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.
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 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