



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Master of Fine Arts In Writing

(MFAW)

Self- Study

Campus Visit
April 23-25, 2007

I. MISSION AND HISTORY

Mission

The mission of the MFA in Writing program is to nurture the artistic and intellectual development of writers, ground their work in an understanding of literary history, and prepare them to participate fully in the literary community. Since its inception, the program has focused on three genres—fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. The program attracts students because of three distinguishing characteristics: a high degree of faculty-student interaction, a workshop ethos that emphasizes generosity and mutual responsibility over competition, and craft-oriented literature courses taught by writers and geared to the concerns of writers. The program's structure and the close individual attention students receive in small classes help a literary community to flourish within the program, and active engagement with the thriving literary community of San Francisco is fostered by projects such as the student-run online journal and the Lone Mountain Reading Series.

The faculty members have a strong sense of collegiality, and their interaction with students and each other extends far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. The program structure also fosters a closely knit community. For example, all entering students enroll in the same team-taught course, which introduces them to each other and to the program's workshop ethos, and because classes are offered on the same evenings in the same location, students and faculty have more opportunities for informal contact that enriches instruction.

The program's mission, like that of the university itself, is to foster close student-teacher relationships that encompass a concern for the whole person—intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially, and psychologically. Like the University, the program welcomes and respects people of all faiths or of no religious belief, and recognizes and values the uniqueness of the individual. In its character the program honors core values of the university, particularly the commitment to learning as a humanizing social activity rather than a competitive exercise and the value placed on a diversity of perspectives, experiences, and traditions. In keeping with the University's mission, the program was founded to serve promising candidates with little or no training in the field and to encourage those who sought education for its own sake. The program continues to be receptive to students who might not fit conventional criteria but demonstrate the talent and intelligence to succeed. While today the program provides rigorous instruction for a more varied student population, the majority of whom are ambitious to publish their work, it has retained from its early days an idealistic sense of writing as a vocation, not just a career.

History

The program was originally conceived as an MA in Writing, part of the adult education curriculum offered in the College of Professional Studies (CPS), which serves a nontraditional student population of working adults. The writing program was initiated through a grant from the National Endowment for the

Humanities and was so successful that the University funded the program after the two-year grant expired. The program was designed to attract students who wanted to write but because of the demands of full-time jobs could not pursue graduate studies in a more conventional academic setting. Many were working professionals who pursued the degree for personal satisfaction, not career change. Evening courses were structured to make it possible for working adults to earn the degree; students took one four-hour class at a time for a nine-week semester, and the program ran year-round. In its earliest days, the program was staffed entirely by part-time faculty, and changes in personnel made it difficult to sustain coherence. Even the program's founding director, Anne Barrows, divided her time between administering the MA program and coordinating the undergraduate expository writing program.

In June 1988 the program was moved from the College of Professional Studies to the College of Arts and Sciences, and operates as an independent program. As is still true today, both literature courses and workshops were taught by practicing writers, so that the curriculum emphasized a craft focus essential for apprentice writers.

Outside evaluators for the last program review in 1994/95 noted the indefatigable efforts of Anne Barrows, who worked miracles with limited resources, and they made several key recommendations regarding the curriculum and the faculty:

- Make the curriculum more rigorous, with particular attention to requiring students to take more workshops and to restructuring the summer autobiography course so it is cross-genre;
- Strive for greater ethnic diversity in the student body;
- Offer a reading series and sponsor a literary magazine, both essential components of successful programs;
- Build a stable core faculty of select, regular part-timers.

The outside evaluators also recommended that the university devote more resources to the program in specific ways:

- Provide additional administrative staff and space for a part-time faculty office, as well as tuition waivers for three to four outstanding applicants;
- Hire at least two full-time, tenure track faculty with a record of extensive, ongoing publication;
- Address the risks attendant on decision making residing in just one person, then-director Anne Barrows;
- Preserve the program's autonomy but consider creating a Department of Creative Writing that would serve undergraduate and graduate students.

Since this last program review, the administration has provided more resources to the program, including three full-time faculty, and the program has successfully responded to most of the evaluators' recommendations. The year-round curriculum is now more rigorous, and students are enrolled in workshop or working with a thesis advisor throughout their time in the program. Literature courses have been refined so that they provide a more focused emphasis on craft

and on historical developments within a given genre, and fall semester course offerings pair craft-of-a-genre classes with workshops in the same genre. In the fall of 1998 the program began offering courses for a more academically rigorous fifteen-week semester, with workshops on Tuesday nights and literature courses on Wednesday nights. These changes meant that 21 out of the 33 degree units now came from writing-based courses, moving the program closer to a professional model for an MFA program.

Anne Barrows retired in 1999. After a national search, Deborah Lichtman and Aaron Shurin became co-directors. The program undertook the process of converting from an MA to an MFA degree, a shift made easier by the fact that the program's curriculum already met the Association of Writers and Writing programs (AWP) guidelines for an MFA program, including completion of course work in literary forms and theory, substantial workshop experience, and directed work on a thesis. In summer 2000 the program became an MFA program. As a terminal degree the MFA offers distinct advantages over an MA, especially for graduates who pursue a teaching career, and this change has enabled the program to attract more qualified applicants and to be more selective in its standards for admission.

As co-directors, Aaron Shurin and Deborah Lichtman have collaborated to strengthen course offerings, improve recruitment of qualified applicants, incorporate a reading series as part of the curriculum, and build a stable core faculty. Today, the program has three full-time faculty members: the co-directors and Kate Brady. Two full-time members of the English Department, Susan Steinberg and Doug Powell, who teach undergraduate creative writing courses, also teach occasionally in the MFA program.

The co-directors and Kate Brady, the only full-time faculty working solely in the program, are term faculty, which means they do not qualify for tenure or for a sabbatical and are expected to carry a heavier course load than tenure-track faculty, on the assumption that term faculty are not expected to publish, a problematic expectation for faculty in a writing program. Seven of the part-time teachers have taught in the program long enough to qualify for the Preferred Hiring Pool (PHP) at the University. The PHP rewards effective part-time instructors with a higher rate of pay, the opportunity to obtain health benefits, and the assurance that they will continue to be offered courses in the program conditional upon programmatic needs and continued evidence of teaching excellence.

In 2003 the program suddenly increased in size when there was a sizeable increase in applications—that is, a larger percentage of the students who were accepted into the program chose to attend. For the next two-and-a-half years, the program struggled mightily to sustain the same level of attention to each student given this dramatically larger class of 47 students. Since 2003 the program has grown substantially in size, though we now deliberately accept slightly smaller classes of 35 to 40 students. Initially, the program drew primarily from an applicant pool of mature adults already living in the Bay Area, but since 2000 our applicant pool has increased in size and changed in its composition. Applications

to the program rose from 87 in 2000 to 218 in 2006, but the ratio of local applicants to out-of-state applicants has remained relatively constant over this time period, with 40-47 percent of the applicants from the Bay Area, 13-18 percent from elsewhere in California, and 40-43 percent from out of state. The average age for the class graduating in 2002 was 37.7; for the class of 2008, 34.

Now that the program has both a stable faculty and a strong curriculum, we are poised to consider how to strengthen our reputation and be still more selective in admitting the most talented applicants. The problem is how to do so while still attracting students from our traditional pool of applicants, especially given the valuable diversity that this wide age range brings to the program. A number of faculty members have raised the question of whether we are serving “two kinds of students,” whose preparation for graduate study, aims in pursuing a degree, and backgrounds vary widely. But the range of abilities and motivation may have more to do with our capacity to attract the best applicants from *either* our traditional pool or a more varied, national pool of candidates. The University is an expensive private school, and the program now offers a few merit scholarships that defray tuition only for the fall semester of the student’s first year. For the few teaching assistantships available, students are paid at an hourly rate. The program cannot compete with other reputable programs unless it can offer to the best applicants more substantial scholarships or teaching assistantships.

In so many of the most important ways, morale in the program is high. At 9 P.M. when our classes end, students pour out of various classrooms and congregate just inside the main exit door of the Lone Mountain building—after nearly three hours of class, they’re not tired but invigorated, and they want to talk and to relish for just a few more minutes their place within this community. No teacher can run this gauntlet without being stopped by someone asking a question, or sharing a joke, or relating just one more reflection on the evening’s work. Faculty and directors share a common understanding of the program’s pedagogical values, care deeply for students, and are richly rewarded by students’ enthusiasm and appreciation. A central emphasis on good teaching reinforces collegiality, and teachers are quick to turn to each other for advice, commiseration, and the pleasure of sharing in students’ successes. Yet morale is also affected by the vulnerability of any largely part-time faculty, although the increasing number of teachers who belong to the PHP mitigates this. Governance is still influenced by the old model in which decision making resided with the director(s) and the part-time faculty was transient. Now that this is no longer the case, both part-time and full-time faculty within the program would like to participate more fully. Yet part-time faculty members are not compensated for the kinds of service this would require, and there is uncertainty about what degree of responsibility part-time faculty can legitimately have. Faculty meetings take place twice yearly (and there were no regularly scheduled faculty meetings before Deborah Lichtman and Aaron Shurin became co-directors) but do not encompass a formal process for self-evaluation and planning, particularly in crucial areas of advertising, admissions, and curriculum.

Other activities throughout the school year involve students in the community that is central to the program. These include a reading each year by members of the graduating class, a reception in fall for all students and faculty, a reading and reception to initiate each new issue of the MFA's online journal, *Switchback*, a commencement reception for graduating MFA students and their guests, and a newly instituted panel on "Life After MFA," an event that informs students about opportunities for post-graduate internships, fellowships, teaching, and publishing. The weekly program newsletter advertises literary events in the Bay Area community, promotes opportunities for students to publish, and announces student and alumni publications and achievements. Alumni receive this newsletter for up to two years after they graduate.

