

NOMINATION COVER SHEET
2011 Virginia Outstanding Faculty Awards

1. <u>NAME</u> Full (Legal): Melanie Mary Almeder Preferred First Name: Melanie	
2. <u>INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION</u> Institution: Roanoke College Rank/Position Title: Associate Professor Year Rank/Title Attained: 2005 Years at Institution: 11 Campus Email Address: almeder@roanoke.edu Campus Phone: (540) 375-2367 Campus Mailing Address: Miller Hall 121 Roanoke College, 221 College Ln, Salem, VA 24153 Campus Communications Contact: -Name: Ms. Teresa Gereaux -E-mail: gereaux@roanoke.edu	3. <u>PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION</u> Academic Discipline: English Specialization/Field: Creative Writing; Contemporary Novel Type of Terminal Degree: Ph.D. Year Awarded: 1999 Awarding Institution: University of Florida

Please check only one box:

- RESEARCH/DOCTORAL INSTITUTION NOMINEE:
 MASTERS/COMPREHENSIVE INSTITUTION NOMINEE:
 BACCALAUREATE INSTITUTION NOMINEE:
 TWO-YEAR INSTITUTION NOMINEE:
 TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY NOMINEE:
 RISING STAR NOMINEE:

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Signature (President or Chief Academic Officer) _____ (signature on hard copies)

Printed Name: _____ Michael C. Maxey _____

E-mail address: _____ maxey@roanoke.edu _____ Telephone: _____ (540) 375-2200 _____

Mission and Purpose Statements

Roanoke College Mission Statement

Roanoke College's Mission is to engage students in their development as whole persons through an integrative learning approach that stresses intellectual, ethical, spiritual and personal growth and prepares our graduates for responsible lives of learning, service, and leadership in a diverse and changing world.

Excerpts from Roanoke College Purpose Statement

Central to achieving the purposes of the college is a strong commitment to liberal education and its vision of human freedom leading to service within the human community ... the college strives to produce resourceful, informed, and responsible citizens prepared for productive careers and for leadership in community.

Executive Summary of Accomplishments for Dr. Melanie Almeder

The record of superior accomplishments of Dr. Melanie Almeder strongly reflects the mission of Roanoke College. Our Mission Statement notes that we “engage students in their development as whole persons through an integrative learning approach that stresses intellectual, ethical, spiritual and personal growth and prepares our graduates for responsible lives of learning, service, and leadership.” The following materials will document how Dr. Almeder is supremely dedicated to educating men and women through an integrative learning approach; is clearly preparing them for responsible lives of learning, service, and leadership; and is outstandingly integrating and balancing the intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and personal growth aims of Roanoke’s whole-person philosophy in her teaching, her advising, and her relating with all of her students.

The College Purpose Statement includes the provision that “(C)entral to achieving the purposes of the college is a strong commitment to liberal education and its vision of human freedom leading to service within the human community....the college strives to produce resourceful, informed, and responsible citizens prepared for productive careers and for leadership in community.” The following materials will document how Dr. Almeder – through her teaching and her advising – promotes active, rigorous, and ethical learning as well as scholarship and teaching that are integrated with service to the community. Testimony from students and colleagues alike will demonstrate the incredible combination of challenging and respecting and nurturing that Dr. Almeder provides her students and her advisees – all of them – and that unequivocally contributes to producing resourceful and responsible citizens.

Superior Accomplishment in the Scholarship of TEACHING

Having won teaching awards and received recognition for outstanding classroom performance while a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Florida, Melanie Almeder did not take long as a roster faculty member at Roanoke College to win our Dean’s Council Exemplary Teaching Award. The seemingly endless testimonies – both written and verbal – from students in her classes and advisees and others with whom she has contact have earned her a campus-wide recognition as a rare and inspiring and effective teacher/advisor/mentor who changes lives of students.

Instruction:

- *Field Guide to the Sung World* (exercises for teaching poetry – a Faculty Scholar project)
- “Witnessing the First Person in Composition Classrooms” – presented at Conference on College Composition and Communication, Denver, March 2001.
- “Writing as Craft” -- presented at the University of Massachusetts Composition Theory Conference, Spring 1992.
- Dean’s Council Exemplary Teaching Award, Roanoke College, Spring 2003
- Student Evaluation Data – mean rating of instructor of 4.91 (5-point scale) for all courses taught during first eight years at Roanoke College.

