IT’S WHAT YOU SAY...

...AND HOW YOU SAY IT.

MAJORS
   English
   Film and Television Studies

MINORS
   English
   Writing
   Film and Television Studies
   Reporting and Documentary Storytelling
   (Housed in the Center for Research on Vermont)

MASTERS
   Master of Arts
   Accelerated Masters Program
More than our knowledge, and the courses we teach, we are people. Discover us.

Sarah C. Alexander
Associate Professor
I skydive and read post-apocalyptic novels in my free time. I like to teach classes about monsters, cannibalism, and science fiction. Everything about outer space interests me. I like the poems of Robert Browning and the novels of Charles Dickens. I have two black cats.
Expertise: Victorian literature and culture, the novel, Victorian poetry, nineteenth-century science, Dickens, Victorian London, 19th-century political economy

Eve Alexandra
Senior Lecturer
I encourage my writing students to take John Waters's advice and “make trouble.” As a poet teaching in both English and GSWS, concerns of gender, sexuality, and identity are central to both my classes and my own work. I direct Arts Scholars: Artists in Action for the Liberal Arts Scholars Program, a first-year interdisciplinary creative arts learning community. This year I taught the first English class for UVM's Liberal Arts in the Prison Program at the Chittenden County Correctional Facility for women. When I'm not at UVM, I'm probably in the stands passionately cheering my daughter on in basketball.
Expertise: Creative writing, poetry, American literature

Andrew Barnaby
Professor
Among my creative efforts are a musical adaptation of A Comedy of Errors for young actors, the 10-minute play "A Man Had Three Daughters," and the one-act play Hamlet Mignon. I am currently at work on a full-length play (Shakescenes: A Work of Revisionist Theater), a novella (Good News, Bad News, According to Mark), and a study of Freud's Moses and Monotheism (Moses Among the Israelites).
Expertise: English Renaissance literature and cultural history, European Epic tradition, the Bible, the history of science, literary theory

Emily Bernard
Julian Lindsay Green & Gold Professor
When I was 12, my father—who was, not coincidentally, an immigrant from the Caribbean—told me I could become either a doctor or a lawyer. When I told him that I wanted to be a teacher, he said I could become a professor, so I did. When I was very new to the game, I gave bloodless lectures that revealed more about my professional insecurities than anything interesting about the books I was teaching. Today I teach for the same reasons that I read and write: in order to feel part of the world. I love books, to look at them, hold them, read them, talk about them, and write them. The older I get, the narrower the gap between my life inside and outside of books. I love books because they allow us to make intimate connections with the past and people we would never have otherwise known. I have a closer relationship with Janie Crawford in Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston and Annie John in the eponymous novel by Jamaica Kincaid than I have with most of the actual human beings I call friends and family. I am more a preacher than a teacher, which is not to say that I aim to deliver sermons from on high but that I believe...
that the stories we read have the power to save our souls. I carry that conviction with me every day, and into every classroom.

**Expertise:** African-American and 20th-century American literature, critical theory, race and ethnicity in literature, women's studies

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**Sheila Boland Chira**

**Senior Lecturer**

I loved teaching composition and American literature over the past two decades at UVM—nestled here between Lake Champlain and the Green Mountains. And I’m excited to take on a new challenge now as the Director of the Undergraduate Writing Center, where I get to work with a great team of UVM undergraduate peer writing tutors, helping to support all students in all disciplines at all stages in the writing process. (Come check us out on the ground floor of Howe Library!)

**Expertise:** American literary history, race and ethnicity in literature, American autobiography, composition

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**Greg Bottoms**

**Professor**

**Co-director of the Minor in Reporting and Documentary Storytelling**

I didn’t grow up around people interested in politics, the arts, or social and cultural issues—the things that have taken up most of my brain’s bandwidth for the past three decades. But I loved rock music, particularly punk and post-punk indie rock. This resulted in me becoming an avid consumer of magazine journalism. I fell in love with great narrative journalism in the 1980s and 90s in places like *Spin, Rolling Stone, Esquire,* and the old *Details.* I almost didn’t go to college, but once I did I knew I wanted to study English and writing. A whole world opened up for me, a world of all the traditions and counter-traditions of great English prose. I went on to study literature and creative writing in graduate school. Then—you guessed it—I started to write for magazines and work as a magazine editor. I published a book when I was thirty, was offered a teaching position in writing at a small college, a few years later moved to UVM to become a professor, and now I teach—you guessed it again—courses in which students get to write the kinds of essays and journalism that made me want to write in the first place.

