

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER
Eugenio María de Hostos Community College,
The City University of New York



VOLUME 5
ISSUE 2
Spring 2022

English Department Newsletter

Volume 5 | Issue 2

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Chair's Message Term Greetings



Welcome back to the Spring 2022 semester. Recent semesters at Hostos, and years in the world, have been challenging and unstable in so many ways. It is inspiring, and a testament to the strength and engagement of our Department, that in the midst of Covid, lockdowns, and variants, our Department continues to produce meaningful scholarship and to reflect thoughtfully on the work we do in the classroom, and for our students. Thank you to Professors Muñoz &

Porter for continuing to produce our newsletter to help us recognize, support, and celebrate one another. I wish us all the best for a successful Spring '22.

Issue Note



It's a term for collective advancement of our English Department, which will be marked by upcoming professional development events and varied departmental initiatives. A capstone of the Spring 2022 term is the upcoming March 11th Developmental Educational Professional Development, which will once again bring together members of the English Department and Writing Center

to reflect on the success and continued improvement of our Supplemental Instruction program (where tutors are embedded in corequisite sections to offer support to students). This new upcoming event is funded by a generous Coordinated Undergraduate Education grant. The English Department is delighted to be hosting invited speaker, Dr. Kelsey Hixson-Bowles (Utah Valley University) for the event, which will also include a roundtable discussion and activity with Writing Center Tutors (page 3). English's collective advancement is also benchmarked by the development of our English Commons page, led by Professor Michael, including a section for Women's and Gender Studies where, moving forward, resources for this year's Women's History Month Celebrations (details on page 4) will be housed. Professors Fabrizio and Marks, who created the acclaimed Core Books program at Hostos, are also delighted to report the launch of the Core Books website, also hosted on the Commons (page 2). English is also proud to introduce our newest faculty member, Lecturer Amina Tajbhai, who tells us about her journey to Hostos and plans for her first term teaching (see page 2). In this issue, we continue to celebrate the creativity of our faculty, with a narrative by Prof. Soto-Franco (page 4), and of our students, with original graphic novel excerpts by students in Prof. Heidi Bollinger's Graphic Novels course. Prof. Bollinger also discusses how she used her Fall 2021 fellowship leave to produce new scholarship in response to her teaching experiences and other projects, for a feature on page 3. Our faculty have been enthusiastic readers—the faculty reading list is our fullest and most varied installment in the series. Finally, a note of thanks is owed to this issue's contributors: Andrea Fabrizio, Amina Tajbhai, Sarah Key, Alex Milsom, Tram Nguyen, Craig Bernardini, Heidi Bollinger and students, Elizabeth Porter, Juan Soto-Franco, Hostos Writing Center administrators, and English faculty.

New Faculty Spotlight

Amina Tajbhai, PhD

Lecturer, English



Q: Tell us a bit about yourself.

A: I'm a Brooklyn College graduate and completed my PhD at Fordham University in 2019. My current work considers how corpses and dismembered body parts can continue to communicate with the living in Shakespeare's plays. In my free time, I enjoy cozy murder mysteries, jigsaw puzzles, and terrible puns.

Q: What most excites you about your new position at Hostos?

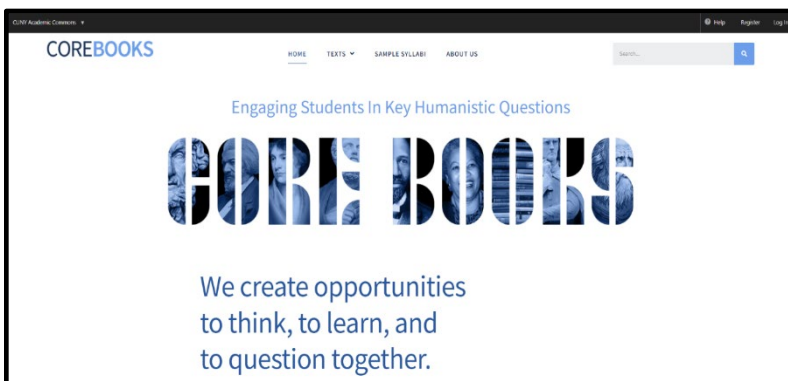
A: I'm excited to be joining a department that so clearly cares for its students. As an adjunct, I was able to see firsthand how amazing our students are, and I'm thrilled to be able to continue working with them.

