

2012-2013

# BENNINGTON

**WRITING SEMINARS**

APPLICATION FOR THE MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN WRITING AND LITERATURE

# The Bennington Writing Seminars

— . —

*Read one hundred books.  
Write one.*

## DEADLINES

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| September 1 | MFA admission and financial aid applications due for <b>January</b> residency |
| March 1     | MFA admission applications due for <b>June</b> residency                      |
| April 1     | MFA financial aid applications due for <b>June</b> residency                  |

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4452 • [writing@bennington.edu](mailto:writing@bennington.edu) • [www.bennington.edu](http://www.bennington.edu)

## **The Bennington Writing Seminars: Master of Fine Arts in Writing and Literature**

Students may begin the Master of Fine Arts in Writing and Literature program during either of the 10-day residency sessions held in January or June. Admission is limited and competitive. The deadline for applications is September 1 for entering in January and March 1 for the June residency.

Students are admitted to the program primarily on the strength of the original manuscript submitted with the application, which will be judged according to its literary merit and its indication of a readiness to study writing and literature on a graduate level. The application should include three copies of the manuscript.

Although we encourage students to read and write broadly in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry, students will initially be accepted to work in one primary genre. The manuscript submitted should be in the genre in which the student intends to concentrate. Manuscripts cannot be returned.

Applicants should also provide a two- to three-page essay discussing their reading life and their engagement with the literature of other writers. Normally a bachelor's degree is required to gain admission, but this requirement can be waived if the quality of the work submitted warrants such an exception, though this may impact federal loan eligibility.

Students who are applying to the program will often have completed some graduate work or attained graduate degrees in various fields; no credits taken beforehand can be applied to the Bennington Writing Seminars. The low-residency format has its own internal logic and requirements, and in order to receive a degree a student must have completed the entire course of study.

In addition to the original manuscript and the essay, in admitting students we will give weight to previous education and work experience. We will look to see that a prospective student has the ability to work independently, to successfully utilize the low-residency format, and to benefit from direct criticism within the collaborative nature of the residency periods. Our aim is to provide a vortex for the person of letters and to be part of a lifelong continuum within the world of letters.

Transcripts from previous schools attended must also be submitted, along with recommendations from three people familiar with the student's writing and/or capacity to function independently and collaboratively.

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4452 • writing@bennington.edu • www.bennington.edu

## Application Checklist

### Deadlines

March 1	MFA admission applications due for <b>June</b> residency
April 1	MFA financial aid applications due for <b>June</b> residency
September 1	MFA admission and financial aid applications due for <b>January</b> residency

Applications are considered complete when the following have been received:

- \$70 application fee** (non-refundable and cannot be waived).
- Application form** with supporting written materials.
- Three recommendations** from persons who are familiar with your writing and/or your ability to work independently and collaboratively (Appendix A).
- Official transcript** from each college or university you have attended.
- Essay:** A two- or three-page essay discussing your reading life and your engagement with the literature of other writers is required. Please submit three (3) copies.
- Writing Sample:** A manuscript of your work (20 to 25 pages of fiction or nonfiction, double spaced, in a readable font such as 12 pt. Times New Roman; 10 pages of poetry) must be submitted. Send three (3) copies, please.
- Financial Aid:** Graduate students who are U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens may use federal student loans to help finance their studies at Bennington. When applying for admission, interested students should complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the online Bennington College Application for Financial Aid. See Appendix B for aid application details and deadlines.

All questions and materials (excluding financial aid forms) should be addressed to:

**Bennington College, Writing Seminars Office, One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201-6003.**

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4452 • writing@bennington.edu • www.bennington.edu

## The Bennington Writing Seminars Application 2012–2013

### Name

Mr. Ms. Dr.

(PLEASE CIRCLE)                      FIRST                                      MIDDLE                                      LAST

Name on transcripts (if different from above) \_\_\_\_\_

### Birth/Citizenship

DATE OF BIRTH                                      SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER                                      CITIZENSHIP

### Address

PERMANENT STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE                                      ZIP

TELEPHONE (HOME)                                      (CELL)                                      E-MAIL

Temporary mailing address, to be used from \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE) to \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE)

STREET                                      CITY                                      STATE                                      ZIP

TELEPHONE (HOME)                                      (WORK)

### Area of Interest

What is your intended focus? Check one:     Fiction     Nonfiction     Poetry

For which term and academic year are you applying?     January (Year \_\_\_\_\_ )     June (Year \_\_\_\_\_ )

Are you applying for financial aid?     Yes     No

### Personal History

Please list all post-secondary institutions you have attended and supply official transcripts.

