

**THE RAINIER WRITING WORKSHOP
MFA @ PLU
2018 RESIDENCY SCHEDULE**

In addition to attending all workshop sessions, each participant must take 16 credits during the residency. A one-session class counts for one credit; a double-session class counts for two credits. These count for one credit each: each morning talk, and each Grad Presentation. The “Art of the Book” counts for two credits. Everyone must take at least one class designated “Advance Reading.” Taking one session of a two-session class is allowed, but it’s a good idea to consult with the instructor beforehand, in case he/she finds it inadvisable to do so. The Grad Sessions are intended for graduates. The Pedagogy Sessions are for thesis-year participants and meet concurrently with the Mixed-Genre workshops. Students are expected to attend the afternoon Grad Readings and the evening faculty readings. Please note: as a courtesy to your peer students and the faculty, please arrive on time to all events and activities, especially workshops and classes! Lastly: a final version of this schedule will be available at the residency. Between now and the residency, there might be changes to this schedule, so please double-check the final schedule when you arrive at the residency.

FRIDAY, JULY 27

UC133 **4:30 ALUMNI READING: Meagan Macvie '14, Michael Schmeltzer '07**

Regency Room **6:30 DINNER**

Scan Center **8:00 FACULTY READINGS: Geoffrey Davis, Scott Nadelson**

SATURDAY, JULY 28

8:30 MORNING TALK:

Xavier 201 **Rick Barot, *The Face of the Beloved***
The poet and critic Allen Grossman once claimed that the roots of poetry are in the poet’s desire to preserve the face of the beloved. Taking Grossman’s notion as a first principle, this talk explores the ways that art is substantiated by the elements that inform Grossman’s notion of the writer’s work: love and pain, earthbound chaos and timeless transcendence, erasure and recovery. Many of the texts explored in the talk will be poetry, but the world of obsessions conjured by the poets will surely be representative to all writers, particularly in the questions implied by the poems: how do craft and experience meet in a poem? how do mortality and futurity abide in poems? and what does it mean to preserve the face of the beloved when the beloved is not a person but an idea, a place, an ethics?

Admin Rooms **10:00 PRIMARY-GENRE WORKSHOPS**

10:00 GRAD SESSION:**Xavier 201****Katrina Hays, *How to Offer a Graduate Reading***

The graduate readings are offered as a way to share the writing you have created over the past three years with everyone in the program. How excellent, right? Well.... For people who are completely confident about reading their work in front of their peers, the reading is easy. For others, it can feel like an approaching nightmare train on the tracks of potential embarrassment, doom and destruction. This class will offer a basic approach in how to offer a graduate reading that is professional, clear, well-thought-out, and does not leave you a wrecked puddle on the floor. After the class, each graduate will be able to schedule a 30-minute private practice session with Katrina in Xavier Hall prior to her or his reading.

Commons**12:00 LUNCH****1:30-2:45 CLASSES:****Admin 204A****Suzanne Berne and Marjorie Sandor, *The Literary Detective: Mystery Techniques in Fiction***

What do the classic conventions of mystery and detective stories have to teach the literary fiction writer? This class will delve into aspects of atmosphere, voice, structure, characterization and point of view. Readings include the first chapters of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* and Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* and two short stories: Edgar Allan Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" and Margaret Atwood's "Death By Landscape." [Two Sessions; Exercises; Advance Reading.]

Admin 204B**Scott Nadelson, *Fiction Fundamentals***

In this class, we will explore foundational concepts of narrative writing to establish a baseline for understanding craft. In the first session, we will focus on character development/exploration, with a particular emphasis on the interaction between perception, thought, speech, and action. In the second session we will delve into the complex territory of time, structure, and perspective. [Two Sessions; Exercises; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 208**Lia Purpura, *Poetic Conversations/Poetic Kin***

Poets love to talk. They wither away without vital, ongoing conversation—or worse, in isolation, they are tempted to draw solely from their own bounded worlds, wonder who they're writing for, and get all existentially angsty. In this two-part class, we will explore contemporary poets' vital, poetic conversations with their ancestors, teachers, and friends. On day one, we'll discuss both the originating poems and "response" poems we've read, as well as study methods of "responsive composition." On day two, we'll share our own poetic responses (brief, written homework overnight). Poetic conversation is a dynamic form of creation that lifts us out of ourselves, joins our concerns with the concerns of other eras, breaks through the solitary nature of writing, and creates forms of community that span all manner of divides. This class will help you locate your work within a lineage of your choosing, and recognize, speak back to, and honor the historical and contemporary influences that shape you. [Two Sessions; Exercises; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 210**Sherry Simpson, *Nonfiction: A Taxonomy of Forms***

What's the difference between a lyric essay and a lyrically written essay? What makes nonfiction literary, and how is that different than literary journalism? This overview will introduce students to the spectrum of nonfiction forms. We'll examine the distinctive elements of each and take note of where the boundaries blur and whether that matters. The aim is a deeper understanding of how form influences a cascade of writing choices. [Two Sessions; Advance Reading.]

3:00-4:15 CLASSES:**Admin 204A****David Biespiel, *Four Great Poems***

This is meant as close study of four superb poems in order to focus on how the thing gets made, what its many ambitions are and consequences. And to inspire you to play up. The four poems are: "The Blue Terrance" by Terrance Hayes. "Have You Prayed?" by Li-Young Lee. "Diving into the Wreck" by Adrienne Rich. "Edward, Edward," by Anon. [Two Sessions; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 204B**David Allan Cates, *First Chapters***

A close reading of the first chapters of various novels to show how they pull the dramatic bow all the way back, presenting characters in unsustainable places, and asking questions that can only be answered over time. We'll discuss how the first chapters set up the geography of the novel's world: physical and emotional and metaphysical. And how they present a clear dramatic situation that is big enough to power a novel. Some of the chapters we'll look at will be from *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Ken Kesey, *The Bell Jar*, Sylvia Plath, *Winter in the Blood*, by James Welch, *The Reader*, Bernard Schlink, *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Last Picture Show*, Larry McMurtry, *A Farewell to Arms*, Ernest Hemingway, and *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Carson McCullers. [Two Sessions; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 208**Jenny Johnson, *Repetitive Scheming***

