



Reading Matters

The Department of English

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From (the Edge of) the Chair's Seat

Well, it's over. Or nearly so. One more day of classes to wrap up the fall semester, followed by a week of exams, with final grades due in the week thereafter. It's been a busy term, as the numbers for fall semester show. According to the "Profile of Students" issued by the Registrar, as of Fall of 2012 English has 961 declared English majors (350 men, 611 women) of whom 123 are ethnic minorities. By way of comparison, the figures for Fall of 2011 were: 987 majors, 102 PhD and MA students, and 42 MFA students. In 2011-12, we awarded 229 BA degrees, just three less than in 2010-11. We still haven't returned to our recent peak (in 2005) of 1018 majors, but it's reassuring that our numbers are holding steady. The same overall stability is visible at the graduate level. The Fall 2012 counts show English with 105 PhD and MA students (43 men, 62 women) of whom 23 are ethnic minorities, and 31 MFA students (10 men, 21 women) of whom 8 are ethnic minorities. In Fall of 2011, the numbers were: 102 PhD and MA students, and 42 MFA students.

Our rapidly filling course roster for Spring 2013 indicates that those students noted in the Registrar's profile are finding places in next semester's classes. As usual, we are raising caps gradually as courses fill, with the final rise coming just before spring classes begin. That process has by and large served us well, allowing us to offer a range of classes for our majors, but if you see any areas of concerns, don't hesitate to let me know.

As we end this semester and look ahead to the next, please remember that final grades are due on MAUI for DEO approval by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, December 18. After that, we enjoy a teaching hiatus until we return (technically, that's on the Wednesday before classes start), to get ready for the opening of Spring semester classes on Tuesday, January 22. Thinking ahead to what we will be tackling as a faculty next semester, I will send out a calendar of departmental meetings and major events for the spring shortly, so that you can plan around those dates.

Until then, happy end of the semester and restorative winter break to you all!

Publications, Presentations and other Faculty Matters

Lori Branch's article "Carlisle's Cross: Locating the Postsecular Gothic" was recently quoted in *The Atlantic*. Lori feels the quote is taken out of context, alas, but you can read the article [here](#).

An interview with Barbara Eckstein about practicing sustainable humanities appears in a recent issue of Iowa Now. The interview can be found [here](#).

Patricia Foster's essay, "The Red Chair", has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize for 2012.

Writers Gone Public Matters

Please stop by the Writers Gone Public events this Wednesday and Thursday nights from 8:00-9:30 in Gerber Lounge. Undergraduate nonfiction students will be introduced by their TA-MFA instructors and will be reading samples of their work. Please invite your students!

Alumni Matters

James Lambert (PhD, 2012) is featured in the current issue of Graduate Education at Iowa. Click [here](#) to read more about his time teaching at the American University of Kuwait.

Emeritus Matters

Emeritus Professor Ray Heffner passed away last week at the age of 87. Ray was a long-time faculty member and administrator at Iowa who continued to teach even after his retirement. His long, active and varied career can be found in a number of obituaries including the [Washington Post](#) and the [Press Citizen](#). He will be missed.

Facebook

The English Department is on Facebook! Go to <http://www.facebook.com/IowaEnglish> and "Like" the department.

Other Calendars

[UI Master Calendar](#) | [UI Academic Calendar](#) | [The Writers' Workshop Calendar](#)
[The International Writing Program Calendar](#) | [The Writing University Calendar](#)

Future Issue

The next issue of Reading Matters will be on January 24. Please send submissions for the next issue by 5:00pm on Wednesday, January 23 to [Erin Hackathorn](#).