SCHOOL/COLLEGE                                      LOCATION                                      DATES ATTENDED                                      DEGREE EARNED

SCHOOL/COLLEGE                                      LOCATION                                      DATES ATTENDED                                      DEGREE EARNED

SCHOOL/COLLEGE                                      LOCATION                                      DATES ATTENDED                                      DEGREE EARNED

Please provide your work/professional history (append separately if you prefer).

---

---

---

Please list any special academic accomplishments and/or professional prizes, honors, or grants you have received which you consider relevant to this application.

---

---

---

### References

Please list the names of three persons you have asked to send letters of recommendation (Appendix A).

---

---

---

These letters should assess your qualifications for graduate study, your creative potential, and your ability to sustain independent work. They should be sent directly to **Bennington College, Writing Seminars Office, One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201**, or sealed and sent with your application.

Please list other colleges to which you are applying.

---

---

---

### Degree/Residency Requirements

The low-residency MFA writing program requires attendance at five 10-day residency periods, which occur during January and June of each year, with a total of four terms of low-residency writing program work, or 64 credits.

My signature below indicates that all information contained in my application is complete, factually correct, and honestly presented.

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

### Optional Information

How did you hear about this program? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you Hispanic/Latino?  Yes, Hispanic or Latino (including Spain)  No
2. Regardless of your answer to the prior question, please select one or more of the following ethnicities that best describes you:
  - American Indian or Alaska Native (including all Original Peoples of the Americas)  
Are you enrolled?  Yes  No If Yes, please enter Tribal Enrollment Number \_\_\_\_\_
  - Asian (including Indian subcontinent and Philippines)
  - Black or African American (including Africa and Caribbean)
  - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Original Peoples)
  - White (including Middle Eastern)

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4452 • writing@bennington.edu • www.bennington.edu

## APPENDIX A

### Recommendation: The Bennington Writing Seminars 2012–2013

#### To the Candidate

---

CANDIDATE'S NAME

has applied to the Bennington Writing Seminars, a Master of Fine Arts in Writing and Literature Program.

I hereby waive the right to see this statement once it has been added to my file. (Please sign only if you waive the right.)

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

#### To the Recommender

Please assess the candidate's qualifications for graduate study, creative potential, ability to sustain independent work, and any other factors you believe are relevant to the applicant's success in the program (use separate sheet if you prefer). Please return this form and/or any additional sheets to: **Bennington College, Writing Seminars Office, One College Drive, Bennington, Vermont 05201.**

---

RECOMMENDER'S NAME

---

STREET

---

CITY

STATE

ZIP

---

POSITION

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4452 • writing@bennington.edu • www.bennington.edu

## APPENDIX A

### Recommendation: The Bennington Writing Seminars 2012–2013

#### To the Candidate

---

CANDIDATE'S NAME

has applied to the Bennington Writing Seminars, a Master of Fine Arts in Writing and Literature Program.

I hereby waive the right to see this statement once it has been added to my file. (Please sign only if you waive the right.)

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

#### To the Recommender

Please assess the candidate's qualifications for graduate study, creative potential, ability to sustain independent work, and any other factors you believe are relevant to the applicant's success in the program (use separate sheet if you prefer). Please return this form and/or any additional sheets to: **Bennington College, Writing Seminars Office, One College Drive, Bennington, Vermont 05201.**

---

RECOMMENDER'S NAME

---

STREET

---

CITY

STATE

ZIP

---

POSITION

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4452 • writing@bennington.edu • www.bennington.edu

## APPENDIX A

### Recommendation: The Bennington Writing Seminars 2012–2013

#### To the Candidate

---

CANDIDATE'S NAME

has applied to the Bennington Writing Seminars, a Master of Fine Arts in Writing and Literature Program.

I hereby waive the right to see this statement once it has been added to my file. (Please sign only if you waive the right.)

