



IT'S NOT JUST FOR ENGLISH MAJORS

NEW ENGLAND LITERATURE PROGRAM



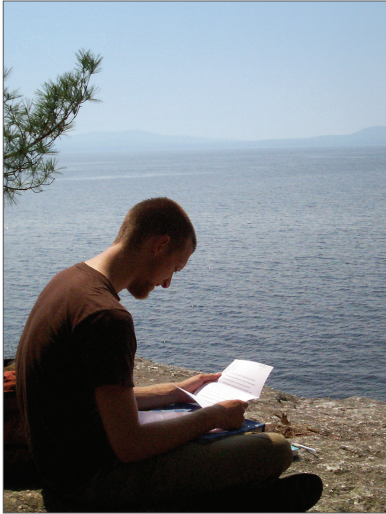
...woodstoves, poetry, mountains, common writing, islands, typewriters, stars...

SPRING TERM IN NEW ENGLAND EARN 9 CREDITS

THIS SPRING YOU CAN LIVE AND LEARN IN A VERY DIFFERENT PLACE.

WHAT IS NELP?

(New England Literature Program)



NELP is a University of Michigan academic program that takes place off-campus during the Spring half-term. UM faculty and other instructors teach the courses, and students earn nine regular UM credits in upper-level English classes.

The program takes place at Camp Kabeyun on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. For six and a half weeks, 40 students and 13 UM instructors live and work together closely, reading New England authors, writing, and exploring the New England countryside, its people, culture, and history.

In addition to formal academic work in literature and writing, the intellectual experience of the program often includes art, camping, nature-study, canoeing, music, cooking—and many other interests brought each year by students and staff. Student-teaching,

where students work with instructors to teach classes on topics they choose, is another important part of the program.

NELP also includes trips to places of natural and cultural interest, including hiking and camping trips in the White Mountain National Forest. We climb at least three mountains during the program. These climbs are physically challenging for most people, but can be accomplished by nearly everyone with a good pair of boots and the right frame of mind.

Camp facilities are simple, though there are showers and toilets. Cabins are unheated, but heated areas are available for reading and classes. The weather is cold when the program begins, but by the time NELP ends in mid-June, the weather is warm, summer has started, and most people are swimming between classes.

Educational Philosophy

Aristotle says that learning is one of life's greatest pleasures, and we at NELP believe that diverse kinds of learning make for an even more valuable and pleasurable education. Accordingly, we provide opportunities for NELPers to learn about things as different (or similar) as the rhythm of a poem and the song of a bird, the shaping of a piece of pottery and the shaping of a novel, the seasoning of a stew and the seasoning of an artistic style. We believe that intellectual and physical challenges are often parallel, and that each kind of learning reinforces other kinds. We try to respond to students' interests and to draw on students' abilities, harmonizing special interests with the central purposes of the program. Each

QUOTES/NOTES:

-We have the ability to teach each other. This is truly special.

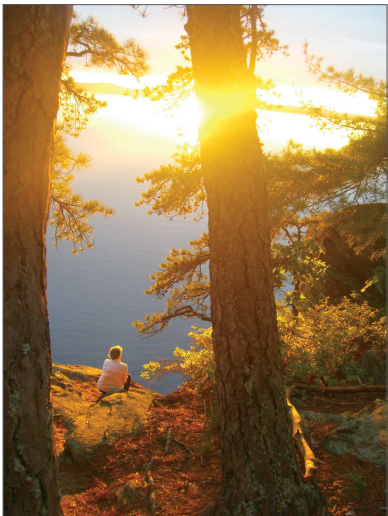
year NELP is different because of the interests and talents of the participants.

Learning at NELP is informed by the natural world rather than being shaped by the built environment of classrooms in Ann Arbor. Communal living—where students and teachers share work, recreation, and academic experiences—further intensifies learning.

NELP is a cooperative community. All NELPers belong to work groups. Work responsibilities rotate among the groups, which prepare meals, wash dishes and pots, and clean bathrooms and other common areas. NELP begins

continued...





