

Office of Research Services Funding Application (Small Grant)

Please refer to the "Announcement of Funding Initiative" for instructions.

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/WhoWeAre/Chancellor/ViceChancellors/Research/OAVCRCA/Pages/Research%20Services.aspx>

NOTE WELL: THIS APPLICATION MUST BE WRITTEN FOR AND ACCESSIBLE TO LAY REVIEWERS. (LINE SPACING NO LESS THAN 1.5, FONT SIZE NO LESS THAN 12, FONT MUST BE TIMES NEW ROMAN) PLEASE ATTACH A 2-PAGE CV.

Applicant Information

Name: Bohlen Teague Date: 10/16/14
Last First

Department: English (Creative Writing – Fiction)

Phone: 303-995-8706 Email teague.bohlen@ucdenver.edu

Title of Project: Funding for Travel Related to Research and Reading

Amount of Request: \$3119

Project Abstract

Provide a project abstract (one-half page)

This Spring (2015), I'll be taking my first sabbatical, and as such I plan to complete a full draft of my next novel, and begin the process of talking with potential publishers and agents. This will require travel on my part, including three short trips centered around interviews, archival research at university libraries and county historical societies, and finally a trip to the AWP (Associated Writing Programs) conference, where I'll be meeting with both book publishers as well as prospective agents for the book itself.

The novel, tentatively titled "The Normal Home," focuses on a fictionalized version of the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Children's School (ISSCS), which was open for over a century in the town of Normal, IL. This historic place will be fictionalized, of course, since the dramatic plotlines of the book will be drawn anew, and not based on any past occurrences; still, I want to base the location and the culture of a residential state institution in a recognizable world, and that's going to require serious research on my part. I already have interviews set up with several past residents of the school, one former teacher at the school, and several current residents of the still-existent campus. I also have research opportunities at both the Illinois State University Archives, and at the McLean County Historical Society, and expect to set up several days of study at both institutions.

Lastly, these trips will also afford me time to both organize my research and do some of the writing itself, something that will be extremely important in rationing my sabbatical time in a constructive way. This work, in turn, will prepare me to meet the publishers and agents at the AWP conference April 8-11, 2015.

Toward this end, I have already secured a guarantee of matching funds from my department, based on the acceptance of this small grant. For this reason, the amount requested here is only half of the projected expenses. Thank you so much for your consideration.

Project Description

Provide a project description indicating the significance of the creative activity (limited to two pages)

The significance of the creative activity—in this case, my second novel, titled “The Normal School,” will be to re-establish myself as a working novelist in my field. I’ve been focused in recent years on two other projects—one my recently-released textbook (*A Snarktastic Guide to College Success*, released in Spring 2014 by Pearson), and the other a book-length collection of flash fiction (*Flatland*, currently under consideration at several small presses). While I’ve published significantly in other forms (short fiction, flash fiction, creative and commercial non-fiction), I haven’t had the time to devote to a novel-length work. Fortunately, my sabbatical is affording me that benefit, and I very sincerely want to make the most of that time—thus, this proposal.

The novel itself is a literary take on the traditional ghost story—a popular form that I plan to deconstruct to some degree, using epistolary forms to tell a more traditional story. It’s this fresh take on an old idea that have several agents I’ve spoken with very interested in the project—that, and the marketability of the project, as it’s based on an actual place, and an actual history, which is always an excellent selling point to both publishers and readers. This, then is the broad significance of my new novel: the opportunity that any book of fiction offers its readers in transporting them to another place, another time, another story, etc. It’s both entertainment, and (with no hubris intended), an examination of what it means to be both alive and not, to linger, and to let rest.

Finally, another important significance of this project has to do with my students here at CU Denver, and the development of a course in novel-writing that I’m currently designing. As the only creative writing faculty member currently on-staff who’s written a published novel, I feel it necessary to be the one who designs the curriculum for the new course proposal. The process of writing this second novel will also be a basis for that curriculum; that is, I’m taking notes on the process of inspiration, design, writing, and editing such that I can utilize this real-world novel writing process as the bedrock of a course which focuses on the process of writing any novel. I’ve pitched this idea to Pearson (who published my last textbook), and they’re interested in talking about the possibility of publishing a *Snarktastic Guide to the Novel* in the coming years, based on the writing of this novel, and the process surrounding it.

