

The English Major in Writing

THE CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM (The English Major in Writing), an undergraduate concentration within the English Department at Northwestern University, teaches the writing of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, as well as courses that cross genres. By asking students to examine poems and prose works with the eye of a writer, and by encouraging students to apprentice themselves, as energetically as possible, to the best literary models, the Creative Writing Faculty hope to help promising artists in their craft, as well as to educate the discerning readers of the future. Some features of this unique and rigorous undergraduate program include the intensive writing course-sequence, the senior honors program, the cross-genre minor track, and the Annual Spring Writers' Festival.

Admission to the English Major in Writing and the Sequence-Based Minor is competitive. The application process takes place in the spring quarter.

Requirements of the English Major in Writing

Two Introductory Courses (2 credits):

206 Reading & Writing Poetry **AND EITHER**
207 Reading & Writing Fiction **OR**
208 Reading & Writing Creative Nonfiction

Year-long Writing Sequence (3 credits):

393 Theory & Practice of Poetry **OR**
394 Theory & Practice of Fiction **OR**
395 Theory & Practice of CNF

Third-Genre Introductory Course (1 credit):

Students must take the introductory course they have not previously taken (English 207 or 208).

392 The Situation of Writing (1 credit)

Six 300-level English literature classes (6 credits):

2 on material written prior to 1798
2 on material written after 1798
2 from any era

Two non-literature Related Courses (2 credits):

Courses from other department(s) that broaden a student's background for the study of literature. These courses must be approved by a creative writing advisor.

THE SEQUENCES: Theory and Practice of Poetry (393), Fiction (394), and Creative Nonfiction (395) These sequences ask students to pursue a year-long program that includes close reading of literary texts, explication and critical writing, imitation and modeling, and original creative work. Departing from Northwestern's typical quarter system, the sequences are arranged in two consecutive semesters. They begin in the fall semester with specialized courses in the fundamental technical and rhetorical bases of each genre. Poetry students study the uses of metaphor and mode, and the theory of prosody (including both the major form of poetry in English—accentual-syllabic verse—and the minor forms-- accentual, syllabic, and free verse). Fiction students consider the tenets of realism and its alternatives, and practice different approaches to style, characterization, structural rhythm, and point of view. Creative nonfiction students focus on essay forms, logical method, authorial tone, and techniques of discourse and description. In all genres, imitations and models of estimable writers are assigned. The second semester in each genre, with a second instructor, is devoted to intensive writing of a longer original work—a poem of at least 120 lines or an essay/novella of 50 to 70 pages.

The Sequence-Based Minor in Writing

Requirements of the Sequence-Based English Minor in Writing

Two Introductory Courses (2 credits):

206 Reading & Writing Poetry **AND EITHER**
207 Reading & Writing Fiction **OR**
208 Reading & Writing Creative Nonfiction

Year-long Writing Sequence (3 credits):

393 Theory & Practice of Poetry **OR**
394 Theory & Practice of Fiction **OR**
395 Theory & Practice of CNF

Two 300-level English literature classes (2 credits):

1 on material written prior to 1798
1 on material written post-1798

The Cross-Genre Minor in Writing

Students not pursuing a creative writing minor through one of the year-long sequences have a way to minor in writing that provides advanced training in a core genre as well as opening up the curriculum to the crossing of genres. There are a variety of new courses to choose from, including one-term core genre workshops on the advanced level offered by distinguished visitors both in the Center for the Writing Arts and by continuing appointments in the English Department such as fiction-writer Stuart Dybek, poet Ed Roberson, and the Blattner Visiting Professors in Fiction; a "creative" option for some literature courses taught by Creative Writing Faculty; and the option of stepping outside the core genre to explore a course that combines genres.