Goals

Our teaching philosophy is grounded in a fundamental faith in the intrinsic value of any teaching in the humanities, which offers to every person opportunities for reflection and critical analysis that nurture inner life but also affect how we conduct ourselves in the world. Learning to write well is not only a matter of mastering craft but also a matter of demanding from oneself a more scrupulous honesty and a more ambitious vision for one's work. Although the publishing record of program graduates is an important measure of success and has improved dramatically in the last six years, no writing program can guarantee this. But we can assure motivated students that we will help them to become better writers and readers.

The program is designed to foster the accomplishment of specific learning outcomes:

- Students should be able to demonstrate in their writing a fluid knowledge of the fundamentals of artistic composition and craft.
- Students should be able to read as writers: to recognize structural elements and aesthetic choices in a given work of literary art and understand the ways in which literary meaning is made.
- Students should be aware of the diverse historical and cultural traditions that inform the genre in which they are working.
- Students should be able to evaluate and critique works of literary art (whether by themselves or others) and be able to participate in constructive critical discussion of such works.
- Students should understand the process of revision, the criteria for completion, and the methodology by which writing may be brought to the public as published work.

The program hopes to foster diversity among students and faculty and to honor diversity in its curriculum, especially through thoughtful consideration of reading lists for literature courses and through the diverse writers who come to campus as part of the Lone Mountain Reading Series. The program has an admirable record of age diversity among its students, but it struggles to achieve ethnic diversity. This is not unusual for "luxury" degree programs in the humanities, which historically attract fewer minority candidates. But the lack of

financial resources affects diversity, since the availability of scholarship funds often attracts more minority candidates. Similarly, the program struggles to achieve a diverse faculty. The University is among the top twenty most diverse colleges in the nation, so the program can count on support for addressing this challenge.

II. CURRICULUM

General Overview

The MFA program at USF is an intimate and intensive one in which students work closely with their peers and instructors. Courses are held on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings from 6:15 to 9:00 PM; all are tailored to graduate-level work in writing. Enrollment in writing workshops is capped at 10; in reading-based courses, it is limited to 16. The program runs for two years and six weeks; it admits between 35-40 students per year. Students are not required to declare a genre when they enter the program but are encouraged, instead, to use their graduate studies to find the genre best suited to their creative ambitions.

The curriculum in the program is founded on a number of principles: Writers develop their craft through the close study of literature as well as through the practice of their own writing; they learn from communal exchange in the classroom and from independent work with a mentor; and they benefit from a working knowledge of several genres.

Workshops and reading-based seminars combine theory with practice, and writing with reading literature. The program emphasizes issues in craft not only in workshops, where student work is the focus, but also in reading seminars, where the question is not so much how to judge works of literature as how to learn from them about the art of writing.

A distinctive feature of the curriculum is its pairing of reading-based seminars with workshops in the same genre. On Tuesday evenings, workshops in each genre bring student work to the foreground in a peer setting of supportive critique. On Wednesday evenings, reading-based seminars focus on traditions, styles, craft elements and developments, and literary models.

The curriculum offers a coherent sequence of courses in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry so that students who work in a single genre only can develop their craft in each successive course. At the same time, students have the opportunity to change genres or experiment by taking classes in another genre. In fall, reading-based seminars are meant to be taken with a workshop in the same genre. In spring, reading seminars are designed to complement a range of genres, and many cross-genre courses take place in this semester.

All students begin the MFA in Writing program with a six-week intensive in

first-person/ autobiographical writing. Study proceeds on a semester basis for two years, including the second and third summers, when students work one-on-one with an instructor towards completing their books (known as the Major Project).

Four times each semester, all students in the program gather together to attend readings in the program's Readings at Lone Mountain series. Each semester's series includes writers of fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. In two consecutive summers, students work independently with an instructor in Major Project I and Major Project II, courses described later in this narrative.

The distinctive nature of the MFA curriculum is cited by applicants as one of the program's chief attractions. Students and applicants are enthusiastic about the program's evening schedule, its balance of classroom instruction and independent study, its craft-based reading courses, and its flexible approach to genre. The introductory course is frequently mentioned as a strong component of the curriculum, though there is significant debate among the faculty about the content and scheduling of the course.

Incoming students first develop a sense of camaraderie with their peers in the six-week summer intensive in first-person writing. The First Person is taught as an introduction to the program's reading-based seminars and its writing workshops. In this three-unit course, students study works of literature (usually memoir, but also poetry) as well as essays on literary craft; they learn the fundamentals of rigorous close reading; they complete critical papers and creative applications; they write and revise on a weekly basis; and they practice giving verbal and written critiques of writing to their peers. A workshop ethos is established in this class, and productive approaches to giving feedback are part of the course's learning objectives. By the end of the term, students hand in a revised 40-page autobiographical prose manuscript drawn from material in their own lives. The reading component of this course is carried forward in other reading-based seminars in the program, as is the workshop component.

The courses that follow the summer intensive appear below:

- Four Workshops (12 units)
- Four Seminars (12 units)
- Major Project I (3 units)
- Major Project II (3 units)

Two of these courses – Teaching Creative Writing and Ethical Issues in Writing – are open to alumni enrollment. Other MFA courses are open to enrolled students only.

The Major Project is the manuscript that students complete over the course of

their two-year study in the MFA Writing program. While students often cultivate this project in workshops throughout the school year, their independent work in the summer is entirely focused on it. The completed Major Project is the student's MFA thesis. As such, it must be a coherent work of literary quality. The Project may be a novel or novella, a collection of stories, a volume of poetry, a nonfiction project, or a purposeful combination of these genres. In the case of a mixed-genre manuscript, the student must select work that has some unifying principle.

Major Project I and Major Project II are the independent studies designated for planning, writing, and revising the Major Project manuscript. Major Project I, which comes at the end of the first year of classes, typically includes such matters as planning the scope and structure of the work and appraising its purpose and audience. Students generally produce a substantial amount of writing in this course. Major Project II, which comes at the end of the second year, is the last course that students take before graduating. It is in this course that each student completes and revises a manuscript and formats it for formal presentation to the program. Major Project manuscripts are due at the end August. Prose works range in length from 120 pages to over 300 pages. Collections of poetry run from 50 to 100 pages. There is considerable debate over the timing and structure of the Major Project course.

Students may work with two different instructors in each of their Major Project courses, or they may work with the same instructor. The instructor in Major Project II is the primary advisor and reader for the thesis. Each completed thesis is also read and approved by another faculty member in the program.

Because each of the 70-75 students in the program works in an independent study in the Major Project, the program adds additional summer faculty each year to accommodate this need. These additional instructors, numbering between 10 and 15, comprise a summer faculty that joins the core faculty in working with students on their creative theses. Most Major Project instructors are recruited in response to faculty referrals and student requests. They are prepared for the course through interviews with the program co-directors, program materials detailing the expectations of Major Project instructors and students, and an annual faculty meeting for Major Project instructors. They are invited to teach again on the basis of student evaluations and the nature of the work their students produce. Though students are sometimes reluctant, at first, to work with instructors they do not know, their evaluations reflect a high level of satisfaction with the majority of their Major Project instructors. There is a high rate of return among Major Project faculty, and their level of experience in supervising Major Projects has consequently grown over time. Several core faculty members first taught in the program as Major Project instructors.

The increasing rigor of the program's curriculum has raised the quality of students' Major Projects. At the same time, its demands have led a number of students to reduce their course load to half-time, thereby extending the duration of their graduate study by six months to a year.

Enhancements to the MFA curriculum include openings for teaching assistantships in the English Department's undergraduate writing courses, and opportunities to read for, edit, and produce *Switchback*. The structure of the program allows for a great deal of contact among students because all of them attend classes on Tuesday and Wednesday nights. Students take advantage of other dimensions of the program by attending the MFA's readings by faculty, joining in or organizing their own readings in local venues, and checking out books from the MFA library – a collection of literary journals; publications by students, alumni, and faculty; and books by visiting writers in the Readings at Lone Mountain series.

Historical Overview

When the director of the program retired in 1999, the curriculum of the program was still undergoing a change that had been instituted two years earlier. This change included a shift from 9-week terms to 15-week semesters, the addition of a second night of classes, and the initiation of seminars and workshops paired by genre.

The basic structure of the new curriculum was in place by 1999, but many courses were not yet determined. What was still missing was a balance of seminars within each genre: four fall classes in fiction, four in nonfiction, and four in poetry. The changes that were subsequently made to the curriculum ensured a balance of courses offered in each genre each semester; it also allowed for a sequence of courses flexible enough for students to take classes in genres of their choice, various enough so that students who stayed within the same genre would find each class instructive. Courses were added to the curriculum as enrollment in the program grew and the quality of students rose. An existing course in Teaching Writing was changed to focus on Teaching Creative Writing. There is some question as to how curriculum can continue to be reviewed and refined.

Courses added to the curriculum since 1999 include the following:

- Cross-Genre
 - The Architecture of Prose
 - Blurred Boundaries: Writing Beyond Genre
 - Composing and Revising
 - Word for Word: The Texture of Language
- Long and Short Fiction
 - Style in Fiction
 - Deepening Prose
- Nonfiction
 - Art of the Essay
 - Classics of Literary Nonfiction

Narrating Nonfiction

- Poetry
Visionary Poetics

The program's two-year curriculum as it stood in 1999 is documented in the course schedule that appears on page 20. The current curriculum is represented in the course schedule reproduced on page 21.

Course Descriptions

- INTRODUCTORY COURSE

The First Person: Autobiographical Writing (3) A six-week intensive in reading and writing autobiography. Students learn how to transform personal experience into a meaningful work of art, using elements of plot, suspense and resolution. Required first course for all students. Course is offered in the summer preceding the first school year.

- FICTION COURSES

Techniques of Long Fiction (3) This course engages students in close readings of several novels, examining some of the ways in which different authors use characterization, plot and narrative arc, point of view, chapter structure, setting and scene, figurative language and motifs. The focus is on how students may apply these techniques to their own novels-in-progress.