Additional Project Information

(i) Provide future funding activities, agency, program name, program officer, and deadlines identified

(department match—see below)

(ii) What specific outlets for the work accomplished in the project are likely (exhibits, journal articles, etc.)

National publication of the novel produced by it; possible publication in various outlets (literary magazines, writing magazines) of chapters as standalone-pieces.

Once the book becomes published, that in turn will allow me to perform readings and workshops at national university programs, bookstores, etc.

(iii) What other support might arise upon successful completion of the project (matching funds, in-kind support, etc.)

I've already secured an agreement from my own department to match any funds I'm able to procure in grants for this project, and its associated travel requirements; this is why the request for funding that I'm making is half of the projected costs for the travel itself.

Methodology Description

Provide a description of the methodology to be used in approaching the project (one-half page)

The methodology for writing a novel is, I presume, quite different from most methodologies that you as a committee probably see. The system I devised for my first novel is something that I'm planning on following again during my sabbatical, and includes outlining, character synopses, plot timelines, and a lot of historical research to get exactly right those details that convince a reader that they're right in suspending their disbelief for the purposes of story.

I feel it needs to be addressed here that there's a reason why this proposal is for four shorter trips, and not one month-long writing excursion. While the latter certainly has its benefits, it's not available to me; I share custody of my two young daughters, and care for them every other week. Practically, despite my sabbatical, I cannot take a full month away to research and write and meet with prospective agents and publishers.

Instead, I've worked hard to turn the challenges of taking four distinct trips into an advantage. I've already set up one reading (at Milliken University in Decatur, IL) for that Spring, to act as an anchor for one research trip, and to perhaps allow me the chance to delve into the University archives at that location as well. I'm talking with the creative writing programs at local universities in the areas, as well as with the Illinois Center for the Book to participate in outreach programs while I'm there. The fact that my time in Illinois will be spread out over three weeks, each in a separate month of the Spring 2015 semester, is allowing me to participate more fully in the Service possibilities of my sabbatical as well, while not significantly taking time away from my primary focus.

All this is to say that the plan for my sabbatical in the Spring of 2015 is both exciting to me for the purposes of productivity, as well as the opportunity to offer myself for service to other institutions, as a representative of CU Denver Creative Writing. These are goals that both stem directly from the CU Denver Strategic Plan, and my own vision for success as well.

How Does Project Advance Applicant's Career

Provide a clear statement indicating how the project advances the applicant's career and what the potential broader impact of the project might be (one-half page)

The importance of the successful research, writing, and publication of this, my second novel, is significant for my career. My first novel, *The Pull of the Earth*, was a Colorado Book Award-winning selection for fiction, and garnered a respectable amount of attention locally (and to a lesser degree nationally).

The limiting factor for my first novel was, frankly, my publisher. Ghost Road Press did not at the time have all that much of a national role; this limited national access to the book, especially for the purposes of review and award nomination. While I'm happy that the book did as well as it did with a smaller publisher, I'm very much looking forward to utilizing the contacts that I've made in the last few years, and getting my second book a far wider audience.

This second book also has the promise of carrying with it a re-printed edition of the first; my five-year contract for my first novel has recently expired, and rights have reverted back to me. I have several publishers interested in looking at re-releasing a second edition of that first novel, once the second novel is published.

The promise of both of these books being available from a nationally-recognized press is exciting for me on a number of levels, both for my career here at CU Denver and for the novelist role for which I was originally hired.

What Is the Broader Significance of the Project to CU Denver

Provide a clear statement indicating the significance of the project in a broader CU Denver context, meaning how does the project subscribe to the CU Denver downtown goals?