**Expertise:** Creative Writing: memoir, personal essay, documentary narrative/literary journalism, travel writing/writing place, personal art and cultural criticism, short fiction

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**Isaac Cates**

**Lecturer**

I not only write scholarly criticism and teach courses on the graphic novel, but also edit and publish an award-winning all-ages fantasy comic called *Cartozia Tales.* I’ve recently turned my worries about counter-scientific trends in our culture into a first-year research course on pseudoscience and conspiracy theories. And one of my poems was chosen for last year’s *Best American Poetry.*

**Expertise:** Modern and contemporary poetry, nature poetry and nature writing, the interaction between science and poetry, and time in poetry; modernism and the difficulty of the modernist avant-garde; the graphic novel, comics as a literary medium, and autobiographical comics; poetic form, formal constraints, oulipo/oubapo

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**Stephen Cramer**

**Senior Lecturer**

I love poetry, music, and hot sauce. This summer, I’m coming out with my seventh book, an anthology entitled *Turn It Up! Music in Poetry from Jazz to Hip-Hop.* The book consists of 400 pages and 88 writers (the number of keys on a piano), including such poets as Langston Hughes, Allen Ginsberg, Yusef Komunyakaa, Kim Addonizio, Joyce Carol Oates, Kevin Young, and Danez Smith. I’m also hard at work on my next bottle of hot sauce and my next book of poetry.

**Expertise:** 20th-century and contemporary poetry, creative writing

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**Elizabeth Fenton**

**Associate Professor**

My research focuses on early American religious writing, and I’ve spent the last decade helping to build a field of literary study around *The Book of Mormon*—a project that has taken me to many interesting places, including the birthplace of Joseph Smith, Jr., which is right here in Vermont. I also have an interest in Book History, so I keep three small printing presses and about two hundred pounds of metal type in my office.

**Expertise:** Early American literature

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**Daniel Fogel**

**Professor**

Something of a workaholic—founded a scholarly journal & society more than 40 years ago, both still going strong & have led two universities (Provost LSU, President UVM), but first & last loves are teaching; reading; writing (poetry & criticism: book under way, *Everybody’s Henry James: A Guide for Social and Solitary Readers*); my wife, an artist & teacher, whom I met in 7th-grade homeroom; my two kids (both pros, law & English); two grandkids; two beagle pups, four guitars; cooking; baking; movies & bingeable long-form TV. Oh, and I teach everything under the sun (poetry, fiction, American, British, Irish, graphic novels, & whatnot).

**Expertise:** 19th and 20th-century American, English, and Irish literature; creative writing (poetry)

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**John Gennari**

**Professor**

The highlight of my career—more meaningful to me than any of my many prestigious awards and the breathless critical acclaim for my books *Blowin’ Hot and Cool: Jazz and Its Critics* and *Flavor and Soul: Italian America at Its African American Edge*—was my collaboration with the poet and performance artist Annie Lanzillotto on “Frittatagoraphobia,” a madcap comedy sketch about the condition that afflicted John’s and Annie’s mothers and many other Italian American women of the Depression era: a morbid fear of leaving the house without a frittata in the pocketbook.

**Expertise:** U.S. ethnic studies, jazz studies, food studies, popular culture, cultural criticism
Jenny Grosvenor  
Senior Lecturer  
I adhere to Joan Didion’s “We tell ourselves stories in order to live.” Due to some traumatic life experiences and focus on survival, I use my writing—journaling, essays, and memoir—to explore, reckon with, and make meaning of what’s happened. I’m currently at a month-long residency at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts doing some investigative work into the dark world of priest abuse. My courses, “Writing Photojournalism” and “Writing Toward Happiness,” stem directly from these endeavors.  
Expertise: Creative writing, composition & rhetoric, literature