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

#### To the Recommender

Please assess the candidate's qualifications for graduate study, creative potential, ability to sustain independent work, and any other factors you believe are relevant to the applicant's success in the program (use separate sheet if you prefer). Please return this form and/or any additional sheets to: **Bennington College, Writing Seminars Office, One College Drive, Bennington, Vermont 05201.**

---

RECOMMENDER'S NAME

---

STREET

---

CITY

STATE

ZIP

---

POSITION

---

SIGNATURE

DATE

# BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Office of Financial Aid • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont • 05201 • 802-440-4325 • fax 802-440-4880 • [finaid@bennington.edu](mailto:finaid@bennington.edu) • [www.bennington.edu](http://www.bennington.edu)

## APPENDIX B

### Financial Aid Checklist: The Bennington Writing Seminars

#### Types of Aid

Bennington College offers no institutional grant funding for the Writing Seminars, though several small one-time/one-term scholarships are offered on the basis of merit and need to selected writers entering the program (no separate application is required).

Students needing financial assistance generally depend upon federal loans, which are available to U.S. citizens and eligible non-citizens who are not currently in default or owing a refund on previously received federal aid. Students may borrow up to the cost of education (the program residency charge, an allowance for transportation, loan fees, and required books and supplies), minus other aid received; they cannot borrow to cover costs of room and board during their non-residency period, and they cannot borrow to cover the final, residency-only, fifth term.

Congress has, however, ended the interest subsidy for new graduate-level federal student loans with a first disbursement after 6/30/2012. Eligible writers with loans to be disbursed during the June 2012 residency may get a subsidized loan for 2012–2013, but new graduate federal loans after that point will entirely be unsubsidized.

There are two types of federal student loans:

- **Subsidized federal student loans** are loans on which the government, rather than the student borrower, pays interest until the borrower leaves school or graduates. The annual maximum subsidized loan is \$8,500. Eligibility is based on financial need as calculated from information provided on the FAFSA and tax return.
- **Unsubsidized federal student loans** are available to students who do not qualify for subsidized funds and to students who wish to borrow more than they can receive through the subsidized program. Borrowers enrolled at least half-time make regular interest-only payments, or make no payments while in school but instead add the interest due to the total amount borrowed (capitalizing the interest).

The interest rate on new graduate federal student loans is fixed at 6.8%. Loan funds are disbursed near the beginning of the term.

#### Applying

**2012–2013 Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA)**—online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

- Deadlines: April 1, 2012, for entry in June 2012; September 1, 2012, for entry in January 2013.
- Before filing a FAFSA, get a **federal PIN** (or retrieve a forgotten one) from [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov) to use as your electronic signature.
- Once you have a federal PIN, complete the **2012–2013 FAFSA at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)**. Be certain to enter your social security number and driver's license correctly, as well as your name (and middle initial) as it appears on your social security card (FAFSA initiates a social security database match).
- Use the FAFSA's IRS Data Retrieval tool if you have already filed your 2011 federal tax return.
- List Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont—**college code 003682**—as a recipient.

**2012–2013 Bennington College Application for Financial Aid**—online at [www.bennington.edu](http://www.bennington.edu), My Financial Aid

- Deadline: As soon as possible after submitting a FAFSA.
- Login with a Bennington aid student ID, (sent after application fee is paid).
- Go to the “Apply Online” tab; an acknowledgement will pop up when it's successfully submitted.

**Federal Direct Loan Master Promissory Note and (if new borrower) Entrance Loan Counseling**

- Completed online at <https://studentloans.gov>.
- Use your FAFSA PIN as your login and signature

**After the award statement arrives, if you will attend Bennington:**

- Confirm IRS figures on FAFSA: If you did not use IRS Data Retrieval when first filing the FAFSA, you must do so later. Several weeks after your family has filed 2011 federal income tax returns, log into the FAFSA again, and authorize IRS Data Retrieval for tax return information.
- If required per aid award letter, complete and submit a 2012-2013 Verification Worksheet to Bennington.
- Accept, decline, or reduce the funds in your financial aid award online at **My Financial Aid**.
- Submit loan authorization and other forms (if required per **My Financial Aid**, Documents tab) directly to the Financial Aid Office.

**Other Resources**

- Inquire with your employer about financial assistance available for professional development.
- Check regionally for listings of state and local scholarships and the Directory of Foundation Grants to Individuals and similar resources.

## **BENNINGTON COLLEGE**

Writing Seminars Office • One College Drive • Bennington, Vermont 05201-6003  
802-440-4452 • fax 802-440-4453 • [writing@bennington.edu](mailto:writing@bennington.edu) • [www.bennington.edu](http://www.bennington.edu)  
Financial Aid Office • 802-440-4325 • fax: 802-440-4880 • [finaid@bennington.edu](mailto:finaid@bennington.edu)