Evolution of the Short Story (3) Concentrates on varieties of the short story as exemplified by masters of the form. Readings are drawn from a wide range of short fiction in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature. Students read these literary models to gain an understanding of the form, and to apply what they learn to their own craft.

Developments in the Novel (3) Emphasizes a variety of traditions in long fiction. Historical developments may include the picaresque, social or psychological realism, stream of consciousness, the Nouvelle Roman, and postmodernism. By studying these works of long fiction, students discover the forms and craft elements best suited to what they want to express.

The Craft of Short Fiction (3) Focus is on the structures of short stories and novellas, looking closely at certain writers' approaches to narrative conflict, point of view, imagery, voice, and story length. The course helps students to appreciate the restraints imposed and the liberties conferred by forms of short fiction.

Style in Fiction (3) This course explores the unique qualities that comprise an original style, and the relationship between form and content. Students conduct in-depth readings of novels and short stories in order to identify and employ the

tactics used by prose stylists in fiction. Attention is also paid to the multicultural influences that affect a writer's stylistic choices.

Contemporary Experiments in Fiction (3) A study of experimental and radical approaches to fictional prose, encouraging students to take risks in their own writing. The emphasis is on writers who work against rather than within convention, and how they make meaning out of their departures from convention. Assigned readings make use of multiple perspectives, discontinuous narratives, and disrupted chronologies. Readings are drawn from writers around the world.

Workshops

Fiction Workshop I, II, III, IV (3 units per workshop) Separate workshops are offered for long and short fiction. Together with the concurrent courses in long or short fiction, students explore theory and practice in writing fiction.

- **NONFICTION COURSES**

Classics of Literary Nonfiction (3) This course traverses three centuries of literary nonfiction, affording students an opportunity to learn about the rich heritage of the genre. A wide range of reading demonstrates the suppleness of the form and helps students to discover possibilities of subject and approach available to them as writers of nonfiction prose. Readings may extend from Daniel Defoe to Jamaica Kincaid, including diaries, speeches, meditations, journals, and monologues.

The Art of the Essay (3) Offers breadth and depth in the study of the essay. Students read extensively from the works of traditional and modern essayists, discovering the range of forms, techniques, and subjects available to them as writers of the essay. Course readings include personal essays, portrait essays, and essays about place and profession.

The Prose of Fact (3) What are the elements that make nonfiction writing creative? This course rehearses a variety of modes that contribute to making fact-based writing dynamic. Examples of memoir, travel writing, nature writing, history, criticism, and letter are used, augmented by creative techniques associated with fiction and poetry.

Narrating Nonfiction (3) Through the close reading of full-length books and nonfiction "stories," this course examines how writers of nonfiction bring narrative momentum to their work through fictional structures and techniques. Particular attention is paid to the work of exemplary authors whose nonfiction relies upon scene crafting, characterization, dialogue, point of view, and chronological frames.

Workshops

Nonfiction Workshop I, II, III, IV (3 units per workshop) Together with the concurrent courses in nonfiction, students explore theory and practice in writing nonfiction. Additional instruction is offered in how to research a topic, conduct interviews, and evaluate and select from both printed and oral sources.

POETRY COURSES

American Poetry and Poetics (3) The American tradition in poetry is explored, from Whitman to the present, with a focus on the historical development of poetic thought. The course follows shifting ideologies and social contexts, and examines the way literary schools and counter-influences create a new American poetry for the modern era. Students read both the poetry and poetics of selected authors, and work toward a final paper exploring their own poetics.

Poetry International (3) This course examines major developments in modern world poetry by looking at a range of literary traditions and historical contexts of non-English-speaking poets. Though most work is read in translation, reference to original languages is encouraged. Students work on translating from chosen languages, and the class examines both the problems and the excitement of reading beyond one's borders.

Prosody: The Meaning of Poetic Form (3) An in-depth study of poetic elements, with an eye to the history and evolution of poetic forms. Students look at the organizing principles of syllable, stanza, and line; of stress, meter, rhyme, and a variety of countings, as well as contemporary explorations of fragmentation, interruption, chance, and silence. Readings are drawn from the ancients as well as from postmodern contemporaries, and demonstrate a range of structural elements, radical and classic.

Visionary Poetics (3) The study of Visionary Poetries, focusing on Romantic, Mystical, and Ecstatic traditions from the Biblical era to the contemporary period. Students examine texts and literary philosophy that encourage transcendental-loss-of-self as a foundation of poetic practice, and adapt strategies for their own writing.

Workshops

Poetry Workshop I, II, III, IV (3 units per workshop) Together with the concurrent courses in poetry, students explore theory and practice in writing poetry.

CROSS-GENRE COURSES

The Architecture of Prose (3) A study of narrative structure, examining authors' strategies for building arcs of conflict, sustaining tension, controlling pace, and achieving closure. By examining a range of literary models, students learn to plot the architecture of their own full-length manuscripts. Readings include works that adhere to a traditional narrative arc as well as those that use the arc as a point of departure.

Blurred Boundaries: Writing Beyond Genre (3) This course examines modern literary works that cross or combine genres and therefore stand outside the conventions of any given genre. By studying such works, students learn about developing forms of writing and explore new ways to approach their own works in progress. Readings are drawn from genre theory and from diverse works sometimes defined as the “short short,” the “lyric essay,” the “illustrated novel,” the “prose poem,” and the “novel in verse.”

Composing and Revising (3) This course delves into questions of intention, examining how a writer’s conscious plans for narrative are achieved in the final product. Through close examination of literary works and writers’ own words about them, students investigate the processes through which these works were created, thereby learning to work with their own intentions in composing and revising. Readings include narrative prose, supplemented by interviews, biographies, diaries, and letters.

Ethical Issues in Writing (3) Is it possible to be a good writer and a good person, too? What kinds of moral responsibilities—and consequences—attend the act of authorship? Through a variety of case studies, this course examines moral and legal dilemmas that writers come up against in pursuit of their art, and asks students to examine their own aesthetic and moral issues.

Deepening Prose (3) An investigation of how literary fiction attains depth, and how complex layers of meaning converge in a single novel or novella. Students undertake the study of this fiction to help them develop and advance thematic strains and structural texture in their own writing. Readings may include works in translation as well as those written in English.

Teaching Creative Writing (3) A study of the methods, theory and practice of teaching creative writing, both prose and poetry. Students read extensively about pedagogy. Topics for discussion range from the philosophy of teaching to more specific issues such as designing a course, choosing class materials, responding to student writing, and meeting course objectives.

Word for Word (3) A language-based course emphasizing diction, syntax, and metaphor; concentrating on the effect of word choice on meaning. Through the close reading of literary texts, analysis, writing, and discussion, the students will explore various ways to incorporate additional detail, texture, and layers of meaning into their own writing.

MAJOR PROJECT COURSES

Major Project I (3) Students work with an individual Major Project Instructor to formulate, plan, and begin to execute the Major Project. Consultation with the co-director of the program is required.

Major Project II (3) Students work with an individual Major Project Instructor to complete the Major Project. Consultation with the co-director of the program is required.

SPECIAL TOPICS

Special Topics courses in the program vary by year. Several courses initially offered as special topics proved highly successful, clearly fulfilling an existing need in the program. These were subsequently approved by the University curriculum committee for inclusion in the program's regular course offerings.

Advising

The program co-directors and a designated faculty member meet with students twice a year to help them make informed course choices for fall and spring enrollment. Advising sessions typically last from 30-60 minutes, and they include a general assessment of each student's academic progress. Students list preferences for their classes, though they are assigned workshop instructors based on the program's commitment to providing a variety of instructors. MFA faculty members and co-directors also hold informal meetings with students throughout the year, thereby contributing to the advising process. The co-directors meet with students a third time each year to help them select instructors for their studies in the Major Project. Advising for Major Project courses is intensive and time-consuming; it requires the skillful negotiation of student interests, faculty schedules, and the suitability of each match between student and instructor.

Student satisfaction with courses is measured in the numerical (SUMMA) and narrative evaluations they complete at the end of each course. It is also made evident in advising sessions where students report on the progress of their work in the program and their level of satisfaction with their courses.

Admissions

Students are recruited through the program's online presence, its advertisements in print and on the radio, and its public information meetings. Applicants are also drawn to the program through word of mouth, initial inquiries and "cold calls" made to the program office, and personal interviews with faculty members and co-directors.

Students are admitted to the program on the basis of writing talent and a basic knowledge of literary craft. Required admissions materials include a statement of purpose, two letters of reference, a resume, undergraduate transcripts, and a writing sample. Applicants are also encouraged to interview. Applications are scored by a committee of six or seven faculty members and the co-directors draw up a final list based on those rankings. The final composition of the cohort is also influenced by issues of genre representation and diversity. Each application is

evaluated by a minimum of two readers. The quality of the writing sample is weighted most heavily in the scoring of applications and the determination of admission. Since 2004, the program received more than 200 annual applications for admission. Each year, accepted applicants receive personal calls from the program co-directors.

Transfer Policies

Students with graduate-level work may transfer up to 6 units of that coursework pending the approval of the program co-directors and the dean. The courses must be relevant to MFA coursework, and they cannot be supervised field work or directed studies.

