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## **Bennington Writing Seminars Launches Residential Teaching Term; Cockrel Selected as Inaugural Fellow**

**Bennington, VT:** Lisa Ann Cockrel, a third-term MFA candidate in nonfiction, has been selected as the first [Residential Teaching Fellow](#) at the [Bennington Writing Seminars](#). The fellowship is the first of its kind in the country to offer full-time undergraduate teaching experience in a low-residency MFA format. Benefits include full tuition remission for one term, room and board, and enrollment in an on-campus class.

Applications to the Bennington Writing Seminars are due by [September 1, 2018](#).

As the Residential Teaching Fellow, Cockrel will work in the classroom for a full term beginning in Fall 2018. She'll assist Bennington faculty member [Manuel Gonzales](#) in his course, "Screenwriting: Scene and Structure." Her responsibilities will include grading, advising, assisting in the development of course materials, guest lecturing, and research.

The fellowship is open to Bennington MFA students in their second, third or fourth term. Students receive mentorship from the on-campus faculty member with whom they are teaching, as well as from the faculty mentor with whom they are working on their manuscript. Cockrel is working with faculty member [Melissa Febos](#).

"We are thrilled to offer this unique and necessary teaching experience to our MFA students and to have Lisa as our first Fellow," said Mark Wunderlich, Director of the Bennington Writing Seminars. "No other low-residency MFA program in the country offers full-time teaching opportunities of this nature to current students, who will also gain experience in arts administration or editorial work thanks to our unique partnerships with [The Robert Frost Stone House Museum](#), [The Bennington Review](#), and [Poetry@Bennington](#)."

For the past three years, Cockrel has been the director of the Festival of Faith & Writing at Calvin College, curating conversations with authors including Zadie Smith, George Saunders, Robin Coste Lewis, Paul Harding, Edwidge Danticat, Jamie Quatro MFA '09, Mary Ruefle '74, M.T. Anderson, Peter Ho Davies, Joy Williams, Kwame Alexander, Kirstin Valdez Quade, and

Marie Howe. She also hosted and co-produced season one of [Rewrite Radio](#), a podcast featuring recordings from the festival's archives. Prior to that, Cockrel spent 15 years as an editor for magazines and then books.

"Manuel is an excellent writer and teacher, and I'm thrilled to learn all I can from him this semester," said Cockrel. "Plus, as much as I enjoy our MFA residencies, I think it will be great fun to experience the lively literary scene that Bennington hosts when undergraduates are on campus."

Cockrel grew up in small-town Texas and spent ten years in Chicago but comes to Bennington from Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she's lived for the last decade. When not reading and writing, she can usually be found swimming in Lake Michigan or taking in live music. Follow her on Twitter [@lacockrel](#).

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### **About the Bennington Writing Seminars**

Steeped in the Bennington College's literary legacy, [Bennington Writing Seminars](#) is consistently named one of the top low-residency Masters of Fine Arts in Writing programs. Founded in 1994, the Seminars was one of the first low-residency graduate writing programs in the country. During this two-year, low-residency program, students commit as much to reading as to writing and conceive reading lists that strengthen and broaden their knowledge. Students perform critical literary analysis and craft bold new works of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry inspired by their discoveries. They finish with a polished thesis and a parting lecture. All this with the expert guidance of authors who, throughout individualized instruction, become familiar with and develop a stake in students' work.

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