

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

FACULTY PRESENTATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
“THE WRITING UNIVERSITY”

Action Requested: Receive the presentation.

Executive Summary:

The writing programs at the University of Iowa, which include the Writers' Workshop, International Writing Program, Nonfiction Writing Program, Playwrights' Workshop, the Translation Program, and Center for the Book, have established firmly in the public mind the notion that Iowa is where great writing begins. The list of famous alumni includes a significant number of prize-winning poets and writers from this country and abroad, which is why the University of Iowa is known as the Writing University. In fact, an application is being prepared to have Iowa City designated as a UNESCO Creative City of Literature, another sign of the centrality of writing to Iowa.

Samantha Chang, Director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop, is the author of a collection of short fiction, *Hunger* (1998) and a novel, *Inheritance* (2004). Her work has been translated into nine languages and has been chosen twice for *The Best American Short Stories*. She has received creative writing fellowships from Stanford University, Princeton University, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Christopher Merrill, Director of the International Writing Program, has published four collections of poetry, including *Brilliant Water* and *Watch Fire*, for which he received the Peter I. B. Lavan Younger Poets Award from the Academy of American Poets. He has also edited several volumes, including *From the Faraway Nearby: Georgia O'Keeffe as Icon* and four books of nonfiction, including *The Old Bridge: The Third Balkan War and the Age of the Refugee*. His work has been translated into twenty-five languages. He is the book critic for the daily radio news program, *The World*. He formerly held the William H. Jenks Chair in Contemporary Letters at the College of the Holy Cross.