

Mission

The Center for African American Poetry and Poetics (CAAPP) is a “creative think tank” for African American and African diasporic poetics and poetics, and a space for innovative collaboration between writers, scholars, and other artists thinking through poetics as a unique field that investigates the contemporary moment and the contemporary as it is impacted by historical artistic and social movements. In its effort to highlight, promote, archive, research, and generally advance the practices and epistemologies of African diasporic poetry and poetics, CAAPP will support individual writers, artists, scholars, and others nationally at a range of levels and academic ranks. The Center also prioritizes providing opportunities for poets and artists in the Pittsburgh community outside of the university. The spirit of cultural collaboration and conversation is at the core of its philosophy, programming, and aspirations.

Directors

The Directors shall exercise conceptual, administrative, academic, and fiscal oversight over the Center. They shall also exercise all the responsibilities usual for Directors of academic centers in the Dietrich School. The Directors are appointed by the Chair of the English Department in collaboration with the Dean of the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences. The length of the appointment shall be determined on a case-by-case basis negotiated between the Directors and the English Department Chair and the Dean. There is not a set term limit. The Founding Directors will be Professor Terrance Hayes and Associate Professor Dawn Lundy Martin.

The Assistant Director

The Assistant Director of CAAPP will take a leadership role in conceptualizing and operationalizing new frames of understanding how poetry interacts with other genres and creative and scholarly disciplines. He/she will serve as the central liaison between the co-directors and the advisory board, center fellows, invited guests, faculty affiliates, graduate students, community members, and other individuals and groups. He/she will also will oversee--in collaboration with the co-directors--the day-to-day business operations of the Center and will take the lead on planning all events associated with the Center, including the planning of readings, symposia, and other events.

National Advisory Board

The National Advisory Board shall serve in an advisory and supportive capacity, helping to advance the goals of CAAPP and energize its capacity to bolster African American and African diasporic poetry and poetics. The Advisory Board shall be primarily made up of invited distinguished poets, artists, and scholars

with an expertise and/or interest in African American poetry and poetics. The National Advisory Board members do not attend meetings or vote on Center matters.

Center Faculty Affiliation

1. The Center will invite a number of faculty from various artistic and scholarly disciplines to be Faculty Affiliates. This shall include but not be limited to those with an expertise in African American and African diasporic poetry and poetics, but should contribute to the cross disciplinary goals of collaboration the CAAPP seeks. The appointments shall be two years with the option to renew. The Directors and the Assistant Director are permanent Faculty Affiliates and serve as the leadership body of the group. The Faculty Affiliates shall be voting members of the Center and assist in some decision-making capacity as outlined below.
2. Initial appointments to Faculty Affiliation are made by the Directors. At the conclusion of each term or in the event of a vacancy, the Co-Directors and Assistant Director will appoint new members. Faculty Affiliates are welcome to nominate other faculty who might serve well as members.
3. Meetings of the Faculty Affiliates will be held twice a year, in the spring and fall semester. The Directors may call additional meetings as needed.
4. Scope of responsibility of Faculty Affiliates include: selection of visiting writers, artists, scholars and post-MFA/postdoctoral fellow positions; awards of research and travel grants; approval of grant proposals and establishment of creative and collaborative projects; and review of Center activities and finances.

Membership

The members of the Center for African American Poetry and Poetics shall consist of the following:

- (i) Invited faculty and emeritus faculty of the University of Pittsburgh
- (ii) Staff members of the Center
- (iii) Postdoctoral fellows and Graduate students invited to join the Center
- (iv) Visiting poets, scholars, and research associates invited to join the Center

Officers and Structures of Governance

1. The Co-Directors and the Assistant Director direct the affairs of the Center with the advice of the Advisory Board and the assistance of the Faculty Affiliates.

2. The Co-Directors and the Assistant Director will submit an annual report on Center activities at the end of each calendar year to the English department chair and the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by the Directors in collaboration with the Assistant Director and a majority vote of the Affiliated Faculty, subject to approval by the Dean.

Proposed Advisory members

Angie Cruz (English)

Yona Harvey (English)

Imani Owens (English)

Bill Scott (English)

Autumn Womack (English)

Christel Temple (Africana Studies)

Larry Glasco (History)

Emeritus: Toi Derricotte (English)

Cameron Barnett (graduate student)