Educational Philosophy (continued)

with a work day during which equipment is unpacked and camp set up, and it ends with another work day to pack it all up again and clean up after ourselves. We value hard work and simple living at NELP, as a way to build a solid foundation for our intellectual explorations during the program, free of unnecessary distractions.

At NELP, the different aspects of our lives are unified, and our daily rhythms are dictated by this fact. We live, work, relax, and study together—you scrub pots with the same people you study poems with and climb mountains with. Life at NELP is full, and we accomplish a great deal each

day—but the frantic "all nighter" is as out of place as the frenetic Ann Arbor party.

We have classes every day, but we also have plenty of opportunities for exploring the environment, for quiet conversations with other NELPers and NELP instructors, and for solitude. It can be challenging at first, but eventually NELPers come to find the right balance between solitude and group activity in the program. In fact, striking this balance is key at NELP—and something that lots of NELPers take with them into their post-NELP lives and studies.

QUOTES/NOTES:

-Discussions often went beyond class—to dinner, to the mountain, by the fire under the stars.

Academic Program

NELP students earn 9 hours of credit. Although NELP's academic work is taught as a single integrated academic experience, the credits appear on transcripts as three separate courses: **English 473, Topics in American Literature (3 cr.); English 317, Literature and Culture (3 cr.); English 328, Writing and the Environment (3 cr.).**

The program emphasizes the writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Emily Dickinson, Frederick Douglass, Sarah Orne Jewett, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, Carolyn Chute, Louise Glück, as well as other 18th through 21st century writers of various backgrounds.

NELP offers creative writing instruction, and you can always find NELPers writing poems and short fiction, but most writing in the program is done in a genre that's new for lots of people: instead of essays in response to texts we read, writing is done freehand and kept in a

journal (or, for most students, a series of journals that develop over the course of the program). Journal writing is central to a NELP education. The journals are both personal and academic—in fact, the genre of the journal helps to integrate the personal and the academic in ways that we think are important and powerful. Every NELPer belongs to a journal group, which meets twice a week for discussion and sharing and writing experimentation. Your journal at NELP is a repository for all kinds of assignments that come out of classes and assigned readings, and is also full of writing on topics you choose yourself. Student writing at NELP often explores creative expression, the natural world and the New England environment, and the writer's response to the NELP experience, all the while connecting back to and using the texts that make up our primary study at NELP.

NELP courses are graded. The academic program requires completion of a reading list, active work in the

journal, and vigorous participation in classes and in the journal group. For LSA students, NELP meets the Upper-Level Writing Requirement. For English majors, NELP satisfies the American Literature and the Poetry requirements. And, of course, NELP is open to English majors and non-English majors alike—our students always bring a variety of interests and disciplines to the program. Of course, we get lots of English majors at NELP—but we also love the business majors, students from the art and music schools, engineers, PitE students... We're always asking at NELP, *What do you know? What do YOU have to teach others? What are you GOOD at already? And how can we connect what you know already to what you're here to learn? How can you use your own skills and knowledge to go even deeper into our work of building a community of powerful readers and sharp, insightful writers?* This community is strongest when it includes a variety of people with different backgrounds and different intellectual interests.



Drug and Alcohol Policy

The University of Michigan requires a drug- and alcohol-free workplace and study environment. This policy applies to NELP, even though many NELPers are of legal drinking age.

NELP has additional reasons for enforcing this policy: Swimming, boating, and hiking can be dangerous, and it is crucial that participants not have impaired

judgment or impaired physical abilities. NELP and our host camp could both be seriously damaged by incidents that involve the use of drugs or alcohol. Further, drug or alcohol use would create divisions in our small community.

If you cannot support this policy, do not apply to NELP.

QUOTES/NOTES:

-No substance use here. This policy is fabulous! ...of integral importance. I didn't miss alcohol...NELP is intoxicating enough as it is!

-The Drug and Alcohol Policy is fantastic—everyone is here, and thinking, and being observant. We are all engaged.

