

## From the Chair

To introduce this issue of Reading Matters I'm inserting a section of the Statement in Support of the Core Mission and Values of Higher Education in the United States of America currently being discussed by Faculty Senates across the Big Ten.

1. Public and private universities serve the public good and contribute to the U.S.'s national and global excellence, through teaching, research, and service.
2. Cuts to research funding in higher education will undermine scientific innovation, health, societal progress, and the U.S.'s leadership position, with long-lasting detrimental impacts.
3. Academic scholarship and research, through peer review and professional accreditation, lead to evidence-based expertise, not partisan viewpoints.
4. We support academic freedom and free speech, and those who exercise their rights thereto, citizens and non-citizens alike.
5. We oppose the targeted harassment of faculty members for their expertise.
6. We support the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which guarantees the right of people to peaceably assemble. All community members who engage in peaceful assembly, regardless of viewpoint or citizenship status, should have the opportunity to do so without retaliation.
7. We agree with the Department of Education that discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (Title VI), sex (Title IX), and disability (ADA) is reprehensible, affirming our legal and moral obligation as educational institutions not to discriminate based on these or other identifying characteristics. Initiatives that help to reduce such discrimination, when grounded in best practice, increase opportunities and ensure real meritocracy for all.

8. We affirm the essential role of transparent and collaborative shared governance in maintaining the integrity of our universities, and commit to its continued strengthening.

9. Lastly, we call upon faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community partners of our universities to unite in support of the core mission, values, and academic freedoms of higher education in the U.S.

Loren

## Department Matters

US News and World Report ranks the University of Iowa's graduate English program #26.

## Faculty Matters

**Harry Stecopoulos** will serve as a judge for the biennial Townsend Prize for Fiction. His essay "The Guilting of the Liberals" appeared in the Feb. 19th issue of LARB.

**Tommy Mira y Lopez** received a NEA Fellowship in Translation to work on the short stories of the 20th century Brazilian author José J. Veiga and was awarded a 2025-2026 Distinguished Mentor Award from the Office of Undergraduate Research.

**Patricia Foster** (Emeritus) had essays accepted at *Fourth Genre* & *The Linden Review*. She's currently Guest Fiction Editor at *The Louisville Review*.

An interview with **Kaveh Akbar** was featured in *Iowa Now* and his essay was published in *The Nation*. Kaveh's novel *Martyr* was awarded the Rosenthal Family Foundation Award by the American Academy of Arts and Letters and Kaveh himself was named Scholar of the Year by the Office of the Vice President for Research.

**Hannah Bonner** published two poems in *Blackbird* and was featured in a conversation with the writer Rachel Schwartzmann in *BOMB Magazine*.

**Loren Glass's** essay, "*The Evergreen Review* from Avant-Garde to Counterculture" appeared in Pat Thomas's illustrated anthology *Dispatches from the Literary Underground: evergreen review covers and essays, 1957-1973*.

**Paige Lewis's** poetry was mentioned in this New York Times article about incorporating poetry into morning routines.

**David Gooblar** contributed pedagogical insight in an article at EdSurge titled "Can Colleges Do More to Help Students Succeed?"

## Graduate Student Matters

Spencer Jones (MFA-NWP) was featured in a [5Q interview](#) with the Writing University.

Rajorshi Das (PhD)'s GLQ article, "[Jai Hijra, Jai Jai Hijra](#)" *Self-Respect and Performance during the 2015 Telangana Swabhimana Walk* went online.

Tove Conway (PhD) was awarded a Marcus Bach Fellowship for the 2025-2026 school year.

Sarah Barringer (PhD)'s article "[Trans people affirmed their gender without medical help in medieval Europe – history shows how identity transcends medicine and law](#)" was published in *The Conversation*.

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards went to many English and Creative Nonfiction graduate students; please congratulate Sarah Frank (PhD), Heidie Senseman (MFA-NWP), Mishma Nixon (MFA-NWP) and Katie Randazzo (PhD).

Jennie Sekanics (PhD) was awarded the Graduate College Post-Comprehensive Research Award for Fall 2025.

## Alumni Matters

Craig Crawford (BA, '91) recently published [Project Threshold](#) with RedCape Publishing.

"Magically Black and Other Essays" (Amistad, 2024) by Jerald Walker (BA, '93) was longlisted for the 2025 PEN Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay.

---

UI English alums, [please let us know about your career](#).

The English Department welcomes your generosity: give [online](#) anytime.

Stay Connected: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

NOTICE: The University of Iowa Center for Advancement is an operational name for the State University of Iowa Foundation, an independent, Iowa nonprofit corporation organized as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, publicly supported charitable entity working to advance the University of Iowa. Please review its full disclosure statement. Privacy Information Emergency Information Nondiscrimination Statement © 2022

The University of Iowa The University of Iowa | Department of English | 308 English Philosophy Building | Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1492  
Office Hours - Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm | Phone: 319-335-0454 | Fax: 319-353-2392 | [english@uiowa.edu](mailto:english@uiowa.edu)