

ENGLISH

English

510.430.2217

english@mills.edu

The English Department provides students with introductory and advanced courses in creative writing and literatures in English from a wide variety of cultural and historical contexts. English majors and minors take a range of courses that allows them to explore diverse authors and periods, experiment with written forms, develop critical thinking and writing skills, access new creative techniques, and prepare for graduate degrees and careers in a variety of professions. A major must choose one of two different emphases, creative writing or literature; both emphases require the same set of foundational courses which are designed to develop literary skills and enhance awareness of the ways history and literature intersect. The six remaining courses offer the student great flexibility to design a program that meets her individual goals and interests as a writer and scholar; these six courses should be chosen in close consultation with the major advisor to help prepare her for the senior thesis in creative writing or literature.

Students are advised to begin planning for their thesis in the first semester of their junior year; we offer the creative writing and literature thesis courses in the spring semester, and in the fall as needed. Thesis projects for creative writers can range from a collection of experimental poetry to the first chapters of a historical novel; literature students can choose to do research and analysis on a particular genre, writer, or theme.

Workshops in creative writing are offered in poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and writing for young adults. In literature, we offer a regular rotation of course topics from Greco-Roman myth to the 21st century in both British and American contexts, and each semester we feature a rich variety; topics may range from African American poets since 1965 to science fiction, New York School to pop fiction. In addition, we offer craft courses in young adult novel, digital storytelling, and literary journalism. Our students often take courses in journalism and book art as well to enhance their studies.

The classes in the English Department are relatively small and rely on discussion among the students. We have a lively community-oriented population who get involved in the literary activities at Mills. The Place for Writers (<https://www.mills.edu/academics/graduate-programs/creative-writing-literature/the-place-for-writers.php>) and the Contemporary Writers Series (<https://www.mills.edu/academics/graduate-programs/creative-writing-literature/contemporary-writers-series.php>) support our curriculum with publishing workshops and author presentations. *The Walrus Literary Journal* is an annual Mills College publication which includes "wonderful, whacky, weird, witty, and whimsical poetry, prose, and art from Mills undergraduates." Our undergraduate editors collect submissions, conduct blind readings, design the layout, and choose artwork during the first weeks of the fall semester. By the spring, they have taken the best, most intriguing work and given it a home. Any questions regarding *The Walrus* can be emailed to walrus@mills.edu.

Our faculty are published writers and critics, and each year we enhance our program by having visiting writers teach some of our courses. Most recently, they include: Ari Baniyas, Tongo Eisen-Martin, Marisa Handler, Susan Ito, Nayomi Munaweera, and Arisa White.

The department also offers graduate work leading to a master of arts in English language and literatures or a master of fine arts in creative writing.

Program Goals:

- Students will read critically with attention to the nuances of language and their effects.
- Students will write clearly and effectively.
- Students will effectively position their original ideas within an ongoing aesthetic, cultural, or critical conversation.
- Students will speak effectively about texts and literary studies.

Majors & Minors

Major

English Major—BA (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/majors-minors/english/english-ba>)

Minor

English Minor in Literature (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/majors-minors/english/english-minor-literature>)

Creative Writing Minor (<https://catalog.mills.edu/undergraduate/majors-minors/english/creative-writing-minor>)

Faculty & Staff

Faculty

Elmaz Abinader

Professor of English

Mills Hall Room 313, 510.430.2225, moses@mills.edu

Professional Interests: Creative writing, fiction and nonfiction, theories of creativity, teaching creative writing

Emma Bufton

Assistant Adjunct Professor

Mills Hall Room 305, 510.430.2219, ebufton@mills.edu

Professional Interests: Nineteenth- and 20th-century British literature, the novel and narrative theory, postcolonial literature and culture, theories of nationalism, rhetoric and composition

David Buuck

Adjunct Professor

Mills Hall Room 348, 510.430.2245, dbuuck@mills.edu

Professional Interests: Poetry, postcolonial literature, site-specific and conceptual art, cultural studies, globalization theory

Diane Cady

Frederick A. Rice Professorship

Mary Ann Childers Kinkead Faculty Awardee

Professor of English

Mills Hall Room 314, 510.430.2221, dcady@mills.edu

Professional Interests: Chaucer, late medieval culture, medieval romance, medieval and early modern drama, new economic criticism, gender studies, cultural studies

Rebekah Edwards

Certificate of Commendation for the Advancement of Digital Learning

Adjunct Professor

Mills Hall Room 316, 510.430.2250, redwards@mills.edu

Professional Interests: Queer theory; problem bodies in 19th and 20th century British and American literatures; visual culture and the aesthetics of alterity; passing narratives; poetics; race, gender and disability in early 20th century US cultures