Anaphora. Epistrophe. Chiasmus. Polysyndeton. Asyndeton. Parallel series. Are you ready for a 101 on schemes of repetition? Yes, we will be repeating ourselves. But in this two-part class you will learn how to do so in ways that enchant, surprise, and haunt your readers. Together, we will build rhythms, patterns, moments of balance alongside moments of asymmetry. We will discuss the "Rhythm of Threes," an informative chapter from *Building Great Sentences* by Brooks Landon. You will learn from close reading writers, such as Justin Torres, Gertrude Stein, Richard Siken, and Aracelis Girmay. You will also have a chance to experiment with various schemes through in-class writing exercises. [Two Sessions; Exercises; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 210**Rebecca McClanahan, *Bringing Real-Life Characters to Life on the Page***

Part of what draws a reader into a nonfiction work is the sense that flesh-and-blood characters stand behind the words. However, the mere fact that characters exist in "real life" does not mean that they will automatically spring to life on the page. How do memoirists, personal essayists, literary journalists, and other nonfiction writers work imaginatively with factual material (gathered through observation, research, interviews, or memory) to create fully developed, three-dimensional characters? We will look closely at several literary models, isolate particular techniques, and discuss ways to incorporate these techniques into our own nonfiction texts. [Two Sessions; Handout Reading Required.]

4:30 GRAD PRESENTATIONS:**Admin 204A****Ann Bodle-Nash, *Containing Life: Techniques for Structuring Memoir***

As a writer considers the work that is memoir, there are structural choices to be made. Shall we tell it chronologically through progressive essays, engage the reader with a preface, organize it thematically, use a three-act structure, or mix it all up with flashbacks doing the time-jump work? Let's look at examples by well-known memoirists for pathways that work and consider our own route to the finish line.

Admin 204B **Kathryn Burgomaster, *Facing the Unknown: The Gift of Vulnerability in the Work of Brenda Hillman and Mary Ruefle***
 Some poems can be “difficult.” Many readers—not having the time, the will, or the energy to try to make sense of them—will stop there. Is there anything to be gained besides an intellectual challenge? Through discussion of the work and writing processes of Brenda Hillman and Mary Ruefle, this talk will explore how we, as readers and as writers, can approach a challenging work from a place of vulnerability in order to engage with its material and, perhaps, discover its meaning.

Regency Room **6:15 DINNER**

Scan Center **7:30 FACULTY READINGS: Kevin Clark, Marie Mutsuki Mockett**

SUNDAY, JULY 29

8:30 MORNING TALK:

Xavier 201 **Justin St. Germain, *How to Tell a True Story: Structure and Scope in Nonfiction***
 Writers who’ve never done it often assume that telling a true story is easier than telling a fictional one: just say what happened. In fact, as anyone who’s written creative nonfiction knows, the truth is often an obstacle to telling a story. Fiction can accommodate any narrative structure the writer chooses, but real life is messier: the writer of nonfiction has to impose a structure on the material by making difficult decisions. What parts of an experience are significant? How can the ragged truth be structured in a way that rewards the reader with the momentum and depth of a good story? In this morning talk, we’ll discuss what factors might help us make those decisions, as well as a few structural examples, and suggested exercises for writers struggling with structure.

Admin Rooms **10:00 PRIMARY-GENRE WORKSHOPS**

UC/Xavier/Admin **10:00 THESIS MANUSCRIPT CRITIQUES**

Commons **12:00 LUNCH**

UC 201 **12:00 FACULTY LUNCH MEETING**

1:30-2:45 CLASSES:

Admin 204A **Berne/Sandor, *The Literary Detective* [Session 2]**

Admin 204B **Nadelson, *Fiction Fundamentals* [Session 2]**

Admin 208 **Purpura, *Poetic Kin* [Session 2]**

Admin 210 **Simpson, *Nonfiction: A Taxonomy* [Session 2]**

3:00-4:15 CLASSES:

Admin 204A **Biespiel, *Four Great Poems* [Session 2]**

- Admin 204B *Cates, First Chapters* [Session 2]
- Admin 208 *Johnson, Repetitive Scheming* [Session 2]
- Admin 210 *McClanahan, Bringing Real-Life Characters* [Session 2]

4:30 GRAD PRESENTATIONS:

- Admin 204A **Brandon Lewis, “A Small Crumb. An Offering”:** *How Two Poets Reject Consolation in the Modern Elegy*
 In the quickness of modern life, in a culture that often perceives death as an inconvenience, could it be that we are largely unequipped to face grief? What if a funeral or other type of ceremony isn’t enough to achieve closure? What happens when grief remains unresolved? For writers, one might say that a natural outlet in a time of mourning is their craft. In this session we will examine the work of two modern elegists who immerse themselves in their pain, outright rejecting consolatory aspects of the traditional elegy, such as religious optimism and the possibility of finding closure, using their poetry instead as a vehicle to progress through grief.
- Admin 204B **Jen Soriano, *Eyes, Prisms and Latticework: The Expansive Truth of Intersectional Form***
 What is intersectional form in literary non-fiction? It’s form that resists looking at the world through pigeonholes; it’s form that resists stereotyping and domination and instead exposes privilege and oppression. It’s form that celebrates tension and contradiction and that allows for multiple perspectives on multiple issues, with no expectation of singular resolution or truth. And it’s form that requires creative containers and rigorous craft to hold its expansive truth. We’ll take a look at examples of intersectional form in the work of Robin Lee Kimmerer, Lauret Savoy, Bhanu Kapil, Lily Hoang and Kazim Ali.

- UC Patio **6:15 DINNER**
- Scan Center **7:30 FACULTY READINGS: Suzanne Berne, Justin St. Germain**
- The Cave **AFTER HOURS: The Cave**

MONDAY, JULY 30

8:30 MORNING TALK:

- CK East **David Allan Cates, Greg Glazner, Rebecca McClanahan, Lia Purpura, Marjorie Sandor,**
Why Did the Writer Cross the Genre?
 In this panel, five writers discuss the rewards and challenges of writing in more than one genre. Some questions we’ll consider: Have you always written in more than one genre, or did you begin in one primary genre and then move into another—by choice, accident, need, or impulse? Do particular subjects, themes, obsessions, and “magnetizing centers” remain constant in your work? If you can identify any of your “signatures” (of voice, tone, style, form) do you retain those signatures across genres? Does the writing process change when you move from one genre to another? What advice would you give to writers considering a move to another genre?

