ENGLISH

Departmental Guidelines

The English curriculum is intended to serve the general needs of the liberal arts student and also provide discerning programs for the more specialized needs of students who want to major in English with an emphasis in literature or creative writing. In the last thirty years, English literary studies have changed in response to new theoretical and cultural models as well as greater attention to Anglophone international and non-canonical literature and genres. In our courses and major we approach the study of language and literature as a dynamic, living, and lively pursuit, one that integrates political, social, philosophical, cultural, and aesthetic values. We have designed a program that meets a variety of needs and enables students to pursue a variety of personal and professional goals, whether defined by individual or collaborative intent, subject breadth or depth, instructional model, source engagement, writing development, or other pedagogical features. The faculty in English participate actively in the Writing Program and in the college's many interdisciplinary programs, including Global Commerce, Journalism, Women's and Gender Studies, Black Studies, Queer Studies, International Studies, and Sustainability & Environmental Studies.

All students may enjoy readings and lectures made possible by the endowed Harriet Ewens Beck Fund, which has brought such writers as Min Jin Lee, Billy Collins, Terrance Hayes, Hanif Abdurraqib, Silas House, Mary Ruefle, Ada Limon, and Steven Millhauser for visits or residencies each year. In addition, the Dr. Nan Nowik Writer-in-Residence Endowed Fund enables the department to host one high-profile writer for an extended residency every two or three academic years. The curriculum in English is also enhanced by a variety of opportunities for students to pursue publishing their works locally in a variety of student-edited journals, including ARTICULĀTE (a forum for cultural and literary criticism) and EXILE (a journal of creative writing).

Mission Statement

The faculty of the English Department seeks to help students improve their abilities to read, write, and think critically and creatively. Through the study of literature and the instruction of writing in various forms, we endeavor to promote in our majors and minors both a deep understanding of our discipline and an active use of its practices. As a faculty, we recognize and encourage among ourselves a variety of pedagogical and critical approaches to literature and writing. Moreover, we feel that our students should experience and comprehend these different schools of theory and application. Thus, in the course of their studies in our department, students are exposed to the traditional canon of British and American literature as well as to noncanonical texts in the Anglophone tradition; asked to apply a variety of critical approaches from traditional close reading to recent postmodern methods of investigation; required to write with style and acumen; and motivated to examine, question, and challenge their own moment and situation in literary and cultural history.