Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) is a small group of dedicated students that have been working to promote and recreate one of the primary Student/Faculty workspaces in the Communication and Journalism Department, known as the Communication and Journalism Center (CJC).

Research and survey data indicates that students are unaware the CJC is a learning space for students. The Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) collaborators want to share their passion for multimedia (photo, video, design) and engage students and their peers in a safe, togetherness environment to both learn and apply multimedia skills outside of the classroom using creative freedom.

Third spaces, coined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg, offer folks an opportunity for daily communal sociability. Third spaces are essential to develop positive wellbeing and a sense of belonging. PAL will organize design/multimedia activities for students which will create opportunities for students to enhance collaboration, social, and technical skills. PAL’s role is welcome, support, and encourage students not unlike a small town shop owner helping a customer solve a home repair. Studies have shown that when working with peer mentors, students are more open to ask questions and seek advice.

Our next step with the CJC in Fall 2022 is to create multiple accessible multimedia activities for student engagement in a creative learning community. This includes, but is not limited to: the radio studio, the broadcast studio, the photo lab and photography studio, and the general open area within the arena. CJ clubs have been suffering from a lack of wider interest within the student body after the pandemic and an accessible venue for students not in the program may boost interest in clubs that are integral to the CJC center. Projects created in Fall 2022 will culminate into an exhibition which will be open to the larger campus community.

Survey Data Highlights

143 Survey Participants

- 53.1% have not been to the CJC prior to taking the survey
- 92.2% are interested in learning with peers in the CJC
- 43% are very likely to return to the CJC if changes are made

“Right now, the CJC just feels like a very formal gallery workspace, and I find that it is not currently set up in a way that allows collaboration or creativity.”
- Student submission

Faculty Mentors:
- Ellen Mahaffy & Dr. Mary Worley

Students:
- Jordan Allen, Anders Aspenes, Monica Chaplock, Alanna Espinoza, Amanda Keiser, Joel Kante, Sammy Wrogé

“Supported by the Student/Faculty Research Collaboration program with Blugold Commitment Differential Tuition funds.”

University Printing Services

We acknowledge that UW-Eau Claire occupies the sacred and ancestral lands of Indigenous Peoples. We honor the land of the Ojibwe and Dakota Nations.