

ANNOUNCING

THE BENNINGTON WRITING SEMINARS

AT BENNINGTON COLLEGE

◆
FICTION
NONFICTION
POETRY
◆

*MA/MFA in Writing
and Literature*

*Two-year
low-residency program*

THE BENNINGTON WRITING SEMINARS

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Through the Bennington Writing Seminars, Bennington College offers a low-residency Master of Arts/Master of Fine Arts (M.A./M.F.A.) Program in Writing and Literature. This two-year degree program involves intense 10-day residency periods at Bennington's Green Mountain campus during January and August of each year. Between residencies, students spend the six-month semesters corresponding directly with faculty who teach as part of the program's core staff. Additional faculty participate as associate staff during the residency period, conducting five-day seminars, looking for the sources by which writers discover, extend, and transform their traditions, teaching literature from a writer's point of view. Residencies also feature other guests, readings, lectures, and discussions of what in fact constitutes the world of contemporary letters.

In keeping with Bennington's progressive tradition, the Seminars are largely self-structured. Students, in consort with teachers, form their own reading list and course of study, submitting original work—fiction, nonfiction, and poetry—for critique at regular intervals throughout the semester. The tutorial is at the heart of the program, as it is at the heart of Bennington College, and the periods of correspondence are punctuated by the twice-yearly Bennington residencies, affording time for students, core faculty, and associate faculty—along with visiting writers, publishers, and editors—to come together for workshops, lectures, and discussion. During the residencies students also confer directly with faculty to set up their course of study for the coming semester.

THE LOW-RESIDENCY FORMAT

The low-residency format and pedagogy allow emerging writers to study and hone their craft under the tutelage of nationally-renowned writer/teachers, while maintaining continuity with their communities, jobs, and families. Students in the program correspond one-to-one with teacher/mentors throughout the year, completing an individualized course of study over the two-year period.

CORE FACULTY

Susan Dodd

Maria Flook

David Lehman

Jill McCorkle

Liam Rector

Stephen Sandy

ASSOCIATE FACULTY

Sven Birkerts

Lucie Brock-Broido

Donald Hall

Edward Hoagland

Charles Johnson

Jane Kenyon

Bret Lott

Sue Miller

Katha Pollitt

Tree Swenson

Plus readings

panels, and

symposia

Students are expected to devote at least 25 hours each week to their writing and reading, and a successfully completed semester's project is granted 16 hours of graduate credit. To receive the M.F.A., each student will create a manuscript of fiction, nonfiction, or poetry. The degree awarded, M.A. or M.F.A., will depend on whether the emphasis is on creative or critical work; in all cases, students will be expected to explore both and to complete a major independent written project.

PROVIDING A VORTEX

Generating original work, whether creative or interpretive, is the focus of the program. In the Seminars, the conventional divide between reading and writing disappears: people read in order to write and write in order to read. Our aim is to educate and provide a vortex for persons of letters, helping students discover the literary traditions and innovations which inspire, animate, inform, and propel original work. We will also examine contributions that may be made as essayists, reviewers, commentators, editors, and in other roles that together constitute a life in letters.

The Bennington Seminars offers an ongoing community of kindred spirits and constructive counsel, honoring the solitary nature of reading and writing and the collaborative voices of education. The low student/faculty ratio assures close attention to each student's work and progress.

WRITERS AT BENNINGTON

Bennington College has long been a home for artists-in-residence—writers, dancers, musicians, painters, theater folk, scientists—where the act of teaching is to invite students into the center of one's work. Writers who have taught at the College include, among others, W.H. Auden, Theodore Roethke, Kenneth Burke, Hortense Calisher, Stanley Edgar Hyman, Stanley Kunitz, Bernard Malamud, John Gardner, Jamaica Kincaid, Nicholas Delbanco, Howard Nemerov, Francis Fergusson, Ben Belitt, Joe McGinniss, Lore Segal, Stephen Sandy, and Edward Hoagland. In 1977 the Bennington Writing Workshops came into being, a month-long summer program whose participants have included more than 250 writers, editors, and publishers, among them John Ashbery, Grace Paley, Donald Barthelme, Frank Bidart, Susan Minot, John Cheever, John Irving, and Ellen Bryant Voigt.

The Bennington Writing Seminars is committed to the continuum of education. No writing program—or government, for that matter—can call great writing into being. But writing programs can

BENNINGTON

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aid those who have heard the call and are working to answer it. However one chooses to use the credential—teaching, further graduate work, or in the many other ways a graduate degree concentrates and deepens a life—our emphasis is on the broader and more fundamental concerns of the merits of the work at hand, and a participation in the life of letters.

ADMISSIONS

Admission to the Seminars is based primarily on the quality of original work submitted with the application and a statement of how you intend to use the program to shape your work. Normally a bachelor's degree is required, but this requirement can be waived if the quality of work submitted warrants an exception.

Semester costs, including room and board during the residency period, are \$4,250. Financial aid is available in the form of student loans.

*For more detailed
information on
the curriculum
or to request an
application form,
write or call:*

**Writing Programs Office
Bennington College
Bennington, VT 05201
802-442-5401, ext. 160
FAX: 802-442-6164**