Other Aspects of Community Life

Since NELP is isolated and committed to generating its own activities, we leave radios, TVs, CD players and MP3 players, cell phones, digital cameras, and video cameras back in Ann Arbor. However, we enthusiastically encourage NELPers to bring musical instruments.

The telephone at camp is to be used for emergencies only. You'll rediscover the pleasurable art of letter writing.

QUOTES/NOTES:

-Strong hiking experiences opened the window to what kind of beauty struggle can prove.

You can expect physical as well as intellectual challenges at NELP. Living conditions are rustic, and hiking trips can be rigorous; but both kinds of challenge can nourish the joys of learning in a beautiful environment and a close community.





Equipment and Clothing

A complete equipment and clothing list will accompany acceptance letters. Expensive items are a sleeping bag, hiking boots, and a backpack. The secret to effective dressing at NELP is layers. Style isn't important at NELP; warmth is. There are ways to be thrifty when

getting together your equipment for NELP, and it's also easy to spend several hundred dollars—most students, though, can plan to spend at least \$300-400 on the required items. There might also be opportunities to borrow or buy used equipment from previous NELPers.

QUOTES/NOTES:

—I have never had such a complete learning experience. It nourished my creative side, made me a curious reader, honed my analytical skills, deepened my appreciation for other minds, challenged my fears and boundaries, showed me natural beauty, carried me up mountains, made me proud of my work, gave me friends of the heart, taught me how to survive, let me cook, allowed me to teach, and delivered this revised soul with true care.

Who Can Apply?

All University of Michigan students are eligible to apply for NELP, as are special students, international students, and students from other colleges. Some seniors participate in NELP after their final year at U-M. You need not be an English concentrator to apply.

NELP is an intense, small, short-term community. Because every day counts for a great deal, NELP

requires continuous participation. If you have an important family event, a summer job, or another obligation that conflicts with any part of NELP's schedule—see NELP's website for the exact dates—you should not apply to NELP this year.

QUOTES/NOTES:

- I fell in love with poetry because of this place and the people in it.*
- NELP helped me become, actually be, the person I've imagined I was for so long. Thank you!*



Costs, Financial Aid & Important Dates

Students pay two costs to attend NELP: 1. the NELP Program Fee, which covers room, board, course-texts and travel, and ranges from \$2,200-\$2,500, and 2. regular UM tuition as set by LS&A. Current figures for the cost of attending NELP are available on the website.

Students who would qualify for U-M financial aid during a Spring half-term on campus will likely qualify for a similar financial aid package when participating in NELP. NELP also offers some jobs for people with work-study awards. Financial aid applications for the Spring half-term will be available from the Office of Financial Aid around the first of February, and the deadline for these applications is in the first week of March.

NELP alumni have provided some funds for separate NELP scholarships and loans. Details about applying for these small awards will be included with acceptance letters.

Students are in New Hampshire for 45 days, and return to Ann Arbor in mid- to late June.

Exact dates can be found on the NELP website.

General Timeline

APPLICATIONS DUE (WITH \$35 NON-REFUNDABLE APPLICATION FEE)

First Thursday of Winter Term in January

MASS MEETING AND SLIDESHOW

Mid-November

ALTERNATE INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Mid-December

NELP ORIENTATION

A Saturday in late-March

VANS LEAVE ANN ARBOR

Late-April or early May, either the first Monday after U-M's Commencement Weekend, or the Friday before—depending on the year

Sample NELP Week Schedule

DAILY SCHEDULE:

Breakfast prep:	7:00
Breakfast served:	7:45-8:15
Breakfast cleanup:	8:15-8:45
A.M. class:	9:00-10:30
Lunch prep:	10:30
Lunch served:	11:30-12:00
Lunch cleanup:	12:00-12:45
P.M. Class 1:	1:00-2:15
P.M. Class 2:	2:30-3:45
Dinner prep:	4:00-6:00
Dinner served:	6:00-6:30
Dinner cleanup:	6:30-7:30
...Deep Clean / Entertainments, etc. thereafter...	

