

# CALCULATED FICTION

A Core Program at The Evergreen State College, Fall & Winter, 2007-2008

Dear Student:

*Hello* from your faculty for Calculated Fiction, Brian and Steven. How are you? We're fine.

We are excited to meet you and begin working together this Fall. This will be our second time teaching this program together; we are repeating it because of the wonderful experience we had the first time and because those students did some amazing work.

You are probably wondering what the coming quarter will bring—and maybe even whether this program is the right one for you. Some of the startling revelations in this letter should help you decide whether this will be a good fit for you. Give it a once-over and please write to us if you have any questions or concerns.

See you soon !

Your Faculty,



Brian L. Walter, PhD

[bwalter@evergreen.edu](mailto:bwalter@evergreen.edu)

Steven D. Hendricks, MFA

[hendrics@evergreen.edu](mailto:hendrics@evergreen.edu)

## *Some first quarter readings...*

The following are the texts that you will be required to purchase:

*Ficciones*, Borges

*Gödel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid*, Hofstadter

*A Mathematician's Apology*, Hardy

*The Mathematical Experience*, Davis & Hersh

*Einstein's Dreams*, Lightman

*Arcadia*, Stoppard

*Mathematical Excursions*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., Aufmann, Lockwood, Nation, Clegg

*Literary Theory, A Very Short Introduction*, Culler

—All of these will be available in the campus bookstore—

*You will also receive excerpts from Einstein's Relativity, a packet of articles concerning the group Oulipo, and a packet of short works of mathematical fiction.*

## *A few items for your calendar...*

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|------------------|--|
| September 17     | Program Preview, 9:00-10:30 in Sem2, B1105<br><i>A chance to meet your faculty, ask questions, look at program texts.</i>                |
| September 17     | Academic Fair, 4:00-6:00, CRC  |
| September 24     | First Day of Class, 10:00 a.m., Sem2, A1105.<br><i>If you don't attend the first day of class, you will be dropped from the program.</i> |
| October 8, 9, 10 | Calculated Fiction Program Retreat in Sequim, Wa.<br><i>Pillow Fight !</i>   |
| December 10-14   | Fall Quarter Evaluation Week<br><i>Please don't make travel plans for these dates without first checking with your seminar faculty.</i>  |

# The Shape of the Program

A great deal will happen in the course of every week. You will have short-term projects: essays, math and writing tasks, group work, seminar preparation, etc. And you will have quarter-long projects: 2 substantial essays, a major project proposal, and other longer-term concerns.

Here is a short description of what a typical week might be like for you in this program:

## **Monday 10:00-12:00 Lecture** ( Seminar 2, A1105 )

In lecture, we will provide context for program themes and readings while making explicit our perspectives on the interconnections between mathematics and literature. The lecture session is where we will often take care of bits of program business, introduce assignments and projects, make schedule changes, and so on.

## **Monday 1:00-3:00 Seminar** ( Seminar 2, C3107 & C3109 )

Seminar is your chance to ask questions of others, hear a variety of perspectives, argue and debate issues, develop ideas, have your ideas challenged, challenge the ideas of others... all to the point of deepening your understanding of the text. In this seminar, you'll work directly with the week's texts, usually in small groups and with specific instructions. It's a good time to ask questions that will give you a better handle on areas of confusion or difficulty in the texts.

## **Tuesday 10:00-1:00 Math Workshop** ( Seminar 2, A 3105 )

Each math workshop will include a series of activities to complete and problems for you to solve in a small group. Using the math textbook as a foundation, you'll explore a series of mathematical concepts relevant to the week's seminar texts. You'll also have math reading and homework to do outside of class.

## **Wednesday 9:00-1:00 Project Lab** ( Seminar 2, C3107 & C3109 )

This will be scheduled and required work time when you will meet in a consistent small group of fellow students to accomplish a variety of tasks: you might assist each other with workshops and assignments, review each other's essays, hold mini-seminars, meet with one of the program aides for discussion or assistance.

