Lehman College English Department

English Honors Program Newsletter

November 2011
Welcome to students of the English Honors Program (EHP) at Lehman College! It’s been a busy and exciting academic semester for us all, so let’s begin with our news.

Celebrate!

The English Honors Program is thriving. We currently have 22 students. We also have quite a few juniors and pre-majors in the pipeline who will join our ranks in the Spring. Here’s a list of current EHP members:


Please spread the EHP word to friends in your English classes. We particularly want to welcome all interested and qualified Juniors at this time, as students should be EHP members by the Spring Term of the calendar year in which they do their Fall ENG/ENW 481/482 English Honors Project.

Here's what some of you have been up to this fall:

Twelve seniors are (very) hard at work on their ENG/ENW 481 English Honors Projects:

Lisa Abate (critical essay on capitalism, the American Dream, and the will to power in works from Daniel Defoe to John Steinbeck); Lisa Marie Blanco (critical essay on denial as a defense mechanism in the Holocaust writings of Muñoz Molina, Elie Wiesel, and Giorgio Bassan); Grecia Huesca (poetry collection in media res); Yvette Lewis (critical essay on Mary Wollstonecraf, Mary Shelley, legacy, and rebellion); Sherin Mathew (critical essay on fairy tales, character development, and the later Charles Dickens); Viviana Ocampo (critical essay on William Falkner, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and post-colonial realities and representations); Brian Rivera (critical essay on neo-slave narratives by Octavia Butler, Edward P. Jones, and Marlon James); Suely Riordan (critical essay on proto-feminist treatises by Christine de Pisan, Mary Astell, and Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz); Valerie Ross (critical essay on the social, sexual, and racial history of the termagant in William Shakespeare and Alice Walker); Carmen Santiago (critical essay on a possible Latino-American literary aesthetic in Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Junot Diaz); Pablo Torres (short story about a regular guy who ultimately pulls the plug on his own ideal online persona); Shabana Yusuf (short story in poetic form, loosely based on the Medusa and Perseus myth).

Faculty mentors guiding this year’s seniors are Professors Bryant, Bullaro, Cheng, Humpherys, Koo, Loscocco, Massa, O’Boy, Schmidt, Valgema, and Yood.

Good luck and congratulations to one and all on good hard work well done!
January Graduates! Early congratulations to Carmen Santiago, Pablo Torres, and Shabana Yusuf, who will graduate from Lehman College, the English Department, and the EHP this January! Best wishes to you, stay in touch, and we hope to see you both at the English Awards Ceremony in April/May!

Other news from/of you:


Send Professor Loscocco news about your personal, academic, and professional accomplishments at paula.loscocco@lehman.cuny.edu! You’ve all done a lot, but she can’t publish your accomplishments unless you tell her about them—don’t be shy--brag!

Kultcha! This has been the semester for on-campus cultural events, including readings by Professor Salita Bryant (September), Sonia Sanchez (November), Malachi and Michael McCourt (November), and David Hernandez and Simone Meunsch (November). There have also been two Shakespeare performances on campus this term: a rollicking student performance of A Midsummer Night’s Dream (November) and The Theatre for a New Audiences’ selected scenes from Cymbeline (November). Several of you have attended (and reviewed) other on-campus performances at the Studio Theatre and elsewhere on campus, and attended exhibits and talks at the Lehman Art Gallery.

Upcoming events of literary note:

ON CAMPUS: *****On Wednesday, March 21, 2012, acclaimed author Esmeralda Santiago will be the Lehman Lecture keynote speaker. Ms. Santiago’s works include her seminal first book, When I Was Puerto Rican, a memoir about her childhood in rural Puerto Rico and her teenage years in NYC. Her new novel is Conquistadora, an epic historical novel also set in Puerto Rico. Ms. Santiago’s talk on 3/21 will surely be engaging and enlightening regarding history, identity, creativity, and the writing process. *****On Thursday, March 29, to kick off National Poetry Month, Lehman is happy to have our own Billy Collins headlining what is surely going to be an amazing reading by Lehman’s most respected poets. Prof. Collins will be reading from his new book, released in paperback, Horoscopes for the Dead. Reading along with Prof. Collins will be Salita Bryant, Jason Koo, and George Green, all Lehman professors.