Requirements of the Cross-Genre Minor in Writing

Two Introductory Courses (2 credits):

206 Reading & Writing Poetry **AND EITHER**
207 Reading & Writing Fiction **OR**
208 Reading & Writing Creative Nonfiction

Two Core Courses in the same genre from (2 credits):

Poetry: English 306 or Writing 302
Fiction: English 307 or Writing 301
Creative Nonfiction: English 308 or Writing 303

One Course in a different genre from (1 credit):

Poetry: English 306 or Writing 302
Fiction: English 307 or Writing 301
Creative Nonfiction: English 308 or Writing 303
Cross-Genre: English 307

Two 300-level English literature classes

1 on material written prior to 1798
1 on material written post-1798

For more information about the English Major in Writing or the Sequence-Based and Cross-Genre Minors in Writing visit our website:

www.english.northwestern.edu

The Spring Writers Festival

The Creative Writing Program hosts a week-long festival of writers who give master classes, readings and participate in a "guided discussion" on the challenges of their genres.

During the week of April 9, 2012 all creative writing classes will participate in the Writers' Festival with:



Kate Daniels
Poetry



ZZ Packer
Fiction



Jane Brox
Creative Nonfiction



Major Honors in Creative Writing

Students who are completing the advanced year-long Theory and Practice sequence in their major genre (poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction), and who have kept up with their other Writing Major requirements, may apply to work toward honors during their senior year. The final project is a significant creative writing, creative media, or literary translation work, sustained over two quarters of 399 Independent Study.

During these two quarters, admitted students have the opportunity to work one-on-one with a faculty mentor and to engage more deeply with their forms and materials as they complete an ambitious original undertaking, which may be submitted for departmental honors.

Blattner Fellows

The English Department and the Creative Writing Program periodically host an emerging fiction writer who holds the Simon Blattner Visiting Assistant Professorship in Creative Writing.

Past Blattner fellows include John Keene (2001), Aleksander Hemon (2003), Tara Ison (2005), Miles Harvey (2006), Naeem Murr, Suki Kim (2008), Patrick Somerville (2009), Cristina Henriquez (2010).

This fall (2011) the Blattner Fellow will be Goldie Goldbloom



Goldie Goldbloom was born in Western Australia but currently lives in Chicago, Illinois with her eight children and her cat. She has a thing for lying on her back and watching the sky in winter. She also likes to walk barefoot in mud.

For close to twenty years, she worked as a teacher in both high school and elementary school, and as a particular kind of nerdy librarian. Some of her first jobs were cooking vast quantities of apple sauce, cracking open eggs for a bakery and weaving in the loose threads of cardigans. Of the various things she's studied, she particularly enjoys botany and midwifery. She is a chassidic Jew. Studying at the Warren Wilson MFA

Program for Writers was one of the highlights of her life and she hopes to continue on to do her Ph.D. Goldie is a mentor and writing teacher for queer and transgender youth.

Her short fiction has appeared in Narrative Magazine, StoryQuarterly and Prairie Schooner, and was anthologized in The Kid on the Karaoke Stage and Windy City Queer.

Her collection of short stories, You Lose These and other stories, was published by Fremantle Press.

Her non-fiction was anthologized in the groundbreaking Keep Your Wives Away from Them: Orthodox Women, Unorthodox Desires.

Her novel, The Paperbark Shoe, won both the AWP Novel Award (2008) and the Great Lakes College Association's New Writer's Award (2011). It is published by Picador in the US and UK, and has appeared in French translation.

Faculty for the English Major in Writing

Eula Biss, Continuing Lecturer. Eula Biss is the author of *The Balloonists* (Hanging Loose 2002) and *Notes from No Man's Land: American Essays* (Graywolf 2009). She holds a B.A. in nonfiction writing from Hampshire College and a M.F.A. in nonfiction writing from the University of Iowa. Her work is currently supported by a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Howard Foundation Fellowship and has been recognized by a Jaffe Writers' Award, a 21st Century Award from the Chicago Public Library, a Pushcart Prize, and a National Book Critics Circle Award. Her essays have recently appeared in *The Best American Nonrequired Reading* (Houghton Mifflin 2009), *The Best Creative Nonfiction* (Norton 2007) and the *Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Nonfiction* (Simon & Schuster 2007) as well as in *The Believer*, *Gulf Coast*, *Columbia*, *Ninth Letter*, the *North American Review*, the *Iowa Review*, the *Seneca Review*, and *Harper's*.

