Twitter Thread by Anna Leahy



Anna Leahy
@AMLeahy

1/ THREAD. MFA in Creative Writing at Chapman University. Application deadline: February 1. That's MONDAY! Let me say a few things about our program first, and then I'll provide a CODE for an application FEE WAIVER at the end of this thread. #MFA #gradschool #creativewriting

2/ While some of our MFA students focus on one genre, many write across genres. @tryphena_yeboah published her first poetry chapbook last year with @AkashicBooks, has published stories @NarrativeMag, and is writing a thesis in fiction with thesis director Richard Bausch.

3/ Likewise, @lizharmer published her first novel with @penguinrandom while she was an MFA student here, her second novel is forthcoming in 2022, and she drafted a memoir as her thesis, with me as the thesis director. Lots of our students take a workshop in a second genre.

4/ MFA faculty work across genres too. Jim Blaylock is a steampunk fiction writers (see Homunculus), and now he writes essays (see a couple in @poetswritersinc). @TheMil10 writes plays & poems & I write poems & essays. Together, our expertise covers a broad range of aesthetics.

5/ All incoming MFA students begin with Aspects of a Writer in their first fall semester. This course focuses on sustaining a writing life, publishing, and fostering literary culture. When I teach the course, each student forms a Writing Life Plan based on their own goals.

6/ All students conclude the MFA program with a thesis, which serves a book-length draft and a sort of proof of concept for their writing life over the longer term. A couple of years ago, Liz Harmer won the regional WAGS/ProQuest Award for best creative master's thesis.

7/ In between Aspects and Thesis, students take workshop and techniques courses and also choose from electives in literature, rhetoric, and digital humanities. Students also have the option to pursue a particular topic connected to their thesis as an independent study.

8/ Digital Humanities is offered every year, and we're piloting a course in Publishing Industries this semester. MFA students who complete the screenwriting course in Creative Writing are eligible for a spot in the Adaptation course in the film school (ranked top ten).

9/ The MFA program hosts two reading series: Tabula Poetica in the fall & Fowles (w/international focus) in the spring. We host Pub(lishing) Crawl in April, which extends the conversation begun in the Aspects course. A coffee shop down the street hosts a weekly poetry open mic.

10/ Since it's winter and my family in Illinois just texted pics of snow and single-digit temps, I'll mention that Chapman U is located in Southern CA between the ocean and the mountains, and it's a sunny, chilly 65° here in Orange today.

11/ Campus is close to the train to LA & San Diego. LA is 30 miles away. Here in the City of Orange, we're blocks from The Circle of shops & restaurants. Of course, we're starting this semester remotely & any student can remain online this semester even if we return to campus.

12/ Applicants are usually wondering about funding. I'll be honest. It's expensive to live in Southern CA, and the MFA program is unable to offer every admitted student funding. We DO have several competitive fellowships that cover tuition & include an $18,000 annual stipend.

13/ All MFA apps submitted by 2/1 are considered for fellowships. Faculty Richard Bausch & Presidential Fellow @carolynforche were instrumental in establishing these fantastic opportunities at Chapman U. With the fee waiver at the end of this thread, why not add us to your list?

14/ Our Grad Teaching Asst program is rigorous & competitive. All students who take Teaching Composition in Spring can apply for a GTA spot the following Fall. Not all MFA students was to teach & that's ok. @CU_Wilkinson has a career advisor to help pursue other paths.

15/ Some MFA students teach at Orange County School of the Arts & others teach at OC Recovery Education Institute. Several recent alums are now full-time faculty at community colleges. While we cultivate teaching options, our goal is not to make every writer into a professor.

16/ Our MFA alums hold jobs as medical writers, grant writers, web designers, fundraisers, and more because there are all sorts of ways to sustain writing and reading over a lifetime. The MFA program helps each writer get their bearings and set a trajectory.

17/ A little about Chapman U as the context for our MFA program. It's big enough for a range of resources & small enough that you can get answers, find opportunities, & connect across campus. The interdisciplinary vibe here is genuine. We have work to do & we're trying to do it.

18/ Our app deadline is 2/1 & applications are coming in at the same rate as last year, so we're set on the numbers. But this has been a rough year for a lot of people. Yesterday, the Grad Programs Coordinator & decided we want anyone interested in an MFA to have a shot with us.

19/ In hopes of creating fostering equity & an inclusive application pool, I'm sharing a fee waiver code for the MFA in Creative Writing program at Chapman U. 24 hours after you submit your app, you get an email reminding you to pay the fee. In it is a link to a waiver request.

20/ Thru Feb. 1 & if you need it, you can use this last-minute code in your request for an application fee waiver: MFALEAHY. First, please read this whole thread and look at our website. If you have questions, email the Grad Programs Coordinator or me. https://t.co/4hrv5E9dki