Maria Hummel  
Assistant Professor  
My first novel was inspired by cellar holes and stone foundations in the Vermont woods and me wondering who lived there around the time of the Civil War. My second novel arose from family letters hidden in an attic wall in Germany after World War II. My third came from working in an art museum in Los Angeles, at a time when there were many high-profile murders of women. Reese Witherspoon picked my last book, Still Lives, for her book club, and I’ve sold the TV rights to Hollywood.  
Expertise: Creative writing

Didi Jackson  
Lecturer  
I was a modern dancer as an undergraduate in college and even taught modern dance for a few years after I graduated. I have also taught art history and LOVE travelling the world, mainly to visit pieces of art I admire. Some of my favorite trips have been to Colmar, Alsace, France to see the Isenheim Altarpiece by Matthias Grunewald; Jan van Eyck’s Ghent Altarpiece in Ghent, Belgium; and Cerveteri, Italy to see the Etruscan Tombs. After living in Florida for forty years, I am learning to love the snow here in Vermont! This new landscape has found its way into my poetry.  
Expertise: Poetry, creative writing, visual arts

Major Jackson  
Richard Dennis Green and Gold Professorship in English  
University Distinguished Professor  
When not at my desk, I am in the Green Mountains with my wife hiking or snowshoeing, or very amateurishly identifying plant and wildlife. I enjoy playing chess with my sons or anyone who might humor me. I take great joy in reading and commenting on my students’ poetry as they reach to discover themselves during an important transition in their lives. For this reason, I teach poetry as a mode of inquiry more than a vehicle of personal expression. I also serve as the poetry editor of The Harvard Review and host a reading series here at the University of Vermont that features nationally renowned authors, The Painted Word Poetry Series.  
As an undergraduate, I wrote poems in between Accounting and Business Management classes, then after graduation, in the corporate office of Urban Outfitters. Surprisingly, some years later what was a private passion has led, five books later, to publishing and reading poems before audiences in China, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Kenya, and United Kingdom, and even once on PBS NewsHour. In addition to books, I edited Best American Poetry 2019 as well as Renga for Obama. A career highlight: having my poem “Leave It All Up to Me” posted on New York subways as part of Poetry in Motion series.  
Expertise: Creative writing, contemporary poetry, African American literature & culture

Mary Lou Kete  
Professor  
I grew up in a New Jersey family where “the girls” were not expected to go to college; all three of us have PhDs. Spent a lot of time exploring America and traveling in Europe and Central America before finding my home in Vermont and at UVM. I write and teach about 19th-century America, early African-American literature and women’s literature.  
Expertise: 19th-century American literature, early African-American literature, women’s literature, critical theory

Eric Lindstrom  
Associate Professor  
I worked as a janitor and at a power plant in college—and read during the night shift. If you take a class with me, I definitely at some point will recommend something I saw on PBS!  
Expertise: British romanticism, romantic to modern poetry, literature and philosophy, critical theory

Annika Ljung-Baruth  
Senior Lecturer  
After studying feminist theory, phenomenology, and literature at Stockholm University in Sweden, I came to UVM to complete research for my doctoral dissertation in 1997. Little did I know that I would fall in love with Vermont and with Burlington, and stay! Now I teach in the English Department and the Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies Program, and I am so grateful to my students for sharing my passion for feminist theory, women’s literature and continental philosophy. We have so much fun in the classroom!  
Expertise: Women in literature, modern literature and philosophy, women’s and gender studies

Lokangaka Losambe  
Frederick M. and Fannie C.P. Corse Professor of English  
I was born in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and lived in Britain, Nigeria, Swaziland, and South Africa before coming to Vermont in 1998. These different cultural sites have shaped the transnational consciousness that I bring to bear on my teaching of African, African diasporic and postcolonial literatures. My daughter, a UVM graduate, recently wrote this about me: “Loka is skilled enough to be an English Professor and crazy enough to love it.”  
Expertise: African-Anglophone literature, Pan-African literature, Black Atlantic literature, postcolonialism
ENGLISH FACULTY

Anthony Magistrale
Professor
I have published three separate interviews with Stephen King, and from 2005-2009 I served as a research assistant to Mr. King. Accordingly, a dozen of my scholarly books and many published journal articles have illuminated the narrative themes, psychological and social contexts, and historical development of horror film and art, especially the work of Stephen King. I am frequently cited in scholarly books dealing with the interdisciplinary aspects of American horror, and have been interviewed and/or profiled in national and international magazines and newspapers.

