

Program Details

FEES

- ENG 401, ENS 401 = 6 credit hours
 - regular University of Kentucky tuition fees for summer courses (see charts listed below)
- Program Fee: \$300 (covers lodging at \$10/night and some food costs)

Undergraduate Students

Tuition and Fees 2007-2008 for		Semester Full-Time Fee Note	Part-time, 4 Week and 8 Week Intersession Fee/Credit Hour Note
Students with 59 hours or less	Resident	\$3,548.00	\$282.43
	Nonresident	\$7,448.00	\$607.43
Students with 60 hours or more	Resident	\$3,651.00	\$290.43
	Nonresident	\$7,547.00	\$615.43

Graduate Students

Tuition and Fees 2007-2008 for	Semester Full-Time Fee Note	Part-time, 4 Week and 8 Week Intersession Fee/Credit Hour Note
Resident	\$3,835.00	\$401.43
Nonresident	\$8,079.00	\$873.43

Charts from UK's Registrar <http://www.uky.edu/Registrar/feegen.htm>

A Guide to the SUMMER ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING PROGRAM Matt Williams, Summer 2006

The Summer Environmental Writing Program (SEWP) is a pastoral summer retreat into the Appalachian region of Kentucky. Not only is it designed to focus intently on writing and all the facets therein, it pays special and close attention to the aforementioned ecological issues of the forest itself, as well as the region. Students spend an entire month immersed in a geography, mindscape and way of life that is different than almost anything previously experienced. In addition to being informative in areas such as biology, botany, ecology and so on, immersing yourself into this program allows for personal growth and the expansion/development of writerly processes. There is something to be said for the mystique of a program such as this one. At the same time, however, I feel there are basic sets of things you should know and be prepared for upon entering this summer retreat.

READINGS

Based on experience, I recommend that when you receive your first course-pack you take ample time to not only read it, but also to take notes, write down questions and overall prepare yourself to be discussing the works in great detail. Additionally, many of the authors that appear in your packet *will* be visiting at SEWP. Keep this in mind and at least attempt to develop an idea of what you may want to ask them about their writing or particular pieces. (This aspect of SEWP is one that is unique to almost any other program. Rarely would you have the chance to sit down with writers of this caliber and pick their brains. Take advantage!!) In addition to the mandatory readings, it may be a good idea to begin reading other nature and ecological writers. This will come in handy for journal entries, making connections between yourself and place and may just spark an idea for your independent project.

DISCUSSION SESSIONS & JOURNALS

Keeping in fashion with readings, you will be attending daily classes and sessions over the four weeks of wilderness submersion. For the most part, classes are informal, but they are serious and do require a bit of preparation on your part. I found it good practice to make an entry into my journal after I finished each reading to jot down my ideas, impressions, responses and the like. It really helps to get your juices flowing before the class session begins. Accordingly, classes don't work unless everyone is willing to participate. Much of the focus and overall point of this program is community building. Consider your classmates as that community—building strong ties early will benefit everyone in the end. Since I mentioned it, I will take the time here to outline the concept of the journal. Not only is it the means by which you will be graded for the Regional Survey portion of SEWP, it is—or will become—your best friend. After speaking to all of my classmates and getting their opinions, I suggest that you bring several journals. Bring a couple small note pads to take field notes on—something that is easy to carry or can fit easily into a small pack or pocket. In addition to that, bring 2-3 larger journals that you can do the bulk of your writing, scribbling, drawing, painting, gossiping, etc in. The last thing you want is to run out of space in which to write—it is the main purpose of the program after all. You will find more information about the journal below.