Dr. Almeder’s work with students goes well beyond teaching in the classroom. In addition to supervising 44 independent studies, she is very involved with student activities and publications, including organizing student readings, serving as advisor of On Concept’s Edge (our undergraduate literary journal), organizing competitions for student work, coordinating the

Poets-in-the-After-School Program for high school students in Roanoke City, which she along with her students started in 2002-2003, and teaching refugee children from Africa at the Refugee Center to help their assimilation into mainstream American society.

Student Development:

- Serving as Advisor, Student reading / book club
- Panel Discussion, Paris Writers' Workshop, "Publishing the First Book," 2007
- Serving as Advisor, Undergraduate Literary Journal, 1999-2001, 2004 –
- Serving as Advisor, After School Writing Programs, 2002-2004, 2007 -
- Serving on Multicultural Advisory Board, 2003 -
- Supervised 9 students on editing the Roanoke Review, 2002-2003
- Supervised 4 students on creating a Poets-in-the-After-School Program at West End Center, Fall 2002
- Supervised student Summer Scholar, "Identity and Landscape in American Literature," Summer 2002
- Supervised 44 independent studies: 1999-2010
- Served on ten honors committees, 1999-2010
- Academic advisor (average of 20 advisees each year); summer advisor
- Assisted many students with graduate school applications

Superior Accomplishment in the Scholarship of DISCOVERY

With 27 poems published since coming to Roanoke College eleven years ago, with a 60-page book of poems published in 2007 and a second collection drafted and a third in progress, and with numerous awards for her writing (including Editor's Prize, Tupelo Press, in 2007 and First Book Prize, Anhinga Press, in 2005, for On Dream Street, and being a Featured Poet in the March 2004 issue of Poetry), Dr. Almeder is recognized by the writing community as an outstanding and talented contributor to literature. On Dream Street was also a finalist for the Walt Whitman Award (she withdrew after committing to publication with Tupelo Press). During 2007-2009, in addition to publication of On Dream Street, Dr. Almeder performed 13 readings, 6 additional workshops and readings, and a panel discussion. The general public locally has been able to hear about her work because of a two-part radio interview (Studio Virginia/WVTF Public Radio), a newspaper article (Roanoke Times, about the Landscape and Poetry project with the Art Museum of Western Virginia), Blue Ridge Business Journal reviewing her book in April, and Showcase Magazine doing a feature article in August. Also in 2007 another poem won an award (Verse Daily award, posted on website in March); the poem was also included in a book Annaghmaking, celebrating 25 years of writing in Ireland at the Tyrone Guthrie Center. During her sabbatical year (2005-2006), Dr. Almeder researched writers in exile and sanctuaries while living at the Irish Culturel Centre in Paris; she had a full fellowship writer-in residence at Chateau de la Napoule for six weeks (November-December), and she was writer-in-residence at The Island Institute in Sitka, Alaska in April 2006. During this time she completed the first draft of her second book of poems. Dr. Almeder has also begun work on The Book of Hours (poems) and Here:Interviews with Irish Public Space Artists. Currently she was nominated for a Library of Virginia Book Award in Poetry, and she has held a poetry fellowship from the Virginia Commission for the Arts (to finish her second manuscript of poems). Her most recent works have been published in a special issue of The Seneca Review. In addition, she has been invited and is currently working on a group of poems about cancer and chemotherapy for the journal Connotation Press.

Scholarly Works:

