

TRANSLATION RESIDENCY

The Poetry Center Committee unanimously and enthusiastically supports the following proposal, which also enjoys the endorsement of Ann Jones of Comparative Literature. More informally, colleagues in several language departments have expressed their excitement about the proposal.

The Poetry Center has already demonstrated a firm commitment to exposing students and community to a wide spectrum of literature from abroad. We host at least one translated event per year. Languages represented include Welsh, Spanish, Korean, Basque, Arabic, Irish, Bosnian, and Vietnamese.

In collaboration with Comparative Literature and the language departments, we propose an annual 1-2 week-long visit by a (non-English-speaking) writer, accompanied by one of his/her translators. A learning community of students and faculty might gather prior to the visit, each working to produce a translation of the same short poem/piece (some from the original language, others using a simple, literal translation). Perhaps the group would take the shape of pairings, one person knowledgeable in the source language and the other a creative writer in conversation with the expert in the language. (The visiting pair could also be slotted into Comp Lit's 150, a course on the practice of translation, built around once-a-week talks by experts.)

During the residency, the author and translator would meet with this short-term colloquium to discuss issues raised in translation, intercultural exchange, conflicts in linguistic structures, cultural context, etc. Author and translator would also give one or more public presentations, including a reading and a lecture or presentation on issues in translation.

The translation residency offers a unique opportunity—rare at a small liberal arts college—for hands-on experience with language and culture and would appeal to and benefit creative writers, language students, comparative literature students, and students about to go abroad.

The residency proposal falls under at least four of the Strategic Planning Initiatives:

Deepen Students' Awareness and Appreciation of Other Cultures & Global Issues - would contribute to a global education, could be based in the proposed Center for International Study.

Prepare Women for Rewarding Lives in a Rapidly Changing World -- inquiry-based learning as part of a focused intellectual community

Promote a Culture of Research, Inquiry, & Discovery - faculty and students working side-by-side in the translation colloquium

Encourage Purposeful Engagement with Society's Challenges – would foster "a culture of active engagement with social, political, [and] aesthetic... issues on all levels"

Respectfully Submitted by Ellen Watson, on behalf of The Poetry Center & Comp Lit