



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

STUDENT EXPERIENCE



"Reading and writing have always been my two passions, and the English major at Connecticut College has allowed me to do what I love every day

and with great satisfaction. My freshman year I took a seminar called *England and the End of an Empire*, where we focused on recent British fiction and how it figured into a sense of British identity. After taking this class I knew that I wanted to spend the next four years enrolled in English courses analyzing and debating about literature.

A major in English is all-encompassing. One of my favorite English classes was *Shakespeare in Performance*, where we read plays and then attended performances at theaters ranging from the Yale Repertory Theatre to the Metropolitan Opera. I have also enjoyed taking creative writing classes, such as poetry and narrative nonfiction with Charles Hartman and Blanche Boyd, the College's poet- and writer-in-residence. Learning about writing from published authors has been an amazing experience.

I am on the English department Student Advisory Board, which is in charge of planning events for the majors and the department. I also work for the English department, assisting with office work as well as researching for professors. It has been my pleasure to be so involved with this department because it is truly unique."

— Caitlin Jackson '09

English

AS AN ENGLISH MAJOR at Connecticut College, you will be challenged to analyze, interpret and compose various forms of writing, ranging from poetry to fiction and prose nonfiction. Working with some of the most passionate and attentive scholars in the field, our students, in the words of Professor Blanche Boyd, learn to "think of a sentence as a Ferrari and ... drive it well."

Learning to read critically and imaginatively both enables and requires learning to write effectively. The department offers writing-intensive courses to the largest number of students at the College, both majors and non-majors. However, at Connecticut College, English majors don't just learn how to write. The department's core strength lies not only in its classical approach to the study of literature, but also in its ability to draw upon numerous disciplines to make your experience relevant to today's dynamic and globalized society. You may also combine the major with one of our interdisciplinary certificate programs in international studies, community action, environmental studies, or arts and technology.

Throughout your studies you will be asked to approach the analysis of works from throughout the 1,000-year history of English with an eye toward innovative interpretation and criticism. You can study literary works produced throughout the English-speaking world, from Britain to America, from the Caribbean to South Asia, developing a new perception of how literature transcends and crosses cultural boundaries. English faculty also reach across disciplines, helping students develop and hone the necessary writing and analytical skills to excel in any field, be it business, law or a life devoted to writing.

The English department is one of the largest at the College, with a faculty that is actively publishing, presenting and teaching. Although more than 50 students graduate each year as English majors, your experience in this department will be intimate and personalized. Most of our upper-level seminars are limited to 20 students or fewer, and our freshman classes are capped at 16.

Special Opportunities

The department offers a concentration in creative writing and has a writer-in-residence and a poet-in-residence, giving students access to gifted teachers who are prominent practitioners in their fields. In addition to your work within the classroom, you will have the opportunity to meet and speak with authors through our Klagsbrun Symposium on Writing and Moral Vision. This symposium has drawn writers such as Saul Bellow, Dorothy Allison, Wally Lamb and Sandra Cisneros to campus.

English majors may also pursue honors study, a yearlong writing project either on a critical topic or in creative writing. The Oakes and Louise Ames Prize for the most outstanding honors study at the College has gone to an English major five times in the award's 20-year history.

The department is establishing a concentration in race and ethnicity. Students who choose this concentration will explore literature in the context of social and political development since the Enlightenment. This concentration strengthens the department's relationship with the Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity.



Faculty

Theresa Ammirati, *Dean of Studies, Assistant Professor of English*

B.A., Douglass College, Rutgers University; M.A., Lehigh University; Ph.D., University of Rhode Island

American studies; 20th-century American literature; rhetoric and composition

Courtney Baker, *Assistant Professor of English*

B.A., Harvard University; Ph.D., Duke University, 2008

Film and visual culture; critical theory; cultural studies; African-American literature

Kenneth A. Bleeth, *Professor of English and Director of the Medieval Studies Program*

A.B., Harvard College; A.M., Ph.D., Harvard University

Medieval literature; Chaucer

Blanche McCrary Boyd,

Roman S. and Tatiana Weller Professor of English and Writer-in-Residence

B.A., Pomona College; M.A., Stanford University

Feminist fiction; creative writing (fiction and non-fiction)

