

**ENGL 7485-001: LITERARY ARTS PROGRAMMING: *River City Writers Series, et al* / Fall 2019**

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**Catalog Course Description:**

Development of skills involved in planning and administering community arts events and organizations; further training in the skills of author interviewing and book reviewing. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credit hours with change in course content. PREREQUISITE: Permission of instructor.

**Extended Course Description:**

Students will be deeply involved in planning community literary arts events with special focus on the River City Writers Series and other conferences and events put on by the University of Memphis and in the Memphis Community. In particular the students will select the authors, work with literary and booking agents to negotiate fees and travel, apply for funding from the public and private sectors, design the program, including interviews, audience interactions and educational components; and marketing, distribution, and sales.

**Course Overview:**

This course involves the development of practical, hands-on skills related to planning, programming, and promoting University of Memphis literary events. While the focus is on **The River City Writers Series**, students will also help with planning and promotion for other department events as needed. In its nearly forty-year history, the series has hosted more than a hundred authors, including Elizabeth Strout, Charles Baxter, C.K. Williams, Mark Strand, Gwendolyn Brooks, Lucille Clifton, John Updike, Tobias Wolff, Joyce Maynard, James Tate, Carolyn See, Carlos Fuentes, and Seamus Heaney. We will focus on the art and craft of programming a successful literary event as well as promotion, and all the business aspects of events.

This course also provides an introduction to the larger literary job market, and we will discuss the process of building a career in a literary community by working in the nonprofit private or government sector to promote literary events and community programs. The course will also focus on literary criticism as students read and interview contemporary authors about their work. These interviews are intended for publication and students will be encouraged to submit them for publication.

This is an excellent course for **ALL** graduate students, whether they are enrolled in the MFA program or not. The class functions like an internship with students expected to work (including class hours) about ten hours a week.

**Course Objectives:** Students will learn how to:

1. Select authors for a reading series and negotiate terms of appearance
2. Design a marketing and promotion campaign
3. Apply for external funding to support a reading series or literary event
4. Design educational content for a literary event
5. Research and analyze other literary events to implement effective event programming
6. Submit their own book reviews and author interviews for publication