TWO-YEAR CLASS SCHEDULE 1998-2000

SUMMER, 1998

0105-600-01	Autobiographical and Narrative Writing
0105-689-01	Major Project I
0105-699-01	Major Project II

FALL 1998

0105-672-01	Short Fiction: Design of the Modern Short Story.
0105-651-01	Long Fiction: Tradition and Innovation in Long Fiction.
0105-653-01	Nonfiction: Nonfiction Prose/Literary Journalism.
0105-674-01	Poetry: Prosody: The Meaning of Form.
0105-675-01	Teaching Writing.
0105-612/632-02	Short Fiction Workshop I/III/V
0105-612/632-01	Long Fiction Workshop I/III/V
0105-612/632-03	Nonfiction Workshop I/III
0105-612/632-04	Poetry Workshop I/II

SPRING 1999

0105-680-01	Living Words
0105-622/642-02	Short Fiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-01	Long Fiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-03	Nonfiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-04	Poetry Workshop II/IV

SUMMER 1999

0105-600-01/02	Autobiographical and Narrative Writing
0105-689-01	Major Project I
0105-699-01	Major Project II

FALL 1999

0105-652-01	Short Fiction: Tradition and Innovation in the Short Story
0105-671-01	Long Fiction: Design of the Modern Novel
0105-673-01	Nonfiction: Nonfiction Genres
0105-654-01	Poetry: American Poetry and Poetics
0105-612/632-02	Short Fiction Workshop I/III/V
0105-612/632-01	Long Fiction Workshop I/III/V
0105-612/632-03	Nonfiction Workshop I/III
0105-612/632-04	Poetry Workshop I/II

SPRING 2000

0105-661-01	Genre Fiction
0105-662-01	Contemporary Experiments in Fiction
0105-663-01	Ethical Issues for Writers
0105-664-01	Poetry International
0105-632-05	Teaching Writing
0105-622/642-02	Short Fiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-01	Long Fiction Workshop II/IV:
0105-622/642-03	Nonfiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-04	Poetry (3)Workshop II/IV
0105-642-06	Teaching Practicum

Summer 2000

0105-600-01/02	Autobiographical and Narrative Writing
0105-689-01	Major Project I
0105-699-01	Major Project II

TWO-YEAR CLASS SCHEDULE 2005-2007**SUMMER 2005**

0105-600-01/02	The First Person
0105-689-01	Major Project I
0106-699-01	Major Project II

FALL 2005

0105-652-01	Short Fiction: Evolution of the Short Story
0105-671-01	Long Fiction: The Techniques of Long Fiction
0105-673-01/02	Nonfiction: The Prose of Fact, Sections I and 2
0105-654-01	Poetry: American Poetry and Poetics
0105-690-01	Special Topic: Point of View
0105-612/632-02	Short Fiction Workshop I/III/V
0105-612/632-01	Long Fiction Workshop I/III/V
0105-612/632-03	Nonfiction Workshop I/III
0105-612/632-04	Poetry Workshop I/II

SPRING 2006

0105-662-01	Contemporary Experiments in Fiction
0105-684-01	Narrating Nonfiction
0105-687-01	Deepening Prose
0105-664-01	Poetry International
0105-650-01	Word for Word: The Texture of Language
0105-675-01	Teaching Writing
0105-622/642-02	Short Fiction Workshop IIIV
0105-622/642-01	Long Fiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-03	Nonfiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-04	Poetry Workshop II/IV

SUMMER 2006

0105-600-01/02	The First Person
0105-689-01	Major Project I
0106-699-01	Major Project II

FALL 2006

0105-672-01	Short Fiction: Craft of Short Fiction
0105-651-01	Long Fiction: Developments in the Novel
0105-653-01	Nonfiction: Classics of Literary Nonfiction

0105-674-01	Poetry: Prosody: The Meaning of Form
0105-663-01	Ethical Issues in Writing
0105-670-01	Composing and Revising
0105-612/632-02	Short Fiction Workshop I/III
0105-612/632-01	Long Fiction Workshop I/III
0105-612/632-03	Nonfiction Workshop I/III
0105-612/632-04	Poetry Workshop I/III

SPRING 2007

0105-680-01	Style in Fiction
0105-665-01	The Architecture of Prose
0105-683-01	Art of the Essay
0105-660-01	Visionary Poetics
0105-681-01	Blurred Boundaries: Writing Across Genre
0105-675-01	Teaching Writing
0105-622/642-02	Short Fiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-01	Long Fiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-03	Nonfiction Workshop II/IV
0105-622/642-04	Poetry Workshop II/IV

SUMMER 2007

0105-600-01/02	The First Person
0105-689-01	Major Project I
0106-699-01	Major Project II

III. ASSESSMENT

The program assesses its success in achieving program learning outcomes by both formal and informal means. Formally, assessment is accomplished via SUMMA teaching evaluations (supplemented by narrative evaluations created by the program), review of syllabi by the co-directors, rigorous writing assignments, and a process of thesis advising and approval that supports students in meeting program objectives. Informally, faculty consult each other frequently on course content and reading lists. The program's success in meeting its objectives is also reflected in students' satisfaction with their experience in the program, improved writing and critical thinking skills, and the publishing record of students and graduates.

The most important assessment of student work comes from instructors. Literature courses require that students write frequent critical papers, with an emphasis on craft analysis, and typically also require creative exercises in which students integrate theoretical learning with their own practice as writers. On average, students write from twenty to forty pages of critical papers and exercises in the typical literature course. In the workshops, students submit both rough drafts and revisions of work in all three genres; workshop critique of revised drafts constitutes an important means of teaching the skills necessary for producing a polished final draft and assessing students' progress. In addition, students are required to provide written feedback on their peers' manuscripts, and grading in workshops typically depends heavily on careful, responsible

reading of the work of student peers. program expectations are communicated to students primarily in the form of extensive written feedback on their work, and instructors regularly hold conferences with students, especially those who are struggling to meet program standards.

Faculty submit syllabi well in advance of advising for the subsequent semester, and the co-directors provide feedback and request changes so that the course as outlined meets program expectations. The directors also advise teachers when they experience difficulty in the classroom, sometimes in response to narrative evaluations that suggest areas for improvement. Teachers must demonstrate competence as evidenced in course evaluations; a co-director also makes a class visit to observe teachers new to the program. The narrative evaluations are tailored to the aims of the MFA program and solicit specific suggestions from students. Because we now have a stable core faculty, these evaluations help teachers to revise and retool courses when they next teach them.

The program's process for advising students as they complete a thesis, termed a Major Project, is labor-intensive and provides for advising from the early stages of the writing. In their second summer in the program, students meet four times with an advisor who reads and provides written feedback on their drafts, helps students to plan for completion of the work, and conveys program expectations for the thesis. In their third and final summer in the program, students again meet four times with an advisor, who also reads their completed thesis to ensure it meets minimum standards of competence, including competence in the conventions of a genre, correct usage, and careful proofreading. In addition, the advisor writes the student a letter of assessment at the end of each summer's work on the thesis. (Students also write narrative evaluations of their Major Project instructors.) Once the completed thesis is submitted, a second faculty reader reviews the thesis, requests corrections if necessary, and writes a formal letter of approval that comments on content.

In the program's current configuration, there is no formal process for assessing the curriculum as a whole. Faculty members, nevertheless, have expressed interest in sharing ideas on curriculum. Recently, the program has conformed to stipulations by faculty unions that may impede its reliance on narrative course evaluations as an assessment tool. The part-time faculty union stipulates that narrative evaluations are voluntary, not mandatory, and narrative evaluations for full-time faculty are entirely confidential. In view of this, though the deans have the responsibility for hiring and retaining faculty, in point of fact the co-directors interview and recommend all program instructors, while lacking all the necessary means of evaluation. At the last pedagogy forum, a number of faculty members expressed interest in developing a peer review program, in which instructors would visit each other's classes and offer constructive feedback.

The process of thesis advising and approval presents particular difficulties in a program that depends heavily on part-time faculty and structures advising as a summer course. To provide for all the students during the summer, the co-directors hire additional Major Project instructors, a number of whom do not otherwise teach in the program. Although students are asked not to approach

core faculty members before a specified date, often their anxiety about obtaining an advisor prompts them to sound out these teachers in advance, even though students must meet with the co-directors to be assigned an instructor based on student preferences and instructor availability. Core faculty members work with from one to five students per summer and thus can't accommodate all the students who would choose to work with them. When these core faculty also teach the summer autobiography course or have other commitments in summer, students may have to switch advisors between Major Project I and II or may lack access to instructors whom they trust. Of the three full-time faculty based in the program, neither co-director serves as a thesis advisor and Kate Brady is free to do so at most every other summer. It can be problematic to have thesis advisors who are not fully familiar with the program or program standards. The present structure burdens the directors and often imposes on the second reader of the thesis the task of proofreading and asking for corrections.

Assessing student progress in an MFA program requires tracking the success of students who publish their work and the eventual placement of interested graduates in teaching jobs. Until recently, only a very small minority of our graduates pursued a career in teaching at the college level, but as more students expressed interest, the program responded in 2003 by collaborating with the English Department to offer teaching assistantships and restructuring the Teaching Writing course so it focused on the teaching of creative writing. Recent graduates teach literature-based composition courses at several Bay Area colleges, including Chabot College and San Jose State University, as well as teaching creative writing in nonacademic settings. Though it may be possible to offer teaching assistantships in the freshman composition program, there is concern among program faculty that this would risk diluting students' primary focus on their own writing, given the compressed time frame in which they complete the degree, and the program's focus on creative writing.

Appendix A provides an account of the accomplishments of students and graduates of the MFA program. A very cheering measure of the program's increasing professionalism is that in the last five years, three of our students have won AWP Intro Journal Awards for student writers: Cynthia Cowdry, for her essay "What the Heart Does" (2001-02); Kathryn Kefauver, for her essay "Part Lao, Part Falang" (2002-03); and Anne Clifford, for her short story, "Gravity" (2003-04). A short story by recent graduate Vanya Rainova appeared in *Best New American Voices 2006*, an anthology of the best work by students in the Writing programs. Abeer Hoque, who graduated in 2003, is the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship as well as a San Francisco Foundation Tanenbaum Award. Stories by students Anne Clifford and Josh Mohr were performed on stage in the New Short Fiction Series in Los Angeles in 2006. Graduates who have published books include Rose Castillo Guilbault, Nelson Eubanks, Matt Dalton, Brian Kluepfeld, Ken Rodgers, Karen Benke, Susanne Dyckman, and James Frost. Tiff Dressen, Amanda Field, and Todd Melicker published small-press poetry chapbooks, and Craig Perez won a poetry scholarship to summer literary seminars in St. Petersburg. Current students and graduates also publish their writing in *McSweeney's*, *Zyzzyyva*, *Volt*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Cimarron Review*, and other literary journals. We also view students' continued participation in the literary

community as a measure of success. Alumni as well as current students run *Switchback*, our on-line literary journal, with the help of a faculty advisor. Program graduates have launched local journals and served as interns or readers at local literary magazines and literary agencies.