Expertise: Poe, Gothicism, writing across the curriculum, horror film

Deborah Noel
Senior Lecturer
I’m currently working on “possible worlds” and “susceptible reader” approaches to speculative fiction, especially sf by women and Afrofuturist narratives. Like Kurt Vonnegut, I believe we need a book-loving Secretary of the Future in Washington.

Expertise: American literature, race and ethnicity in U.S. literature and culture, women in literature

Holly Painter
Lecturer
Before coming to UVM, I spent almost a decade overseas. I spent a year hitchhiking around New Zealand, living in a tent and writing the poems that would go in my first book. I’m writing a book about jobs that are becoming obsolete in the US. I’ve road-tripped across the country to interview and photograph everyone from telephone operators to shoe-shiners, clockmakers to movie projectionists.

Expertise: Creative writing, experimental poetry, intersections between poetry and philosophy, New Zealand literature, science fiction

Valerie Rohy
Professor
While a graduate student, I transcribed hundreds of letters by Jane Goodall for a professor who was publishing a two-volume collection, as well as a biography of her. They came in boxes straight from Tanzania and were full of insects and rusty paper clips. I once worked for Houghton Mifflin making the kind of flyers marketing college textbooks that, as a professor, I now receive in the mail; so I now like to talk to students about the many non-academic careers for English majors. I published an article on The Lord of the Rings in an academic journal and UVM granted me tenure anyway.

Expertise: 19th and 20th-century American literature, LGBT literature, critical theory, feminist theory, queer theory, psychoanalytic theory, narrative

Lisa Schnell
Associate Professor
I hated my undergraduate Milton class... so I became a professor who teaches Milton to undergraduates. I’m pretty sure they don’t hate it. Sometimes, careers are (at least partly) about redemption.

Expertise: Renaissance, Shakespeare, 17th-century British, Bible as literature, critical theory, women’s studies

Helen Scott
Associate Professor
Grew up in England, came to the US in my early twenties, and settled in Vermont. An immigrant and an internationalist, I am opposed to borders and all attempts to restrict the free movement of people. Teaching global literature allows me to travel the world with my students in the limitless realm of the imagination.

Expertise: Postcolonialism, Caribbean Anglophone, 20th-century British literature, Marxist theory

Sarah E. Turner
Senior Lecturer
Canadian by birth, I have lived in Vermont for more than twenty years. Get paid to talk about books I love and writers I admire. Wish I had more time to snowboard, kayak, bike, and paddle board.

Expertise: Race and ethnicity in contemporary American literature, colorblind racism and post-racial ideology, popular culture, 20th and 21st century Black women writers, modernism, composition

Christopher Vaccaro
Senior Lecturer
I was in my youth (and perhaps remain) a mix of dead head, gay club kid, literature geek, D&D nerd, Tolkien fan, and ardent meditator. Through Tolkien I discovered the beauty of the Old English language and of Beowulf. My courses on these and all subjects are a joy to me; I am truly invigorated by teaching. Today that joy has translated into the scholarship I publish, the conferences I organize, and the talks I give. I’m currently working on a monograph on Beowulf and two collections, one on sadomasochism in medieval culture and another on queering Tolkien. I’ll be giving a talk at the Morgan Library (New York) on the influence of Old English literature upon Tolkien’s imagination. When I’m home, I’m usually enjoying Ru Paul’s Drag Race or Game of Thrones.

Expertise: Beowulf, Medieval literature, Tolkien studies, sex and gender identity studies
James Williamson
Senior Lecturer
I’m the author of *Evolution of Modern Fantasy*, which has been called “the definitive history of the fantasy genre in English.” In the summers I can be found reading and writing on various benches around the city of Burlington, which has provided much fodder for my now in revision stages absurdist dream vision fantasy *The Books of W*. I continue my 35 year haunt at the periphery of the Burlington music scene.

