

English



To study English is to understand its power, its possibilities and its pleasures. As an English major at Illinois Wesleyan, you'll examine writing past and present to discover its variety and complexity. You'll learn to write with clarity and imagination.

Why English at Illinois Wesleyan?

- Our English program offers two tracks for majors: a concentration in literature and a concentration in writing.
- The literature track focuses on reading, research, critical analysis and speaking skills.
- The writing track links the study of literature to producing creative writing and journalism, with courses in writing fiction, poetry, the essay, news and news features.
- Opportunities for research and independent study are available and encouraged for qualified students in both the writing and literature concentrations.
- The student-run literary cooperative *Tributaries* and the campus chapter of the national English honors society *Sigma Tau Delta* foster a sense of community within and beyond our campus.
- The Department encourages students to broaden their experiences by studying abroad for a semester or during May Term.

Learning from a Quality Faculty

Faculty in the English Department put teaching first. Five of our ten full-time faculty have received the University's highest teaching award, and another was named Student Senate Professor of the Year.

- **Mary Ann Bushman**, *Associate Professor of English, Ph.D. — University of California-Berkeley*
Her research interests are Shakespeare, adaptations of Shakespeare's work, the pedagogy of teaching Shakespeare, Renaissance poetry and drama and feminist theory.
- **Wes Chapman**, *Associate Professor of English, Ph.D. — Cornell University*
He teaches courses in literary theory, British and American poetry, modernism, postmodernism, and science fiction. His current research interest is in cognitive approaches to literature.
- **Joanne Diaz**, *Department Chair and Associate Professor of English, Ph.D. — Northwestern University*
A recipient of an NEA grant for poetry, she teaches poetry writing and is researching expressions of religious, political and romantic complaint in the English Renaissance.
- **Kathleen O'Gorman**, *Professor of English, Ph.D. — University of Notre Dame*
Her research interests are Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Julio Cortázar, feminist theory, twentieth century women writers (Luisa Valenzuela, Clarice Lispector, Fay Weldon, etc.) and representations of the female in literature.

A Sampling of Courses Offered by the English Department:

Writing Fiction
Writing Poetry
Creative Non-Fiction
Newswriting and Reporting
Seminar in Journalism: Public Relations
Stand-Up Poetry
Science Fiction
Travellers and Travel Liars
Bad Girls
Literature of the Iraq War
Poetry Through Performance
On the Bus: The Beat Writers
American Drama: 1940 - Present
Writing in the Third World
Freaks!
Native American Literature
Medieval Literature
Romantic Literature
Slavery and the American Novel
Modernism
Literary Theories
Shakespeare's Comedies and Histories
Shakespeare's Tragedies and Romances
James Joyce
Senior Seminar



“ Although most students who become English majors do so because they love to read and to write, they are also preparing themselves for life after

- **James Plath**, *Professor of English, Ph.D. — University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*
With a background in journalism and literature, he is a member of the Online Film Critics Society and remains active in Hemingway and Updike scholarship. He is faculty advisor to *The Argus*, IWU’s student-run newspaper.
- **Brandi Reissenweber**, *Assistant Professor of English, MFA — New York University*
An accomplished fiction writer, she teaches writing courses at all levels. In one workshop, she requires students to write full-length novels; in another, she asks students to write short story collections that draw inspiration from research. She is the faculty adviser for *Tributaries*, IWU’s literary magazine.
- **Molly Robey**, *Assistant Professor of English, Ph.D. — Rice University*
A specialist in nineteenth-century American literature and culture, her research interests include transnationalism, religion, domesticity, and the legacies of slavery. Her courses introduce students to literary history through material culture and digital archives.
- **Alison Sainsbury**, *Associate Professor of English, Ph.D. — Cornell University*
A finalist for the Kathleen A. Nason Bakeless Prize in memoir, she teaches creative nonfiction, autobiography, and courses in women’s literature, the Victorians, and post-colonial writing. In 2016 she traveled with a student to the “Dickens Universe,” a madcap week of academic summer camp for enthusiasts of the work of Charles Dickens.
- **Dan Terkla**, *Professor of English, Ph.D. — University of Southern California*
His research on the literature, art, architecture, and maps of the Middle Ages at places like Oxford’s Bodleian Library enhances his medieval studies courses and has resulted in student research conference presentations and the awards of research honors.
- **Mike Theune**, *Professor of English, Ph.D. — University of Houston*
An accomplished critic, his student editors have helped to publish the website Voltage Poetry (voltagepoetry.com). He currently directs IWU’s Writing Program.

Putting Learning into Practice

- Students can join the staff of *The Argus* (one of the top small college newspapers in Illinois) or work for the campus literary magazine, *Tributaries*; the radio station, WESN 88.1 FM; the television station, Titan TV; or *Lyrical Graffiti*, our performance poetry group.
- Opportunities for internships are available at places like IWU’s public relations office, local TV and radio stations, and public relations or communications departments at State Farm and COUNTRY Financial.
- Our alumni include journalists for metropolitan newspapers, public relations specialists in all fields, editors at university and commercial presses, attorneys, freelance writers, online critics, public and private high school teachers, college professors, librarians, and entrepreneurs who have used their public relations and communications skills to promote their businesses.

college. Most obviously, they learn to write well, an essential ability in any professional career and an increasing rare and prized commodity. And because fiction and poetry and drama, the materials we work with, are complex and messy, like life, English majors learn to use their whole minds: the analytic intelligence to be sure, but also intuition, emotion, and imagination. The world changes so quickly that few people can really know what their futures hold, but it’s a pretty safe bet that writing well and thinking well will be keys to any successful career.”

Dr. Joanne Diaz
Department Chair



ILLINOIS WESLEYAN
UNIVERSITY

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