IV. THE MFA IN WRITING FACULTY

Full-time MFA Faculty

There are three full-time MFA in writing faculty: Deborah Lichtman and Aaron Shurin, Co-directors and Assistant Professors, and Kate Brady, Assistant Professor. The Co-directors' appointments contain significant administrative components, and Kate Brady's appointment is mostly teaching. Usually, Aaron Shurin teaches two courses per year, Deborah Lichtman one course that includes a seminar and a workshop, Kate Brady four. All three have a large stake in shaping the program, developing curriculum, and bringing in new faculty. They are all on renewable term contracts. None are tenure-track.

- **Catherine Brady.** MFA in Creative Writing, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. The Brenda Ueland Prose Prize and the *Zoetrope: All Story* Short Fiction Prize. Author of *Curled in the Bed of Love* (2003), winner of the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction, and *The End of the Class War* (1999). Published in *Best American Short Stories 2004*. A biography of molecular biologist Elizabeth Blackburn is forthcoming from MIT Press. Currently serves as Vice-President of AWP. **Courses Taught:** *Tradition and Innovation in Short Fiction, Contemporary Experiments in Fiction, Autobiographical Writing, Style in Fiction, The First Person, Deepening Prose, Craft of Short Fiction, Teaching Writing, Techniques of Long Fiction, Major Project I and II, Short Fiction and Long Fiction Workshops.*
- **Deborah Lichtman.** Ph.D., M.A. in English, University of California, Berkeley. Published in *To Live a Woman* and *Switchback*. **Courses Taught:** *The First Person, Major Project I and II, Nonfiction Workshop, Teaching Writing.*
- **Aaron Shurin.** M.A. in Poetics, New College of California. California Arts Council Fellowships in poetry (1989, 2002), NEA fellowship and San Francisco Arts Commission grant in creative nonfiction (1995, 2005). Author of poetry: *A's Dream* (1989), *Into Distances* (1993), *The Paradise of Forms: Selected Poems* (1999), *A Door* (2000) and *Involuntary Lyrics* (2005), and prose: *Unbound: A Book of AIDS* (1997). **Courses Taught:** *Prosody: The Meaning of Form, American Poetry and Poetics, Poetry International, Creative Elements of Nonfiction, Major Project I and II, Poetry, Nonfiction, and Fiction Workshops.*

Other Core Faculty

Besides the three full-time MFA professors, the core faculty of the program consists of seven Preferred Hiring Pool (PHP) part-time faculty, who teach the bulk of the program's courses (Stephen Beachy, David Booth, Lewis Buzbee, Lowell Cohn, Lisa Harper, Karl Soehnlein, and Jane Anne Staw), and two full-time English Department faculty who also teach some courses in the MFA program (Susan Steinberg and D.A. Powell.) The two English Department faculty teach Creative Writing courses in the undergraduate curriculum and are widely published authors. The MFA PHP faculty are also widely published authors, and each has demonstrated a long-standing and deep commitment to the program. (To be eligible for PHP status, instructors must teach twenty-four units.) They attend faculty meetings, and most have participated on the program's admissions committee, helping read and evaluate applicant files. They have spearheaded and contributed to faculty readings, and taken initiative in developing and staffing special program events for students and alumni.

Courses are assigned by the co-directors according to teacher preference, PHP seniority, and the need to rotate instructors between workshops and literary seminars and among the three genres. The faculty is characterized by the ability to teach both kinds of program courses, and by the ability of many instructors to teach in more than one genre.

Gender diversity is strong; esthetic variety is extremely rich and a significant program highlight. Racial diversity, alas, is very weak. It has been quite difficult to attract capable, culturally diverse part-time instructors when only an occasional course, paid at a part-time rate, is available. Some redress is offered by the Readings at Lone Mountain series, through which a high number of socially and culturally diverse writers have participated in the program curriculum. Major Project instructors also offer greater ethnic diversity.

The faculty across the board is intensely dedicated. The Part-time instructors have shown devotion to the program in spite of the traditional lack of security associated with part-time status. There is some question as to how such devotion can be maintained without offering a path to full-time status. Some part-timers are content to teach a class or two each semester; others, clearly, would prefer more financial and professional security.

The English Department professors administer the TAships offered to program students by coordinating them with undergraduate creative writing courses. The TAships have been popular with a significant number of program students, and have substantially added to program competitiveness. Some questions remain as to the exact relation between the department and the program, since the instructors do not have joint appointments. It's been somewhat difficult to clarify the relations, and there has been tension associated with the dimly defined structure and occasionally poor communications.

All in all, program morale is extraordinarily high, with a couple of caveats, and enthusiasm for teaching in the program very strong.

- **Stephen Beachy.** M.F.A. in Creative Writing, Iowa Writers Workshop. Michener Award in fiction. Author of *The Whistling Song* (1991), *Distortion* (2000) and *Some Phantom/No Time Flat* (2006.) Published in *High Risk 2*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Bomb*, *Best Gay American Fiction* 1996. **Courses Taught:** *Contemporary Experiments in Fiction, Major Project I and II, Short Fiction, Long Fiction, and Nonfiction Workshops.*
- **David Booth.** M.F.A. in Creative Writing, M.A. in English, San Francisco State University. Published in *The Missouri Review*, *Fourteen Hills*, *Transfer*. **Courses Taught:** *Craft of Short Fiction, Evolution of the Short Story, The First Person, Major Project I and II, Short Fiction and Long Fiction Workshops.*
- **Lewis Buzbee.** M.F.A. in Fiction, Warren Wilson College. Author of a novel, *Fliegelman's Desire* (1990); stories, *After the Gold Rush* (2006); and nonfiction, *The Yellow-Lighted Bookshop* (2006). Published in *Harper's*, *Paris Review*, *Gentleman's Quarterly*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Black Warrior Review*, *ZZZZYVA*, *Best American Poetry* 1995. **Courses Taught:** *Evolution of the Short Story, Narrative and the Making of Meaning, Teaching Writing, Composing and Revising, Style in Fiction, Special Topic: Point of View, Narrating Nonfiction, Major Project II, Short Fiction and Long Fiction Workshops.*
- **Lowell Cohn.** Ph.D. in Literature, Stanford University. Leverhulme Fellowship for study in England. Sports Columnist for the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. Sports columnist of the year in the San Francisco Bay Area 1996, 2002, 2005. Author of *Rough Magic: Bill Walsh's Return to Stanford Football* (1994). **Courses Taught:** *Major Project I and II, Nonfiction Workshop.*
- **Lisa Harper.** Ph.D. in English, M.A. in Creative Writing, UC Davis. Published in *Emily Dickinson Journal*, *Gastronomica*, and the anthology *Literary Couplings*. **Courses Taught:** *Ethical Issues for Writers, Tradition and Innovation in Long Fiction, Art of the Essay, Narrative in Nonfiction, The Prose of Fact, Deepening Prose, Major Project I and II, Nonfiction Workshop.*
- **D. A. Powell.** M.F.A in Creative Writing, Iowa Writers' Workshop. Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the James Michener Foundation. Author of *Tea* (1998), *Lunch* (2000), and *Cocktails* (2004), finalist for the PEN West, the Publishing Triangle and the National Book Critics' Circle Awards. Published in *Boston Review*, *New American Writing*, *Tin House*, *American Letters & Commentary* and the *Washington Post*. **Courses Taught:** *Poetry Workshop.*

- **Karl Soehnlein.** M.F.A. In Creative Writing, San Francisco State University. Lambda Literary Award and Henfield Prize. Author of novels, *The World of Normal Boys* (2000) and *You Can Say You Knew Me When* (2005). **Courses Taught:** *The First Person, Design of the Modern Novel, Architecture of the Prose, Major Project I and II, Short Fiction and Long Fiction Workshops.*
- **Jane Anne Staw.** Ph.D. in French Language and Literature, University of Michigan. M.F.A. in Poetry, Iowa Writers Workshop. Author of *Parsnips in the Snow: Talks with Midwestern Gardeners* (1990), *Nonfiction Writing Workshop* (1989), and *Unstuck: Working through Writing Blocks* (2004). **Courses Taught:** *Creative Nonfiction, Blurred Boundaries, The First Person, Touchstones of Literary Nonfiction, The Prose of Fact, Word for Word, Classics of Literary Nonfiction, Major Project I and II, Nonfiction Workshop.*
- **Susan Steinberg.** M.F.A. in English, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; B.F.A. in painting, Maryland Institute, College of Art. Editor of *Pleiades: A Journal of New Writing*. Author of *The End of Free Love* (2003) and *Hydroplane* (2006). Published in *Conjunctions, The Gettysburg Review, Boulevard, The Massachusetts Review*. **Courses Taught:** *Architecture of Prose, Major Project I, Short Fiction Workshop.*

Recent Part-Time Faculty

In general, the co-directors have tried to establish and sustain a core faculty of full-time and part-time (PHP) instructors, to build a sense of program unity, to offer students a sense of continuity, and to utilize the faculty as an ongoing creative resource. There are usually two or three extra courses available to new or regular part-timers, brought in for specific purposes and specific courses, with the aim of enriching the faculty mix. They are all published authors with strong teaching backgrounds. Since one course represents fifty percent of a student's course load per term, teachers must be unusually responsible and experienced, and it has often proved surprisingly challenging to find appropriate instructors. Nevertheless, interest in teaching in the program is strong. Recent part-time faculty (since 1999) include:

- **Andrew Altschul.** MFA in English, University of California, Irvine. Jones Lecturer in Creative Writing, Stanford University. Published in *Fence, Swink, One Story, StoryQuarterly*, and the anthologies *Stumbling and Raging: More Politically Inspired Fiction* and *Best New American Voices, 2006*. Author of the forthcoming novel, *Lady Lazarus* (2007).
- **Lucy Jane Bledsoe.** B.A., University of California, Berkeley. California Arts Council Literary Fellowship. American Library Association Award, and National Science Foundation Artists & Writers in Antarctica Fellowship. Author of *Sweat: Stories and a Novella* (1995), *Working Parts* (1998), and *This Wild Silence* (2003).