Monique Iles

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 303, 510.430.2282, miles@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Pedagogy, community college education, acceleration and viable alternatives for pre-transfer level writing classes, feminism(s), modernism, and grammar

Bula Maddison

Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 330, 510.430.2217, bmaddiso@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Bible, bible in modern literature, Bakhtinian theory

Kim Magowan

Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 349, 510.430.2283, magowan.kim@gmail.com
Professional Interests: Nineteenth- and 20th-century American literature, modernism, the gothic, African American literature, film

Ajuan Mance

Certificate of Commendation for the Advancement of Digital Learning
Professor of English
Mills Hall Room 311, 510.430.2213, amance@mills.edu
Professional Interests: African American literature, 19th-century American literature, US popular culture, the oral tradition in US literature, Black feminist thought, African American art

Hugo García Manriquez

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 303, 510.430.2282, hgarciamanriquez@mills.edu

Margaret Miller

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 305, 510.430.2219, mamiller@mills.edu
Professional interests: eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British literature; queer theory; ecocriticism; narratives of mining, extraction, and archaeology; narratology; and postcolonial theory

Nayomi Munaweera

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 303, 510.430.2282, nayomunaweera@gmail.com
(nayomunaweera@gmail.com?subject=)

Achy Obejas

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 344, 510.430.2337, aobejas@mills.edu
Professional interests: Literature, translation, travel, politics, and Cuba

Sarah Pollock

Professor Emerita of Journalism
Mills Hall Room 347, 510.430.2359, pollock@mills.edu
Professional interests: The journalism revolution (digital media, social media, legacy news values, etc.), magazine and news writing and editing for traditional media; creative nonfiction (in print and other forms), historical and geographic narratives, environmental and natural history writing

Patricia Powell

Professor of English

Mills Hall Room 351, 510.430.2204, ppowell@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Creative writing: fiction and nonfiction; Caribbean literature; African women writers; gay and lesbian literature; contemporary fiction

Kathryn Reiss

Professor of English
Aurelia Henry Reinhardt Professor
Mills Hall Room 307, 510.430.2216, kreiss@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Creative writing, fiction for juveniles and young adults, historical fiction, suspense fiction, literature and time

Ruth Saxton

Professor Emerita of English
Mills Hall 301, 510.430.2192, rsaxton@mills.edu

Kirsten Saxton

Certificate of Commendation for the Advancement of Digital Learning
Professor of English
Director of MA in English Language and Literatures
Mills Hall Room 306, 510.430.2214, ktsaxton@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Women and the law, the history of the novel, 18th-century British literature and culture, post-colonial literature and culture, theories of sexuality, pedagogy, composition studies

Shanthi Sekaran

Assistant Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 312, 510.430.2195, ssekaran@mills.edu

Juliana Spahr

Professor of English
Joan Danforth Professorship in the Arts
Mills Hall Room 315, 510.430.2289, jspahr@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Poetry and poetics, cultural studies, anti-colonial literature and theory

Thomas Strychacz

Professor of English
May Treat Morrison Professor
Mills Hall Room 304, 510.430.2208, toms@mills.edu
Professional Interests: American literature, mass culture, political and cultural approaches to literature, science fiction

Truong Tran

Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 350, 510.430.2285, truong.celan@gmail.com
Professional Interests: Poetry and poetics, visual arts

Stephanie Young

Adjunct Professor
Mills Hall Room 317, 510.430.2236, syoung@mills.edu
Professional Interests: Contemporary poetry, cross-genre and hybrid writing, documentary poetics, performance, lyric essay and memoir, digital and new media, feminist theory, cultural studies, poetry communities and movements

Staff

Tonianne Nemeth

Department Administrator
Mills Hall Room 310, 510.430.2217, tnemeth@mills.edu

Christina Fisher

Graduate Programs Coordinator

Mills Hall Room 321, 510.430.2240, chfisher@mills.edu

Stephanie Young

Director of Strategic Initiatives and Programs

Mills Hall Room 317, 510.430.2236, syoung@mills.edu

Resources

- Contemporary Writers Series (<https://www.mills.edu/academics/graduate-programs/creative-writing-literature/contemporary-writers-series>)
- The Campanil (<http://www.thecampanil.com>)
- The Place for Writers (<https://www.mills.edu/academics/graduate-programs/creative-writing-literature/the-place-for-writers.php>)
- FIVE8oSPLIT (<http://www.five8osplit.org>)