

## *eye of the story*

We think with stories. We tell stories to give shape to experience, to find words for things that in the absence of stories about them often remain too complex, troubling, or elusive to grasp. This program will explore storytelling in two of its most highly polished forms: fiction (novels and short stories) and documentary literature (ethnographies and journalistic works). Our purpose is to study the power of both kinds of narrative art to take fresh looks at the world and to use this knowledge to become adept practitioners of the writer's craft.

Readings fall and winter will include outstanding twentieth-century fictional and non-fictional works from the United States and Europe. We will examine these texts closely and comparatively, with attention to the full palette of resources the authors employ to create compelling effects: plot, language, dialogue, style, point of view, social codes, genre conventions, and the like. The program will also feature instruction and practice of fieldwork methods: ways of listening, looking, and recording evidence to make truthful stories. In fall quarter, students will compose short pieces of essay, ethnographic, and imaginative writing. In winter, they will undertake a major writing project, supported by field research or additional background reading, in a genre and on a subject of their choice.

Questions about the value of fictional and documentary literature will be at the heart of this inquiry. What strengths, for example, do these stories possess as a means of seeing human existence? How do they deal with social and political realities of their time and place? Can they change cultural outlooks? What might be the future for the classics and for contemporary writing, given the visually-oriented, media-and-technology-saturating direction of the globe?

Throughout the program, dialogue among students and faculty about our common and individual work will be prized. By writing intensively in modes they choose, informed by challenging literary study, students will develop their distinctive ways of telling; their own eyes.

**Faculty:** Sam Schragar & Steven Hendricks  
**Program Website:** [academic.evergreen.edu/curricular/eyeofthestory/](http://academic.evergreen.edu/curricular/eyeofthestory/)

**Special Expenses:** Approximately \$125 for fall program field trip.

**Fall - Winter, 32 credits**

## Program Goals

These are the learning goals around which the activities and assignments for the program are built.

Your successes and achievements in relation to these goals will be the basis for your credit and your evaluation at the end of each quarter.



### 1. Writing (Fiction)

To understand the conventions, strategies, history, and theory that surround the craft of fiction writing and demonstrate skill in applying that understanding in your own work.

### 2. Writing (Non-Fiction)

To understand form, structure, and style in the development and refinement of non-fiction writing and the capacity in your own work to convey complex ideas and information clearly and appropriately in relation to audience, subject, or discipline.

### 3. Ethnography

To become skilled in listening to the stories people tell, observing social life, documenting what you hear and see, grasping others' ways of being in the world, interpreting cultural patterns, and engaging people ethically, with thoughtfulness about your own position and purposes.

### 4. 20th Century Literature

To appreciate a range of 20th century english-language literature with an understanding of literature as an art form: a form of social engagement, expression, and exploration.

### 5. Critical reading / analysis

To understand various approaches to critical reading and analysis of both fiction and non-fiction works, including an understanding of contextual meaning, formal/structural analysis, close reading, and the application of specific interpretive frameworks and demonstrate that understanding in seminar discussions, program meetings, and in written inquiries and projects.

### 6. Synthesis

To develop understandings which draw together all dimensions of our inquiry.