Brian Bouldrey, Senior Lecturer. Brian Bouldrey, is the author, most recently, of *The Sorrow of the Elves* (GemmaMedia, 2010). He has written three nonfiction books: *Honorable Bandit: A Walk Across Corsica* (University of Wisconsin Press, September 2007), *Monster: Adventures in American Machismo* (Council Oak Books), and *The Autobiography Box* (Chronicle Books); three novels, *The Genius of Desire* (Ballantine), *Love, the Magician* (Harrington Park), and *The Boom Economy* (University of Wisconsin Press), and he is the editor of several anthologies. He is recipient of Fellowships from Yaddo and Eastern Frontier Society, and the Joseph Henry Jackson Award from the San Francisco Foundation, a Lambda Literary Award, and the Western Regional Magazine Award. He is the North American Editor of the Open Door literacy series for GemmaMedia. Teaches fiction, creative nonfiction, and literature.

John Bresland, Artist in Residence. Bresland works in video, radio, and print. His audio essays have aired on public radio's Weekend America, and his video essays can be seen at *Ninth Letter*, *Blackbird*, and *The Fourth Genre*, an anthology of contemporary creative nonfiction. His print essays can be read at *North American Review*, *Brevity*, and elsewhere. He is the recipient of the Tamarack Award for Fiction, a Ludwig Vogelstein Foundation fellowship, and his essays were twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Bresland teaches creative writing, filmmaking, and digital production.

Averill Curdy, Continuing Lecturer. M.F.A. University of Houston, Ph.D. University of Missouri. She was awarded both a Creative Writing and a Gregory Fellowship. Co-editor of the *Longman Anthology of Poetry*. Her poems and translations have appeared widely. In 2007, she received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Illinois Arts Council, as well as a residency fellowship from the Lannan Foundation. Teaches poetry.

Sheila P. Donohue, Distinguished Senior Lecturer. Sheila P. Donohue received her M.F.A. from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she was a Randall Jarrell Fellow and served as poetry editor and production manager for *The Greensboro Review*. A former Wallace Stegner Fellow and Jones Lecturer in Poetry at Stanford University, she is a recipient of an Academy of American Poets prize and several nominations for a Pushcart Prize. Her work has appeared in numerous literary magazines, including *The Threepenny Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The New England Review*, *TriQuarterly*, and *Epoch*. She teaches poetry and fiction in the undergraduate major and in the MA/MFA program.

Stuart Dybek, Distinguished Writer in Residence. Graduate of Loyola University of Chicago and the University of Iowa. Professor of English at Western Michigan University from 1974 to 2006. Author of three books of fiction: *Childhood and Other Neighborhoods* (1980), *The Coast of Chicago* (1990), *I Sailed with Magellan* (2003), and two collections of poems. His work has appeared in the *New Yorker*, *Harpers Magazine*, the *Paris Review*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*, among many others. Awards include a Whiting Foundation Fellowship, a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, an NEA fellowship, the Nelson Algren Award, a PEN/Malamud Award, and a lifetime achievement award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2007 he was awarded a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. Teaches fiction.

Reginald Gibbons, Professor. (Ph.D. Stanford University, Comparative Literature) is a poet, fiction writer, translator, literary critic, artist, and Professor of English, Classics, and Spanish and Portuguese. In 2011-12, he is a (short-term) Fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies (Harvard) in Washington D.C. In 2010 he published *Slow Trains Overhead: Chicago Poems and Stories* (Univ. of Chicago); his book of poems, *Creatures of a Day* (LSU Press, 2008), was a Finalist for the 2008 National Book Award. In 2008 he also published a volume of new translations of Sophocles, *Selected Poems: Odes and Fragments* (Princeton); he has recently completed a stint as a columnist for *American Poetry Review*. From 1981 to 1997, he served as the editor of *TriQuarterly* magazine, an international journal of new writing, art and cultural inquiry published at Northwestern; during that time, in addition to general issues of the magazine, he published special issues of writing from South Africa,

Faculty Continued

Spain, Poland and Mexico. He also co-founded and edited *TriQuarterly Books*, an imprint for contemporary writing at Northwestern University Press.