Admin Rooms **10:00 PRIMARY-GENRE WORKSHOPS**

UC/Xavier/Admin **10:00 THESIS MANUSCRIPT CRITIQUES**

Commons **12:00 LUNCH**

UC 201 **12:15-1:00PM: BRING-YOUR-LUNCH INFO SESSION**

Hannah Comerford and Garrett Brooks, *Building Your Website: A Writer's Guide to Creating a Powerful Presence Online*

Whether you're already a published author or just starting your writing career, your public identity is paramount. A professional website is essential for establishing that identity—but where do you begin? Our *Soundings* webmaster Garrett Brooks and 2017-18 editor Hannah Comerford will walk you through the process of establishing a high-quality and attractive web presence, covering approaches for the tech savvy and not so savvy. Topics will include professionalism, branding, visuals, technical aspects, and social media.

1:30-2:45 CLASSES:

Admin 204A **Rick Barot, *The Personal and the Political***

We're living in tumultuous, grief-struck times, and poetry's role as a catalyst for redress has never been more necessary. As we process each day's onslaught of news, many of us struggle to reconcile our roles as artists, citizens, agents of resistance, conscience, and care. In this two-session class, we'll look at poets whose works illustrate the ways we might pivot—whether messily or fluidly—between the personal and the political, the private and the historical. The poets we look at will include Ross Gay, Danez Smith, Wayne Miller, and others. [Two Sessions; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 204B **Greg Glazner, *Ghosting the Master Poets***

One of the most useful graduate classes I took was a techniques course taught by Patricia Goedicke at The University of Montana. She required that we ghost the rhythms—syllable- by-syllable, accent-by-accent—of great, non-metrical poets, writing our own imitations in exact fashion. In important ways, I heard the poems of Whitman and Levine for the first time by ghosting them in this manner, and my own ability to write rhythmically expanded immediately. For this class, I will bring in some master poetry for us to ghost. You are invited to bring in the work of an accomplished poet as well, especially if one of your key poets strikes you as rhythmically powerful in mysterious ways. The process of ghosting has the potential to develop your ear dramatically. [Two Sessions; Exercises.]

Admin 208 **Jason Skipper, *Secondary Characters: Beyond Flat and Round***

Often texts on craft speak little if at all to secondary characters other than say what makes them flat and round. In this class we will delve deeper into secondary characters to examine the different roles they can take in a narrative and their power to guide, drive, and transform the central character's story. [One Session; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 210 **Brenda Miller, *Time Traveling in Creative Nonfiction***

In this class, we will explore how creative nonfiction writers situate themselves (and their readers) in time. We will study examples of past, present, and future tense, learning how writers free themselves to effectively explore their material from various perspectives. [Two Sessions; Exercises; Handout Reading Required.]

3:00-4:15 CLASSES:

- Admin 204A** **Kevin Clark and Marjorie Sandor, *How to Assemble a Literary Anthology or Craft Textbook***
Do you have a particular area of knowledge that would make for a marketable anthology or textbook? Kevin Clark and Marjorie Sandor have each published anthological texts, and, while on the job, they learned the process from proposal to permissions. They will share strategies, secrets, and practical magic that will give you a step up on producing such a book. From the proposal to the shaping to the intro to the terror and splendor of gathering rights and permissions, our goal is to help you avoid the pitfalls of the first-time anthology editor. [One Session.]
- Admin 204B** **Geffrey Davis, *Re-thinking the Margin: Where Does Poetry End and Living Begin?***
The 20th century saw both the birth of confessional poetry and its backlash. Today, the position of the “poetry of the personal” within contemporary poetry remains controversial, as poets tangle with the stakes of writing about the self (especially when doing so from a marginalized position). This session investigates “write what you know” as edict and presumption in the field, exploring both the risk and the potential of the confessional across distinct perspectives. We will discuss possible relationships to the confessional label; its usefulness—and misuse—when ascribed to poets; and the challenge of embracing confession’s ongoing dialogue between poet, speaker, and reader. [One Session.]
- Admin 208** **Rigoberto González, *Lorca in Translation***
In this brief introduction to the art of translation, students will examine the various decisions, considerations, and permissions that translators take when reimagining a poem in a different language and cultural context. To grasp the nuances of the art, we will take a close and critical look at various versions of Federico García Lorca’s *Poeta en Nueva York*. We will begin with Ben Belitt’s 1955 edition, proceed to the canonical Christopher Maurer edition, and end with the recent and most experimental version by Pablo Medina and Mark Statman. If time permits, in order to appreciate the labor of translation, students will be invited to participate in a few exercises. You do not need to know Spanish to attend this class. [One Session.]
- Admin 210** **Marie Mutsuki Mockett, *Inspecting Liberal Bias: Religion***
In our secular, liberal world, it’s not uncommon for us to think that our science-based world is the “real” one. The 2016 election, however, has given voice to the wide cultural chasm in the United States—and beyond. The charge has been made that mainstream media and the liberal coasts are biased against other parts of the country. Is this true? In this course, we will examine how our unconscious bias against religion influences how we write about it and the words we use and we will ask how we have come to use those words, and what the origin of our attitudes is. [One Session.]