- “Homage” and “Iridescence of Life,” in The Seneca Review (special issue on the Lyric Body), Fall 2009/Spring 2010
- “Tusawilla Lullabye,” Old Florida Journal, Spring 2009.
- Book review: “The Cambridge History of Irish Literature.” Sixteenth Century Journal, Fall 2008.
- *On Dream Street* – book of poems, Tupelo Press, March 2007 (60+ pages)
- *Red Undoing* – work in progress, second collection of poems, draft completed
- “This Tropic of Resemblances” Catalogue Introduction,” and “The Necessary Angel” Exhibition Introduction,” Miami Dade Public Library, 2007.
- “Hermeneutics of Lust,” Mississippi Review, Winter 2006.
- “Moon Variations,” “Ode to an Egg,” and “Water Histories,” Connotations: A Journal of the Island Institute, October 2006.
- “From Ten Cures” (3 poems), The Courtland Review, November 2005.
- “The Lowell Sonnets,” 32 Poems, Fall 2005.
- “Verge,” 32 Poems, Fall 2005.
- “Dreaming Industry” – Margie: A Journal of Contemporary American Poetry, Fall 2004
- “Lonely” -- Margie: A Journal of Contemporary American Poetry, Fall 2004
- “Decline of a Century” – The Minnesota Review Special Issue: Absurdity, Summer 2004
- “Country Love Song” – Poetry, March 2004
- “Adam and Eve Chassis du Paradis” – Diner, Honorable Mention, Fall 2003
- “Ouroborus,” Exhibit Catalogue Essay, Cork Art Exhibit, Ireland, Fall 2003
- “Poem for a Sad River” – Iron Horse Literary Review, Summer 2003
- “Dumb Luck” – Iron Horse Literary Review, Summer 2003
- “Verge” – Writer’s Venue National Contest, Best Poem Award, Spring 2003
- “For Silence” – 32 Poems, Spring 2003
- “Poem for the Man Who Would Not Answer the Phone” – Comstock Review, winner of annual Murial Bailey Poetry Craft Award as best poem, and nominated for a Pushcart Prize, Fall 2002
- “After Chagall: Lovers Above the Town” – Comstock Review, Runner-up Best Poem, Fall 2002
- “Elegy for Grief” – American Literary Review, Spring 2001
- “The Old Lie” -- American Literary Review, Spring 2001
- “Elegy for Market Street” – Seneca Review (Vol, XXIX, no. 2), Winter 1999/2000
- “Ode to Eastern Birds”– Seneca Review (Vol XXIX, no. 2), Winter 1999/2000
- “A Brute Given” – flyway (Vol. 4.2-4.3), Fall 1999
- “Mock Orange” – Five Points, Summer 1999
- “Sanctuary” – essay on sanctuaries in contemporary American fiction
- “Desire” – Southern Poetry Review, Winter 1999
- “From the Front Door to the Mailbox and Back” – The Georgia Review, 1990.

Scholarly Activities (and awards for scholarly activities):

- Inaugural Poem read at Inaugural Ceremony for College President, 2007
- Poetry Fellowship, Virginia Commission for the Arts, 2007-2008
- Library of Virginia Book Awards Nomination in Poetry, Summer 2008
- Nomination, Great Lakes New Writers Award, Fall 2007

- *Verse Daily*, Featured Poem, “Mock Orange,” April 2007
- 7 Readings in 2007: (1) “Landscape Painting and Poetry” at Art Museum of Western Virginia, in Roanoke, VA; (2) “Club Lake Medicine” for ArtShanty Projects in Minneapolis; (3) AWP Conference in Atlanta; (4) Roanoke College; (5) Lynchburg College; (6) Writers at Jordan House, Lexington, VA; (7) Paris Writer’s Workshop, Paris.
- 3 Workshops and Readings in 2007-2008: (1) (2) “Writing the Region Conference,” Florida (twice); (3) “Blue Ridge Writers Conference,” Virginia
- Contest judge, Pen Women’s Poetry Contest, 2007, 2005
- WVTF Public Radio Interview (about poetry and book), March 2007
- Editor’s Prize for On Dream Street, Tupelo Press, 2006
- First Book Prize, On Dream Street, Anhinga Press (but declined)
- Finalist, Walt Whitman Award, Spring 2006 (withdrew, accepted Tupelo)
- Writer-in-Residence, La Napoule Foundation, France, Nov. – Dec. 2005
- Invited Poetry Reading, Southern Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference (for November 2004)
- Finalist, First Book Award, Kent State/Wick Prize, Summer 2004
- Finalist, First Book Award, Four Ways Books/Levis Prize, Summer 2004
- Research Grant, Roanoke College, Summer 2004
- Featured Poet, Poetry, March 2004 issue, ongoing on website.
- Editor, *Roanoke Review*, 2002-2003
- Paris Writers’ Workshop Fellowship Award (one of two given internationally), Summer 2003
- Associated Writing Programs, Writers’ Conference Award (one of two grants given nationally), Summer 2003
- Writer’s Residency (one of 12 for residency period), The Woodstock Guild, Woodstock, NY, Summer 2003
- Finalist, First Book Award, Four Ways Books/Levis Prize, Summer 2003
- Research Grant (for “Exile and Ekphrasis” – poems about art), Roanoke College, Summer 2003
- Finalist, First Book Award, Zoo Press/Paris Review, Spring 2003
- Roanoke College Faculty Scholar Award, 2002-2005
- Summer Starter Grant, Manuscript Two, Summer 2002 (for poetry)
- Tyrone Guthrie Center Grant (scholarship for writing), Ireland, Summer 2002
- Semi-finalist, The Nation “Discovery Award” (for new poets in America), 2001
- Starter Grant, for “Natural Histories: Florida’s Other Edens,” Roanoke College, May 2001
- Finalist, First Book Award, Kenyon Review Poetry Prize, Spring 2001
- Finalist, First Book Award, Fordham University Press, Spring 2000
- Starter Grant, for “The Wind Canticles,” Roanoke College, May 2000
- Semi-finalist, First Book Award, Sarabande Press, Spring 2000
- Emily Dickinson Award for Best Poem, Universities West Press, Summer 1999
- Finalist, International Poetry Contest, The Atlanta Review, Spring 1999
- Second place, First Book Contest, Anhinga Press, Spring 1999
- W. B. Yeats Society Award for best poem, Spring 1998
- The Dana Award for best group of poems, Spring 1998
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dissertation Fellowship, Fall 1998
- Kirkland Dissertation Fellowship for Folklore & American Literature, 1997-98

Superior Accomplishment in the Scholarship of KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION

Dr. Almeder's personal statement indicates that her scholarly activities allow her to bring "the ideas of other writers and scholars and the lessons ... about writing and literature back into the classroom and community." Thus, it is not surprising that she has shared her written art in diverse settings, such as at a Faith and Learning luncheon, with the Science and Literature Society, with the college choir on one occasion and a joint performance with a musical composer on another, with women and children at a battered women's shelter in Alaska, and through various public readings, including in France, Ireland, and Alaska. Her work during her sabbatical (researching writers in exile and sanctuaries while living at the Irish Cultural Centre in Paris last fall, followed by her residency in Sitka, Alaska), in addition to her summer 2006 Curriculum Grant for "Contemporary Global Novels" has led her to frame her teaching in a much more global context. Her writing residencies and scholarly work have led to the creation of nine new courses developed and taught during eight years at Roanoke.

Curricular Development:

- Multicultural Curriculum Committee, 2004 - ongoing
- Departmental Curriculum Committee, 2001-2002; 2004-2005; 2007-2009
- Developed community arts programming (both program and curriculum)
- Developed 11 new courses for the Roanoke College curriculum:
 - a) May Travel Intensive Learning Course: Contemporary Irish Literature and Culture (May 2001, May 2005)
 - b) Engl 301: Literature of Political Witness (Fall 2000)
 - c) Engl. 220: Contemporary Novels of the Family (Spring 2003)
 - d) Engl. 220: Native American Literature (Fall 2003)
 - e) General Studies 101: The Writer in Place (Fall 2003)
 - f) Senior Symposium (GST 400): The Writer in Politics (Spring 2004)
 - g) Engl. 352: Crisis, Memory, & Truth: Contemporary World Novels (2004)
 - h) General Studies 102: Visions & Revisions: Storytelling and Truth (2006)
 - i) Engl. 352: Childhood Memory & Truth: Contemp. World Novels (2006)
 - j) Engl. 220: Gendered Fiction (2008)
 - k) INQ (Intellectual Inquiry)110: Global Literature (2009)

Connections between Teaching and Discovery:

- "Three Unlikely Leaders: Survival, Grace, and Service" – address to Annual Academic Excellence and Awards Banquet, Roanoke College, April 2004
- "The Literary Canon since the Civil Rights Act" – talk given for Martin Luther King celebration week, Roanoke College, Spring 2004
- "Ethics and Leadership: The Life You Save May Not Be Your Own" – presentation to Student Leadership banquet, Fall 2002
- "A Response to September 11" – poetry performance with Roanoke College Choir, Spring 2002
- "Literature and Faith"– Faith and Learning Luncheon, Roanoke College, 2002
- "Moon Variations" – reading and performance with musical composer, Roanoke College, April 2001
- Research Grant, Ireland course, Roanoke College, June 2000
- "Writing Cure: Shamanism Meets the Stock Market" -- presentation to the Science and Literature Society, Fall 1998
- "You Cannot Just Fly Off from a Body: The Politics of Healing in Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*"-- Science and Literature Society, Oct. 1997.

Superior Accomplishment in the Scholarship of SERVICE

Dr. Almeder's teaching philosophy states that "our learning is not distinct from our community lives ... the two inform each other in vital ways"; therefore, she strives to "encourage and model bridges between scholarship and service." Although she contributes so often to college functions and services (work with Admissions Office, past Mellon Fellowship representative, speaker at campus-wide events), her community work (both local, as in her involvement with a halfway house for women, and international, as in her active involvement with Amnesty International) has become integrated into her teaching (and vice versa). Dr. Almeder's current community service centers on explorations into establishing an Amnesty International chapter in the city of Roanoke, on working with Refugee Services (a program of Catholic Charities in Roanoke), and on working with Bethany Hall, a women's halfway house. For Refugee Services she brought a group of students to the Pilot Street Refugee Center to tutor English and help children with their homework; she herself taught the refugee children and organized the "bike drive" which provided bicycles and lessons for the children on how to ride. A former member of the Board of Directors for Bethany Hall, she has conducted a writing workshop for the women residents. Last year she wrote poems as part of a large community fundraiser for the Lotus House, a shelter for homeless women in Miami.

Institutional and Professional Service:

- Creative Writing co-chair (1999-) -- student readings at Family Weekend; organize/judge poetry writing contest; organize readings and convocation talk
- Work with Admissions Office: serve on admissions panels, meet potential students, interview student scholar applicants (Fall 2001 -)
- Co-chair of Visiting Writers Program – Roanoke College
- Organizer of Book Arts workshop, Fall 2002
- "You are What You Buy: Global Capital," Roanoke College, Spring 2002
- "On Leadership" -- Leadership Banquet Speaker, Roanoke College, 2002
- Assisted with Kwanza Celebration, Fall 2001
- Awarded Faculty Leadership Award by Roanoke College Student Government Association, Spring 2002, and Spring 2001
- College Committee Service – numerous committees
- Departmental Service – Composition Theory Committee; Hiring Committee
- Advisor: On Concept's Edge, Roanoke College, 1999-2001; 2009 -

Public / Community Service:

- The Lotus House (shelter for homeless women), Miami, fundraiser, Oct. 2009
- Workshop/Reading, Fundraiser for Jefferson Center, Roanoke, January 2008.
- Refugee Services (program of Catholic Charities) – volunteer projects, 2005- ongoing (teaching refugee children, organizing 'bike drive' in 2007)
- Amnesty International: 1997 – ongoing (planning for chapter in Roanoke)
- Island Institute (Alaska) writer-in-residence -- conducted writing and storytelling groups with women and children in Battered Women's Shelter; gave 2 public readings, Rotary Club talk, and radio interview, April 2006
- Collaborative installation project on books and nocturnes for an art opening with Romanian book artist Anka Seel, Fall 2005
- Board of Directors, Bethany Hall (halfway house for women), 2002 – 2005
- Writers in the After School Programs, Roanoke: St. John's Episcopal Church (2000-2001), West End Center (Spring 2002, 2003)
- Heiffer Project (providing trees and bees for community in Africa), Fall 2001

Personal Statement by Melanie Almeder

The best scholarship of teaching, discovery, and service is integrated into local and global communities. In my dissertation work on novels of healing, I looked at the way contemporary authors write about political trauma and exile, and the ways in which they constructed an “American” narrative tradition of writing the traumatized person into a life of vitality. At the same time, I volunteered at an Arts and Medicine Program and saw the ways in which physicians and artists worked together to give children with cancer not only physical healing, but esteem in the midst of a disease that rendered them and their families powerless. I realized in each of these how very important the connections are between fields of study, the lived life, and service.

I do my best to encourage and model bridges between scholarship and service at Roanoke College. I continue to research and write essays and poems about how political exiles and trauma survivors, in fiction and in reality, write themselves into vital activism and community. I am an active member of Amnesty International, and I am on the board of directors for a women's halfway house. A number of the women in our program are trauma survivors and I work with the other members to raise money for these women and to support the needs of the therapeutic staff. I also work with students to create learning communities locally. Several years ago we started “Writers in the After School Programs,” in which a group of Roanoke College students planned a curriculum for a group of disadvantaged middle-school students. The students took so well to the college students’ curriculum, they began calling themselves “The West End Writers.” That semester culminated in a reading by these West End Writers; it was a wonderful evening to watch those young people stand up in front of a standing-room-only crowd, read their poems about their lives, and be honored for their work.

