

Faculty Spotlight Series:

5 questions with Lisa Hammond.

1. What is your role at USC Lancaster, and how long have you worked here?

I'm a Professor of English here at USCL, for twenty years this coming fall. I teach mostly first-year composition courses, ENGL 101 and 102, but I also teach a wide range of upper-level literature and writing courses, including Poetry, Themes in American Literature, Business Writing, Women Writers, and Creative Writing. One of my favorite courses the last several years was a special topics in American literature called "Mothers and Memoirs," in which we read about women's experience of motherhood.

In 2016, I also began serving the campus as Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research. In this position, I collect data and write campus accountability reports for the state government and university reporting. I'm still learning this work, which is actually quite interesting and gives me great new material for my Business Writing class.

2. Where did you go to college, and what attracted you to the education field?

I earned my bachelor's degree from Francis Marion University in my hometown of Florence, South Carolina, and then moved to Tuscaloosa, where I earned my master's and doctoral degrees. I knew from the time I was pretty young that I wanted to spend my time learning and reading, and I had a wonderful aunt I really looked up to who taught high school English. But when I got to college, I felt really at home for the first time—and I've been in universities ever since!

3. What is your favorite thing about USC Lancaster?

I love the opportunity to work with people with curious minds. It's a privilege to watch students begin to understand fully how to interpret a text or revise their writing, to help them learn, and to witness them grow personally and professionally. And I never know from one day to the next where a conversation with a faculty or staff member will take us—we are still learning too. That lively conversation is a gift.

4. What are your hobbies/interests?

Reading, of course. I'm reading more nonfiction these days, but I love fiction, mystery, fantasy, poetry. Art books are fantastic too. I'm a photographer, and on New Year's 2017, I started a project on Instagram of posting a photo every day. I've kept it up without missing a day since, and I love how it helps me see the world more closely and in different ways. I like to draw and visit museums. My son and I spend time outdoors with his Boy Scout Troop; my grown daughter and I just started a new project writing poems on postcards to each other. My husband and I think farmers' markets sound really good, but we never want to get up early, so we goof off on the internet Saturday mornings instead.

5. What advice would you give current students or prospective students?

Take the time to build a real relationship with the faculty. Attending class and keeping up with the work is critical, of course, but if you're talking to your professors outside of class, visiting their office hours, you will not only do better in your studies, but you also will find yourself in conversations you never imagined—and ones that can change your life.



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