Q: What are you excited to bring to the classroom?

A: As a former pre-med student who rapidly realized the importance of clear communication, I'm intrigued by the way writing is integral to any major. I'm looking forward to working with Hostos students to create connections among their interests, their aspirations, and their writing. Perhaps, in the process, they'll come to love Shakespeare as much as I do!

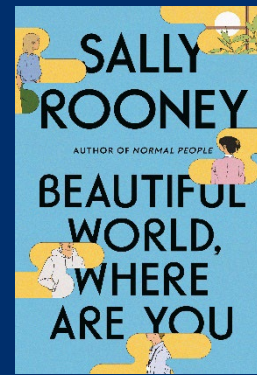
Core Books Launches Website

Project PIs: Professors Andrea Fabrizio & Gregory Marks

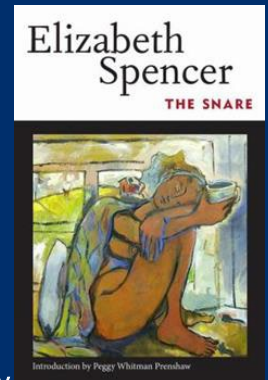


We are happy to share that the new Core Books at CUNY website is live. This site houses the work of the four CUNY campuses participating in the Teagle Foundation grant: Hostos (Lead Institution), LaGuardia, BMCC and New York City College of Technology. Faculty using the Core Books in their co-requisites, ENG 110 and ENG 111, can find extensive resources for the classroom on this site. We hope you will visit and find it helpful. For more information about participating in the Core Books Initiative, please contact Andrea Fabrizio or Gregory Marks. Visit <https://corebooks.commons.gc.cuny.edu>.

Spring Faculty Reading List

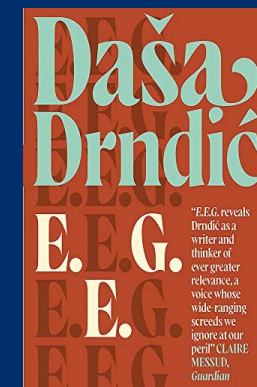


Sally Rooney, *Beautiful World, Where Are You* (2021): "[...] this amazing Irish novelist [...] made me relieved I'm no longer in my 20s." – Prof. Milsom

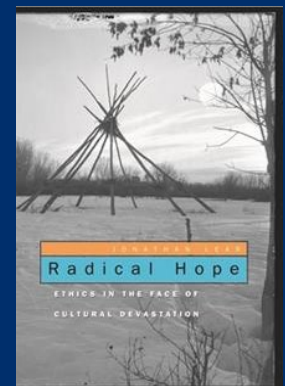


Elizabeth Spencer, *The Snare* (1972): "follows a strong female protagonist, trapped by [...] gender and class, through a noirish New Orleans. – Poet-in-Practice Sarah Key

Jonathan Lear, *Radical Hope* (2012): "A philo-anthropo-logical meditation on cultural annihilation, the meaningful life, and hope." – Prof. Nguyen



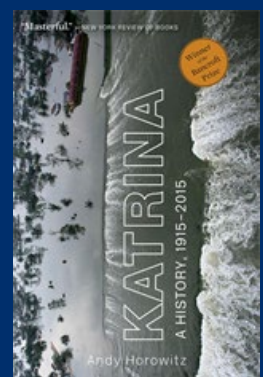
Daša Drndić, *E.E.G.* (2019): "Chess ... memory ... genocide. [...] Just...read her!" – Prof. Bernardini



Elif Shafak, *The Island of Missing Trees* (2021): "[...] with an unexpected twist, this novel explores an immigrant family story with a background of Cyprus history." Poet-in-Practice, Sarah Key



Andy Horowitz, *Katrina, A History* (2020): "[...] theorizes the human history of natural disasters, and [...] the racist policies responsible for the costly human toll of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans, [...] a city I love." – Prof. Milsom





The Writing Center is pleased to begin offering in-person hours this spring! The Center is open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 12-8 for both appointments and walk-ins. We are closely monitoring utilization and, if necessary, will revise our in-person hours in April and May. Online tutoring (both synchronous and asynchronous) continues five days a week; we are also offering our full roster of reading meetups and writing seminars, and an expanded schedule of poetry open mic events. Finally, we'd like to welcome our new tutors, Sidratul Muntaha, Reyna Compres, and Kashon Jones, and our new faculty liaison, Prof. Ann Genzale; welcome Shipa Akter back to Hostos; and bid a fond adieu and good luck to Adelyn Castro, our former web manager, who is finishing her MA with the goal of becoming gainfully employed at a museum.