Janet Gezari, *Lucy Marsh*

Haskell '19 Professor of English

B.A., Cornell University; M.Phil., Ph.D., Yale University

The English novel since Defoe; Victorian culture, poetry and fiction

John S. Gordon, *Professor of English*

B.A., Hamilton College; M.A., Ph.D., Harvard University

Modern British literature; James Joyce — *Finnegans Wake*; modern poetry and literature

David Greven, *Assistant Professor of English*

B.A., Hunter College; Ph.D., Brandeis University

Antebellum American literature; television; popular culture; film (Hitchcock, De Palma; the woman's film), melodrama; horror; film noir, 1970s film, sci-fi)

Charles O. Hartman, *Professor of English, Poet-in-Residence, Co-Director of Creative Writing Program, Chair of the English Department*

A.B., Harvard University; M.A., Ph.D., Washington University

Poetry writing; modern and contemporary poetry; prosody (metrics); music and poetry; computer arts

Simon Hay, *Assistant Professor of English*

B.A., M.Phil. (Dist.), Massey University; Ph.D., Duke University

Postcolonial literature and theory; 20th-century British and British-colonial

literature; critical theory

Philip E. Ray, *Associate Dean of Studies for Juniors and Seniors, Adviser to Transfer Students, Associate Professor of English*

B.A., Harvard College; M.A., Ph.D., Yale University

Science fiction; fantasy

Julie Rivkin, *Associate Dean of the Faculty, Professor of English*

B.A., Ph.D., Yale University

American literature; gender studies and contemporary literature; literary theory; Henry James

Steven Shoemaker, *Director of the Roth Writing Center, Assistant Professor of English*

B.S., University of Maryland; Ph.D., University of Virginia

20th-century American literature; writing and composition theory; intersections of literature, technology and science; literature and film; critical theory

Lina Wilder, *Assistant Professor of English*

B.A., University of Rochester; B.M., Eastman School of Music; M.Phil., Ph.D., Yale University

Shakespeare; Renaissance drama; 20th-century and postcolonial drama; performance studies

What can you do with a major in English?

Michael Griesinger '01

"I have been working as a program and field coordinator for the International Rescue Committee in several countries, including Chad, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire and Burundi. At Connecticut College I took a terrific Chaucer class with Professor Bleeth and I enjoyed Modern Poetry with Professor Gordon. I studied abroad in Toulouse, France, and Mysore, India. Studying abroad in India was a real eye-opener in terms of the developing world, poverty and seeing firsthand the difference in standard of living between the East and West."

Geoff Babbitt '03

"I received my M.F.A. in poetry from the University of Utah in 2005. Currently, I am working on my Ph.D. in creative writing at Utah, where I teach courses in English, creative writing and academic writing. I've published poetry in a number of literary journals, and I serve as an editorial assistant for *Quarterly West* and *Western Humanities Review*."

Grace Elizabeth Kendall '07

"After graduating, I attended the Columbia Publishing Course in New York City, a seven-week-long intensive professional program in the industry of publishing. From that course, I was offered a job at Scholastic Inc. to be the editorial assistant for the Blue Sky Press imprint. It's the best first job I could have hoped for and I'm looking forward to a long career in children's publishing."

Selected Courses

Dissenting Voices in American Fiction; Alien Beings, Alien Worlds; Narratives of Black Travel; Wicked Thoughts; Bob Dylan; Writing the Short Story; Hollywood After the Sixties; American Women Writers; Poetry of the Post-Modern Era; Milton; Race and Documentary Film; The Novel and Globalization; Shakespeare in Performance; The Literature of Passing; George Eliot and Virginia Woolf; The Films of Alfred Hitchcock; The Ghost Story: Genre, Theory, Politics; Significant Others: India and England; Medieval Narrative: Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College is a highly selective residential liberal arts college with 1,900 students from all over the country and the world. The academic program offers more than 50 majors in the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities as well as innovative interdisciplinary programs. Students engage with dedicated faculty and each other to create a vibrant social, cultural and intellectual community in which learning is valued for its own sake — and individuals' diverse perspectives enrich the experience of all.

For more information, visit
www.conncoll.edu/academics/