OFF CAMPUS: *****The Morgan Library and Museum, in Manhattan at 37th and Madison Avenue, has an exhibit called “Charles Dickens at 200” ongoing until February 12, 2012. Worth seeing and the building is surreally beautiful—J.P. Morgan’s private honors room. *****The Jewish Museum at 5th Avenue and 92nd Street has an exhibit of interest to Early Childhood and Childhood Education / English majors (as well as anyone who has or once was a child): “The Snow Day and the Art of Ezra Jack Keats,” ongoing until January 29, 2012. *****The New York Public Library is 100 years old and is celebrating in style: “Celebrating 100 Years,” at the Stephen Schwartzman Building at 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue is ongoing through December 31,
2011. Upstairs from the exhibit hall, of course, is the NYPL itself, an incredible resource: if you haven’t visited the Reading Room and ordered a book, do so; if you haven’t made use of their vast electronic resources (many of them only accessible on site), do so. You won’t regret it. *****The Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture, on 135th Street in Manhattan, has an epochal exhibit, “Malcolm X: A Search for Truth,” through January 7, 2012. *****And I can’t help mentioning a far-flung but wonderful exhibit at the Firestone Library at Princeton University, “Sin and the City: William Hogarth’s London,” showing through January 29, 2012. Free and open to the public if you can find your way there. Finally, a head’s up on a future exhibit you’ll want to see: *****El Museo del Barrio New York, 1230 Fifth Avenue at 104th Street, will host “Caribbean: Cross-Roads of the World” from June to December 2012.

You can find Lehman professors’ picks for great local cultural events at the Arts Committee’s page on the Lehman website: [http://www.lehman.edu/academics/arts-humanities/facultypicks.php](http://www.lehman.edu/academics/arts-humanities/facultypicks.php).

*****For theatre buffs, remember that Lehman College has a partnership with the Theatre Development Fund (TDF): [http://www.lehman.edu/academics/arts-humanities/bodylehman.html](http://www.lehman.edu/academics/arts-humanities/bodylehman.html). For as low as $10 for your first year of membership, you have access to hugely discounted Broadway, Off-Broadway, and Off-Off Broadway tickets.***** Also, if you ever want to see an opera or ballet at Lincoln Center, show up at a box office the day of the show with your student ID and see what you can get—usually something amazing for incredibly cheap! (Also, check LehmanStages for live HD broadcasts of Metropolitan Opera performances, which are incredible and free.)

Many of you find out about wonderful cultural opportunities and events in your travels around the city. Share them with the rest of us via email: someone in the group always takes advantage of such notices!

Writing Opportunities!

A number of you worked hard this year at various Lehman College publications. Grecia Huesca, Alex Linde, Brian Rivera, Pablo Torres, and Shabana Yusuf all worked on the English Department’s literary magazine, Obscura. The 2011 edition can be found in various offices around the Department: look for and read it—it’s great! (For more information, email [LehmanLitMag@gmail.com](mailto:LehmanLitMag@gmail.com)). Obscura is accepting submissions (fiction, poetry, and art) for its third volume until THIS SUNDAY 11/20/11; for details, go to [http://www.facebook.com/ObscuraLiteraryAndArtsMagazine](http://www.facebook.com/ObscuraLiteraryAndArtsMagazine).

The College’s student-newspaper, The Meridian, is always looking for writers: contact Professor Mifflin at [margot.mifflin@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:margot.mifflin@lehman.cuny.edu) with questions.