We look forward to seeing & serving your students!

PS – And please join us at our PD on SI tutoring, coming up on March 11 from 2-5 p.m.! @ <https://bit.ly/March11thPD>

Fellowship Leave: An Immersion in Writing

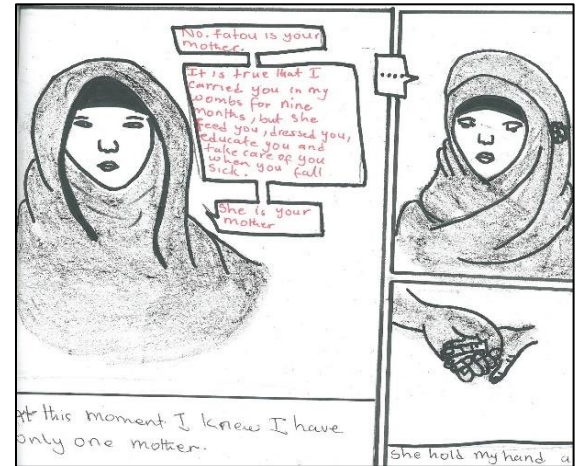
By Heidi Bollinger

My fellowship leave in Fall 2021 was productive and rejuvenating. I was able to complete a writing project that had long been on the back burner, a pedagogical article about “Community College Students as Graphic Novelists.” This piece discusses the culminating assignment in ENG 240, which asks students to author their own comic books (pictured).

The article reflects on how the project immerses students in a ruminative creative process. This was a fitting topic for fellowship leave, which afforded me the time to think, research, write, and re-write in a deep and methodical way.

I had time to tackle some tricky revisions on “Loss Made Visible: Women’s Graphic Memoirs and the Boundlessness of Grief,” an invited essay that will be published in *Auto/Biography Studies*. This deadline would have been difficult to meet during a regular semester.

I also finished editing “Post-Truth but not Post-Race: The Repeating Realities of Anna Deavere Smith’s *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*,” forthcoming in the collection *Theatre in a Post-Truth World*.



Part of the writing process is false starts. I came up with what I thought was a new idea before realizing that the definitive book had been published years ago (haven't we all?). It was exciting to have the mental space to consider new possibilities that did not have to lead somewhere.

I also learned how to do the yoga pose known as Side Crow (you will have to take my word for that).

I am very thankful to Prof. Fabrizio for encouraging me to take fellowship leave and to Prof. Marks for filling in as deputy this fall. I am grateful to Prof. Nguyen for reading my work in progress.

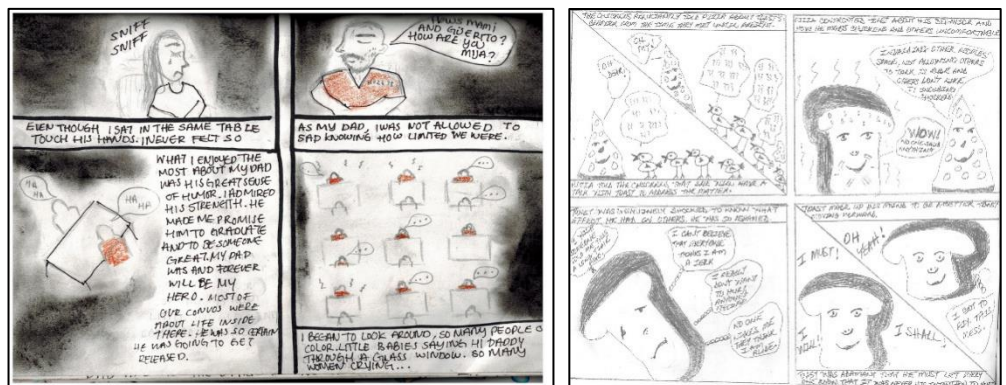


Image Credits (top to bottom, left to right): “Feeling the Inside” by Sarata; “Social” by Natallie; “Caged” by Denise; “Annoying Slice of Toast” by Jacky

Celebrating Women's History Month A Month of Enrichment Activities

For Women's History Month 2022, the Women's and Gender Studies Faculty Council have organized a series of virtual events and designed activities for instructors to include in their classes. We hope that these virtual events and activities might inspire students to submit essays, creative writing, or visual arts by creating a list of relevant text-based and audiovisual sources that will be distributed to the College community.

Tuesday, March 8th | 3:30 p.m. on Zoom "The Road Ahead for Women of Color: Pandemic Lessons and Opportunities"

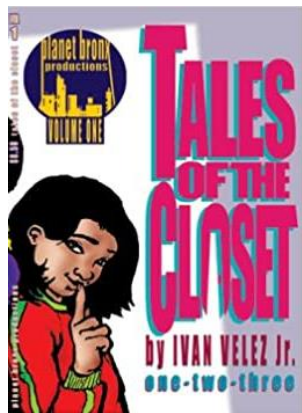
Dr. Alcalde currently serves as Miami University's vice president for institutional diversity and inclusion. She has a PhD in Anthropology and specializes in the fields of Gender and Women's Studies and Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies. This talk is supported by the Office of Academic Affairs and organized by Profs. Elizabeth Porter & Jerilyn Fisher. Register @ <https://bit.ly/alcalde-pandemic-lessons>



Friday, March 18th "COVID-19 and Gender: A Student Panel"

In this panel, students will answer questions and talk to one another about the ways that their gender and other identity positions have influenced their response to and responsibilities throughout the ongoing pandemic in school, work, and home. The goal is to build solidarity among students and the college community while reflecting on the role that gender and other identity positions play in our daily lives. This event is supported by the Educating for Diversity grant and organized by Profs. Elizabeth Porter, Alexandra Milsom, and the WGS Faculty Council.

Tuesday, March 22nd | 3:30-5:00pm "Vengeful Goddesses, Warrior Queens and Other Monsters, a Comics Writing Workshop"



Cartoonist Ivan Velez Jr. (*Tales of the Closet*, *Blood Syndicate*, *Ghost Rider*) breaks down the myths and legends in comics that helped define gender roles, morality and feminine stereotypes for us all. Not only will you learn the basics of making your own fabulous comics/manga and fabulous heroic women, but also understand how to create characters of all genders that use old legends and are newly diverse in color, ethnicity, age, class, ability and body types. It's time to create new legends and archetypes that are fair, fun and profound by touching upon social issues and real-world flavors; and using the powers of cartooning and Manga to make the world a better place and organized by Prof. Inmaculada Lara Bonilla, a collaboration with the Latin American Writers Institute (LAWI)

ALL MONTH LONG

Women's History Month Activities and Materials for Instructors:

Faculty are invited to incorporate a reading assignment on patriarchy from *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* by the late bell hooks. Created by Prof. Victoria Muñoz, this assignment includes critical reading questions and an optional writing or creative response that students are invited to submit to the Dismantle Patriarchy nationwide student competition: <https://dismantlepatriarchy.org>. Faculty may also make use of a list of thematic resources, compiled by Prof. Miriam Laskin:

<https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/wgs/women-s-history-month/>

"A Moment of Relaxation"

By Professor Juan Soto-Franco

This narrative has positively impacted my class and served as an element of discussion and analysis among my students.

In this convoluted world, stress piles up easily. It can come from work, toxic relations, economic crisis, health issues, among other reasons. However, it is time to stop and take some time out for ourselves, do some mental exercise to help us travel in time and help us relax. Relaxing like I used to every Wednesday afternoon when I took a break from my teaching activities. This happened in the inner gardens of Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, Recinto Santo Tomás de Aquino in Santo Domingo. In that garden, there were iron park benches by the west high wall, which shed nice shadows that benefited faculty, students and staff alike. After a slow walk, I sat on one of those benches in a comfortable position (open arms and crossed legs). The spring breeze gently caressed the leaves of the trees composing a melody that relaxed all my senses. That same breeze softly hit my skin turning my body temperature down and decreasing my tensions. While all this was happening, I could hear the chirping of birds looking for small dry tree branches to make their nests. My breathing was calm and placid. My stare spread out over the well maintained dark green grass. The smell of recently cut grass added another tranquility level to my staying at that place. Gladly, every time I have the opportunity, I close my eyes and taste the remembrance of A MOMENT OF RELAXATION that will live forever in my mind. I am sure each one of you has had a relaxing memory, be it sitting on a beach watching the waves go back and forth, or watching a bonfire, or sitting on a bench at a park. No matter which one it is, I invite you to evoke that memory of your life to help you relax.

READING MEET-UPS

SPRING 2022 SCHEDULE

2/23 William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* & Sophocles's *Antigone*, Part I

3/2 William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* & Sophocles's *Antigone*, Part II

3/30 Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* I

4/6 Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* II

4/13 Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* III

4/27 Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* IV

Wednesdays at 3:30 PM
Via Zoom



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CUNY

Departmental Accolades

Publications

Bernardini, Craig. "A Forgivable Enthusiasm." *Fourth Genre* 24:1 (Spring 2022): 79-93.

Botwick, Aaron. (review) Hermione Lee, *Tom Stoppard: A Life*. *Comparative Drama* 55.1 (Spring 2021): 120-122.

Botwick, Aaron. (review) Hugh Chignell, *British Radio Drama, 1945-63*. *Theatre Journal* 73.4 (December 2021): 587-588.

Nguyen, Tram. "Feminist Memorializations in Piercy and Carter." *Gender Forum*, vol. 80, February 2022.

Porter, Elizabeth, et. al. "Continuing to #WriteWithAphra: A Year Of Collegiality and Compassion." *ABO: Interactive Journal for Women in the Arts, 1640-1830*, 11.2 (Fall 2021). <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/abo/vol11/iss2/17/>.

Rice-González, Charles. "How Much Is Too Much? Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in the South Bronx." drea brown and Ana-Maurine Lara, eds. *Teaching Black*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021. 144-151.

Roussetzki, Rémy. *La Tête Hors de L'Eau: Passions New-yorkaises*. Paris: Editions Vêrone, 2021.

Presentations & Performances

Fabrizio, Andrea. "Small Town Travel and Gossip: Earthly Obstacles and Spiritual Agency in The Narrative of the Persecutions of Agnes Beaumont." *EC/ASECS 2021: A Virtual Prelude*, 15 October 2021. Online.

Michael, Krystyna. "Valuing The Digital Now: Teaching with OER." *Modern Language Association*, 6 January 2022. Online.

Michael, Krystyna. "Collaborating with Early America: Bringing Manifold Digital Publishing to Students." *Americas Online*, the McNeill Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, 12-13 November, 2021.

Milsom, Alexandra. "British Caribbean Tourism." *Modern Language Association Conference*, 8 January 2022. Online.

Muñoz, Victoria. "Liberating America: An English Imperial Fairy Tale." "Insurrection, Tyranny, and Resistance: Indigenous, Colonial, and Enslaved Perspectives." *Modern Language Association*. 7 January 2022. Online.

Nguyen, Tram. "The Bronx Way: Rethinking Educational Access and Social Justice." *International Writing Center Association Conference*, October 20-23, 2021. Online.

Porter, Elizabeth. "Women in London: Traffic and Transit." *Northeast American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies (NEASECS) Annual Conference*. 5 November, 2021. Panel Organizer and Moderator. Online.

Porter, Elizabeth. "Moving Against the Marriage Plot: London in Burney's *Cecilia*." *EC-ASECS. A Virtual Prelude*. 15 October, 2021. Online.

Soto-Franco, Juan. "La Importancia de la Investigación Científica y Algunos Tips" [The Importance of the Scientific Investigation and Some Tips]. *Coloquio de los Estudiantes del PE en Lengua Inglesa*, Universidad Autónoma del Carmen (UNACAR), 22 November 2021. Ciudad del Carmen, Campeche, Mexico. Guest Speaker.

Slentz, Kristine. "Queer and Qualified" *Queer Student Union/Club*. Santa Clara University. 23 February 2022. Panel participant.

Congratulations

To Ann Genzale for being accepted to CUNY Faculty Fellowship Publication Program for her project (tentatively titled), "Re-

READING MEET-UPS

Reading:

Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* I

Discussion:

Flying to Freedom

Wednesday 3/30

3:30 PM

via Zoom



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SAVE THE DATE

Friday, March 11th 2:00 PM on Zoom

Developmental English PD Featuring

Kelsey Hixson-Bowles (Utah Valley University)

&

Writing Center Tutors

5

Register @ <https://bit.ly/March11thPD>

Writing the Book of Myths: Embodied Narrative in Cheryl Strayed's Wild."

To Charles Rice-González for his 2021-2022 writing fellowship at MacDowell (Peterborough, NH) and for being named a 2022 PEN America Writing as Activism Fellow (New York, NY).

To Prof. Jerilyn Fisher for her recent retirement.

News & Announcements

Prof. Kristine Slentz runs an artist series that is every third Friday of the month at Otto's Shrunken Head, 6-8 PM. All are invited to the upcoming event on March 18.

Prof. Roussetzki has shared many short stories for public reading at <https://remyr.substack.com/>.

Prof. Krystyna Michael is co-editing with Jojo Karlin and Ines Vanos Garcia a themed edition of the peer-reviewed *Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy* focusing on Open Educational Resources with a forum for general articles. Please see the CFP and submit an article at <https://jitp.commons.gc.cuny.edu/call-for-submissions/>

Prof. Juan Soto-Franco will be delivering two presentations at the upcoming Bronx EdTech Showcase. For details visit the website: <https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/bronxedtech/>

Prof. Elyse Zucker has created for the Disabilities Issues Committee "The COVID Catharsis," in collaboration with co-chair, Ms. Jessica Powell. The project was developed as an archive to house the thoughts, stories and/or feelings anyone in the Hostos community wishes to share about how the pandemic disabled them--and/or what, if anything, enabled them to begin to heal. Participants can share what they wish via writing, telling it to an interviewer, or using other venues of communication we will offer. We are currently updating the project, and its availability to the Hostos community will be announced.

Upcoming Events

Term Meetings | 3:30 PM via Zoom

Department-wide: Thurs, March 10th

Developmental: Mon. March 14th, Tues. April 12th

ENG 110: Wed. March 9th, Thurs. May 5th

ENG 111: Thurs. March 24th, Mon. April 25th

Electives: Tues. March 29th, Mon. May 9th

Sunday March 6th @ 12 PM | PSC Budget Rally, Brooklyn Boro Hall

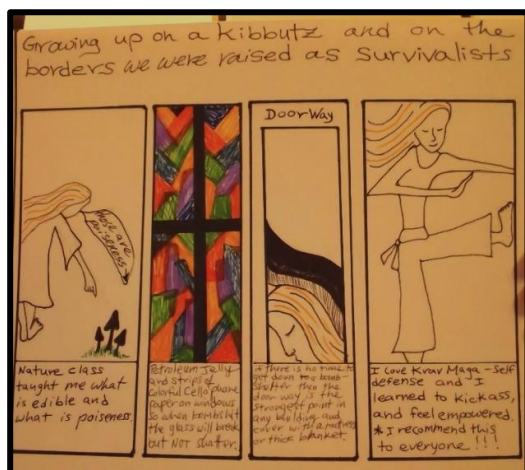


Image: Student graphic novel excerpt by Raz; courtesy of Prof. Bollinger; full story on page 3

WRITING SEMINARS

Spring 2022 Schedule

- 2/17 Prompt: What is your professor asking you?
- 2/24 Poems that Talk to Visual Art: Exploring Ekphrasis
- 3/3 Brace Yourself the Brainstorm is Coming: Gathering your Thoughts
- 3/10 The Essay's Engine: Thesis Statement
- 3/1 Tell us who you are: An Intro to Personal Statements
- 3/24 A Plan for Action: Outlining
- 3/31 Creative Writing
- 4/7 Paraphrasing: In other words...
- 4/14 Research
- 5/5 Exam Stress



WRITING CENTER



WRITING SEMINAR

A Plan for Action: Outlining

Thursday 3/24
4 PM
Via Zoom



WRITING CENTER



SAVE THE DATE

Wednesday, March 16th

3:30 PM on Zoom

English Faculty Reading Series

Featuring

Professor Heidi Bollinger

&

Professor

Charles Rice-González

Register @ <https://bit.ly/FRSMarch16>