CAMP LIFE

The camp at Robinson Forest is quite nice. You won't be roughing it, but you won't be living in the lap of luxury either. You will be staying in a bunkhouse with the sex that correlates closest to your own. In said house, there is a common area, fridge, and rooms with bunk beds. There is a very nice fire pit in the center of all the bunkhouses that serves well for evening gatherings and reogas (you'll learn about these from Erik). Your cabin may or may not have a bathroom. Fear not friends, there is a very well lit, well-equipped and clean bathhouse at your 24-hour disposal. There is a washing machine where you can do laundry, but rarely a dryer, so you'll have to use clotheslines. One important thing to remember: this is a research facility. There *will* be times when you will have to share camp with Forestry or Landscape Architecture students. Also, groups—Robinson Scholars, GSP, etc—do use the facilities here as well. It is good practice to plan on sharing your new community with others. All in all, there is ample room for comfort, privacy, fun and learning. Just remember, you'll have to pitch in and help with camp chores.

FOOD

New to SEWP this year, and continuing on, is a program that brought a food-intern to assist in the feeding of students, instructors and guests alike. Working with local CSAs—Community Supported Agriculture—and farmers around Kentucky, the program brought a very healthful, regional, communal-supportive facet to the program. Not only do you get to eat well, you are helping the community in which you live. Since the food-intern is only one woman, daily chores in regards to cooking and cleaning are mandatory. There is usually a weekly sign-up sheet that students volunteer time toward. Again, I want to stress the importance of community. We all work together here and you can learn an amazing amount from the people around you, no matter how different.

COMMUNITY

The overall concept of a program such as this is the immersion. Diving into the issues, ideas and controversies of this region, this forest and its ecology are paramount. It is not my intention to give too much away. So I will sum things up by saying that in addition to submersion, this is a time to explore, to write and then write some more, to open your eyes to new things regardless of political and moral ties and to branch out and become more active as a member of a community. Keep everything that I have written here in mind, but also embrace the notion that you don't really know what you're getting into.

CLOSING

I'd like to sum up with a poem I wrote about not only coming to SEWP, but also the pretences and conditions under which anyone may come. It seems crucial to consider all of what is happening around oneself in regard to personal actions:

on going to the woods in a time of war

I came to the woods
a friend went
to war
where I stand has little bearing
cause my
community
my co-worker and friend
are all in the bargain

we come to the woods
facing another
war—one in our backyard
fighting may differ
but realities remain—tank
or truck
oil or coal
our culture pushes progress
or the so-called

so a little piece of
me feels pompous in retreat
unable
unwilling to fight overseas
at least for him
but I come here: 107 miles
to fight, and
learn with open eyes

which war is worthy my attention?
one or the other?
Both?
Neither?
it can't be neither

on a level
basic as life I am
part and parcel—could
well be fighting in sands
beyond oceans
with friends
but my body finds mountains
words for bullets and
ambiguous enemies

attention has been paid
but possibly in vain—
I like many
have forgotten his war
only the people
in it
can this evil overshadow
another misstep
or turned shoulder?

I shall face war
Belly up
or lose sleep, faith
hope

on coming to the woods
in time of war,
it seems I'm nearly
as lost as when
I left
And a little unsure
Who we're
Fighting

Although this poem might be a touch on the bleak side, I think it is important to consider where it is you are coming from and where it is you plan to go. It's also paramount to bear in mind what is happening the world around you. I'll be the first to tell you that a trip to Robinson Forest, to SEWP, to this region of Kentucky will impact you beyond comprehension. What you will learn here, hopefully, will impact you for life. Upon entering this program, I encourage you to adopt an attitude conducive to the expansion of your horizons and the consideration of all that surrounds you.

Good luck!
Matthew Williams
SEWP Alumnus 06'

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE ON WHAT TO BRING

A retreat of such duration as this requires that you bring a fair amount of things. This section will detail what exactly it is you should bring along and what you should leave locked safely at home. The following is a detailed packing list that includes descriptions and purposes for certain items. Consider this your bible:

- *BAGGAGE/LUGGAGE/PACKS*: While space in the vehicles that will be transporting you to and from destinations is limited, use special care and consideration when choosing two (2) items to pack your belongings in. After reflecting upon my personal experience and consulting with my peers, I would recommend you bring a medium-sized duffel bag and a daypack with a hydration bladder. First, the duffel: if you find it manageable to purchase or borrow a dry-bag it would be ideal. (A dry bag is a PVC duffel bag that is primarily used for rafting/kayaking/canoe trips—the idea is that it is waterproof) Since you *will* be going on a 3 day, 2-night canoe trip, you will need means by which to keep your belongings dry. A dry bag is perfect here—plus you can find them large enough to pack everything for the entire trip in and they usually have backpack straps if you need to carry that way. If you find this product too hard to come by—financially or otherwise—I urge you to bring some sort of waterproof packaging—trash bags, zip locks, waterproof stuff-sacks, etc. Dry belongings make for happy campers!

Secondly, a small daypack, large enough to hold a snack, a journal, some art supplies and pens and your raingear are, in my opinion, essential. Make sure this pack is in some way fitted with a hydration reservoir (camelback specializes in these, but almost any major backpack company offers options along these lines). It won't be the end of the world if you don't have a camelback or the like, but keep in mind that ample time on and off trails will leave you quite parched. Better to have too much water than not enough.

- *BEDDING*: For the bulk of your trip, you will be staying in a cabin at the forest's camp. Although immersion in this month-long program will force you to forfeit much of the conveniences of everyday life, you won't exactly be "roughing it." In order to save space in both your bag and in the vehicles, I recommend you bring a summer-weight sleeping bag. This will serve two purposes: it will function as a blanket—when need in your bunk—and as a sleeping bag on the canoe trip. It isn't necessary that your bag be summer-weight, but given the temperatures and humidity levels during a Kentucky summer, I promise it's logical. (If you are looking to save money, bring what you have. Although, the smaller the bag, the more space you'll have for all your other gear)

Also, bring a set of sheets—the bunks are twin size, but any will do—and a pillow. I would strongly urge you to bring a sleeping pad in addition to the aforementioned. Thermarest makes a number of great pads and many that can double into camp chairs—great for padding on the hardwood benches and chairs around camp. Again, if cost or availability is an issue, you can find good, compact pads even at Wal-Mart.

- *TOILETRIES*: Just the essentials here. Again, as if I haven't stressed it enough already, space is our friend. Toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, etc. You're going to be in the woods for a month, you don't need makeup or gel or anything that you might use in the city to impress the opposite (or same) sex. Make sure and bring plenty of sunscreen, bug-spray (with DEET), and poison ivy wash (if you're allergic or not into taking risks). Additionally, you'll want to bring some very basic first-aid precautions—band aids, hydrocortisone, pain reliever, and so on. There will be a large crew first-aid kit. At the end of the day, you'll simply want to be clean, bite and irritation free and comfortable.