- **Cecil Brown.** Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley. Mentor Fellowship, UC Berkeley. Berlin Literary Fellowship. Author of *Stagolee Shot Billy* (2003), *Coming Up Down Home: A Memoir of a Southern Childhood* (1993), *Life and Loves of Mr. Jiveass Nigger* (1991), *Days Without Weather* (1938).
- **Norma Cole.** M.A. in French Language and Literature, University of Toronto. Gerbode Poetry Prize, Fund for Poetry grant. Author of *Mars* (1994), *Contrafact* (1996), *Moira* (1996), *Spinoza in Her Youth* (2002), the CD *Scout* (2005), and numerous translations from the French.
- **Thaisa Frank.** B.A., Philosophy, Oberlin College; Graduate work in philosophy and linguistics, Columbia University. Squaw Valley Fellow (1992.) Author of *Sleeping in Velvet* (1997), *A Brief History of Camouflage* (1992); *Desire (1)* (1982); *Enchanted Men* (1994).
- **Susan Gevirtz.** Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz. Author of poetry: *Hourglass Transcripts* (2001), *Black Box Cutaway* (1999), *Prosthesis: Caesarea* (1994) and a critical biography: *Narrative's Journey: The Fiction and Film Writing of Dorothy Richardson* (1996).
- **Gabrielle Glancy.** M.A., the City College of New York, English and Creative Writing. New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship (1990). Published in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *American Poetry Review*. *Quarry West*.
- **Judith Greber.** M.A. in American Civilization, University of Pennsylvania. Author of *Easy Answers* (1982), *The Silent Partner* (1984), *Mendocino* (1988), *As Good As It Gets* (1992) and numerous mysteries as Gillian Roberts.
- **Rob Halpern.** M.A. in Literature, University of California, Santa Cruz. Author of *Rumored Place* (2004). Poetry and short fiction published in *Harrington Gay Men's Fiction Quarterly*, 26, *Mirage* #4, and *The James White Review*.
- **Kauai Hart Hemmings.** M.F.A. in fiction, Sarah Lawrence College. Wallace Stegner Fellowship. Author of *House of Thieves* (2005). Published in *StoryQuarterly* 39, *Best American Non-required Reading* 2004, *Zoetrope: All-Story*, and *Best American New Voices* 2006.
- **Paul Hoover.** M.A. in English. NEA Fellowship in poetry, Illinois Art Council Literary Fellowships. Author of *Fables of Representation* (2004), *Winter (Mirrior)* (2002), *Totem and Shadow* (1999), *Nervous Songs* (1986) and several translations from German and Vietnamese to English. Published in *ZZZZYVA*, *Chicago Review*, *Ironwood*.

- **Cathleen Miller.** M.F.A. in English, Pennsylvania State University. Author of *Desert Flower: The Extraordinary Journey of a Desert Nomad* (1998). Nonfiction articles in *Washington Post*, *San Francisco Examiner*.
- **Rusty Morrison.** M.F.A. in Creative Writing, Saint Mary's College; M.A. in Education, SFSU. Author of *Whethering* (2005). 2004 Colorado Prize for Poetry. Poetry and essays published in *Conjunctions*, *New American Writing*, *ZYZZYVA*, *Pleiades*, and *Cross Cultural Poetics*.
- **Barbara Ohrstrom.** M.A., Professional Writing and Publishing, Emerson College. Creative work published in *Watch Out, We're Talking; American Poetry Anthology; Bay Windows; The Beacon; The New Hampshire; Catalyst Magazine*.
- **Michelle Richmond.** M.F.A., University of Miami. James Michener Fellow. Associate Writing programs Award for Short Fiction. Author of *The Girl in the Fall-Away Dress* (2001). Stories and essays published in *Glimmertrain*, *Cut Bank*, *Other Voices*, *7x7*, and elsewhere.
- **Elizabeth Robinson.** M.A. in Creative Writing, Brown University; Mdiv and M.A. in bioethics, The Pacific School of Religion. McDowell Colony fellowship. Author of *In the Sequence of Falling Things* (1990), *Bed of Lists* (1990), *House Made of Silver* (2000), and *Harrow* (2001).
- **Nina Schuyler.** M.F.A. in Creative Writing, San Francisco State University. Author of *The Painting* (2004), finalist for the Northern California Book Award. Published in *Tumbleweed Review*, *Watchwordpress*, *Sojourn Literary Arts Journal*, *Small Town*, and *Newsday*.
- **Steven Simmons.** Ph.D. in Modern Thought and Literature, Stanford University. Fellowships at Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, and Ford Foundation. Author of *Body Blows* (1986) and the forthcoming *Dead White Men*. Stories and essays published in *Artforum*, *Partisan Review*, *Harper's*, *Vanity Fair*.
- **Marianne Villanueva.** M. A. in English/Creative Writing; M.A. in East Asian Studies, Stanford University. California Arts Council literary fellowship. Author of *Ginseng and Other Tales from Manila* (1991). Published in *Threepenny Review*, *Zyzyva*, *Story Quarterly*.
- **Malena Watrous.** M.F.A., University of Iowa. Truman Capote Fellow. Published in *TriQuarterly*, *Massachusetts Review*, *Glimmertrain*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Kyoto Journal*, *Lingua Franca*, *San Francisco Chronicle*.
- **Chet Wiener.** Ph.D. in French and Romance Philology, Columbia University; M.F.A. in Poetry, University of Iowa. Author of numerous publications in French and numerous translations from the French.

Major Project Instructors

Additional instructors are required to teach the Major Project theses courses, a one-on-one summer engagement that each student participates in each summer. This experience often proves to be a training ground for teachers later brought into the program to teach courses. All are published writers, with some teaching experience. Since 1999, 56 writers, not otherwise teaching in the program, have served as Major Project instructors. See Appendix B.

V. DEPARTMENTAL GOVERNANCE

The two co-directors are responsible for almost all aspects of departmental governance. Much of the work is done jointly through consensus. Other tasks fall primarily within an individual co-director's purview. The co-directors meet weekly – and are in contact more frequently than that – to conduct the daily affairs and fulfill the responsibilities of their positions in the program. These include developing curriculum, finding and recommending faculty for hire, scheduling and staffing courses, advising students, managing enrollment and registration, planning and hosting program events, reading and approving MFA theses, recruiting and admitting new students, and producing program documents (including the program's weekly newsletter, annual viewbook, Web site, catalog copy, student handbook, Major Project guide, information packets for prospective applicants, Readings at Lone Mountain brochure, and program ads). They plan and hold four information meetings for prospective students, interview applicants, plan and staff admissions committee meetings, and make personal contact with admitted students.

For the purpose of governance, the program faculty technically consists of three members: the co-directors and one other full-time term faculty member. The majority of program decisions are made in conference between the two co-directors; some additional decisions result from small conferences with select faculty members and larger faculty meetings. Because two of the three full-time faculty members in the program have the responsibility and accountability of co-directors there is some confusion about the role and responsibilities of the third full-time faculty member. In addition, the structures of programs are different from those of Departments, giving rise to questions about the role of full-time faculty members in governance. This has led to significant contention about the structure of decision-making and inclusiveness. The structure of the co-directorship itself has raised a unique set of decision-making and governance issues.

Important curricular and departmental issues are aired in faculty meetings held once each semester. While the number of formal faculty meetings is limited because of the part-time status of almost all MFA faculty, the co-directors often meet informally with part-timers to confer about such matters as syllabi, course development, student behavior, special events, and program vision. Various questionnaires, meetings, and informal conversations suggest part-time faculty are well satisfied with the systems of governance and communication within the

program. They are encouraged to develop new ideas for courses and events, and many have. These events have included a faculty reading series, a “Life After MFA” panel, special pedagogy forums, and student-oriented workshops on the writing process. The co-directors also meet regularly with the deans of the College of Arts and Sciences to clarify program and University issues.

As the program has grown, the administrative load of the co-directors and the program assistant have expanded. Kate Brady’s appointment has been filled with regular administrative duties (including running the spring semester reading series, working on a variety of admissions projects, organizing an annual pedagogy forum, and thesis reading), and since 2005, several part-time faculty have assumed non-teaching assignments to help with advising, recruitment, admissions, and thesis-reading. Because part-time faculty are not ordinarily obligated to perform such administrative work and are not compensated for it, these positions exist separately from their teaching appointments.

Though the co-directorship is a complicated and often exhausting administrative structure, both co-directors are aware that the program is stronger for their complementary abilities and program governance is fairer and more thorough.

VI. STUDENTS

The program looks for students who show promise as writers and also demonstrate readiness to be contributing members of an academic community. We know that we can teach craft and teach it well, and in keeping with our original mission to serve students who might be overlooked by more conventional programs, we are especially receptive to working with students whose writing may lack polish because they lack a background in literary studies but demonstrates a vivid feeling for language and an urgent sense of meaning. In the admissions process, we give primary weight to the writing sample but also weight the student’s statement of purpose because it provides important clues to seriousness of purpose, receptivity to a structured academic environment, and the capacity to work collaboratively with others. The co-directors and several faculty members also meet with any interested applicants who request an interview, a substantial investment of time that some faculty members feel we should re-evaluate.

The program is particularly well suited to serve working adults who otherwise might not be able to attend a writing program. Given the expense of living in the Bay Area, graduate students in many local writing programs usually have job responsibilities in addition to their academic work, but we are unique in structuring a program that acknowledges this and attempts to make it possible for such students to succeed, balancing rigor against the competing demands on their time. The program is also well suited to serve candidates who seek a committed writing community that discourages destructive forms of competition and a careerist approach to graduate education.