English Department Writing Contest

Notice will soon go out about the . The deadline for critical essays, research essays, and all kinds of creative work is likely to be March 1, 2012. Look for
details in flyers and strongly consider submitting your work. (ENG/ENW 481/482 seniors who are graduating anytime in 2012 are eligible.) Many of the prizes have modest cash prizes and all recipients are recognized in the English Awards Ceremony in April/May 2012. Do not miss this excellent and inspiring opportunity open ONLY to Lehman students!

There’s a world of opportunities out there. *****Visit “Pineapple and Milk,” a multimedia site run by two Lehman English graduates, Nabil Rahman and John Paul Infante: [http://www.pineappleandmilk.com](http://www.pineappleandmilk.com) *****The Washington Pastime is run by Paul Karaffa and has a new Promising Young Author (PYA) program that is seeking student leaders to set up campus support groups (Chapters) for writers, where they can learn to work as a team, professionally edit literature, and have the opportunity to have their work published: [http://www.washingtonpastime.com/drupal/pya](http://www.washingtonpastime.com/drupal/pya) You can find links to submit work for the site’s monthly publication and for the site’s Literary prize at this website. *****The Norton Writer’s Prize is awarded annually for an outstanding essay done for an undergraduate writing class—including literary narratives, literary and other textual analyses, reports, profiles, evaluations, arguments, memoirs, proposals, mixed-genre pieces, and more. The winner receives $1,500; the two runners-up receive $1,000 apiece; deadline is 6/16/12: [http://books.wwnorton.com/books/norton-writers-prize/](http://books.wwnorton.com/books/norton-writers-prize/) *****Wheaton College in Norton, MA (near Boston) has a Summer Institute for Literary and Cultural Studies: [www.wheatoncollege.edu/silcs](http://www.wheatoncollege.edu/silcs) (deadline 2/10/12). SILCS brings ten college juniors together for a four-week intensive program in June to prepare them for college study in English and is particularly open to students from underrepresented ethnic or racial groups. Participation is free of charge and students receive a $2,500 stipend for the month.

Shabana Yusuf, the source of all sites literary, points to other opportunities. Inkpop [http://www.inkpop.com](http://www.inkpop.com) is a writing community created by HarperCollins to give young adults and those who write for young adults a showcase for their work; at the end of each month, the Top 5 pieces (Fiction, Short Writing, and Poetry) are reviewed by the HC editors (and may get an offer if lucky!). Authonomy [http://www.authonomy.com](http://www.authonomy.com) is another HC creation, but not limited to YA. Bookjobs.com [http://bookjobs.com/index.php](http://bookjobs.com/index.php) lists internships and jobs available in the publishing world.; the links are updated regularly but you should check the separate websites. Penguin has internships throughout the year: the Semester Application Deadlines are 1/1 (for Spring), 2/28 (for Summer), 8/1 (for Fall) – see PenguinGroup (USA) Careers at [https://www.facebook.com/PenguinGroupUSACareers?sk=wall](https://www.facebook.com/PenguinGroupUSACareers?sk=wall)

Send Professor Loscocco any additions or corrections here! You are her best resource for current information!

**English Honors Room (CA384)**

The English Honors Room was refurbished and redecorated last year: it now features desks, chairs, a sofa, pillows, lamps, rugs, and inspiring literary wall-art. The small library now includes two very full shelves of major works from the massive Library of America collection, gift of Professor Billy Collins, plus a chronologically arranged selection of works from Old English to contemporary fiction. E-readers are available to all EHP students, just ask at the 302 office or talk to Profs. Cheng or Loscocco: the Department would be happy to download books you need to build the EHP’s electronic “library.” Laptops are also available to you in the English office.
All desktops in the room should be up and running, and connect wirelessly to the terrific laser printer (that will accept wireless printing so long as the computer closest to it is on). Please be mindful of paper use, and let Prof. Loscocco know if the printer cartridge or paper-supply runs out.

Enjoy your room, as many of you now have. It’s a great place to study, log-on, socialize, sleep, eat, and it’s all yours. Thanks for keeping it in good repair! Professor Cheng, Professor Loscocco, and Ms. O’Casio all have the key, which you can sign out in Carman 302.