- *BOOTS/SHOES*: Make no bones about it, you will be walking, hiking and on your feet often and for extended periods of time. It goes without saying, then, that your feet are your friends and possibly your number one priority. That being said, I highly recommend hiking *boots*—something with good ankle support. Often hikes will venture off trail, up steep ridges and over rocky, uneven terrain, broken, sprained or strained ankles will not make this trip enjoyable. I made a specific point to purchase a low-top hiking shoe before I came to Robinson Forest and it was a regrettable decision. Stick with boots; you'll be happy you did!
- *SANDALS/WATER SHOES*: There will be many instances where you will be walking in water. The canoe trip will be the most prolific, but there will be several occasions where you will be in a creek or stream. Good sandals will save your ass here, literally. My allegiance belongs to Chaco, but Teva, Keen, Merrell and others make good, sturdy, reliable water shoes/sandals. **DO NOT** bring flip-flops or something similar. You want your sandal/shoe to be fastened to your foot.
- *CAMP SHOES/SOCKS*: Although you will be doing a good deal of wet and dry hiking, there will be large chunks of time where you will be primarily on flat ground, at camp. If you can fit them or care to, some sort of comfortable camp shoe would be handy here. (Personally, I just wore my sandals around camp due to the heat). Whatever you do, however much of this you decide to listen to or ignore, remember one thing. **BRING PLENTY OF SOCKS!!** You don't want to be the gal or guy that has to do laundry every three days because you didn't bring enough socks. Bring several pairs—8-10—and make sure they are activity appropriate. It would be good to have a pair or two of wool/synthetic socks for cool evenings on the river. Also have lightweight, breathable hiking socks for daily use. This is one thing you cannot bring too many of.
- *CLOTHING*: SEWP takes place in the summer; summers are hot and good for wearing shorts and t-shirts—bring those. The most conducive, versatile thing you could bring are convertible pants—those that zip off at the knees. 2-3 pairs of those and you're set. Bring enough shirts to get you through a week. It wouldn't hurt to bring a few long-sleeved items as well. (Many of the ladies told me they wished they had had some warmer attire). Guys, shorts, especially if they are lightweight, make great swim trunks. Ladies, bring a bathing suit (or don't). Hats are another great friend to the outdoor-person—use personal preference here. The bandana can turn quickly into your best friend out here. I suggest bringing several. They work great for sopping up sweat, as handkerchiefs, a napkin, or a fashion statement—just ask Erik.
- *OUTERWEAR/RAIN GEAR*: Consider a few things in this regard—you will only be going on one (1) scheduled camping trip. You might find wool or poly-fleece handy for this occasion or if you venture off on your own. The remainder of the times you may find yourself chilly you will be at camp. Many people were longing for their hoodies and sweats around the fire-pit. Ultimately, it's up to you. A Gore-Tex jacket is a must! (At least something comparable—it has to be waterproof, not water-resistant). This can also double as an article of warmer clothing if need be. Refrain from cheapo plastic ponchos and the like. This is yet another good thing to invest in and not skimp on.
- *MISCELLANEOUS*: With as much hiking/walking/wading/scurrying up slopes as you'll do, make sure and bring some form of water bottle. The hip kids all have Nalgens these days, but there are many other options. If you opt for the daypack with a hydration bladder, you won't have to worry about this. Also, bring a camp cup—something sufficient for coffee, tea, the occasional Ale-8 (if Erik is willing to share). Do not forget a flashlight or headlamp. Whichever you have or can afford will be fine. **DO, DO, DO** bring a camera!! You'll want to document this trip. If you have the following, consider throwing them in where room allows:

- PENS! PENCILS! ART SUPPLIES! MORE PENS!
 - MONEY FOR TRIPS INTO TOWN AND THE CANOE TRIP!! (TOO MUCH IS BETTER THAN TOO LITTLE!)
 - INSURANCE INFO (IN CASE OF TENDINITIS OR ILLNESS)
 - SUNGLASSES
 - BINOCULARS
 - HIKING STICK/TREKKING POLES
 - ACOUSTIC INSTRUMENTS (GUITARS, FIDDLES, DRUMS, ETC)
 - ALARM CLOCK
 - CARDS
 - GAMES
 - DISK OR FLASH DRIVE (FOR SAVING PROPHETIC WORK)
 - LAPTOP (VERY HANDY—WHAT I'M WRITING ON NOW. THERE ARE AMPLE COMPUTERS HERE, BUT LITTLE MEANS FOR SAVING INFORMATION. IF YOU HAVE A LAPTOP, IT *WILL* COME IN HANDY)
- *DO NOT BRING!:* Stereos, clock radios, etc. Avoid bringing anything that requires amplified sound—even Ipods and Discmen.

The aforesaid might seem a bit cumbersome, overwhelming even. Fear not, future SEWPers, adhere to this advice and you will avoid a handful of mini-headaches. I feel it is important that you remember that you aren't going backpacking for a month, but at the same time, you are leaving many of the everyday luxuries we take for granted. Just bear that in mind when packing. The notion of comfort is relative—to your environment, your disposition and your outlook. You can go a month without hair gel or a razor or a stereo, I know, I've done it. Also remember that you are more than likely a stranger to this region and the people here. Make sure and give respect to those you encounter. The issues at hand in this region are paramount, but it is the people that make a place; practice reverence.