4:30 GRAD PRESENTATIONS:

- Admin 204A** **Tia Harestad, *Speaking Pain: Representations of Female Illness in Literature***
So, you have a chronic illness. And someone tells you to “make the best” out of your “bad” situation. Sonya Huber calls this “cartoon gratitude,” or, “the greeting card variety of spiritual transcendence.” I call it the ‘desirable’ pain narrative, and it is an idea that appears in Roman poetry as far back as 43 B.C. In this presentation, we will explore the particular effects that these platitudes had on women in literature, and how women went from subject, to writer, to both subject *and* writer with the dawn of the illness memoir.
- Admin 204B** **Zach Martin, *Transformative Altered States in Fiction***
One of the few rules in writing a novel is that your main character must change. We will examine

scenes in which authors transform their characters by putting them in a temporarily altered state of mind. These altered states of mind can be brought about chemically, spiritually, digitally, or through extreme emotion. The goal is to take the character outside of him- or herself, and in doing so, enable the character to change their worldview. These altered states, often sought out by characters in an attempt to escape their own existence or circumstances, can paradoxically force characters to confront their situation, see the world in a new way, and change their outlook. Using examples from Ernest Cline, James Welch, Ursula Le Guin, and Leslie Marmon Silko, we will examine the moments leading up to scenes with transformative altered states, the scenes themselves, and how the characters emerge on the other side. Time permitting, we will do a short writing exercise.

Regency Room 6:15 DINNER

Scan Center 7:30 FACULTY READINGS: Rigoberto González, Maurya Simon

TUESDAY, JULY 31

8:30 MORNING TALK:

Xavier 201

Oliver de la Paz, *Documentary Poetics*

In a manifesto posted on the Poetry Foundation's website, poet Mark Nowak declared that “documentary poetics needs to participate not only in the social field of contemporary Poetry but—as has been its historical trajectory—in the larger social movements of the day.” Last year I offered a course on Documentary Poetics, but only scratched the surface of the possibilities within this idea. In this morning talk I will talk about the position of the writer in a social reality. The impulse to document—that is to take in all the factors of the human condition and to consider the poet as participating in social justice movements, both local and personal, is indeed an act of empathy which is the basis for all poetic acts. And I will provide suggestions or scenarios for students and their own writing possibilities.

Admin Rooms 10:00 PRIMARY-GENRE WORKSHOPS

UC/Xavier/Admin 10:00 THESIS MANUSCRIPT CRITIQUES

Commons 12:00 LUNCH

12:00 MENTORSHIP PREFERENCE FORMS DUE FROM 1ST-YEARS AND 2ND-YEARS

1:30-2:45 CLASSES:

Admin 204A **Barot, *The Personal* [Session 2]**

Admin 204B **Glazner, *Ghosting* [Session 2]**

Admin 208 **April Lawson, “The Most Important Decision I’ve Ever Been Faced With”: On Gordon Lish’s Editorial Violations of the Work of Raymond Carver**

In 1981, Raymond Carver’s collection *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love* was published. It not only made his reputation as a major writer but also came to be seen as the foundation of a literary

movement. But what often isn't discussed in classes is that the title story of this famous collection was once called "Beginners," and that before the book was printed Carver begged Lish to publish an earlier form of the book, to in effect undo extreme changes Lish had made to the text. In a letter to Lish, Carver writes: "Now, I'm afraid, mortally afraid, I feel it, that if the book were to be published as it is in its present edited form, I may never write another story, that's how closely, God Forbid, some of those stories are to my sense of regaining my health and mental well-being [...] Please help me with this, Gordon. I feel as if this is the most important decision I've ever been faced with [...]" The changes remained against Carver's will. For this class, we will read and discuss the two versions of Carver's title story from the book, and discuss the artistic and ethical sides of this situation, and the power of editing, in multiple senses. [One Session; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 210 **Miller, *Time Traveling* [Session 2]**

3:00-4:15 CLASSES:

Admin 204A **Kim Culbertson and Rigoberto González, *YA Fiction: A Conversation and Primer***

In recent years, YA literature has fully come of age, both as a literary and marketplace force. A handful of RWW students have met with success in the YA field, including Carrie Mesrobian and Meagan Macvie. This session will feature current RWW student, Kim Culbertson, and faculty member Rigoberto Gonzalez. Kim has published five award-winning YA novels, the most recent being *The Wonder of Us*, from Scholastic. Rigoberto has published three books in his *Mariposa Club* series, published by Alyson Books; the series focuses on queer characters. Kim and Rigoberto will describe their experiences in the YA field, as well as respond to questions. [One Session.]

Admin 208 **Marjorie Sandor, *Darash Me, Baby: The Ancient Art of Midrash and the Contemporary Creative Writer***

All genres welcome. Midrash is the ancient rabbinical art of diving into existing texts to crack open their suppressed and neglected stories, and its methods have much to offer the contemporary creative writer of fiction, poetry, and non-fiction. We'll briefly go over the basic working-method of this lively and subversive form of narrative exploration, explore a few examples of "secular contemporary midrash" from such writers as Alice Munro, Lia Purpura, and Alicia Ostriker, then dive into historical moments and myths that seem to us to be teeming with marginal, unsung heroes and unexplored regions. [One Session; Exercises; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 210 **Maurya Simon, *Ekphrastic Poetry***

The term "ekphrasis" comes from ancient Greek, and in English it roughly means "a description." The tradition of ekphrastic poetry is a long and varied one, with poets from Ovid to O'Hara taking delight in the mirroring of image and text. Ekphrastic poems utilize a myriad of forms and strategies, and they respond to, incorporate, investigate, and/or reflect upon a vital work of art — usually either a painting, photograph, or sculpture. In this session, we'll discuss a selection of compelling ekphrastic poems. If there's time, we'll also try our hands at composing one in class, using a wide array of reproductions of art that I will provide. [One Session; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 204B **Sherry Simpson, *Speak Up: Using Dialogue in Nonfiction***

The people who appear in our nonfiction aren't exactly characters, but they're not mute bit players, either. Who should say what when, and why are they even talking? This session will study examples of dialogue in nonfiction to see how it can convey a character, advance a story, or add dimension to scenes without stretching credibility. We'll also consider some of the practical aspects of letting people have their say. [One Session; Handout Reading Required.]

