M.A. in Engaged Humanities and the Creative Life

WITH EMPHASIS IN DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY

In today’s rapidly changing world, we are constantly called to yield to a new creative movement—as Joseph Campbell writes—to recreate all fields and invent new forms, structures, designs, and products that address the needs of our era. Campbell says, “we are participating in one of the very greatest leaps of the human spirit,” fueled by the creative impulses manifested by new sciences, technology, the arts, and humanities, and democratized by the internet. Never before has it been so easy to share in the creative process and products of humanity. The wisdom traditions of the humanities and depth psychology influence the arts and digital media, informing and enriching the creative life. In fact, the world itself has its own creativity, manifested in the archetypes of the collective unconscious, whose symbols, images, metaphors, and movements are all the *prima materia* for this creative movement.

This M.A. program’s approach is broad, highly interdisciplinary, and satisfying for those who seek to combine intellectual exploration with creativity. Honoring Pacifica’s mission to tend soul in and of the world, the program merges artmaking and soulmaking, supporting students in tending to their souls by tending to their creative lives. Intellectual rigor is uniquely combined with creative expression, encouraging dialogue among students and faculty with a focus on expanding individual and collective potential to contribute to the humanities. The program is designed for those who seek to live and work more creatively, or foster creativity in themselves and others—including anyone in the visual, performing, narrative, studio, and media arts; the creative side of advertising, marketing, and product development; teachers of art, literature, and the humanities; or professionals in fields such as architecture, interior design, fashion, and the film, television, and music industries.

How can the psychology of the creative unconscious help you find the luminous, offer spiritual inspiration, and deepen you in art? The M.A. in Engaged Humanities and the Creative Life is a unique program designed to develop creativity through a potent combination of the soul of the imagination, humanities resources, and arts practice.

~ Susan Rowland
Program Chair
ACADEMIC FORMAT – A BLENDED ONLINE/LOW-RESIDENCY PROGRAM

This degree program takes advantage of online distance-learning technology that allows students to work and learn in their home environments. Additionally, once each quarter, students gather on Pacifica’s Ladera Lane Campus for a four-day weekend (Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) in a retreat-style residence. During these on-campus sessions, students have access to the Institute’s extensive resources and are able to further community involvement and professional collaboration. They join classmates from around the world in forming professional relationships and networks of like-minded individuals. This convenient format brings Pacifica’s graduate degree programs to global citizens and the lifelong learners who otherwise might not be able to fulfill their educational calling.

The M.A. Program in Engaged Humanities and the Creative Life provides an education in the humanities informed by mythology and depth psychology. The program’s unique learning format combines the best aspects of a connected, heartfelt, interpersonal experience with the convenience of distance-learning technology.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

FIRST YEAR

- Creativity and Aesthetic Sensibility – HMC 100, 3 Units
- Joseph Campbell and the Mythmaker’s Path – HMC 110, 3 Units
- The Complex Nature of Inspiration – HMC 120, 3 Units
- Creative Influence Across the Humanities – HMC 130, 3 Units
- The Expressive Power of Archetypes – HMC 140, 3 Units
- C. G. Jung, Individuation, and the Symbolic Life – HMC 150, 3 Units
- The Purpose and Power of Image – HMC 160, 3 Units
- Project Workshop I: Creative Dialogue and Design – HMC 170, 3 Units

SECOND YEAR

- Active Imagination, Dreams, and Psychic Creativity – HMC 200, 3 Units
- Mythic Narratives: Eternal Sources and Contemporary Inflections
  – HMC 210, 3 Units
- Time, Place, Space, and the Ecology of Creative Expression
  – HMC 220, 3 Units
- The Healing Power of Creativity – HMC 230, 3 Units
- The Artist as Activist and Agent of Social Change – HMC 240, 3 Units
  OR
- The Purpose and Power of the Moving Image – HMC 180 Units
- Technology and the Psyche – HMC 250, 3 Units
- Creativity, Vocation and Alchemical Work – HMC 260, 3 Units
- Project Workshop II: Creative Expression and Reflection
  – HMC 270, 3 Units
- Selected Topics in Engaged Humanities – HMC 280, 3 Units*

For its reach is cosmic and earthly; it is down in the dirt as well as reaching for the stars. Even the loneliest meteor circles round some distant sun, or hesitantly draws near to a cluster of brother meteors. Everything hangs together with everything else... This is undoubtedly the same as the idea of an absolute God... But which of us can pull himself out of the bog by his own pigtail?’

~Carl Jung

This curriculum may vary depending upon changing academic needs.
* This course may replace any of the above, and the curriculum may vary depending upon evolving academic needs.

This degree program is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).
For gainful employment information, visit pacifica.edu/gainfulemployment
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WHY “ENGAGED” HUMANITIES?

How does this adjective reflect and inflect this degree program? “Engage” is actually a late Middle English term that means to pledge oneself to do something. This is no ivory tower program where we sequester ourselves away to look down upon the humanities from a distance. Instead, we promise an engagement with the humanities, and pledge ourselves to do something with our studies. This “something” can be summarized in Pacifica’s motto—*anima mundi colendae gratia*—for the sake of tending soul in and of the world. We engage with the humanities to tend to our souls, and the souls of those around us. We engage with the humanities to see how soul has been tended by those around the world for millennia, and we pledge to continue to tend the soul of the world.

And how do we do that? We do it through engaging with our creative life, both our personal creative life and the creative life of humanity, as expressed through literature, history, religion, mythology, art, healing practices, etc. We cultivate our inner life through the wisdom tradition of depth psychology, and make a space in this place for the expression of our psyches in whatever creative format calls to us.

You don’t have to be an artist to join us—this is not an MFA program (though artists are certainly welcome). You do have to be committed to artful living, to exploring the art of living in full partnership with the creative, dynamic unconscious that lives within and around you.

In this sense, it could be called Engaged Humanities and the Co-Creative Life, because this program is all about providing students with both an academic and an experiential knowledge of, and engagement with, the creative, dynamic unconscious which seeks expression through them. But it is co-creative in another sense—and here’s the jewel in the crown. Can you imagine what it’s like to take a group of committed students and put them together in a cohort and then give them permission to unleash their creativity? They’re off and running, and to borrow from Dr. Seuss, oh the places they’ll go! Sparks fly, one person’s flame fans another, then another, and suddenly they’re all on fire, surprising themselves with their own burning light—the light that was there all along, just waiting for the match that a program like this provides.
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.

~William Shakespeare

Your life is much deeper and broader than you conceive it to be here. What you are living is but a fractional inkling of what is really within you, what gives you life, breadth, and depth. But you can live in terms of that depth. And you can experience it.

~Joseph Campbell

The psyche [is] not just a question-mark arbitrarily confined within the skull, but rather a door that opens upon the human world from a world beyond, allowing unknown and mysterious powers to act upon man and carry him on the wings of the night to a more than personal destiny.

~Carl Jung

I have been a poet and a painter for more than 20 years, and I consider myself to be a lifelong seeker. When I came to Pacifica, I felt that I truly had found a home. The program’s hybrid format allowed me to follow the scholarly path and still pursue the other aspects of my life that matter to me. I had a fabulous experience as a student at Pacifica. The active way in which I learned to engage the imagination has been of special value to me.

LISA POUNDER, M.A.
Engaged Humanities and the Creative Life Graduate