Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Proposal?

An Intensive Academic Writing Retreat with Dr. Heidi R. Lewis

A Collaboration with the National Women's Studies Association, the Feminist & Gender Studies Department at Colorado College, and the Dean of the Faculty at Colorado College



Photo Credit: Natalia de la Rosa Reyes



"First forget inspiration. Habit is more dependable. Habit will sustain you whether you're inspired or not. Habit will help you finish and polish your stories. Inspiration won't. Habit is persistence in practice."

Octavia Butler
Bloodchild and Other Stories (1995)

"Create dangerously, for people that read dangerously. [Write] knowing in part that no matter how trivial your words may seem, someday, somewhere, someone may risk his or her life to read them."

Edwidge Danticat
Create Dangerously:
The Immigrant Artist at Work (2010)

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Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Proposal?

An Intensive Academic Writing Retreat with Dr. Heidi R. Lewis
The In-Person Original!

Colorado College
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

June 1-4, 2027

Through several 90-minute workshops, two-hour writing blocks, 30-minute accountability partnership meetings, and a 30-minute 1:1 meeting with the host, this four-day retreat supports scholars developing academic book proposals in Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies and/or kin disciplines like Black Studies, American Studies, and Disability Studies.

A Collaboration with the National Women's Studies Association, the Feminist & Gender Studies Department at Colorado College, and the Dean of the Faculty at Colorado College



HOST BIO

Dr. Heidi R. Lewis (she/her) is Professor of Feminist & Gender Studies at Colorado College; inaugural Editor-in-Chief of Oxford Bibliographies in Gender & Women's Studies; and Series Editor for Expanding Frontiers: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (University of Nebraska Press).

Heidi's publishing record spans more than a decade. In addition to several academic articles and book chapters, she has published with NewBlackMan, The Feminist Wire, Ms., and many other online publications. She also co-edited *In Audre's Footsteps: Transnational Kitchen Table Talk* (edition assemblage, 2021), the 7th edition of Ingeborg Bachmann prizewinner Sharon Dodua Otoo's Witnessed Series, with Dana Asbury and Jazlyn Andrews; and she recently published *Make Rappers Rap Again: Interrogating the Mumble Rap "Crisis"* (2025), the first in the Oxford University Press Theorizing African Music Series.

To learn more, visit www.heidirlewis.com.

Photo Credit: Natalia de la Rosa Reyes



TESTIMONIALS

"I appreciate the above-and-beyond approach Heidi took to this event. As just one person organizing the whole event, I was impressed."
—Dr. Crystal Jackson

"Communication and support were TOP TIER. Leading up to the retreat, en route, there, and even afterward. I always felt comfortable voicing any questions and concerns. And our retreat materials offered extremely detailed, thoughtful, comprehensive information that covered every anticipated concern and beyond."
—Dr. Chelsea Bouldin

"Thank you to Heidi for taking the time to talk through my career goals, as well as the way the book project fits in with these. I truly appreciate it."
—Dr. Jordan Lea Johnson

"What an amazing experience...Every detail was meticulously planned by our host. This was no easy feat, and it made the retreat valuable in so many unique ways. This experience will hold a special place in my heart for a long time!"
—Dr. Samina Gul Ali

"These writing blocks were EVERYTHING! Time and space to think? AMAZING. An accountability partner to keep me focused? GOLD. Others working on their own projects near me? INSPIRING. I felt my intellectual curiosity wake up from a long, long slumber...Dr. Lewis offered me such razor-sharp insight during our one-on-one that my mind is still swirling with her advice! What a gift to have someone respond to you as both an academic *and* a human. I felt seen and heard in a way I haven't in years."
—Dr. Sarah Kersh

PROGRAM FEE



The $1,375 program fee includes lodging on the Colorado College campus; daily continental breakfasts, lunches, and dinners; meeting space in the East Campus Community Center; writing workshops; a one-on-one meeting with the host; regular business hour access to all non-reserved campus facilities with keycard entrances (e.g., Tutt Library and the Adam F. Press Fitness Center); the ZEB shuttle that regularly travels between campus and downtown Colorado Springs; and signed copies of *In Audre's Footsteps* and *Make Rappers Rap Again*. The fee does not include airfare or airport transfers.

Current members of the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) will receive a discount of $175, more than 10% of the program fee. Additionally, if you choose to secure off-campus lodging (at your own expense), your rate will be discounted to $1,165. However, participants are only eligible for one discounted rate. So, if you choose to secure off-campus lodging (at your own expense), you would not be eligible for the NWSA member discount, even if you are a member.

If you are selected to attend, a $475 deposit is due by February 15, with the remaining balance due by April 1. Deposits will only be refunded if the retreat is cancelled by the host for any reason.

COLORADO SPRINGS

Located at the eastern foot of the Rocky Mountains, Colorado Springs boasts a population of over 750,000, 300 days of sunshine annually, and an elevation of 6,035′. Nicknamed the Olympic City because high performance athletes often visit to train at high altitude, the Springs is also a top tourist destination in the U.S., attracting approximately 25.5 million visitors each year.

In early June, Colorado Springs is typically warm during the day and cool at night, with average afternoon high temperatures rising from about 74°F to 81°F (23°C to 27°C) and morning lows around 45°F to 50°F (7°C to 10°C). The air is also thinner and less dense than it is in places with lower elevations. So, participants are encouraged to bring portable oxygen (if necessary), stay hydrated, and move as slowly as possible while retreating.





COLORADO COLLEGE

Founded in 1874, Colorado College is a private liberal arts college that enrolls approximately 2,000 undergraduate students. The small, residential campus is a short walk or ride to downtown Colorado Springs, a 10-minute drive to the Garden of the Gods National Natural Landmark and public park, and a one-hour drive to Denver.

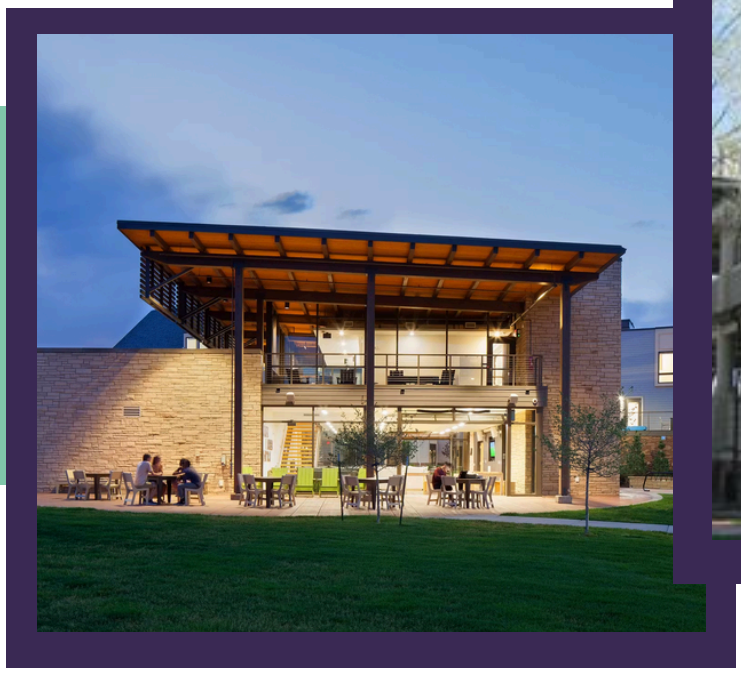
Writing workshops will be held in the East Campus Community Center, which is equipped with a small classroom, large lounge, wireless printer, TV, and WiFi. One-on-one meetings with the host will be held in the Interdisciplinary Studies House, which is equipped with a small classroom, small lounge, wireless printer, TV, and WiFi. Participants will also have access to all non-reserved campus facilities with keycard entrances (e.g., Tutt Library and the Adam F. Press Fitness Center) during regular business hours. So, accountability partnership meetings and independent writing sessions can happen in a location of participants' choice.

LODGING

Participants who choose to live on campus will reside in a small house they will check into after 3PM on Monday and check out of by 11AM on Saturday. While the houses have single, double, and triple rooms (all with single beds), participants will not share bedrooms. The houses are also equipped with multiple shared bathrooms, living rooms, TVs, and WiFi. Some are also equipped with game rooms. The kitchens are equipped with refrigerators, ovens, and microwaves, but they are not equipped with cookware. No on-campus lodging facilities are equipped with air conditioning, but bedrooms are equipped with portable fans. Light bedding and bath towels will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring additional items (e.g., washcloths and shower shoes) to make their stay as comfortable as possible. Housecleaning is only provided before arrival.

All lodging facilities are approximately a 10 to 15-minute walk (or less) to most on-campus facilities, such as the East Campus Community Center, the Interdisciplinary Studies House, Tutt Library, and Rastall Dining Hall.

As a reminder, if you choose to secure off-campus lodging (at your own expense), your rate will be discounted from $1,375 to $1,165. However, participants are only eligible for one discounted rate. So, if you choose to secure off-campus lodging (at your own expense), you would not be eligible for the NWSA member discount, even if you are a member.







MEALS

The program fee includes daily continental breakfasts consisting of fresh fruit, hardboiled eggs, bagels and cream cheese, wheat bread, butter, jelly, peanut butter, muffins, oatmeal, cereal, yogurt and granola, protein bars, coffee, tea, whole milk, almond milk, orange juice, and apple juice.

It also includes daily lunches and dinners catered by the Bon Appetit Management Company.

At their own expense, participants may partake in additional meals, snacks, and beverages from on-campus establishments and/or local restaurants that may deliver via services like DoorDash and Uber Eats.



TRANSPORTATION

Participants traveling to Colorado by air are strongly encouraged to fly in and out of the Colorado Springs Airport (COS), which is approximately 20 minutes from the Colorado College campus, as the Denver International Airport (DEN) is approximately one hour and 25 minutes away. As a reminder, the program fee does not include airfare or airport transfers.

The retreat officially begins with lodging check-in at 3PM on Monday, May 31. It officially concludes with checkout at 11AM on Saturday, June 5, but return flights could depart as early as 8:30PM on Friday.

At no additional charge, parking passes will be provided to local participants driving to campus or those renting cars. Additionally, all participants will have access to ZEB, a free shuttle that regularly travels between campus and downtown Colorado Springs.



Structure

Most days will be structured as follows:

8:00AM	Continental Breakfast
8:30AM	Writing Workshop #1
10:00AM	Setting Intentions with Accountability Partners
10:30AM	Writing Block #1 (and 1:1 Meetings)
12:30PM	Lunch
1:30PM	Writing Workshop #2
3:00PM	Writing Block #2 (and 1:1 Meetings)
5:00PM	Debriefing with Accountability Partners
5:30PM	Adjourn
6:30PM	Dinner

By late February, participants will receive the complete itinerary, participant bios, and a list of brief, informal assignments to aid in workshop preparation. Participants will not submit these assignments. However, they will be discussed with accountability partners and the larger group. While there may be time to complete the assignments during travel and/or after arrival, participants should complete them beforehand so there's ample time for rest and relaxation during the retreat.

In addition to a 30-minute 1:1 meeting with the host, participants may also attend an optional webinar with the Expanding Frontiers team, including the Acquisitions Editor.

APPLICATIONS



The application portal will open on August 15 and close on December 15. Decisions will be announced by December 20, and selected participants must confirm attendance by paying the $475 non-refundable deposit on or before February 15.

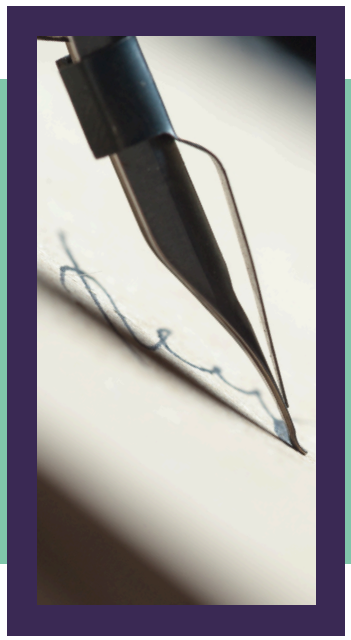
Participants are also strongly encouraged to attend a pre-retreat webinar with the host on May 15 to discuss any questions and/or concerns.

While the retreat is open to all scholars developing academic book proposals in Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies and/or kin disciplines like Black Studies, American Studies, and Disability Studies, priority will be given to applicants interested in developing proposals for Expanding Frontiers.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The online retreat evaluation should be submitted no sooner than 48 hours after the retreat but no more than one week after, so participants have enough time to rest and reflect and so the experience is still fresh in their minds. In addition to strengthening the quality of future retreats, these evaluations may be used to promote them.







For More Information:

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