

CITATION OF
JOE AGUILAR AND KATE MCINTYRE
FOR THE
ROMEO L. MORUZZI YOUNG FACULTY AWARD FOR
INNOVATION IN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

WPI has had creative writing courses in the Humanities Department for many years, but these courses have not had a unified curricular focus nor had students been able to complete their humanities and arts requirement in creating writing. That changed when Joe Aguilar and Kate McIntyre joined the faculty. They worked to build on and unify creative writing at WPI so students could focus in this area, building a minor along with the traditional path to completion of the humanities requirement. As part of their efforts, Aguilar and McIntyre have launched an international literary magazine, *Hex Literary*, both as a means to publish up-and-coming writers and to give students the opportunity to work on an innovative journal as an introduction to the world of literary publication and capstone for the creative writing depth and minor.

This work has made creative writing at WPI into a thriving enterprise and put WPI on the international map for creative literary publications. The journal is innovative in that it pulls together literary writing and speculative fiction, which have often been sharply separated, and it is this that has partly led to its success at WPI. The other part of its success - both as a journal and as an educative tool - is that the day-to-day business of running the journal is done largely by students. Students learn about the history of literary journals, how to promote content through social media and other campaigns, evaluate literary submissions, plan events, and conduct interviews with writers. Students have benefited immensely from this pedagogy. One has gone on to graduate work in creative fiction and is working on another literary journal as web developer, putting both their literary skills and their computer science degree to work. Many others who may not go into creative writing or a literary career have also benefitted through learning the many transferrable skills that can be applied to their careers and interests. The work Aguilar and McIntyre have done building the program, the journal, and the outcomes for students are examples of the best things project-based learning can achieve.

For their work engaging students in the operations of the *Hex Literary* magazine and making creative writing flourish at WPI, we are proud to present the 2024 Romeo L. Moruzzi Young Faculty Award for Innovation in Undergraduate Education to Joe Aguilar and Kate McIntyre.

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