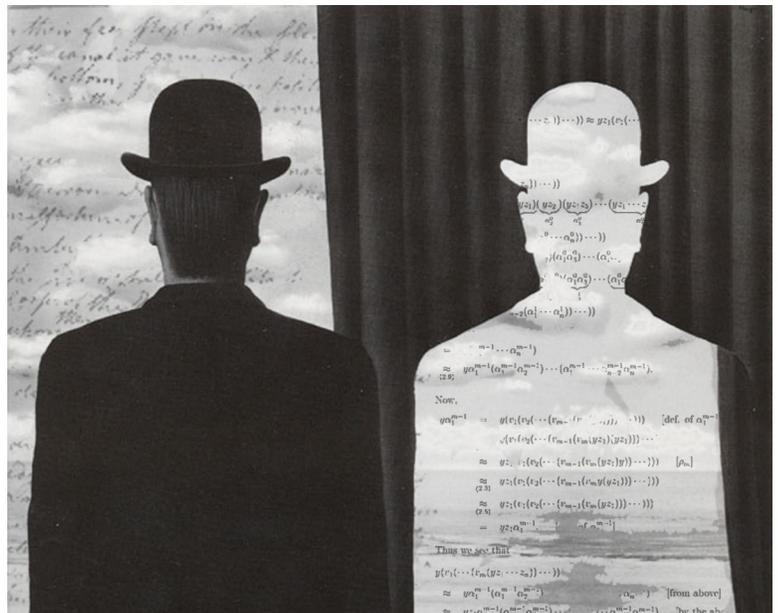
## **Thursday 10:00-12:00(or)1:00 Writing Workshop** ( Seminar 2, A 3105 )

In writing workshops, you'll develop skills in essay composition and creative writing and explore principles of literary theory and criticism relevant to program themes.

## **Thursday 1:00(or)2:00-4:00 Text Seminar**

( Seminar 2, A3107 & A3109 )

In this seminar, you'll meet in a consistent group led by a single faculty. The goal of a text seminar is to *focus intently on the text at hand*—as opposed to expanding out in various directions. Building on the work of the week, this seminar is our chance to deepen our analysis of the texts.



# Program Portfolio

At the end of each quarter of the program you will have a portfolio of completed work and other materials.

We want you to take the maintenance and completion of such a portfolio very seriously in Calculated Fiction. If you start the quarter out well-organized and maintain your portfolio throughout the quarter, your final portfolio will be a smashing success.

A few things you'll need to purchase:

- 3 ring binder with 2" spine.
- Pack of 8 binder dividers ("insertable index dividers")
- Small stapler
- 3-hole punch (or access to one)
- loose-leaf paper
- a simple date book to keep track of schedules, meetings, due dates, etc.

BINDER SECTIONS (*in this order*):

**Program Handouts**

**Lecture Notes**

**Seminar Notes**

**Math Workshop**

**Writing Workshop**

**Papers & Essays**

**Project Proposal**

**Other Notes & Research**

Other things you might want to have, not related to your portfolio:

- a grammar/style manual for college students and/or MLA style guide
- a good pocket dictionary
- post-it flags or similar product—a tool for marking passages in books
- a basic calculator

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We invite you to contact us by e-mail if you have any questions or concerns.

Brian's e-mail: [bwalter@evergreen.edu](mailto:bwalter@evergreen.edu)

Steven's e-mail: [hendrics@evergreen.edu](mailto:hendrics@evergreen.edu)

Also, the program website will begin to grow soon, here:

<http://academic.evergreen.edu/curricular/calculatedfiction/2007/>

You can also visit the [old website](#) (but don't think we're repeating everything)

Please note that we will be using your **Evergreen** email address for all program business. If you have not already activated your Evergreen Account, do so now by going to [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu);

follow the instructions at

[http://www2.evergreen.edu/wikis/computing/index.php?title=Logging\\_in\\_for\\_the\\_First\\_Time](http://www2.evergreen.edu/wikis/computing/index.php?title=Logging_in_for_the_First_Time)