

New Literary Magazine Library in Ray B. West

09/11/2026



Professor Jennifer Sinor and her graduate students in her spring ENGL 6884 class have introduced a new Literary Magazine Library on the third floor of Ray B. West. It is open for anyone to read from, collecting issues from one hundred different literary journals across the nation.

"There's nothing like this in northern Utah," Jennifer reflects. "Or really, in the state."

The library hopes to help give undergraduates access to literary magazines that they wouldn't otherwise reach. "There used to be literary journals in our libraries and bookstores that you could find and read, but there aren't anymore," Jennifer recalls. "As faculty, we keep telling students to submit their work to these journals when they have never held one in their hands."

The idea for a lending library started five years ago with the Bull Pen writing club, for which Jennifer is the club advisor. The students of the club collected books for students to read for free on a bookshelf on the second floor. "But then," Jennifer says, "students in the original group graduated, and no one was curating the library, and people began leaving books and boxes of books nobody was interested in. The shelf became unattractive, useless."

Last spring, Jennifer introduced a community service project to her graduate students. They could choose any community service, but she recommended they gather literary journals for a free library. Using websites like NewPages.com, the group reached out to one hundred magazine editors, who began shipping print copies to USU.

"They went rouge, chose the coolest journals. Tiny ones for fantasy, sci-fi, small zines, magazines I had never heard of," Jennifer explains. "It's a super cool collection of what I would call contemporary, but not necessarily academic creative writing. More 'of the people.'" The magazines come in all shapes and sizes, some large and bound, others smaller and pocket sized. This, she hopes, will introduce students to different types of literary magazines, beyond the big, well-known magazines.

The main way that most faculty learn about literary magazines is through large annual writing conferences like the Association for Writers and Writing Programs. "Undergraduates can go, but it costs a lot of money," says Jennifer. "We haven't yet found a way to fund the conference for undergraduates." This library will bring the fruits of the conference to the students.

In the future, Jennifer plans to continue encouraging her students to add to the library. "We do ask that people not take the magazines but instead just read them on the second floor. The entire library could be checked out for a class period if any faculty are interested in doing that. I really hope that people will take advantage of the opportunity," she comments.