**Department Preparatory Course for Prospective Students**

**Summer 2025**

*“First We Read, Then We Write”* – Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar”

This 3-part, 11-session course is designed to introduce potential students to the English Department. Eight pre-recorded sessions are 45 minutes long and will be available on Moodle.

At the end of Part One (Session 4), there will be an online quiz to check progress.

Sessions 7, 10, and 11 are live.

***The department’s entrance exam takes place a few days after the last session.***

**Part One**: Comprehension and Analysis via Close Reading

**Sessions 1-4**

Session One:

In this co-taught lesson in English, we introduce the department, our expectations, and requirements, what we do, how we conduct classes, and introduce literary interpretation, genres, time periods, etc.

Session Two:

A sample class on a short poem, explicating simple elements for analysis.

Session Three:

Topics include, but are not limited to, elements of language (grammar, paraphrase, restatement, sentence structure, etc.), style, and voice.

Session Four:

Forty-five-minute **quiz** that provides students with an unseen short poem. We will ask multiple choice and sentence completion questions to test reading comprehension and simple parts of speech. This quiz is designed to help you see how you are doing in terms of close reading skills.

**Part Two**: Essay Writing and Revision

**Sessions 5-11**

Session Five:

We demonstrate a close reading of a poem or very short story.

Session Six:

We discuss the academic essay structure and model strategies for writing opening paragraphs with thesis statements.

Homework: students will write their own thesis statements on a new poem or short piece of prose we provide and submit it before the next class. Jenn and Miryam will be available by email to answer students’ questions about the thesis.

Session Seven:

**This is the first of three live sessions** We will meet with students via zoom and workshop their thesis statements, identifying strengths and weaknesses of both style and content.

**Homework:** Aimee Bender’s story “Each Day is the Same Backward and Forward: Day Eighty-four” is on Moodle.

1) Read it for next class. 2) Write a one sentence summary. 3) Choose one image and write about its significance.

Post homework to Moodle prior to watching Session Eight video.

Session Eight:

We demonstrate a close reading of the Bender story, along with an eye towards writing about it. Emphasis on independent (creative) analytical thinking and not rote recounting of plot.

Session Nine:

We discuss a short but complete analytic essay on the Bender story. Emphasis again on independent (creative) analytical thinking and not rote recounting of plot. The ‘academic crime’ of plagiarism explained again.

**Homework**: Students will write their own opening paragraphs and thesis statements. Jenn and Miryam will be available by email to answer students’ questions.

Session Ten and Eleven:

**These are the second and third of the live sessions**. We will meet with students via zoom and workshop their opening paragraphs and thesis statements, identifying strengths and weaknesses of both style and content. There will be close work on language for correction of grammar, punctuation, etc. as well as for analytical thinking. The ‘academic crime’ of plagiarism explained again.

**Part Three**: Entrance Exam

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**June Course *June 3 – June 24, 2025***

**Part One:**

Session 1, 2, 3:  Monday, June 9 – Thursday, June 12

Session 4:  Thursday, June 12 from 16:00 – 20:00 **(quiz)**

**Part Two:**

Session 5-6:   Friday, June 13 – Sunday, June 15

Session 7: Monday June 16 from 17:00 – 18:00 **(live)**

Session 8-9:   Tuesday, June 17– Thursday, June 19

Session 10: Thursday, June 19from 17:00 – 18:00 (**live**)

Session 11: Monday, June 23 from 17:00 – 18:00 **(live)**

**Part Three:**

***Entrance Exam: Tuesday, June 24, 2025***