(<http://www.ucdenver.edu/about/WhoWeAre/Chancellor/Pages/StrategicPlan.aspx>) (one-half page)

In answering this question, let me cite several items drawn from the Strategic Plan's "seven priorities":

- "research excellence must be our hallmark," (p.14): This is, put very simply, a clear call for projects exactly such as the one upon which I'm embarking during my sabbatical . As a tenured professor of fiction, I'm expected to publish within my field regularly, and I do. But reaching for excellence—writing a novel that could gain national exposure through a major publishing house—is that sort of rising tide that could raise all programmatic boats.
- "an institutionwide commitment to student access and success," (p.14): A successful novel can become one of the centerpieces of a writing program's student draw; it can open doors just as much for students as for the institution itself, and provides students with one more good reason to choose CU Denver as a destination for creative writing study.
- "a call to grow creativity," (p.14): Creativity is at the heart of any writing project; the outward production of said creative spark is just as important as the impetus for the creativity itself. That is to say: it's not enough for us as creative writing faculty to teach committed and focused writing—we have to demonstrate it, and its results, as well.

Last, it's clear that this project and others like it fall directly in line with University Strategic Priority #3, to "conduct outstanding...creative work for the public good." The novel is the most commonly read form of the printed word; it's what not only exists for its own ends, but also translates to other forms related to the "public good," ranging from theatrical adaptations to invited readings to published reviews to in-class discussions and examinations of literary value. I'm very proud indeed to already have contributed to that tradition, and look forward to doing so again, not only for my own goals, but those of CU Denver and our students as well.

Applicant's Pending and Current Funding

(a) Pending proposals: (title, agency, amount, date submitted, when will decisions be made)

(None)

(b) Current funding: (title, agency, amount, duration)

English Department Matching Funds (\$3119)

Budget

Provide a budget

Feb. 9-15 (Research/Writing)

- Airfare: \$294 (DEN to St. Louis)
- Hotel: 6 nights, \$159/night, \$1058 total (Holiday Inn Express)
- Car Rental: \$246 (Hertz)

March 9-15 (Research/Writing)

- Airfare: \$371 (DEN to St. Louis)
- Hotel: 6 nights, \$159/night, \$1058 total (Holiday Inn Express)
- Car Rental: \$246 (Hertz)

April 8-12 (AWP Conference)

- Airfare: \$464 (DEN to Minneapolis-St. Paul)
- Hotel: \$165/night, \$748 total (Minneapolis Marriot City Center)
- Car Rental: (none needed)
- Conference Registration: \$155

May 4-10 (Research/Writing)

- Airfare: DEN to STL (St. Louis), \$294
- Hotel: 6 nights, \$159/night, \$1058 total (Holiday Inn Express)
- Car Rental: \$246 (Hertz)

TOTAL: \$6238

English Department Match: \$3119

Amount Requested: \$3119

Budget Justification

Provide a short budget justification

All flight, hotel, and car rental amounts estimated, based on information provided by Christopherson Travel.

I've forgone requesting a Per Diem, given the scope of this project and the budgetary request. I'll be paying for all related daily expenses out-of-pocket.

Pledge to Report Signature

I pledge to report to the Office of Research Services the projects outcomes at its conclusion and to update ORS on future developments related to the initial funding.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

10/16/14

TEAGUE VON BOHLEN

Campus Address

1050 9th St. Park, Auraria
Department of English
Campus Box 175/PO Box 173364
Denver, CO 80217-3364

Home Address

7789 E. 25th Ave.
Denver, CO 80238
303-995-8706
teague.bohlen@ucdenver.edu

Education

1997 Arizona State University, MFA Creative Writing
1991 University of Arizona, BA Creative Writing

Professional Experience

2014 University of Colorado Denver English, Associate Professor
2007-2014 University of Colorado Denver English, Assistant Professor

Awards, Grants, and Mentions

2013 Nominated for Thomas Jefferson Award
2011 Won CLAS Teaching Excellence Award, Tenure-Track
2009 Authored five of the Top Ten Most Read articles in *Westword* online
2008 "Jesus Wants Me to Refinance" named in *Wigleaf's* "Top 50"
2007 Winner of the 2007 Colorado Book Award, *The Pull of the Earth*
2007 Nominated for Excellence in Creative Activities Award
2006 *The Pull of the Earth* on Local Best-Seller List for Denver, CO; 12/26/06
2003 Nominated for Pushcart Editors Book Award, *The Pull of the Earth*
2003 Won CLAS Teaching Excellence Award, Non-Tenure Track

Peer Reviewed Publications, Exhibitions, Performances, Etc.