The program provides an intellectual and social climate in which students flourish. Its physical structure reinforces connections among students and

between students and faculty simply by bringing everyone together at the same place and the same time each week. The Lone Mountain Reading Series takes place on class nights so that the entire program can participate. Fall semester begins with a reception for new and returning students, and the workshops jointly celebrate the end of every semester at a nearby location. Graduating students give a well-attended annual reading at which we celebrate their completion of their work. At biannual faculty readings faculty members read from work-in-progress, an important way to convey to students that we also struggle and take risks in sharing our work. At the twice-monthly Word Night, organized by the English Department, graduate and undergraduate creative writing students read from their work. In addition to publishing *Switchback* online, students generate their own social opportunities and rituals, organizing group readings and by tradition getting together after every Wednesday evening class. (We're not sure how they have the stamina to do so.) Although students have ample opportunities to offer informal feedback to the faculty and directors, they are not represented on any program committees, in part because most of them simply don't have the time.

While it is very diverse in terms of age range, the ethnic diversity of the program, addressed in "Mission and History," fluctuates from about 10 to 25 percent. The program needs to consider how to recruit more vigorously from a diverse community and may require additional financial resources, primarily in the form of scholarship funding, from the University in order to achieve these goals. Diversity is achieved not only through direct recruitment efforts but through continued and genuine participation in one of the most diverse literary communities in the country. Enhancing the ethnic diversity of our faculty is likely to attract more diverse students, and by bringing to campus writers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, the Lone Mountain Reading Series provides important opportunities for defining the program as a truly inclusive community.

VII. STAFF

In September 2000, Ottavia (Tavi) Storer joined the MFA staff as program assistant. Tavi is the main source of administrative support for the program, responding to the needs of faculty, students, and prospective applicants. In order to fulfill her duties, she frequently works longer hours than required.

USF program assistants have substantial work loads and considerable responsibility. In keeping with this University standard, Tavi works closely with the co-directors to perform a wide range of duties for the program, including some of the following, drawn from her job description:

- Responds to initial inquiries from prospective students, prepares and distributes all materials for recruitment and admissions Processes class schedules for program
- Processes class schedules for program
- Prepares and manages files for summers Major Projects
- Processes notices to post for graduation

- Composes correspondence to answer routine requests or inquiries, using knowledge of the University and College academic policies and procedures, and of the requirements of the MFA program
- Answers both program telephone lines, screening and transferring calls as necessary, taking information, answering inquiries, and providing information
- Interprets policies, rules, and regulations in response to requests for information, using knowledge of the University's regulations, policies, rules, and standards, including special regulations governing students in the graduate program
- Views, records, and retrieves information using computer terminals in order to research student records; update records; send and answer electronic mail
- Facilitates connections between off-campus students and University offices as necessary
- Maintains program office and in-house library, keeping the office open until 6:30 on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings
- Types correspondence, reports, forms, and other required program materials
- Order supplies; requests checks; prepares appropriate forms for job orders and office equipment repair or maintenance
- Greets and assist visitors, students, faculty, and staff who come into the Office.
- Schedules appointments for co-directors
- Processes class schedules for each academic session
- Develops new office procedures to increase efficiency of work flow, using knowledge of operations and creative problem-solving techniques.
- Proofreads program reports and materials to identify corrections and provide letter-perfect final copy.
- Files correspondence, reports, data, and other information in a filing system for easy retrieval, using knowledge of basic office procedures.

In order to meet the needs of the MFA program and to advance her administrative skills, the program assistant has enrolled in a number of training seminars offered by the dean's office and the division of Human Resources, including special training sessions in SIS (Student Information System), Dreamweaver 4.0 Basics, Quark, Excel, Mac OS 10.3, Blackboard, Enrollment Management Technology (EMT), and Purchasing Card training.

Under the supervision of the program co-directors, the program assistant also oversees the work of up to two student assistants in each academic year. Between 1999 and 2006, the program has employed a total of seven student workers. The program has a strong record of retention, with student workers remaining in their positions from one year to three years, depending upon the year of their graduation.

The work of the program assistant and the student assistants is supplemented by the administrative efforts of the fulltime faculty, all of whom must contribute to

the work load of the program in order to sustain its infrastructure during the 12-month school year.

VIII. TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

Students and faculty in the program use available campus technology to gain access to email, general University information (on the USF web site), and the MFA Blackboard – a site that houses MFA course syllabi, information about registration and enrollment, and the documents needed for Major Project advising, preparation, and completion. The program incorporated the use of the Blackboard into its procedures in 2004, soon after its introduction into the University system.

MFA students in the program have little need for additional technology, though many have expressed satisfaction with the increasing number of locations on campus that provide them with wireless internet access. They use this access to log onto USF Connect, the conduit to their email and to the MFA Blackboard.

IX. FACILITIES

Currently the program is housed in a suite of four linked offices in the Lone Mountain building: one for the program Assistant that also serves as general program office and library, a small interior office that serves as the Student Assistant work space, and two private offices for the co-directors. The offices provide just enough adequate space. Since MFA students are only on campus Tuesday and Wednesday evening, the need for an open, public, program area is important: they often gather in the main office, and interact regularly with the program Assistant on matters of advising, registration, etc. Due to construction and re-configuration of the building during the last two years, Kate Brady's office was moved to lower campus, maintaining a functioning space for her but physically separating her from the program. In addition, an office for the part-time faculty was also removed, leaving them without any discrete space for student meetings or class preparation (they now confer with students in the cafeteria). Since student meetings are confidential and focused, meeting in the cafeteria is less than ideal.

Lone Mountain itself has proved to be a boon to the program: it offers an esthetically poised and physically discrete location that has often been cited by both students and applicants as a positive feature. The self-contained spatial articulation matches in many ways the needs of the students, who tend to be older, are often a bit shy about returning to a university environment, and are used to a more self-sufficient professional and personal environment. Lone Mountain gives them communal coherence — they're all in the same building at the same time — and, in the form of the cafeteria, a space to congregate before class and during breaks, a space the program otherwise lacks. The classrooms are generous, with an airy quality and superb views: all adding to the general educational experience.

In 2008 the program will be moving to lower campus, where the new Kalmanovitz Hall is being built to house most Arts & Sciences departments and programs. The MFA program will have another suite of offices designed to capture at least some of the spatial program identity offered by the LM campus. The architects worked closely with the Co-directors and deans to try and carve out a space for the program that will be more than a random collection of offices, one that recognizes the needs of program students to have a home base inside the university.

The move should offer new intersections with the rest of the university. Nevertheless, it will also remove the more complete sense of environmental unity that most faculty and students feel has served the program well in Lone Mountain. In Kalmanovitz Hall there will again be an open, welcoming space for students, three offices for the full-time program faculty, and one additional office to be used by both the student assistants and the part-time faculty. (Since at any given time there are at least seven part-time faculty teaching in the program, sufficient office space for them will clearly be a continuing challenge. The English Department will have some small conferences rooms down the hall that should be available for student conferences.)

Faculty will certainly benefit from proximity to colleagues in the new Kalmanovitz environment, and MFA students may find themselves willing to be less isolated, to interact more with other students taking evening classes. In any event, the new offices will be set among many other departments and programs, in a large and complex structure peopled by mostly undergraduates. Though the program's evening classes will likely offer students a more discrete environment than day classes would, there may still be a safety and confidence factor for our large number of "older" students (in our program's mix, older students tend to be more nervous about being older than younger ones are about being younger). Hopefully this will be offset by the energy and extra- and inter-curricular opportunities the new structure will encourage.

Because our students only come two nights a week, they need to be in rather immediate and regular contact with the program office. Classrooms have to be close enough to facilitate these interactions and to provide a sense of community. We have usually been able to hold all our classes in Lone Mountain. When this pattern has been disrupted (one or two courses held in buildings down the hill or on lower campus) students have complained of feeling isolated from their peers. It will be a priority for MFA classrooms to remain within the new structure or as close to it as possible.

Because the students mostly come right from work, how to eat or get quick energy is an important issue. The Lone Mountain cafeteria has provided for this adequately, even restructuring its hours so coffee and snacks could be obtained during the evening break. At this time, it's not clear whether or not there will even be a coffee cart in the new Kalmanovitz Hall. There are, however, cafeteria and a coffee house in the nearby University Center.

X. CONCLUSIONS

The strengths of the program include:

- good morale among faculty and students and a strong sense of community
- small classes and personal attention
- structure that allows working adults to successfully complete the program
- a highly qualified and dedicated core faculty who emphasize teaching as a central value
- increased rigor in the curriculum
- an extremely appealing physical location and convenient and centralized environment
- a fluid curriculum that allows students to work in more than one genre

Weaknesses of the program include:

- too few full-time faculty
- lack of tenure-track positions, raising questions about stability
- program cost and lack of scholarship money
- absence of formal processes to address a range of governance and curricular issues
- lack of ethnic diversity among faculty and students

XI. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The program is at an ideal size, large enough to offer a varied curriculum and still small enough to feel like a real community. It functions well as an independent program, with the particular strength that all courses are taught by writers, and students take all their classes with fellow MFA students. With its curriculum of paired courses and its open approach to specialization in a genre, it occupies a distinctive niche in an increasingly competitive environment.

To continue to be a competitive program and to enhance our ability to attract the best students, we will need some specific additional resources from the university. The ability to offer more merit scholarships, named fellowships, and/or substantial teaching assistantships will help us to attract the best applicants and to enhance diversity.

Because the program has grown to serve approximately seventy to seventy-five students at a time, more full-time faculty members are needed. Adding three new full-time positions, particularly a full-time position for a nonfiction writer, would redistribute the administrative workload among a larger number of full-time faculty, help to enhance the program's reputation, and ideally also help us to diversify our faculty. A position might also be designed for a visiting writer for a set period of time. The program's stability would also increase if current full-time faculty positions, all of which are term positions, became tenure track.