**Expertise:** Science fiction and fantasy, Arthurian tales, American Indian literature, composition

Sean A. Witters
Senior Lecturer
I’m an alumnus of UVM English (’98) and am most proud of receiving the Kroepsch-Maurice Award for Excellence in Teaching after being nominated by some truly remarkable students. I am presently writing on the emergence and evolution of “the Addict” in literature, culture, and medicine. I am inspired by archival work. In the last year, I have had the great honor of holding original drafts, journals, and letters from James Baldwin, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas De Quincey, Robert Lewis Stevenson, and J.M. Barrie in my own hands.

**Expertise:** Modernism, postmodernism, American literature, critical theory, film & television studies, critical race and ethnic studies, dystopian fiction, addiction studies
Deborah Ellis  
Associate Professor
Experienced documentary filmmaker who loves long bike rides and has a propensity for engaging in potentially bone-breaking winter sports. Had a flash of fame when my film, *Howard Zinn: You Can’t Be Neutral on a Moving Train*, was short-listed for an Academy Award. Ultimately, it wasn’t one of the final nominees, but the moment is still fun to think about! I’m a native Vermonter who grew up professionally in Chicago. I kind of feel like I have had the best of both worlds.

**Expertise:** Film & video production, documentary film history and production, film festivals

Todd McGowan  
Professor
I played football in college but wasn’t drafted by the NFL because I wasn’t very good. I debated going into dentistry because I loved the movie *Marathon Man*. But ultimately I decided to become a professor. Unfortunately, because I had a series of concussions playing football, I am incapable of teaching except through the use of comedy. I try to make each class like a scene from *Bridesmaids* or *The Hangover*, with a dose of Kant or Hegel thrown in to ensure the comic effect.

**Expertise:** Hegel, psychoanalysis, existentialism, and the intersection of these lines of thought with the cinema

Hilary Neroni  
Professor
For me theory and practice always come together. The way we live affects the interpretations we make and vice versa, and the art we make expresses this interaction. My books on violence and cinema, for example, are meant to reflect this as I grapple with both real-world violence and that which is represented on the screen. (Strangely, people keep telling me I’m not the kind of woman who would study violence, which makes me want to keep writing books and teaching classes on it!) Additionally, my work on feminist media considers how theories of gender, race and sexuality intersect with contemporary media. This is why I especially love to teach the theory and practice classes in which the classroom becomes a place of genuine experimentation as students bring together their critical and filmmaking ideas.

**Expertise:** Film and media theory, representations of gender and race, violence in film and on television, women directors, documentary film/video, feminist theory, psychoanalytic cultural theory and Marxism

Sarah Nilsen  
Associate Professor
Led backcountry high school trail crews in national parks around the country for 9 summers; met my husband Mike on a trip at Coronado National Forest in Arizona. Studied viola at Julliard. Rowed crew in college. Fell in love with cinema when watching old black and white films late at night on TV. Appeared in PBS American Experience special on Walt Disney. Led 3 UVM travel trips to Walt Disney World and one to Los Angeles. Would like to take a group to re-shoot Disney nature documentaries in Alaska. 3 children, 4 cats, 3 dogs, 2 hamsters, 2 crawfish, many fish. Animal activist and animal lover. Working with my writing partner on TV pilot script, *Shelter*, about an animal shelter in VT. Love to bake, especially chocolate. Obsessive tea drinker. Retirement plans: wildlife rehabilitator with specialty in crows, foxes (and bobcats).

**Expertise:** Walt Disney, the popular culture of the cold war, cultural diplomacy

Hyon Joo Yoo  
Associate Professor
I grew up under the military dictatorship in Seoul, South Korea where violent patriarchy defined my everyday life. As a college student, I tried to fight injustice inherent in a society under patriarchal and military violence, and then became a TV producer for a public broadcasting system. But it was not until I came to the U.S. and studied critical theory and film that I found the way to not only escape, but also confront personal and historical trauma. Theory and film gave me courage to do so, and they can rock your world too!

**Expertise:** East Asian cinema, postcolonial studies, gender studies, psychoanalysis, Marxism, globalization and media
With the exception of the Buckham Overseas Program, travel courses may be subject to change based on courses and faculty.