John Keene, Associate Professor. A.B. Harvard College, M.F.A. New York University. Author of the award-winning novel *Annotations* (New Directions, 1995), and, with artist Christopher Stackhouse, of the poetry collection *Seismosis* (1913 Press, 2006). He has published his fiction, poetry, essays, and translations in a wide array of journals, including *African-American Review*, *Gay and Lesbian Review*, *Indiana Review*, and *New American Writing*, and in anthologies such as *Giant Steps*, *Shade*, *Step into a World*, and *Other Countries III: Voices Rising*. Recipient of fellowships from the New York Times Foundation, Yaddo, and the Bread Loaf Writers Conference. He was Northwestern's inaugural Simon Blattner Visiting Assistant Professor of Fiction in 2001. His current projects include a new novel, a book of short stories, and translations of poetry and fiction by Brazilian, Dominican, and Francophone writers. Teaches fiction.

Mary Kinzie, Professor, and Director of Creative Writing. Mary Kinzie, poet and critic, M.A. Johns Hopkins University, Writing Seminars (fiction), Ph.D. Johns Hopkins, English. Author of seven poetry collections, including *Summers of Vietnam*, *Autumn Eros*, and her recent collection of poems and lyrical essays *California Sorrow* (Knopf). Two volumes of critical essays, *The Cure of Poetry in an Age of Prose* (Chicago) and *The Judge Is Fury* (University of Michigan "Poets on Poetry" series), were followed by *A Poet's Guide to Poetry* (Chicago), a critical handbook on poetry and prosody. Recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in Poetry, and the Folger Shakespeare Library's O. B., Hardison Poetry Award. She teaches poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction.