The program needs additional administrative staff support, and it stands to benefit by examining its administrative processes to ensure that they are as efficient and effective as possible.

The addition of more full-time faculty would also help us to address the difficulties of running a program with a largely part-time faculty. We need to identify means to incorporate full and part-time faculty in program governance and planning, especially with respect to supervising and evaluating graduate theses, building program curriculum, and adding new features to the program to keep it competitive with other well-regarded programs. We would like to address curriculum issues with a focus on possibly revamping and rescheduling both the summer autobiography course and the summer major project instruction. We also see a need to consider whether the program can become a three-year program or offer that option to students who desire it.

The program is somewhat removed from the university as a whole because of its population of working adults; for many students and faculty, this counts as an advantage, for others there is a desire for more integration. More coordination and continuity between the MFA program and the undergraduate creative writing program is a possible, but debated, goal in the next five years. Another debated goal might be the formation of a creative writing planning group.

With a planned move to lower campus in the next few years, the program faces the potential loss of a coherent environment in which students have easy access to services, including those of the program office, and to each other, with a nearby cafeteria providing an important gathering place for students and faculty. The physical features of our present location have a crucial impact on the program as community, and we need to plan for a similarly centralized set-up in our new location. We also need to find space in the new building for the growth of the program and its faculty.

Because our advertising budget hasn't been increased in over seven years, it is time to look again at our needs in this area, finding new approaches to promoting the program and new venues for doing so.

With its unique structure, dedicated core faculty, growing reputation, and ever-increasing student achievements, the Program is poised to continue into the future with renewed enthusiasm.

Appendix A: Student Achievements

Students and alumni from USF's MFA in Writing Program have published widely in multiple media, including books, anthologies, journals, and online publications. They have read their work widely in bookstores and community institutions, and have participated in conferences at the local and national level.

Books

Karen Benke's *Sister*; Lynn Bridgers' *Death's Deceiver: The Life of Joseph P. Machebeuf*; Thomas Burke's *Where is Home and Other Stories*; Clint Catalyst's *Cottonmouth Kisses*; Matthew D. Dalton's *The Vertical Man; Keeper*, a poetry chapbook by Tiff Dressen; Suzanne Dyckman's *equilibrium's form*; Nelson Eubanks' *The First Thing Smoking*; *That Year*, a poetry chapbook by Amanda Field; James B. Frost's *World Leader Pretend*, Rose Castillo Guilbaut's *Farmworker's Daughter: Growing Up Mexican in America*; Jo Ann Yolanda Hernandez' *White Bread Competition*; Brian Kluepfel's *Anatoly of the Gomdars; day collects*, a poetry chapbook by Todd Melicker; Amy Novesky's *Elephant Prince: Story of Ganesh*; Tanya Pampalone's *Where to Wear 2005*; Jane Porter's *The Frog Prince*; *Home*, a poetry chapbook by Rebecca Stoddard; and Ken Rodgers' *Trench Dining*.

Anthologies

Work by current students and alumni has appeared in *Best New American Voices 2006*; *The Best Travel Writing 2005*; *Going Home to a Landscape: Writings by Filipinas*; *Times of Sorrow/Times of Grace: Writings by Women of the Great Plains Area*; *The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror 2004*; *Appetite: Food as Metaphor, An Anthology of Women Poets*; *The Best of Travelers' Tales*; *Exact Fare Only II*; *Going Alone: Women's Adventures in the Wild*; and *I Should Have Stayed Home*.

Journals, Magazines, and Newspapers

Work by current students and alumni has also appeared in *All Hallows*, *Aurora Review*, *Backwards City Review*, *Berkeley Fiction Review*, *the Christian Science Monitor*, *Cimarron Review*, *Clackamas Literary Review*, *Comet Magazine*, *Fence*, *Fiction Attic*, *14 Hills*, *Georgetown Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Ignatian*, *Interim*, *Jane Magazine*, *Kalliope*, *Marin Independent Journal*, *Phantasmagoria*, *Pomona Valley Review*, *Poets & Writers*, *Prose: aX*, *Quercus Review*, *Room of One's Own*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *Santa Clara Review*, *7x7*, *Shenandoah*, *Tiny Lights: A Journal of Personal Essay*, *26*, *VOLT*, *Yoga International*, *Zaum*, and *Zyzyva*.

Honors and Prizes

Among the Program's student honors and prizes are the highest-ranking national Associated Writing Program's award for nonfiction and/or fiction in three consecutive years; inclusion in the *Best New American Voices 2006* anthology (a competition recognizing the best short fiction produced by students in graduate writing programs across the country); the 2005 Espy Foundation Literary Contest

award (with publication forthcoming in *Bellingham Review*); the San Francisco Foundation's 2005 Mary Tanenbaum Award in Nonfiction; the Five Fingers Poetry Award; the *Writer's Digest* Writing Award in short fiction; finalist nomination for the Bellwether Prize; first place in UC-Irvine's Chicano/Latino Literary Prize; second place in the Nimrod/Hardman "Katherine Anne Porter" fiction prize for 2005; a nomination for the Faulkner Prize for a distinguished novel in progress; the Backwards City Review Fiction Contest award; a prize in nonfiction from the National League of American Pen Women; the Julia Peterkin Fiction Award; a New California Media Award for the Best in Ethnic American Media; and post-graduate artist residencies at the Headlands Center for the Arts.

Organizations and Conferences

The stream of activities in and around the Program highlights a belief in the community value of literature, and features student participation in a number of literary and service organizations, including Poets and Writers, Zoetrope, Swords to Ploughshares, California Poets in the Schools, the Squaw Valley Writers Conference, The Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, San Francisco LitQuake, the Walden House Liberal Arts Program, the Associated Writing Programs Conference, the Vermont Studio Center, the Northern California Writers Circle, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Under the Volcano Writing Conference outside Mexico City, and the Summer Literary Seminars in Prague, Czechoslovakia and St. Petersburg, Russia.

Readings

Students and alumni have read their work at 826 Valencia, the San Francisco Main Public Library, Intersection for the Arts, Cody's Books, Diesel Bookstore, the Associated Writing Programs Conference, The San Francisco Foundation, the Canvas Gallery, the Readings at Lone Mountain Series, Book Passage, the Bazaar Café, Sebastopol Center for the Arts, and the Emerging American Writers Series produced by The New Short Fiction Series in Los Angeles.

Online Publications

Our MFA journal *Switchback* is in its second year of online publication. Conceived and produced by students in the Program, the journal accepts submissions in all genres. Alumni and students in the MFA Program have published their work in *swback.com* as well as *salon.com*, *McSweeney's*, *lodestarquarterly.com*, *literarymama.com*, *subrevolt.com*, *verbsap.com*, *freshyarn.com*, *planet-mag.com*, *tattoohighway.org*, and *pindeldyboz.com*.

Appendix B: Major Project Instructors

This represents the list of Major Project instructors who were available to the MFAW students between 1999 and 2006.

#	Name	Genre
1	Albon, George	Poetry
2	Ali, Samina	Fiction, Nonfiction
3	Altschul, Andrew	Fiction
4	Barbash, Tom	Fiction
5	Barrows, Anne	Fiction
6	Berkson, Bill	Poetry
7	Bledsoe, Lucy Jane	Nonfiction
8	Block, Elizabeth	Fiction
9	Bromige, David	Poetry
10	Brown, Cecil	Nonfiction, Fiction
11	Carroll, Peter	Nonfiction
12	Caspers, Nona	Fiction
13	Cohen, Paul	Fiction
14	Coshnear, Daniel	Fiction
15	Costello, Elizabeth	Fiction, Nonfiction
16	Davison, Matthew	Fiction
17	Dienstfrey, Patricia	Poetry
18	DiPrima, Diane	Poetry
19	Duane, Daniel	Nonfiction
20	Dyckman, Suzanne	Poetry, Nonfiction
21	Ferber, Audrey	Fiction, Nonfiction
22	Foster, Jeanne	Nonfiction, Poetry
23	Frost, James	Fiction
24	Genna, Jamey	Fiction
25	Glancy, Gabrielle	Fiction
26	Graham, Toni	Fiction
27	Greber, Judith	Fiction
28	Hemmings, Kauai Hart	Fiction, Nonfiction
29	Hill, Carolyn	Fiction, Nonfiction
30	Hoover, Paul	Poetry
31	Iribarne, Mathew	Fiction

32	Kim, Junse	Fiction
33	Kim, Myung Mi	Poetry
34	Klamkin, Lynn	Nonfiction
35	Mackenzie, Lily Iona	Fiction, Nonfiction
36	McFerrin, Linda Watanabe	Nonfiction
37	Michael, Pamela	Nonfiction
38	Miller, Cathleen	Nonfiction
39	Moody, Bill	Fiction
40	Perin, Margo	Nonfiction
41	Reents, Stephanie	Fiction
42	Richmond, Michelle	Nonfiction, Fiction
43	Robertson, Mike	Nonfiction
44	Robles, Jaime	Poetry
45	Rodgers, Ken	Nonfiction, Poetry
46	Rumsey, Tessa	Poetry
47	Salas, Floyd	Fiction
48	Seeley, Tracy	Nonfiction
49	Simmons, Glori	Fiction
50	Simmons, Steve	Fiction
51	Swindle, Renée	Fiction
52	Teare, Brian	Poetry
53	Tran, Truong	Poetry
54	Turoff, Randy	Nonfiction
55	Villanueva, Marianne	Nonfiction
56	Watrous, Malena	Fiction, Nonfiction

Not included are faculty of the MFA Program who teach during the school year:

Beachy, Stephen
 Booth, David
 Brady, Kate
 Buzbee, Lewis
 Cohn, Lowell
 Cole, Norma
 Harper, Lisa
 Morrison, Rusty
 Schuyler, Nina
 Soehnlein, Karl
 Staw, Jane Anne
 Steinberg, Susan