Buckham Overseas Program
This study abroad program gives English majors the opportunity to study at the University of Kent (UKC) at Canterbury in England for a semester or the entire year.

Literary London Travel Course
This two-week summer travel course explores iconic sites, theaters, museums, and neighborhoods of this extraordinary city! Enjoy an exclusive look into studying British literature and the London Stage.

Sri Lanka Travel Writing Course
This winter session course offers a rare opportunity to learn more about yourself and the world through experiencing and writing about travel at the same time.

Film and Television Studies travel opportunities are available during winter session and with the Film Festival courses during the year. Below are some of the programs we have run.

Walt Disney World Travel Course
The WDW class examines the development, expansion, and transformation of the Hollywood studio system from the 1920s to today and includes studying the social and cultural impact of these films on our society. Additionally, students have the opportunity to discuss today’s media industry with UVM alumni currently working in the film industry; they can also explore employment options within today’s media industries.

Hollywood Travel Course
The Hollywood class examines the development, expansion, and transformation of the Hollywood studio system from the 1920s to today and includes studying the social and cultural impact of these films on our society. Additionally, students have the opportunity to discuss today’s media industry with UVM alumni currently working in the film industry; they can also explore employment options within today’s media industries.

Film Festival Experiences
Vermont International Film Festival
Camden International Film Festival
FTS offers a 1-credit course that immerses students in the film festival world in Vermont and Maine. Every fall, in collaboration with the Vermont International Film Festival in Burlington, students attend screenings and events, interact with filmmakers and audiences, and write about their experiences.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

English travel opportunities are available for a full year, semester, winter session and summer session. Below are some of the programs we have run.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities for hands-on engagement alongside our English department faculty are plentiful, and department events feature great speakers, readings, screenings, and much more. Previous guest speakers on campus have included Slavoj Žižek, Chimimanda Ngozi Adichie, Kelly Link, Claudia Rankine, Kevin Young, Viet Thanh Nguyen, Chris Abani, Moustafa Bayoumi, Judy Hoffman, Jack Halberstam, Alison Bechdel, Mark Covino, Art Spiegelman, Jaime Hernandez, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Billy Collins, Salman Rushdie, Joe Sacco, Stanley Fish, J. Hillis Miller, Edward Hirsch, Natasha Tretheway, Sharon Olds, Eileen Myles, Stephanie Burt and many other experts in their craft.

Annual Conferences and Events
Tolkien in Vermont Conference
The Painted Word Poetry Series
Will Miller Social Justice Lecture Series
English Department Symposium
English & FTS Majors BBQ

Independent Study, Internships, Undergraduate Research and Fellowships
Beyond formal course work, student opportunities abound. You can devise an independent study topic and work one-on-one with a professor to explore an interest not on anyone’s syllabus. You can pursue research projects and seek funding for them—for example, one of our junior English majors recently had a $5,000 grant from UVM to support research on the novelists Henry James, Ford Madox Ford, and Virginia Woolf, an award that supported her travel to research libraries in the United States and England and that greatly enriched her experience writing her senior thesis. Undergraduate research experiences are not just for STEM students. Internships have enriched our students’ academic journeys by providing real-world opportunities to use their skills and knowledge in a variety of settings, from the worlds of publishing, film and television; communications to non-profits (including legal aid, environmental, biomedical, and social justice organizations); to local, state, and federal governments (think of vibrant Burlington, where Bernie Sanders was mayor, of nearby Montpelier, site of Vermont’s citizen legislature, and of our state’s prominent federal delegation in the U.S. House and Senate). Every employer wants students with the skills English majors bring with them—written and oral communication, research, critical thinking, creativity, persuasion.

English and Film and Television Studies Honors Day Ceremony
SAMUEL N. BOGORAD MEMORIAL AWARD
MARION BERRY ALLBEE AWARD
DOUGLAS A. PINTA AWARD

Student Clubs and Organizations:
THE CYNIC - The University of Vermont’s Independent Voice Since 1883
THE UVM CREATIVE WRITERS GUILD - A writing club where students peer-review writing in weekly/bi-weekly meetings.

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BEGIN YOUR STORY...

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT