

## **The Literary Education at Simpson**

“In reading great literature I become a thousand men and yet remain myself. Like the night sky in a Greek poem, I see with a thousand eyes, but it is still I who see. Here, as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself: and am never more myself than when I do.” C. S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*

### **A Thinking Education**

The study and interpretation of literature develops the essential skills of analysis (breaking things apart), synthesis (putting things together), and evaluation (making judgments). These skills readily apply to a variety of careers, professions, and graduate programs.

### **An Imaginative Education**

Ordinary life, with its news bites, internet sites, and text messages, fosters a one-dimensional view of the world, but a mature Christian faith rooted in the two natures of Christ—fully human and fully divine—requires a multi-dimensional view of all of reality. The study of literature—filled with symbols, metaphors, and layers of meaning—is essential practice for seeing and expressing the world in its imaginative and multi-dimensional fullness.

### **A Diverse Education**

Besides literature, the English major engages history, philosophy, communication, art, and theology: it connects the student to other cultures, other places, and other times, adding richness and depth to the student’s understanding of the world that lasts a lifetime.

### **A Living Education**

Literature considers and expresses the fullest range of human life: love and loss, joy and sorrow, life and death, sin and salvation, doubt and faith. Thoughtful study of literature enhances the living of a thoughtful life: it is an education in living wisely and living well.

### **A Personal Education**

Small classes in a small university environment allow for much greater personal contact with other students and professors. The English faculty encourages students in their personal development as they prepare for lives seasoned with maturity and grace. English Department activities and traditions enhance student life. These elements combine to develop public and private interpersonal skills.

### **A Spiritual Education**

Simpson University is affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, a denomination that excels at personal spiritual formation. Building on this strength, the study of literature at Simpson connects students with important and sometimes troubling questions related to living as informed and authentic Christians in a diverse world.

### **A Unified Education**

Most contemporary education and philosophy focuses on the disconnection between God and the world and the resulting dis-integration of knowledge. Although the English Department engages with these postmodern trends, in contrast we offer an education unified in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Moreover, we affirm the eternal relevance of the Christian story of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation and the power of this one true story to bring unity and fulfillment to our spiritual and intellectual lives.

Written for the English Department by Dr. Brian Larsen