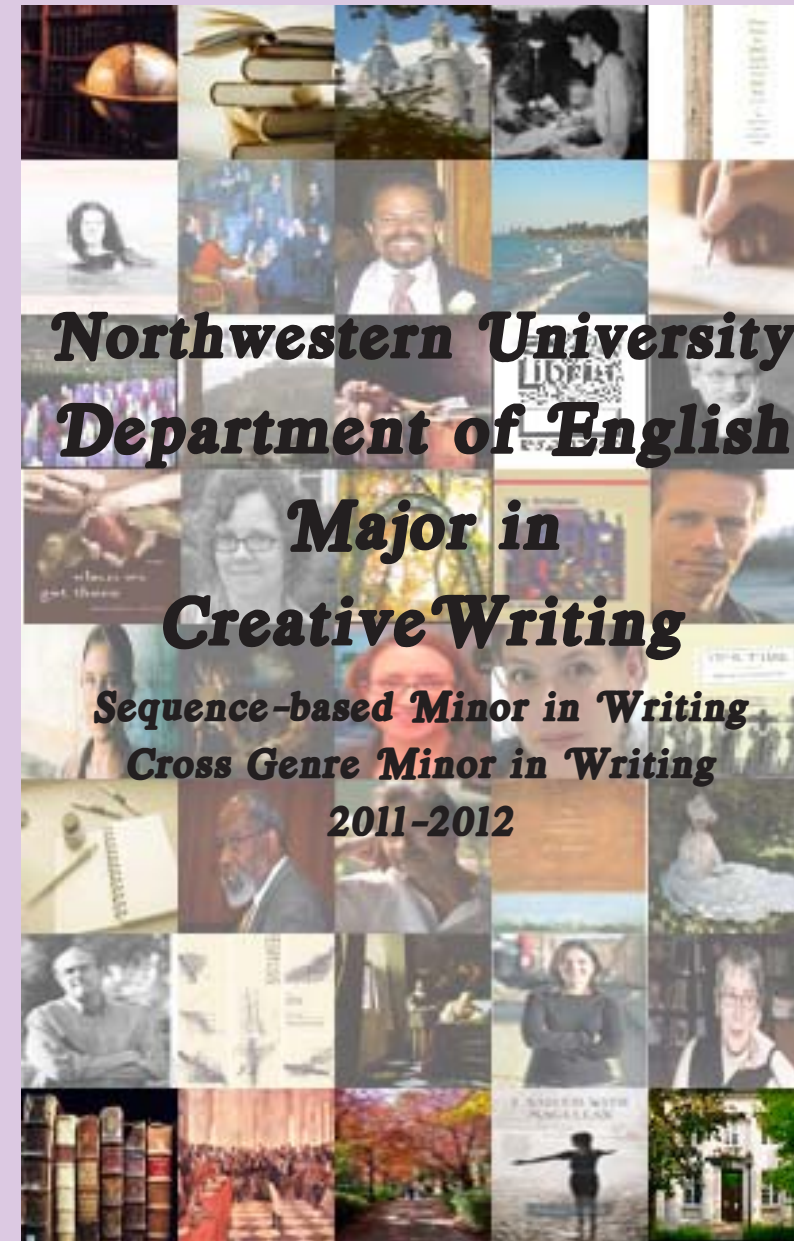
Ed Roberson, Distinguished Artist in Residence. Taught from 1990 – 2003 at Rutgers University and from 2004-2006 at Columbia College Chicago. Received the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America in 2008. In March, 2008, Roberson was one of three writers honored at the recent conference "Literature, Culture, & Critique," organized for and about African American writers by *Callaloo* magazine, the preeminent journal of African, African-American, African Diasporic letters and culture. Teaches Poetry.

Shauna Seliy, Artist in Residence. B.A. University of Pennsylvania; M.F.A. University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Author of the novel *When We Get There* (Bloomsbury USA and UK 2007). She has received fellowships from Yaddo and the MacDowell Colony, and is a recipient of the Mary Roberts Rinehart National Award for emerging writers. From 2003-2004 she was the Writer-in-Residence at St. Albans School in Washington D.C. Her work has appeared in *Other Voices*, *Meridian*, the *New Orleans Review*, and the *Alaska Quarterly Review*. Teaches fiction and creative nonfiction.

Rachel Jamison Webster, Artist in Residence, Rachel Jamison Webster (M.F.A. Warren Wilson) has published poetry and essays in print and online journals such as *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, *Redivider*, *Perihelion* and *Blackbird*. She is currently sending out two poetry manuscripts for publication and enjoying the release of a chapbook, *The Blue Grotto* (Dancing Girl Press 2009). She edits an online anthology of international poetry, *UniVerse of Poetry*, which aims to widen poetry's audience and celebrate poets from every nation in the world, regardless of territory. Rachel is the recipient of an Academy of American Poets Young Poets Prize and an American Association of University Women Award, the latter for her implementation of writing workshops for homeless youth in Portland, Oregon. From 1998-2001 she worked closely with Chicago's First Lady Maggie Daley to establish literary arts apprenticeships for city teens. In this capacity, she edited two anthologies of writing by young people, *Alchemy* (2001) and *Paper Atrium* (2004). Teaches poetry.

Other Program Features

Contributing to the lively atmosphere for undergraduate writers at Northwestern are several publishing and academic initiatives, including the student run and published PROMPT literary magazine. The University-wide Center for the Writing Arts also hosts visitors for entire terms. Writing by students at Northwestern is recognized by the award-winning student literary magazine, *Helicon*, and by the Department of English Annual Writing Competition.



Northwestern University Department of English Major in Creative Writing Sequence-based Minor in Writing Cross Genre Minor in Writing 2011-2012

www.english.northwestern.edu