Courses & Advisement

Professor Loscocco provides major advisement for all English Honors students. She offers guidance for EHP students as they work their way through their major and specialization, signs forms, and does permissions. Professors Bullaro (Chair), McElligott, O’Boy, and Koo are all available for advisement and permissions as well, but you must check in with Professor Loscocco at least once a semester about your progress in the English Honors major, and you must get her and the English Chair’s permission to enroll in ENG/ENW 481 (which requires getting a pink tutorial form from 302, filling it in and getting it signed by your mentor, Prof. Loscocco, the English Chair, and the Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities!) before you can register.

Things are going to be a little confusing in the winter/spring term. The English Department revised its curriculum recently, and the new curriculum goes into effect on January 1, 2012. The most important new information is as follows:

New Curriculum starting January 1, 2012:
ENG 300 is Introduction to Literary Methods (not English I)
ENG 301 is English I (not English II)
ENG 302 is English II (not English III)
ENG 303 is English III (not Introduction to Literary methods)

All students graduating 2013+ must declare their English Honors majors under the new curriculum.

Any English courses taken before 1/1/12 using old number-codes must be brought to English Advisors’ attention for correction.

We are still working out how to handle the various problems that will soon arise. Be patient with us. We’ll go over each of your records and figure out on a course-by-course basis what you need, and figure out how to do it. Promise. But: patience.

A few other issues of important note:

English Honors – Literature students who are graduating in 2013+ are required to take ENG 463 (Literary Theory and Criticism), ideally in the Spring term prior to the Fall in which they are taking ENG 481/482. This Spring, ENG 463 is co-enrolled with ENG 702, the graduate
methods course, though the EHP students will outnumber the graduate students considerably (!). Professor Joseph will be teaching the course Thursdays 6:00-8:40.

Professor Lee Quinby, a Distinguished Lecturer at Lehman College, runs the Honors Colloquium for undergraduate honors students from all CUNY campuses. (“Honors” here includes Macaulay, College Honors, and departmental honors students.) She teaches the other section of ENG 462 (“Honors Seminar), which is recommended but NOT required of EHP students. Professor Quinby teaches a Fall “Doomsday” course and a Spring “American Sexualities” course that students invariably describe as superlative.

Do not forget HUM 150, “City and the Humanities,” which is a one-credit, two-show course in which students meet with Professor McElligott to discuss a play they’ve read, attend the play with a working theatre professional who discusses the play with them after the show, and then write a brief review of the performance.

Professor Farrell of Lief Library has kindly put together a fabulous for the EHP: go to [http://libguides.lehman.edu/eng481](http://libguides.lehman.edu/eng481). Make good use of this valuable resource, which was considerably expanded/updated this fall. Pay particular attention to the horizontal row of blue tabs near the top: you’ll see what’s there immediately if you click on “Database Searching” or “Citation Guides” (the MLA Guide is there!).

**ENG/ENW 481/482**

ENG/ENW 481/482 is a three-credit Honors Tutorial and one-credit Colloquium in which students spend a semester researching, writing, and revising the English Honors Project that is a principal requirement for departmental honors. Students enroll in ENG/ENW 481/482 in the Fall Term prior to graduation, meeting individually with a mentor in a weekly tutorial to discuss reading, research, and writing, and meeting together with the EHP director in a (roughly) bi-weekly colloquium to establish a project-calendar, share ideas and experiences, and socialize. Colloquium meetings in Fall 2011 were Thursdays 3:30-5:00. Students find a mentor, identify a preliminary topic and reading list, and register for ENG/ENW 481 (with the EHP director’s permission) during Spring Registration.

Students should keep in mind that the English Honors Project may not overlap with regular coursework or course-related writing (though it may be inspired by something you read or wrote previously). EHP students who are also Lehman Scholars and/or Macaulay Honors College students are equally bound not to overlap their ENG/ENW 481 work with regular coursework, but they may use their English honors project to satisfy the honors-project requirement of both the English Department and their College Honors program, with the approval of Professor Schwartz. CUNY Pipeline students may not overlap their English Honors and Pipeline Honors work in any way.