4:30 GRAD PRESENTATIONS:

- Admin 204A** **Lisa Morin Carcia, *Subject to Interpretation: Women Poets, Male Historical Subjects, and Stance***
 Women who want to write about the history of science, art, and exploration often find themselves engaging with the male figures who have dominated those fields for most of our history. As readers, when encountering a work about a male historical figure written by a contemporary woman, we seek to understand the author's stance toward her subject as one way of calibrating our response to the work. In this presentation, we will look at poems about male historical subjects written by five contemporary Pacific Northwest women poets: Linda Bierds, Elizabeth Bradfield, Kathleen Flenniken, Melinda Mueller, and Megan Snyder-Camp. We will see the range of approaches they take to writing across time and gender, and we will discover how their choices influence our interpretations of their work.
- Admin 204B** **Ann Quinn, *Artifact as Muse: Using the Things We Share to Bring Nonfiction and Poetry to Life***
 How can we as writers interact with the past in a tangible way? In this session we will examine how ten writers in both poetry and non-fiction asked questions of artifact to bring the past into relevant relationship with the present. Come prepared to write: we will practice posing questions to an artifact (bring one, or a picture of one if you like) to see how it can inspire our own writing.
- Admin 208** **Grace Anderson, *Fun with Triggers***
 Are your characters just sitting around talking to each other with no direction or focus? In this session, we will toy with classic literary triggers (signs, symptoms, and symbols) and consider how encounters with seemingly insignificant objects might spark action, change orientation or initiate transformation. Your character's reactions may surprise you.

5:30 MID-RESIDENCY BREAK BEGINS: DINNER ON YOUR OWN**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1****Off Campus** **MORNING FIELD TRIP, 9AM-2PM: PIKE PLACE MARKET, SEATTLE****Admin Rooms** **4:00-5:30 BUSINESS MEETINGS FOR COHORT GROUPS****Kent Meyers, *Writing Critical Response Papers* [Mandatory for Incoming Cohort]**

This is a nuts-and-bolts class offering advice for writing the response papers: ideas for constructing reading lists; the differences between reading as a writer (craft) and reading as a scholar (criticism); general mentor expectations; useful approaches for focusing the papers and supporting their ideas; and the relationship between the monthly CRPs and the longer, thesis-year Critical Paper. [One Session; Handout and Online Reading Required.]

Regency Room **6:15 DINNER****Scan Center** **7:30 FACULTY READINGS: David Biespiel, Sherry Simpson****GBC** **8:30 FACULTY BOOK-SIGNING AND RECEPTION**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 2

8:30 MORNING TALK:

Xavier 201

Jenny Johnson, *On Imagistic Endurance*

In *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*, Haruki Murakami asks of himself as a marathon runner and a writer, “How much can I push myself? How much rest is appropriate—and how much is too much?” On the crafting of images, I will ask similar questions of stamina. Consider, for example: How long do you hold the gaze in your work? What might happen if you held it longer, if you kept looking, if you refused to look away? We will turn to a range of models for tips on seeing—Robin Wall Kimmerer’s sustained attention to moss in *Gathering Moss*, and Ruth Ozeki’s decision to stare at her face uninterrupted for three hours in *The Face: A Time Code*. Of course, we will consider imagistic endurance in a handful of poems, too.

Admin Rooms

10:00 MIXED-GENRE WORKSHOPS

10:00 GRAD SESSION:

Admin 208

Kent Meyers, *Re-thinking the MFA as a Skill Set*

An MFA prepares us to write literature. That fact can prevent us from seeing that the skills we learn in acquiring it have great value in numerous, other settings. Graduates of RWW have written grants, worked in PR, written for software companies, worked for non-profit organizations. The abilities to read well, write clearly, listen to others, accurately interpret language, contribute to groups, get along with others under pressure, and think creatively are invaluable abilities. This session will help participants re-think what they have learned in the program as valuable abilities in job-seeking and career-building beyond the domain of writing. We will discuss how to present these abilities to potential employers and re-frame the MFA experience in ways that clarify its value.

10:00 PEDAGOGY SESSION:

Admin 210

Geffrey Davis, *The Pedagogy of Emotions*

In their effort to concretize knowledge and skill, our rubrics for evaluating the performance and progress of students diminish if not elide the emotional voyage of that education. Despite axioms that offer soothing (if compelling) intellectual payoffs for the rigor of a creative writing curriculum—“Learn how language shapes the world!” “Refine the art of asking the right question!” “Become someone on whom nothing is lost!”—the actual sites of such development—interrogating cultural stereotypes, confronting fraught family histories, admitting the danger of our partial knowledges, challenging the palatability of our storytelling, so on and so forth—seem necessarily ripe for feelings of deep discomfort. Even the positivity of small breakthroughs (celebration!) and large breakthroughs (sublime!) come with emotional costs. Because learning involves the emotional lives of students, how do we realize our commitments to safety in light of our obligations to challenge? How do we cultivate a robust and evolving ethics of pedagogical discomfort? As teachers, how do we model the emotional-intellectual complexity of engaging the limits of our own understanding? Let’s talk about it.

Commons

12:00 LUNCH

Regency Room

12:00 GRADUATES & FACULTY LUNCH [FACULTY SPEAKER: Rebecca McClanahan]

1:30-4:00 CLASSES: [2-SESSION CLASSES]**Admin 204A****David Biespiel, *The Art and Craft of the American Sublime: The Poetry of Larry Levis***

Larry Levis is so much identified with the rhetoric of elegiac poetry — his choice of subjects, from beauty to hopelessness; his position as a poet of the San Joaquin Valley; his reputation since his death by heart attack in 1996 at the age of 49 — that it can be easy to forget how extraordinarily tender he was. And his tenderness can cause you to overlook his social conscience. As a poet of the sublime, he embraces joy and bitterness. His great innovation is a narrative delicacy that lets him widen stories across time, allowing them to accrue and swell until he suddenly stitches together the roving metaphors. This class will 1) be a chance to read or re-read several iconic Levis poems, 2) discuss the capaciousness of the sublime imagination in American poetry, 3) become alert to several of Levis's important craft choices as a means to help your writing, and 4) finally, offer us a new perspective on the violent rhetoric of contemporary American poetry with a counter-view, one that is equally political, of modesty and sincerity. [One Session for 2 Credits; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 204B**Barrie Jean Borich, *Memoir Fundamentals***

In this session, we break down the narrative fundamentals of the literary memoir. We look closely at an array of storytelling tools and focal points, such as character, scene, summary, reflection, point of view, positionality, setting, space, place, structure, and deep subject. We also discuss issues all memoir writers must consider, such as writing about family, embracing vulnerability, and fact vs. invention. Through close reading, text-based discussion, and revision-focused exercises we move from reading as writers toward writing as fine storytellers of memory and lived experience. [One Session for 2 Credits; Exercises; Advance Reading.]

Admin 208**Kevin Clark, *When Does Mystery Become Obscurity: Questions of Enigma, Ambiguity, and Opacity in Poetry***

Let's begin with the notion that, while a good poem can be about mystery, in most cases it should not be *inaccessible*. Readers prefer access to guessing games. Citing examples from good poems and bad, we will discuss ways to render mystery (including the disorientation it sometimes affords) without falling into the trap of obscurity — or outright opacity. We will take up the questions of fruitful ambiguity, the state of unknowingness, off-poem allusions, dropped transitions, and perhaps Language Poetry. Vigorous Q&A encouraged. [One Session for 2 Credits; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 210**Brenda Miller, *The Hermit Crab Essay: Using Adopted Forms to Tell Your Story***

In the Hermit Crab essay, authors scrounge for forms that already exist in the world (i.e.: a recipe, a how-to article, language lessons, letters, etc.) in order to house their own personal material. We will explore how to find these forms, the variety of ways to employ them, and the joys and challenges of working within these kinds of restraints. Participants must acquire *The Shell Game*, ed. Kim Adrian, prior to the residency. [One Session for 2 Credits; Exercises; Advance Reading.]

Admin 212**Scott Nadelson, *Since Eden Went Wrong: The High Stakes of Narrative***

In fiction workshops, we often ask what's at stake for a character. And the answer? I'd argue it should always be the same: everything that matters to her. In order for us to care about a character's losses or gains, we not only want to understand what she has to lose, we want to glimpse what her life might be like if she had exactly what she wanted or needed, her most ideal version of herself. In this class, we'll explore archetypes of paradise and expulsion to think about how we can set the stakes of our stories as high as possible. To do so, we'll look at sections of James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*, Elizabeth Spencer's *Light in the Piazza*, and Laurie Colwin's "The Water Rats." [One Session for 2 Credits; Handout Reading Required.]

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| Xavier 201 | <u>4:30-6:00 OUTSIDE EXPERIENCE PRESENTATION</u> |
| UC Patio | <u>6:15 DINNER: MENTOR/MENTEES DINNER</u> |
| Scan Center | <u>7:30 JUDITH KITCHEN VISITING WRITER READING: Paisley Rekdal</u> |

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| <u>FRIDAY, AUGUST 3</u> |
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8:30 MORNING TALK:

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| Xavier 201 | <p>Marie Mutsuki Mockett, <i>Then We Came to the End</i> Whether your parents read you bedtime stories, or you watched a lot of television growing up, (or both), you were unknowingly imprinting on story structures that reflect the culture you are from. What's more, the ending of those stories taught you to feel that a certain kind of resolution just seems more complete. In this talk, we will take a look at western fairy tales and eastern fairy tales—the childhood building blocks of storytelling that follow us to adulthood. We will see over and over how the stories overlap, but resolve differently, reflecting very different world views. The beauty of this kind of story analysis is that it can not only give us an appreciation for stories outside the usual grab bag of patterns we turn to, but also may open us up to take greater creative risks, and expand our understanding of what it means to be human.</p> |
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| Admin Rooms | <u>10:00 MIXED-GENRE WORKSHOPS</u> |
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10:00 GRAD SESSION:

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| Admin 208 | <p>Geffrey Davis, <i>Why Do You Write?</i> This session will explore some long-game questions for writers—not to put them to rest (long-game questions don't have those kinds of answers) so much as to recognize and perhaps re-name what drives us to write. As Adrienne Rich pressed us to consider, a life committed to the alternative power of re-vision via the imaginative transformation of experience into prose or poetry requires deep and ongoing philosophical self-inquiry. In addition to meeting some questions head on, we will talk about best practices for finding healthy (head) spaces and communities that can nudge or nurture us along the way.</p> |
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10:00 PEDAGOGY SESSION:

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| Admin 210 | <p>Rebecca McClanahan, <i>Teaching Nonfiction</i> Introduces and explores major topics in teaching nonfiction, including identifying the course's focus and structure, creating a common class language, deciding whether (and how) to use texts, establishing literary and privacy standards, and finding ways to keep yourself alive as a writer while you're teaching.</p> |
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| Commons | <u>12:00 LUNCH</u> |
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| UC 201 | <u>12:00 SECOND-YEARS LUNCH WITH RB</u> |
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1:30-4:00 CLASSES: [2-SESSION CLASSES]**Admin 212****Suzanne Berne, *The Confessional Narrator***

Confessional narrators are a staple in short fiction. A character has committed some sort of offense and needs to talk about it. The crime can be literal, spiritual, or circumstantial; it can be grave or almost undetectable. Whatever it is, in trying to clarify or justify (or simply comprehend) what happened, the narrator asks the reader to act as confessor. Meanwhile, the writer has to make us willing to listen. So how does one present a dramatic confession and keep it interesting? That's the question we will explore through Frank O'Connor's "Guests of the Nation," Tillie Olsen's "I Stand Here Ironing," and Raymond Carver's "Cathedral." [One Session for 2 Credits; Handout Reading Required.]

Admin 204B**Oliver de la Paz, *Long Poems, Sequences, and Ecstatic Experimentations***

The idea of a long poem is oxymoronic. We think of poems as short, quick bursts of light. Yet so much of what's deemed notable in American letters are the longer projects—particularly the projects created by the Modernists like T.S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, H.D., W.C. Williams. Purveyors of the long poem have not gone away with this new century. There are still long poems being crafted. What's clear is there must be some level of intensity, some level of sustained meditation that must be achieved by the writers of such work. At times, such a sustained meditation on a subject matter/obsession can cause agony. At times—ecstasy. What's also clear is that writers who engage in such a sustained meditation on a subject matter often find themselves experimenting with form, shape, sound. In this class we will try our hand at writing our own long poems through prompts and examples. Students must bring 10-15 pages of a sequence or work in progress. [One Session for 2 Credits; Exercises.]

Admin 208**David Allan Cates, *Where's the Body?***

We'll look at good scenes in novels and stories and examine how the writers keep the narrative focused and the reader clear by never letting us forget where the bodies are. Our bodies are how we are connected to the physical world, and it is through the body of the characters that we as readers experience time and space, which are the medium of stories. Body is also the first thing the reader has in common with your character... whoever your character is. And the more mysterious the story, or character, the more we need grounding in the common things. [One Session for 2 Credits; Handout Required Reading.]

Admin 210**Holly J. Hughes, *Worlds Unraveling: Moving Beyond Elegy***

While the elegy has a long tradition in poetry, many of today's contemporary poets are moving beyond bearing witness to vanishing species and forests; instead, they're writing poems that wake us up and move us to take action. We'll look at a few poets who've long focused on these issues, like W.S. Merwin and Alison Hawthorne Deming, as well as poems from more recent collections by Arthur Sze, Melissa Kwasny, and Joanna Klink. We'll also look at poems by an emerging generation of diverse voices, who are speaking up in innovative, powerful ways. Bring poems you've written—or come ready to write—and get ideas for how you might choose to bear witness. Readings will be provided. [One Session for 2 Credits.]

Admin 204A**Paisley Rekdal, *Prosthetic Memory and Creative Nonfiction***

Media scholar Alison Landsberg calls "prosthetic memory" any interaction that occurs between a person and a historical narrative of the past, usually one the person is likely to encounter in either a movie theater, or a museum. In this encounter, Landsberg argues, the person "sutures herself" to the larger narrative represented by the media she encounters in this space, taking it into her own memory, her own experience of being alive in the world. In that sense, she transports these

memories inside of herself, “challenging,” as Landsberb says, “authentic” or “authoritative” notions of history. In this class, we will look at the ways that experimental nonfiction writers have created their own “prosthetic memories” of the past by using images and even whole narratives from other media, such as photographs, found documents, and most especially film. In what ways do these writers use these found historical narratives to tell larger stories of racial, ethnic, and historical trauma? How do culturally mediated memories become personal memories, and vice-versa? We’ll be looking at selections from Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s *Dictee* and Tisa Bryant’s *Unexplained Presence* to see how film and photography help forge, for better and for worse, our shared understanding and remembrance of the past. [One Session for 2 Credits; Handout Reading Required; Advance Reading.]

4:00-5:00 MENTORSHIP MEETINGS AS NEEDED

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| Xavier 201 | <u>5:00 GRAD READINGS: Grace Anderson, Katie Baker, Lisa Carcia, Tia Harestad, Zach Martin, Bill Winter</u> |
| Regency Room | <u>6:15 DINNER</u> |
| Scan Center | <u>7:30 FACULTY READINGS: Barrie Jean Borich, Rebecca McClanahan</u> |
| The Cave | <u>AFTER HOURS: The Cave</u> |

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4

8:30 MORNING TALK:

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| Xavier 201 | <p>Geffrey Davis, <i>Let Me Clear My Throat: Exercising Poetic Voice</i></p> <p>Where does a writer’s voice originate? How does a writer establish a voice that is unmistakably her own? Can changing our voices change our hearts? With these and other pressing questions in mind, we will work through poetic examples that offer some broader traction on the wild mutability of a writer’s voice. In particular, we will try to ground our understanding according to notions of interiority, intervention, and integrity. This talk should give participants of any genre permission to craft careful considerations of the ways a writer might fasten a voice to the page.</p> |
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| Admin Rooms | <u>10:00 MIXED-GENRE WORKSHOPS</u> |
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10:00 GRAD SESSION:

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| Admin 208 | <p>Scott Nadelson, <i>Life as an Adjunct Instructor: A Cautionary Tale</i></p> <p>Teaching is a wonderful profession, and for writers finishing an MFA, seeking teaching appointments at the college level is an attractive possibility: there’s the flexible schedule that allows time for writing, there’s the built-in community, there’s the opportunity to share your passion with eager young minds. But in an age when most institutions of higher learning are depending more and more on part-time and contingent faculty, there are also major risks in choosing that path. I’ll share my experience teaching as an adjunct for more than ten years before landing a tenure-track position, discussing the pleasures and pitfalls of the adjunct life, and will answer questions about how to find teaching positions, how to keep them, and how to avoid getting trapped in a cycle of exploitation.</p> |
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10:00 PEDAGOGY SESSION:**Admin 210****Greg Glazner, *Beginners Thrive on Structure***

It took me several years of teaching to realize that beginning writers not only do better work when there are some set parameters; they also tend to *like* writing from parameters better, at least early in a class, than they do writing without restrictions for a workshop. In our session, I will discuss ways of structuring a creative writing class that incorporates both craft assignments and workshop. And I will describe specific craft assignments that involve voice and diction, text and sub-text (these first two can also serve as in-class ice-breakers), point of view, and image. We will actually do one or more of the exercises in class, as time permits.

Commons**12:00 LUNCH****UC 133****12:00 FIRST-YEARS LUNCH WITH RB****UC 201****12:00-6:00 SILENT AUCTION****1:30-4:00 THE ART OF THE BOOK:****Admin 204A****Kent Meyers & Lia Purpura: *Invisible Cities*, Italo Calvino**

Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* has been described as a set of prose poems or a novel or a long conversation or a meditation. It draws on the tradition of the travel narrative, specifically Marco Polo's account of his journeys, to become a reflection on imagination and the nature of reality. Poets reading it will be challenged by its language and images. Fiction and non-fiction writers will be challenged to re-think setting and the use of details. Writers in all genres will be forced to think about what language and imagination are, and whether form and genre matter or do not. Though structured with an almost mathematical precision, the book is playful and whimsical and yet also deeply philosophical. Do the invisible cities Marco Polo speaks of exist in his imagination or in the world we live in or in both? The question is a good starting point for discussing the book and is also a question the book asks about all literature and perhaps all language.