Short Fiction

2014 "Glass Fish," *DIN Magazine*, Spring.
"Slope," *DIN Magazine*, Spring.
2013 "Robert, Lost," *Telegram Review*, Fall.
"Where It's All Coming From," *Waccamaw Review* #11, Spring.
"Backwards," *DIN Magazine*, Spring.
"Rebirth," *DIN Magazine*, Spring.
2012 "All His Shirts," *Superstition Review*, Fall.
"Not for Sale," *Superstition Review*, Fall.
"Shining On for No Good Reason," *Superstition Review*, Fall.
"Gold is the Mother of Yellow," *Hawaii Pacific Review*, Vol. 26.
"Blue Doesn't Mean Water," *South Dakota Review*, #49.
2011 "Nu-Life," *Saxifrage Press*, September.
"Sink," *Terrain*, #27, Spring/Summer.
"Waiting for Her," *Terrain*, #27, Spring/Summer.
"She Let Him," *Terrain*, #27, Spring/Summer.
2010 "The Way of All Things," *Six Sentences*, Spring.
2007 "Whalesong," *Ghoti Magazine*, Fall.
"Jesus Wants Me to Refinance," *Ghoti Magazine*, Fall.

"Tell You More," *Ghoti Magazine*, Fall.
"In the Cut Grass," *Six Sentences*, Fall.

Anthologized Fiction

2013 "All His Shirts," "In the Cut Grass," "Shining On for No Good Reason,"
Performance. Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art, May.
2011 "In the Cut Grass," *Saxifrage Press*, Summer.
2008 "In the Cut Grass," *Subito Press*.
"Thrashing," *Subito Press*.
2007 "The Pull of the Earth: Chapter One," *Terrain*, Fall.
2006 "Thrashing," *Please Stay on the Trail: A Collection of Colorado
Fiction*. Ed. Matt Hudson. Boston, MA: Black Ocean.

Peer-Reviewed Books

2014 *A Snarktastic Guide to Student Success*. National: Pearson Publishing.
2006 *The Pull of the Earth*. Denver: Ghost Road Press.

Other Indicators of Scholarly and Creative Activity:

2015 Writing Workshop, Millikin University (scheduled Spring)
2014 Vlog Reading, Superstition Review
2013 Interview, *ASU Magazine*, March.
Interview, *S/R Blog*, March.
Co-Host, Student Literary Awards.
Invited Reading, Garfield County Libraries, CO
2012 Invited Reading, Millikin University, Decatur IL
Press. "Author/Professor Teague Bohlen Plans 3-Day Stop in Sterling,"
Press. "Teague Bohlen Wrapping Up 3-Day Visit,"
Co-Host, Colorado Humanities Student Literary Awards
Special Guest, Morning Show/KPMX, Sterling, CO
2011 Host. One Book, One Denver Book Discussion Groups
Vlog Reading. Terrain.org #27
2010 Host. One Book, One Denver Author Interviews
2009 Presenter. One Book, One Denver Presentations
Host, Colorado Book Awards Finalists Reading, Fiction
Invited Reading. Denver Books.
Contestant, *Opium's* Literary Deathmatch.
Invited Reading. LitFest, Arapaho Community College.
Invited Reading. Stapleton Authors Reading Series.
Host. Great Writers Reading Series, Denver Public Library.
2008 Interview. *Colorado Matters* (Radio Interview, *The Pull of the Earth*)
Press. *AM Sunday*, KWGN (TV Interview, *The Pull of the Earth*)
Invited Reading. Cornelia Street Café, New York, NY.
2007 Invited Reading, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ .
Press, *Marginalia*, for *The Pull of the Earth*
Press, "Bohlen Wins Colorado Fiction Award", *Denver Post*.
Press, "CU Prof, 13 Others win Colorado Book Awards", *Rocky Mountain
News*.