**Summer Experiences**  
Creative Writing Institute  
Sample Schedule

*Please note that this is a sample schedule only and that activities are subject to change.*

The institute is divided into two daily sessions with a break for lunch:

- Workshop (9:00am-12:00pm)
- Lunch (12:00-1:30pm)
- Independent Writing Sessions (1:30-4:30pm)

**Attendance Policy**
Timeliness and earnest engagement in all sessions is imperative to the general success of the institute and of your performance. Take care to attend each session on time every time. Your Teaching Assistant will take attendance at all sessions. You are required to attend every session unless otherwise approved by program supervisor.

**Course Description**
Discuss published work, create your own pieces using innovative prompts, and share your work with classmates. Workshop will provide you with the unique opportunity to hear your classmates' reactions to your poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, in a supportive setting, and to develop your own critical skills regarding others' writing. If you've never experienced workshop, you'll quickly discover that it's an immeasurably valuable process, sparking new ideas, energizing your writing, and opening up new perspectives to become a more thoughtful writer and critic. See attached syllabus for details on workshop.

**Independent Writing Sessions**
You'll spend the afternoons in independent writing sessions guided by prompts included with this syllabus. These prompts might find you responding to a documentary or film, exploring WashU’s campus, or traveling off-campus on a field trip. Writing prompts are designed for you to focus on a specific writing skill. You will then meet together as a group to discuss your responses to these prompts with your peers and TA, and using their feedback, you will create a written piece that you will turn into your TA the next morning at the start of morning workshop.

**Student Expectations**
Students will be expected to attend class daily, participate in discussion and debate, and bring all required materials to class. Students will be expected to complete several assignments and readings outside of class.

**Final Project**
You will submit a written piece (no more than 2 pages) on a topic of your choice to be included in our online literary journal. You will read your final piece during the Open Mic Event on the final afternoon of the program.

**Academic Integrity Statement**
The WashU academic integrity statement applies to all Summer Experiences students at WashU. All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of behavior. To view the policy visit: studentconduct.wustl.edu/academic-integrity/policies-and-procedures/

**Independent Writing Session Prompts**
**Day 1**
Walk to the quad and find a place to sit. Write about what you notice. Address all five senses: what do you see, touch, taste, hear, and smell? Use detail—does it smell good, or like freshly cut grass? Do you hear a lot of loud noises, or the combined voices of dozens of excited high schoolers? Make Wash U come alive.
Day 2
As you walk around the St. Louis Zoo observe the people (and animals) around you. Now invent a character:

1. What does s/he look like? Height, hair color, eye color, ethnicity...any physical detail you can think of. Does she have an interesting scar on her right hand? Does he have freckles on his wrists?

2. Where does this character come from? And where are they going? Is he a gas station attendant in Des Moines? A professor at Wash U? A little girl from San Diego? A mother from Seattle? What is this person’s life like? Is the gas station attendant happy because he just got engaged to his high school sweetheart? Is the mother from Seattle anticipating a promotion at her advertising agency, where she works part time? Jot down interesting details about this person’s life. Invent a history (write it down—maybe one or two paragraphs). Then tell us about where the character is now, what their life is like (maybe two or three paragraphs).

Day 3
Today you are headed to the Missouri History Museum. As you explore the exhibits be sure to notice the place. Notice how the tile is uneven in just that one corner, or an ornate fixture, painting, or artifact. Now, think of your character from yesterday. Move your character into this new setting. How does s/he get there? Running, walking, strolling leisurely? And what happens in this new setting? You haven’t made a list of this new setting, but make it come alive all the same in part 2 of your story. Again, your character should not leave this physical setting. And again, you can put other characters in this setting.

Day 4
Today you are headed to the Missouri Botanical Gardens. While exploring the gardens create a narrative of your observations. Most likely, you will have seen a smattering of interesting things. It’s your job to turn these observations into a story, with a beginning, middle, and end. You’re a journalist trying to make fact interesting. So you can’t invent anything, or read anyone’s mind, like you could in fiction. You can only assemble the facts you have in an interesting way.

Day 5
Today you will visit the Kemper Art Museum. After the presentation on “Narratives in Art” find a painting or other piece of art that you like and write in the voice of something in the painting. A person, for instance; or, if you’re looking at something abstract, maybe you’ll give voice to the color red. Let the piece guide you.

Day 6
Go to the DUC with your partner and write five three to four sentence long character descriptions for each person you see. What does this person look like? You can use physical gestures (tapping fingertips nervously) if you think it will help create an image of the person. When you’re done, share with your partner. Do your descriptions sound like you’re describing the same people?

Day 7
You are headed to the historic Fox Theater today. Think of one of your characters from yesterday and begin your prompt: “FILL-IN CHARACTER runs into the Fox Theater, breathless.” Let your story unspool. The only catch: your character should remain in the Fox Theater. S/he can think about other settings, other places, other people—but s/he should remain in the Fox Theater. But, s/he CAN interact with other invented characters in this setting. Maybe you place the mother’s daughter here with her, or the gas station attendant’s friend. Make sure that setting plays a big role in your story. The mother doesn’t just sit down—no! She flops down on the green leather couch, throwing her black leather purse onto the shiny tile floor. You get the idea—make the place come alive.

Day 8
Enjoy a final afternoon as you relax and watch “The Princess Bride” a film about romance, fantasy, comedy, and adventure. So many genres combined into one. Did you know this film was adapted from a book originally? Take some time after the film and discuss with your peers some of the differences between some of your favorite films and their book counterparts.

This is your final independent writing session. Spend some time reflecting on the past few days and what you’ve learned. Then answer one question: “What makes someone a confident writer?”

Day 9
Open Mic Event. Enjoy your last day...no writing prompt due!