



SWEETLAND CENTER FOR WRITING

Thoughtfully supporting writers and teachers of writers

The Gayle Morris Sweetland Center for Writing was established to promote excellence in writing, writing instruction, and writing research in LSA. We celebrate diversity and create learning environments that are exciting, vibrant, collaborative, inclusive, accessible, and equitable for everyone. Sweetland has substantial impact both within and beyond LSA. Our dedicated and award-winning faculty work with students and instructors from 14 of U-M's 19 schools and colleges. In all that we do, we seek to develop U-M's capacity for evidence- and research-based understanding of how students learn to write effectively and how faculty and graduate student instructors can improve classroom instruction.

Sweetland is founded on the idea that writing—including digital composition—is central to all academic disciplines. Writing advances disciplinary thinking, deep learning, cognitive and social development, conceptual understanding of course content, and the effective communication of new knowledge and ideas. Our invention of new knowledge is worth little if we cannot convey it to appropriate audiences.

Sweetland therefore offers programs for writers at every level, from the first year through the dissertation. We maintain a Minor in Writing; a Peer Writing Consultant Program; and a Fellows Seminar for faculty and graduate students seeking to develop effective writing pedagogy in the disciplines. We offer an innovative curriculum in both multimodal and traditional composition, including courses that fulfill the first-year and upper-level writing requirements.

Finally, Sweetland provides an exceptional range of programs for graduate students, focused on effective writing pedagogy and advanced writing in the disciplines. We give graduate students professionally valuable opportunities to engage creatively and intellectually with each other, with peer mentors, and with Sweetland faculty.

SWEETLAND CENTER FOR WRITING STRATEGIC FUND

The Sweetland Strategic Fund gives us flexibility as we develop programs to support student writers, invent new initiatives in response to technological changes, pursue unexpected opportunities, and create events and career development opportunities that benefit students. The director supports the center's mission by using these funds to enhance instruction: for example, we have offered summer internships for Minor in Writing students, supported the annual production of the *Writer to Writer* journal by the students in the minor, enabled undergraduate peer writing consultants to participate in national conferences where they present their research, and paid students to participate in a student advisory board charged with recommending how to improve the center's accessibility. Gifts of all sizes to this fund allow the center to develop programs that expand students' educational experiences and support their academic success.

DIGITAL RHETORIC COLLABORATIVE

The Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative (DRC) was founded in 2012 to provide a venue to support digital writing. Both a book series with the University of Michigan Press and a community web space by and for scholars and teachers working in computers and writing and digital rhetoric, the DRC is an international leader in digital composition. One of only two publishing venues that specializes in interactive multimedia publications focusing on digital rhetoric, the Digital Rhetoric Collaborative series serves a key function in advancing research in this field. The DRC/U-M Press Book Prize supports innovative contributions to the field of digital rhetoric with an annual prize of \$5,000, along with an advance contract for publication in the series. An endowed gift of \$100,000 or \$5,000 annually is needed to support the Digital Rhetoric Collaborative U-M Press Book Prize.

Essential to the Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative website are graduate fellowships granted to students at universities around the country. These fellowships give students practical experience in online publishing, website development, and social media production. The energy and expertise fellows invest in this web presence helps Sweetland maintain a national profile in digital writing, while advancing the students' professional experience. Gifts totaling \$3,000 annually are needed to fund six DRC graduate fellows each year.



“My time as a Sweetland Peer Writing Consultant remains one of the most memorable parts of my college experience and it challenged me to grow exponentially as a writer. I realized the central role that conversation has in writing, speaking across differences and exploring new ideas.”

–Akili Echols, A.B. '21



NAMED MWRITE PROGRAM

Sweetland has expanded its support for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education with a program called MWrite, funded by the National Science Foundation and a grant from U-M's Third Century Initiative. Developed in collaboration with U-M STEM faculty, MWrite uses writing assignments as a way to improve students' understanding of difficult concepts and disciplinary thinking. Research persuasively demonstrates that MWrite writing tasks contribute significantly to students' success: students engaged in content-focused MWrite writing exercises perform better and show a deeper grasp of the key concepts than students who do not complete the exercises.

Foundational lower-division STEM courses with enrollments of 500-1800 students present obstacles for writing instruction, but MWrite enables instructors to include writing exercises in their course design at scale. This is possible because Sweetland faculty train and mentor undergraduate MWrite Fellows who took the course in a previous term, to serve as graders, lightening the assessment burden for faculty and also substantially benefitting the graders, who report that their role deepens their comprehension of course content and gives them valuable leadership experience. The Fellows receive a stipend for their work, which is MWrite's most substantial financial investment in developing STEM expertise and supporting student success.

Gifts for MWrite are critical to engage more students in enhanced learning experiences and enable instructors to refine their teaching in response to in-depth assessment data about student learning. We need funding to continue to develop and expand this curriculum to enhance STEM courses, using state-of-the-art technology to support teaching and learning. An endowed gift of \$1 million would enable us to sustain the program and continue to research its benefits.

WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT

Your partnership connects the college's rich past to a boundless and bright future. You can change lives with gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities, and create a meaningful legacy through your bequest, trusts, gift annuities, and other planned gifts. Your generosity makes an impact on what's next, for a better tomorrow.

for what's next ▶
Look to Michigan

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