graduated with BA, MA, or MFA degrees. Congratulations to all! Kudos, too, to the English Honors Robert Torry award winners, Laura Greenwood, Jade Howdeshell, and Jeremy Molt. For more award winners in English, please see page 2.

Graduation is not all we have to celebrate this May. I'm pleased to salute our three retiring faculty, Carolyn Anderson, Julianne Couch, and Alyson Hagy. Thank you for your teaching and service, and I wish you all many exciting adventures to come. In addition, I must offer Molly McCully Brown a reluctant goodbye; Molly will take a faculty post at Sewanee, in Tennessee, starting in the fall. Thank you, Molly, for all your incredible leadership in Creative Writing. Finally, a special thanks to Phillip Goodwin for crafting these excellent newsletters.


As I revisit the year in the pages of this monthly missive, full of accomplishments and inspiring stories, I am reminded of all the good that English does on campus and beyond. True to theme of "English Does" from the spring newsletters, faculty, staff, and students achieved so much this year. I'm proud to reflect on all the activities, from the Keywords series and the Laramie Zinefest to the spring Humanities Summit and the fall Shepard Symposium.

The newsletter will go on hiatus for the summer, but we'll be back in September with more exciting news from Hoyt Hall. Enjoy your summer reading! And please mark your calendars: Giving Day 2026 will be October 21–22, Noon to Noon. This year English will feature our Creative Writing accounts. If you're a creative writer, or an alum of our BA or MFA programs, please get in touch this summer. I'd love to hear your story and your connection with UW Creative Writing.

Michael Edson

HIGHLIGHTS

This summer Kelly Kinney leads English as it hosts the 2026 Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) Conference in Laramie, July 22-23. The conference marks the 40th anniversary of the historic Wyoming Resolution. Centered on labor, literacy, institutional change, and the future of writing instruction, scholars, teachers, and administrators will reflect on the legacy of the 1986 Wyoming Conference while imagining new futures for writing program administration. The event highlights UW's continuing role in national conversations about equity, teaching, and public-facing humanities work.

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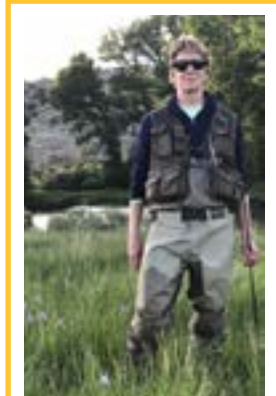
Thank You Carolyn Anderson

Carolyn Anderson's pumpkin pies are "revelatory," according to Susan Aronstein. Legend has it that at her first American Thanksgiving, not knowing that one could buy a can of Libby's and a premade pie crust, Carolyn scooped out pumpkins, roasted and pureed them, and made a crust from scratch. "The New

Zealander came to America and showed us what pumpkin pie could be" says Aronstein. After 33 years of teaching medieval literature and the classics in the Department of English, Carolyn will retire and return to New Zealand.

Carolyn came to UW in 1993 and, in the words of Eric Nye, "has been our department's chief advocate for the study of classics, linguistics, and philology." Her favorite texts to teach include tragedies by Homer and Aeschylus, Chaucer, "Beowulf," "Chanson de Roland," and Ovid's "Metamorphoses." Carolyn loves teaching students to read Middle English so that they can analyze texts themselves.

From Carolyn, students learned geography with a dose of world history. Carolyn's earliest students, to their surprise, discovered that she did not speak with a fake English accent. Rather she is a polyglot who also speaks authentic Kiwi.



Thank You Alyson Hagy

Alyson Hagy believes that tennis instills a high tolerance for failure, which, she also believes, is useful for a writer. Over the last 30 years at UW, Alyson, the author of eight books, taught many writing lessons to her students. Her favorite course to teach is Introduction to Fiction Writing. "Working with emerging writers to find their voices is a

privilege and a pleasure. It never gets old," she says. It was one of the first classes she taught at UW and also one of the last. Alyson retires at the end of this academic year.

Alyson grew up on a farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, graduated with an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Michigan in 1985, and taught at the UVA, University of Michigan, and the Stonecoast Writer's Conference before coming to UW in 1996. During her time at UW she co-founded the MFA in Creative Writing, something she describes as "truly innovative—small, interdisciplinary, and communal." What kept her at UW was the department's deep commitment to teaching ... and the mountains.

When Alyson isn't writing or teaching she can be found fly-fishing, bird-watching, or hiking. Anything, she says, that will "get her in the mountains or near water." In retirement there will be more books to write. But first, "time with trout and warblers."

Award Recipients

A&S Beatrice Gallatin Beuf Golden Apple Award
Shelby Hutson, English & LeARN

PIE Award (Promoting Intellectual Engagement in the First Year)
Tracey Patton

A&S Sabbaticals
Kelly Kinney and Tracey Patton

A&S DUAC Thumbs Up Award
Seth Swanner

A&S Outstanding Graduate 2026
Katie Acord

A&S Outstanding Alumnus of 2026
Steven Watt

A&S Extraordinary Merit in Teaching
Paul Bergstraesser

John P. Ellbogen Outstanding Graduate Assistant Teaching Award
Joe Saufley & Faith Breads

Stewart Family Serviceship Fellowship
Misty Springer

Fred Slater Teaching Award
Mercy McAndrew & Shelby Dodds

Robert Torry Award for Outstanding English Honors Thesis

Laura Greenwood, Jade Howdeshell, & Jeremy Molt

Congrats Grads!



Congratulations to all of our graduating students. We are proud of your hard work and inspired by the energy, creativity, insight, and intelligence you brought to the program. We wish you all the best for your next exciting adventures. Don't forget to send postcards!

