

ENGLISH AT LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

The English Department at Lawrence offers students the opportunity to develop their skill at critical reading, writing, and analysis—skills that can be applied not only to “literary” texts but also to the texts and images produced by the cultures that surround us.

Balancing a solid grounding in the study of literary history with training in contemporary critical methodologies, the English major prepares students for a wide range of career possibilities. Course offerings in the English Department include analysis of British, American, and Postcolonial cultures. Courses in postcolonial studies focus primarily on South Asia and Africa.

Majors, minors, and non-majors can choose from course offerings in literature, literary theory, and creative writing, including classes focusing on Renaissance drama, the history of the book, the English novel, the Harlem Renaissance, the culture of the American Civil War, and literature and human rights, among other topics; courses in creative writing include workshops in writing poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. Many of our courses draw on interdisciplinary approaches, reading literary texts in relation to historical documents, music, visual images, or film.

English is one of the largest and liveliest majors on campus, and English majors typically have wide-ranging intellectual interests. Some students combine their study of literature with work in the natural or social sciences, while others pursue work in other languages or in the fine or performing arts. The English major provides students with the analytic abilities they need to make connections between and among different fields.

English majors from Lawrence have gone on to do graduate work in literature and creative writing, as well as to careers in film, television, music, medicine, law, journalism, publishing, software design, and teaching. If your intellectual curiosities and enthusiasms focus on reading and writing, then English might be the right major for you.

CREATIVE WRITING

Creative writing is a particularly active program at Lawrence. The department offers beginning and advanced courses in poetry, fiction, and non-fiction writing, and many of our majors take at least one of these courses before graduation. English majors often find that the experience of being in a creative writing workshop helps to deepen their understanding of literature.

Many creative writing courses offer students the opportunity to work with visiting writers and to read from their own work in public. Interested students can also submit their creative work for honors in independent study. Recently several students have earned honors for their work on poetry manuscripts and longer works of fiction.

THE ENGLISH MAJOR

Students completing the major in English frequently also pursue a second major, combining English with theatre or music, history or philosophy, government or psychology.

Most majors begin their study of English with Literary Analysis, a course that emphasizes close reading and analytical writing. At the intermediate level, majors take at least two Major Writers courses. Spanning two to three centuries of literary history, these courses include study of writers such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Aphra Behn, Wordsworth, Keats, Charlotte Bronte, Emerson, Thoreau, Dickinson, Frederick Douglass, Virginia Woolf, Willa Cather, Langston Hughes, Joan Didion, and Toni Morrison, among others.

All majors are also required to take a course on Shakespeare and to explore a variety of literary traditions at the advanced level. Advanced courses recently offered in the department include Restoration and 18th-Century Comedy, Romanticism, Gender and Modernism, Representing War in American Literature, Contemporary American Fiction, and Narratives of International News, among others.

During your career at Lawrence, you may pursue tutorials or independent studies, working closely with faculty members on topics of special interest. Independent study may result in a senior honors thesis.

INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS

Faculty from the English department are involved in a number of other programs on campus, and English majors often participate in these programs as well.

The interdisciplinary program in linguistics allows you to examine the structure of the English language and its relation to other languages. In addition to courses in historical and descriptive linguistics, you can choose from classes in psychology, anthropology, philosophy, and, of course, the foreign languages.

Gender Studies encourages you to examine such varied issues as the images of men and women in literature and the arts, the psychology of gender identity, and sex roles in the family and in society from the Middle Ages to the present. Ethnic Studies allows you to consider the impact of various ideas about race and ethnicity, as well as the experience of particular ethnic groups.

CAMPUS PUBLICATIONS

If you have an interest in journalism, you can develop your skills by working for the *Lawrentian*, the student-produced weekly newspaper. The paper includes campus news articles, as well as editorials, features, sports, and arts and entertainment. The paper is

completely student-produced and has positions open for reporters, editors, managers, and photographers.

If you have an interest in creative writing, you can write or edit works for Lawrence's literary magazine, *Tropos*, an annual publication of students' poems, art work, and short stories. The staff members of *Tropos* also organize literary workshops and readings and may also publish a 'zine at various times during the year.

VISITING WRITERS SERIES

The English Department at Lawrence regularly hosts visiting writers on campus. Typically a visiting writer will meet with students in a number of informal settings—including discussion sessions, one-on-one meetings, and class visits—as well as giving a reading from her work. In the past several years, such events have included talks and readings by Kevin Brockmeier, Billy Collins, Robert Creeley, Jane Hamilton, Salman Rushdie, Cole Swensen, Elizabeth Robinson, Jill McCorkle, Willard Spiegelman, Lyn Hejinian, Rebecca Wolff, and Alyson Hagy among others.

AFTER LAWRENCE

An English major offers solid preparation in critical writing and thinking, skills that are valued in a wide range of professional settings. Some of our graduates enter the fields most often associated with English, becoming teachers, editors, and journalists. But Lawrence English majors have also gone on to careers as movie actors, indie rockers, and network news correspondents. Here's what some of our recent graduates are doing.

Madhuri Vijay, '09, graduated with majors in English and Psychology. She was awarded a Watson Fellowship to spend a year abroad exploring the Indian diaspora. In 2010, she joined Andrew Graff, '09, at the University of Iowa Writers Workshop.

Leila Sahar, '08, is pursuing her J.D. at Georgetown University School of Law.

Julia Callander, '07, graduated with majors in English and Music. She is currently enrolled in the English Ph.D. program at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Katherine Kirkland, '07, is Marketing Manager at *The New Yorker* magazine.

Timothy Anne Burnside, '02, is a research assistant at the National Museum of African-American History at the Smithsonian Institute.

Annie Dude, '99, graduated with majors in English and Biology. She is finishing an M.D./Ph.D. program at the University of Chicago, has published an article on HIV in India, and was awarded the 2009 first prize essay on global health by Smart Global Health.org.

Rebecca Whelan, '96, majored in chemistry as well as in English and is now assistant professor of chemistry at Oberlin College. In 1999, her outstanding work as a teaching assistant at Stanford earned her the Walter J. Gores Award.

Mike Spofford, '94, graduated with majors in English and Spanish. He holds an M.S.J. from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and currently works for the public relations department of the Green Bay Packers.

FACULTY

Faith Barrett, associate professor of English
Swarthmore College, B.A.; University of Iowa, M.F.A.; University of California, Berkeley, M.A., Ph.D.
Interests: 19th-century American culture, 19th and 20th century American poetry, literary theory, creative writing (poetry)

Garth Bond, assistant professor of English
Trinity University, B.A.; University of Chicago, M.A.
Interests: Renaissance literature, Shakespeare, poetry and drama, film

Mark Dintenfass, professor
Columbia University, B.A., M.A.; University of Iowa, M.F.A.
Interests: prose fiction, film, American literature, theatre directing, drama

Karen Hoffmann, associate professor
Lawrence University, B.A.; Indiana University, M.A., Ph.D.
Interests: British and American modernist fiction; gender and modernism; African American literature.

Lena Khor, assistant professor
Middlebury College, B.A.; University of Texas at Austin, M.A., Ph.D.
Interests: Contemporary world Anglophone literature, human rights discourses, postcolonial studies

David McGlynn, assistant professor
University of California-Irvine, B.A.; University of Utah, M.F.A., Ph.D.
Interests: fiction and nonfiction writing, contemporary American literature, autobiography

Timothy Spurgin, associate professor and Bonnie Glidden Buchanan Professor of English Literature
Carleton College, B.A.; University of Virginia, M.A., Ph.D.
Interests: Victorian fiction, Dickens, literary theory, cultural studies