

**Xavier University of Louisiana  
Center for Teaching Advancement and Faculty Development &  
The Office of Academic Affairs**

**A Studio in the Woods Faculty Writing Retreat Fellowship  
AY 2021-2022**

**Request for Proposals – Due April 16, 2021**

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We invite you to apply for the *A Studio in the Woods Faculty Writing Retreat Fellowship*. This initiative is funded by the Office of Academic Affairs to support faculty in advancing their scholarly/artistic agendas. This writing retreat opportunity is intended support an intensive one or two-week residency at *A Studio in the Woods* during the academic year 2021-2022. It is expected that two fellowships will be awarded to faculty.

***Significance and Purpose***

There are many challenges for teacher-scholars at HBCUs inherent in balancing teaching loads with active and productive research and writing agendas. In 2003, then president of Dillard University Michael Lomax reflected on the tradition of scholarly production at HBCUs. He argued that while “teaching remains a powerful, primary, function” of the institution, HBCUs needed to continue to provide “opportunities and rewards for faculty research, scholarly writing, and active participation in professional societies.” Speaking to the collective, he requested that “we keep high on the list our commitment to a creative and productive faculty” as “one of the best ways to insure the gifted teaching that is so central to the HBCU mission and tradition.”<sup>1</sup>

With this in mind, the Office of Academic Affairs at Xavier University is offering the opportunity for one or two faculty members per year to devote an entire week or two to their scholarly/artistic productivity. This retreat, to be hosted by *A Studio in the Woods*, offers the opportunity for faculty to remove themselves from their everyday demands and focus solely on their academic work. Located on the West Bank of New Orleans yet surprisingly removed from the urban landscape, *A Studio in the Woods*’ mission is “to protect and preserve the Mississippi River bottomland hardwood forest and to provide a tranquil haven where artists and scholars can reconnect with universal creative energy and work uninterrupted within this natural sanctuary.”<sup>2</sup> Faculty fellows will immerse themselves both in this beautiful retreat setting as well as their scholarly/artistic project.

The benefits of devoted writing retreats such as this one have been well-documented by scholars of writing productivity. In addition to the allocation of large chunks of time solely devoted to their scholarly project, participants have found encouragement in the basic act of devoting that time to their research and writing, rejuvenation in their identity as thinkers and scholars, and

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Lomax, “Scholarly Publications and HBCUs: Renewing the Tradition,” *Scholarly Guideposts for Junior Faculty, Quality Education for Minority Network & the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education* (<http://qemnetwork.qem.org/SPmonograph.html>) (2003).

<sup>2</sup> For more on A Studio in the Woods see their website: <https://www.astudiointhewoods.org/about/>

project advancements well beyond the number of hours allocated to the retreat. In short, writing retreats allow for an opportunity for faculty to briefly set aside their everyday activities, immerse themselves in their scholarly/artistic work, and emerge refreshed and with significant advancement in their projects.

### ***Eligibility and Requirements***

Any full-time, tenured, tenure track or non-tenure track faculty member within the university may submit a proposal. Applicants must be able to schedule one or two entire weeks of residency at *A Studio in the Woods* between September 1 and May 31 of the academic year 2021-2022. These residencies are not meant to interfere with existing service responsibilities or classes; however, applicants should plan on immersing in the retreat as much as possible with a minimum of four overnight stays per week. It is anticipated that up to 2 proposals will be funded.

In addition, participants will be expected to provide a short, 1-page report on the results and impact of their retreat period. Participants may also be asked to present on their experience as a fellow at *A Studio in the Woods* after completion of their stay.

### **Schedule of Payment**

In addition to administrative residency fees, the fellowship will cover meals and grocery costs up to \$175 per week and provide fellows with \$1,000 materials money to advance their scholarly or artistic project during the academic year 2021-2022. Residents will be expected to prepare their own meals and to cover other personal living expenses during their stay. Material monies may be spent on supplies, books, conference/research travel, or other research needs related to the project proposed.

Participants will receive reimbursement for food costs after completion of the retreat and will be able to make research needs purchases or travel at any point during the academic year. Original receipts are required for reimbursement, and university travel policies apply. Reimbursement will be received after submission of associated costs, no later than August 15, 2022.

Funding decisions will be made and communicated to faculty no later than May 10, 2021.

### ***Proposal Expectations***

The purpose of the *A Studio in the Woods Faculty Writing Retreat Fellowship* is to provide support for faculty members seeking to enhance their scholarly/artistic agenda through a writing-focused week or two-week retreat program.

Preference will be given to faculty who propose a project with a clear set of writing objectives that could be accomplished during the retreat period, adhering to the prescribed proposal expectations, as well as faculty who have demonstrated commitment to enhancing their scholarly/artistic output through workshops and writing group participation at Xavier and elsewhere.

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

1. **Cover Page** (see attached; electronic signatures expected)
2. **Project Summary** (not to exceed 200 words): The project summary should provide a brief description of the proposed research project along with a clear statement of retreat objectives.
3. **Narrative:** The narrative should not exceed three single-spaced pages and should address the following points:
  - a. *Project Description* – This section should clearly describe the proposed project in language comprehensible across disciplinary fields. It should explain the major research question underlying the proposed project as well as the expected final outcome/product (article/book/conference presentation, etc). Finally, it should describe the specific aims of the week or two-week retreat and how these goals fit into the overall project.
  - b. *Significance of Scholarly/Artistic Project* – Describe how this project fits into the larger scholarly/artistic landscape of your discipline or disciplines. This section should demonstrate the import of your work to broader questions of the field.
  - c. *Qualifications* – Briefly describe your qualifications to complete both the larger project and the more specific aims of the retreat. This can include accomplishments in completing stages of the project, efforts to sustain your current research and writing agenda as well as specific recognition for the current project.
  - d. *Impact on Scholarly/Artistic Agenda* – Describe how the proposed project will impact your larger scholarly/artistic agenda. In addition, briefly describe how advancing the proposed project will enhance your own effectiveness as a teacher-scholar.
  - e. *Timeline* – Submit a brief timeline for your project indicating 1) the placement (month) of the retreat in the academic year 2) the expected work to be completed during the retreat and 3) how the retreat goals fit into the larger projected deadlines for the project.
  - f. *Statement of Commitment* – Finally, submit a one-sentence statement of commitment to schedule and complete your retreat if funded through this initiative.
4. **Curriculum Vitae:** Attach a copy of your curriculum vitae (3 pages maximum) paying particular attention to 1) research/written output around the proposed project and 2) general efforts to advance scholarly/artistic agenda including conference presentations, writing groups and retreats, and submitted grant proposals.

### Criteria for Evaluating of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by select CAT+FD staff and an advisory group who will make recommendations to the Office of Academic Affairs. Proposals will be assessed based on the quality and specificity of each subsection.

**Due Date: no later than 4:00 pm on Friday April 16, 2021**

### Questions or Comments

Any questions about the *A Studio in the Woods Faculty Writing Retreat Fellowship* or this RFP should be directed to Dr. Elizabeth Yost Hammer ([eyhammer@xula.edu](mailto:eyhammer@xula.edu)).

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**A Studio in the Woods Faculty Writing Retreat Fellowship AY  
2021-2022**

**Grant Proposal Cover Sheet (Electronic Signatures)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Information / Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Head Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean Signature: \_\_\_\_\_