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
Depart for mountain trip	Mountain trip, trip class details TBA	Return from mountain trip
DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6
9:30 Common Writing in Dining Hall Afternoon: 1:00pm Elective classes 2:30pm Required Class: Robert Frost Evening: Journal group meetings	9 am Required Class: Emerson's "Circles" Afternoon: 1:00pm Elective classes 2:30pm Elective classes Evening: optional art seminar / kitchen deep clean	9am Required Class: Dickinson poems TBA Afternoon: 1:00pm Elective classes 2:30pm Elective classes Evening: Hawthorne read-arounds
DAY 7	DAY 8	DAY 9
9am Required Class: Thoreau's "Higher Laws," "The Ponds," "Winter Animals" Afternoon: 1:00pm Reading Period 2:30pm Required Class: Hawthorne: "Roger Malvin's Burial," "Rappacinni's Daughter," 4pm town run Evening: Ecology lecture in the Lodge	Required Class: Chute: "The Beans of Egypt, Maine" Afternoon: 1:00pm Journal group meetings 2:30pm Elective classes 4pm next week's work groups meet Evening: optional New England country dance in Falmouth	9am Required Trip Group Meetings Afternoon: 1:00pm Elective classes 2:30pm Creative writing societies Evening: rest, prepare, read, pack for next trip

Testimonials



Amber Bellazaire

NELP was one of the most notable experiences of my college career. The curriculum, the landscape, and the lifestyle shared throughout the program's six weeks were riveting and powerful, and the combination fostered a unique space for growth, challenge, and exploration. It was during NELP that I learned the meaning of community. I cultivated rich relationships with peers and professors, many who are still present in my life. NELP introduced me to experiential

education and offered me the opportunity to teach on my own, with the guidance of my instructors. For these reasons, I am grateful for my NELP experience. I'm now

a teaching assistant and tutor in a Boston-area alternative high school dedicated to challenging my students, engaging with them in authentic ways by asking them to deepen their thinking and welcome their own questioning. What I learned about education at NELP prepared me so well for the work I'm doing today.

—**Amber Bellazaire. NELP XXXVII, 2011**

At first, my home, my job, my surroundings today may seem as far from NELP as they could possibly be. I work in New Jersey at a major pharmaceutical company. I spend my days in the lab, on a computer, or in a manufacturing plant running chemical reaction processes for new drugs in development. I am a chemical engineer AND a NELPer.

Now that I have settled into my job as an engineer, I've discovered that NELP may have taught me even more about true work than I'd realized at the time. NELP was the holistic educational experience my engineering professors dreamed of, but could never quite create through constructed group projects and homework sets. NELP opened my mind to becoming comfortable with whole-minded involvement, open-ended problem solving, and investment in community through group decision making. The "real-world" workplace is based in these same ideas. Both are environments where lessons learned two weeks ago in a friendly lunch conversation could enlighten a debate today. NELP mirrors, magnifies, and feeds on the genuine interactions of people that are so important in the culture of the workplace.



Anna Jenks

the same way. Texts are to be considered from multiple angles and discussed with people who have various backgrounds and lenses; one unique resolution does not always result.

The most critical engineering lesson I came to understand and apply at NELP was the world of open-ended problems and multiple solutions. This idea was often discussed in the engineering classroom, but only applied on the rare occasion—because in the end, homework has an answer, a preferred solution, a formulaic method to resolve the issue at hand. Poems, literature, they don't work

And sure enough, what does my job require, but consulting a variety of experts for unique opinions and viewpoints to weigh a variety of possible solutions. In the workplace, I am not expected to design the solution alone. It is expected that I discuss decisions with co-workers and work in a functional community to develop a universally accepted plan of action. So in reality, the literature discussions that occur at NELP and the problem solving of pharmaceutical development are not so far apart.