Admin 204B**Marie Mutsuki Mockett: *The Emissary*, Yoko Tawada**

Rivka Galchen refers to the work of the Japanese novelist Yoko Tawada as possessing "magnificent strangeness," and the New York Times cites Tawada's "profound empathy." Tawada's most recent novel, *The Emissary*, is set in a post-apocalyptic Japan, where an aging novelist cares for his great grandson in a Japan whose borders are shut; no one is allowed in or out. For this class, we as readers will deconstruct the "historical" and "cultural" elements of *The Emissary*, by reading a variety of news stories and historical documents. We will then isolate the parts of the book that are Tawada's own aesthetic. The goal is to show how an artist can make a world out of the news and out of reading history, but then bring her own eye to bear on the world of the story—that is one of the things that differentiates art and the art of fiction in particular, from nonfiction.

Admin 208**Brenda Miller: *The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating*, Elisabeth Tova Bailey**

In this memoir of a single year in the author's life, we are allowed to peer deeply into the nature of solitude determined by illness. A small woodland snail becomes Bailey's companion and object of contemplation from the bed that becomes her small world during her time of convalescence. We will study the nature of such contemplation, and how this writer keeps us engaged at a (literal) snail's pace. We will also analyze how she weaves research and scientific fact into her personal story to create a multi-layered narrative in this compact book. Come prepared to try your hand at some of the techniques we identify.

Admin 210**Barrie Jean Borich: *The Recovering*, Leslie Jamison**

Leslie Jamison burst onto the nonfiction writing scene with the publication of her volume of linked essays *The Empathy Exams*, a book which merges essay, memoir, and reporting. In this new book, Jamison extends her reach, delving into her own addiction and recovery tale — which she states is by its nature “always a story that has been already told” — as well as the narratives of other writers famous for their drinking but who thrived as artists working in sobriety. This book breaks new ground not only in its meld of memoir, essay, research, and reportage, but also as an investigation of the too-little explored ground of sobriety as a field of conscious artistic inquiry.

Admin 211A**Oliver de la Paz & Rigobeto González: *Whereas*, Layli Long Soldier**

In her National Book Critics Circle Award-winning book, *Whereas*, Layli Long Soldier confronts language, form, history, geography, and the spaces between silences. The work in the book takes on the coldness of bureaucratic language and syntactically, visually, and rhetorically dissects structures of power present in those languages that exclude, excise, and inhibit. Equally, Long Soldier’s work explores the dynamic terrain of what’s possible on the page, uninhibitedly traversing beyond the left-justified margin into multiple modes, creating an array of possibilities for the poem. Throughout our discussion, we will consider Long Soldier’s use of form and language and the way the structure of the book’s entirety functions as indictment and elegy.

Admin 212**Kevin Clark & Greg Glazner: *The Duino Elegies*, Rainer Maria Rilke**

Considered by some the best poem of the first half of the twentieth century (if not the entire century), *The Duino Elegies* (1923) broke ground not simply for the elegy as a form but for the potential of poetry to render the interior life. Deeply moving and sometimes bewilderingly complex, the sequence asks questions of its readers: Is life best lived looking out (other-directed) or looking in (solipsistic)? What is the function of romantic love in the formation of identity? Is the natural world a good template for human ways of being? Is sex a great enhancer of intimacy or is it a seductive distraction? In terms of the writing itself, among other things the book challenges conceptions of voice, consistency of metaphor, standard uses of myth, and the purpose of mystery. We will read the Elegies and Robert Hass’s introduction in Stephen Mitchell’s *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke* (Bilingual Edition / English and German Edition).

4:00-5:00 MENTORSHIP MEETINGS AS NEEDED**Xavier 201**

5:00 GRAD READINGS: Ann Bodle-Nash, Kathryn Burgomaster, Mina Mitchell, Ann Quinn, Julianna Waters

Regency Room

6:15 FINAL DINNER & AUCTION

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| <u>SUNDAY, AUGUST 5</u> |
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8:30 MORNING TALK:**Xavier 201****Scott Nadelson, *The Miraculous Mundane: Five Lessons from Photography***

Whenever I’m between projects, I spend a lot of time floundering, usually in search of some big idea, one that resonates beyond my limited experience or speaks to our fraught historical moment. Eventually, to get myself on track, I’ll spend time looking at photographs, which always remind me

that I'll quit spinning my wheels only when they find traction in some small, overlooked detail that captures my imagination so completely I forget all notions of "importance." This talk will focus on finding magic and meaning in the ordinary and will explore what writers can learn from studying the approaches of fine art and documentary photographers: what to look at, how to see clearly and complexly, and how to frame what we discover to highlight its significance. Awesome slideshow guaranteed.

Admin Rooms **10:00 MIXED-GENRE WORKSHOPS**

10:00 GRAD SESSION:

Admin 208 **Brenda Miller, *The Writing Biz and You***

While the business aspects of writing can often seem like drudgery, with the right attitude you might find this process to be just as creative as writing itself. We will explore how to find your publishing niche so that your submissions can be targeted in the most effective way possible. We'll also discuss the resources available to sustain and enhance your writing life, such as grants, conferences, fellowships and residencies. We'll practice the art of describing your work in a way that will make it get noticed, and we'll see how the submission process can be utilized as an effective tool for revision.

10:00 PEDAGOGY SESSION:

Admin 210 **Lia Purpura, *How to Run a Successful Workshop (For All Genres)***

Includes setting the tone, clarifying expectations, delivering procedures, producing written evaluations, guidelines on how to speak in class, various methodologies that privilege the work and not opinions/emotions.

Regency Room **12:00 GRADUATION LUNCH [FACULTY SPEAKER: David Biespiel]**

1:00-3:00 MENTORSHIP MEETINGS AS NEEDED

Scan Center **4:00 GRAD READINGS: Brandon Lewis, Jen Soriano**

Scan Center **4:30 GRADUATION CEREMONY & RECEPTION [FACULTY SPEAKER: Sherry Simpson]
[ALUMNI SPEAKER: Jennie Goode]**

MONDAY, AUGUST 6: DEPARTURE DAY