An EHP student who plans to graduate in 2013 (January, May, or September) should take ENG/ENW 481/482 in Fall 2012. The student must register for ENG/ENW 481/482 in Spring 2012. Find a faculty mentor and plan a rough topic during the winter/spring; when Registration rolls around, obtain a pink tutorial form from CA301 and get it signed by your mentor, the EHP director, and the English chair; once the Department notifies you that your tutorial as the approval of the Dean of Arts and Humanities, you may register.
Before classes end in May, be sure to meet with your mentor and develop a summer reading list—and then read. The fall term is very short, and you want to have read as much as possible in areas of interest over the summer, so you’re ready to get to work on September 1.

EHP Literature students should take ENG 463 in the Spring term prior to ENG 481/482. EHP Creative Writing and Professional Writing students should plan on taking HUM 470, ideally in the Fall term prior to (or coincident with) ENW 481/482. Writing students will need to talk to Professors Cheng, Bryant, Mifflin, and Anderson about their options for HUM 470, but should begin with Prof. Loscocco.

**Reminder**

To graduate with English honors, EHP students need to maintain a 3.2 overall GPA, maintain a 3.5 English GPA, participate in the EHP for at least two semesters, and complete ENG/ENW 481/482 in the fall prior to their year of graduation.

**Scholarship Opportunities!**

Juniors (class of 2013) who are considering eventual doctoral study should look into the **CUNY Pipeline Program**, which provides first-class support for graduate-school-bound juniors (who become seniors while in the program). Accepted students take a summer honors course to prepare them for senior-year study, receive assistance in preparing and paying for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and graduate-school applications, work on an independent project of their own devising with a mentor from their home institution during their senior year, and receive a generous stipend of $3,250. The program is a wonderful combination of educational and financial support, coupled with the flexibility of doing most of the work at Lehman. Students who have gone through the program speak of it highly, as does Professor Schwartz (director of Macaulay and Lehman Scholars) and a number of English Department faculty.

The deadline for applications—application-form, essay, and two letters of recommendation—can be found at [http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Resource-Services/OEODP](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Resource-Services/OEODP). If you’re interested in applying, brainstorm with professors and recommenders this spring and/or early next fall.

**Other opportunities:** There is money out there for all kinds of intellectual endeavor: do not make the mistake of thinking you do not have a chance—you do! There’s a CUNY site that lists every kind of funding under the sun: [http://cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/grants-scholarships.html](http://cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/grants-scholarships.html). Pay particular attention to the “Prestigious Scholarships” link: [http://cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/grants-scholarships/pscholarships.html](http://cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/grants-scholarships/pscholarships.html). CUNY students—departmental honors students as well as LSP and Macaulay students, Lehman students as well as students from the other senior colleges—do get these goods. Go to [http://cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/grants-scholarships/pscholarships/recipients.html](http://cuny.edu/admissions/financial-aid/grants-scholarships/pscholarships/recipients.html) and type “Lehman” into the “find” box.
If you find scholarship or fellowship that seems to match your strengths and interests, bring it up with a professor. Get that conversation going—you never know where it may lead!

Also, do not ignore Lehman’s Career Services Center (Shuster 254): Erin Reilly (erin.reilly@lehman.cuny.edu) fields all queries from English majors about cv’s, applications, cover-letters, internship opportunities, career-planning, jobs, you name it. Ms. Reilly’s focused, energetic, practical, and tells the English faculty to get you there by sophomore year at the latest—so go, even if you’re a senior! For a sense of what the CSC offers, see http://www.lehman.edu/vpstud/careerservices/

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The Lehman College English Department aims to provide its English Honors students with the most enriching, interesting, tech-savvy, challenging, rewarding, congenial capstone experience possible. We’re at your disposal—just ask!

Good luck finishing the term and we’ll see you all again in January!