—Anna Jenks, NELP XXXVII, 2011

When I applied to NELP, I expected to be part of a unique educational program, meet some interesting new people, and get to see a part of the country I hadn't experienced much. What I never anticipated was just how important that half-semester would

be. Not only would NELP turn out to be the defining experience of my undergraduate years, the love for the outdoors it instilled in me soon turned into an interest in wilderness medicine, which subsequently grew into a passion for medicine generally, and now here I am a decade later thoroughly in love with the beginnings of my career as a physician. I truly believe the projects of discovery and exploration NELP set in motion allowed me to find a calling that is so fulfilling and enjoyable. And beyond this, every day I find the lessons of NELP relevant even in such a



Mike Richman

Testimonials (continued)

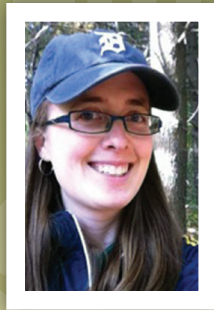
disparate setting as a large urban hospital. So much of medicine is about seeing a problem from all directions, going beneath the surface to analyze the essence of a question, considering information from unconventional angles. The experiences I had at NELP were infinitely more helpful in developing these skills than any time in a chemistry lab or with a biology textbook.

—**Mike Richman, NELP XXIX, 2003**

To say that NELP was an important part of my undergraduate education would be an understatement. In the 12 years since the NELP van pulled away from the shores of Lake Winnepesaukee and back into the Angell Hall loading dock, I have graduated from Michigan, taught high school English in New England, received my Ph.D. from Cornell, and begun a job as Assistant Professor of English

at Portland State University, where I routinely teach the authors whose words made my mind and heart sing at NELP... But to act as though NELP's influence can be quite so easily tracked or mapped would be untrue to the magic of that experience, and to the wildness and unpredictability that those six weeks taught me to embrace. Because what NELP taught me was not so much content as it was form—the how and why of education that I take to heart every day and do my best to live, both inside of the classroom and out. At NELP, I learned to take risks: to jump into a freezing cold lake with relative strangers and to venture a new idea about a poem amidst strangers who were becoming friends. I learned to clean a toilet and climb a mountain and cook eggplant parmesan for 55. I learned how laughter and guitar chords and basketball games sound when they echo through the forest. I learned

how to dwell in and with intellectual ambiguity. I learned to persist amidst discomfort, to be awkward and alive, to allow myself to be surprised by what my mind—and others'—could do when really set free. I learned that the best questions can't be readily answered, and that the best teachers often ask you to think in those very terms. I learned that I—ever the quiet student—come alive when asked to be the teacher. I learned how much more meaningful and enlivening thinking is when done with others. I learned



Sarah Ensor

more about friendship than I ever thought possible. I learned more about literature and writing than I did in any experience prior—or in any experience since.

—**Sarah Ensor, NELP XXVII, 2001**

Since the spring of 2000, NELP is still with me. My experience at NELP freed me to think liberally and creatively about how I might spend my life.

I was supposed to be a lawyer. I'm sure I would have been happy practicing law, but I know I would not have been as fulfilled as I am now. The intense reflection and "searching" we did at NELP raised my expectations for a meaningful life. When faced with the opportunity to step off the track to law school to work for a non-profit in Boston for low pay and an uncertain

path, I drew courage and confidence from my NELP experiences. Emerson advised me, "Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist," and Thoreau stepped outside of the conventional life for his experiment in simple living on Walden Pond. Such examples came to life and moved me during my six weeks in New England. Eventually, I went to Harvard Business School and prepared myself to start my own non-profit organization.

Today, I lead a youth development organization teaching youth in Detroit how to play the racquet sport of squash, while supporting students academically and personally. I wake up each day excited to go to work, and end each day knowing my purpose. It takes me a while to explain exactly what I do for a living when I'm asked. Most people don't even know what squash is, let alone understand why it

might interest public school kids in Detroit, or why it functions as a perfect vehicle for personal development. Thinking about my experience at NELP helps me to see the unconventional aspects of my profession, and my life, as signs that I'm on the right path.

—**Derek Aguirre, NELP XXVI, 2000**



Derek Aguirre



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for MORE INFORMATION *or to*
DOWNLOAD AN APPLICATION *visit*
www.lsa.umich.edu/nelp

