Graduation Celebration Reimagined

By Karen Redfield

This year we are celebrating scholarship and writing prize recipients, along with all graduating seniors, at a reception on Sunday afternoon, May 5. The reception will be held in the Alumni Room of the Pyle Center, 702 Langdon Street. Student awards will be given out from 4:30-5 p.m., with a reception to follow.

At 5 p.m. we will award the Distinguished Alumni Award to Daniel Socolow, who received his BA in English from UW-Madison. Mr. Socolow is now the Director of the MacArthur Fellows Program. The sizable fellows awards are often called “genius grants” and are given to people who show “exceptional creativity in their work and the prospect for still more in the future.” After Mr. Socolow’s brief remarks, we would like to honor all of our graduating seniors.

In a change from previous years, there will be hors d’oeuvres and beverages in place of dinner. All award winners, graduating seniors, friends, and family are welcome. Although I will need you to RSVP for all who are coming, there will be no charge for students or their guests. We hope that many of you will come and receive the recognition you so deserve.

The Alumni Room faces the lake and has a lovely outdoor patio; we have reserved the space until 6:30. We are hoping that the setting and the celebration will give you a fond and lasting memory of your time in the English Department at UW-Madison.

Balancing The Job Search

by Karen Knipschild

Hunting for a job is a job. And when you’re already employed as a full-time student, it can turn into a tricky balancing act. Like a trained trapeze artist, you have no choice but to skillfully swing from the bar of academic achievement, build up momentum, swing over to the job hunt and lilt back to your studies again. Dynamic movements like these require precise timing and lots of strength.

The most effective timing includes a strong focus. Similar to choosing an academic path, you must determine a career direction. If you don’t know exactly what career path to pursue, take the time to review what you’re best at or have a passion for. Some of your strength can be developed by matching your skills and passions to particular job types. A talent assessment is a valuable tool in helping to identify careers suitable for you. L&S Career Services can administer one or take advantage of the WisCareers evaluation that can be accessed through your MyUW account under the Work Record tab or search box. Once you’ve decided on an area to focus in on, start doing your research. Review company websites, job shadow or even set up an informational interview. There is no underestimating the value of an internship or part-time job with a specific employer either.

And like many masterful athletic artists, one of your greatest talents could very well be your endurance. It is critical – like a rehearsal – to remain persistent throughout the job search. Don’t give up – keep applying and stay vigilant for the next bar of opportunity that may swing your way.

If you would like help in planning your balancing act, feel free to set up an appointment on my WisCal Calendar.
We are offering a new event this semester that we hope will get you to your chosen graduation date and to your chosen career after that.

On May 3 from 9 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., advisors Karen Redfield and Karen Knipschild will be in room 7191 Helen C. White.

Before You Go . . .

This year we would like to do a kind of exit interview with graduating seniors before you all go off to new adventures. We would like to know how you feel about your experience as an English major at UW. What was especially meaningful, for example, or what changes would you recommend? What questions would you like us to ask to best capture your thoughts? Should we include specifics like class availability and topics? Would you like to give feedback on career and academic advising? Do you have ideas or advice for incoming majors?

Send me your thoughts, and I’ll try to fashion a survey that is worth your time and helpful to the department and students: advisor@english.wisc.edu.

Blog Offers Unique Job Hunting Advice

The evocative career blog New Grad Life is designed specifically to assist the new college grad embarking on the road to career fulfillment.

Unlike the average career hunting sites that provide basic methods for job hunting, New Grad Life provides many perspectives and unique angles to approach your search in thoughtful and effective ways that can give you an edge in how you approach the hunt.

For example, did you know that efficient job hunting can be performed on Facebook? New Grad Life provides three simple steps for an effective Facebook job search by utilizing the social media site to your advantage in the eyes of employers.

From crazy employment interview tips to job hunting myths, this site is worth the click—if not to just lighten the sometimes burdensome process of the career hunt.