My own scholarship feeds my teaching. In the past several years I have participated in writing workshops and communities in New York, Ireland, and Paris, researching and writing on the lives of exiles, the ways in which “the reader” is represented in art, and Irish political history. My scholarship has spawned not only numerous publications, but also an essay for an exhibit catalogue publication in Cork, Ireland, and vital curriculum development (nine new courses in the past eight years). In these ways, I have been able to bring the ideas of other writers and scholars and the lessons I have learned about writing and literature from a widely diverse international group of communities back into the classroom and community.

Whether I am teaching general education courses, literature, or creative writing, my goal is to teach my students to be active, rigorous, and ethical learners. My course designs insist that the students arrive to class prepared, ready to ask questions and to discuss, ready to challenge their own skills, and ready to research their interests and apply those interests to community. Each of my courses is designed around a question which connects the intellectual life and the lived life; for example, the question at the center of my course, “The Writer in Politics,” is, “To what degree can an individual alter her or his culture?” As we read and write throughout the semester I ask students to consider the contradictory ways authors take up such questions and the ways in which the forms they choose aid them. I encourage them to resist easy, formulaic answers and to look at the application of ideas. My assignments and exams ask students to make connections between texts, to think critically about their own writing and reading strategies, and to apply what they have learned on structural and syntactic levels to revising. It is my responsibility to share my knowledge of reading, critical thinking and writing with the students in multiple formats. Some days I will provide short lectures; some days students will bring in a question about a text and we will begin class with a warm-up writing exercise. For example, when we were reading Henry David Thoreau, one young woman asked the class what it would mean for them to go “into the woods” now. We used our warm-up writings as a springboard into discussion: how are our “woods” constructed as social commentary? How did Thoreau describe his life in the woods in order to critique the life lived “outside the woods”?

Instead of keeping “research” a distinct and separate later assignment each semester, I encourage students to consider research a natural intellectual strategy that begins the first day of class and develops, by the time they are writing their research project, into a valuable resource for broadening and deepening our discussion and for helping us to rigorously question our own thinking. In both the introductory and the advanced poetry writing class students write a “research” poem in a subject area that interests them, incorporating what they have learned throughout the semester and writing an accompanying essay talking about how they researched and used research in their poems. The research poem encourages them to think of all writing as enriched by interdisciplinary study.

Several principles serve me well as I teach. The first is that each of my students (if I am careful, work hard and listen deeply) is my teacher. The necessary qualification of the first principle is that I never quite know what it is they will teach me. There are those moments when a student will see a text in a new way. I will never forget the delight I felt when a science major used the sonnet form, a form devoted to praising or worrying over the “beloved,” to write a love poem to the thinking of Darwin. More subtly, students keep me intellectually honest; they keep me on my proverbial pedagogical toes. Also, I have found that even when students are motivated to achieve by a desire for skills and/or good grades, they perform even better when they feel the material is relevant to their lives. One of the things I love about teaching and learning in the Roanoke College community is the ethic that our learning is not distinct from our community lives, that the two inform each other in vital ways. In my creative writing classes we not only visit and write about the art that is being made in Roanoke, we also attend after school programs to help “troubled” kids write poems.

Perhaps the most important thing I have learned in my teaching is to listen for the silences, for the students who are not talking or who are confused. Because they vary so widely in their abilities, needs and experiences, if I am to achieve my goals with as many of them as possible, I cannot embrace a comfortable single habit of knowledge or skill giving. A lecture that inspired one group may not convey passion and knowledge to the next. My goal is to teach all of them to be active, ethical, rigorous learners, not just the middle achievers or high achievers. A certain strategy of exposition may work for most of the students most of the time, but I have to be ready to modify it for those who learn differently than the majority. Because my pedagogy is student-centered, I must stay flexible in the classroom and I must be available outside the classroom.

I try to be unafraid to be passionate in teaching, scholarship, and service, because I do believe that we live and die to some degree by the stories that we tell about ourselves and others. But history shows us mere emoting does not suffice and oftentimes ideas that seem the most promisingly liberating have been used to great harm. For example, in Writing II, we study the liberating ways people began to think of “news” depending upon who was reporting it—that the earthquake in Mexico became a very different story when told by the poor in the streets. But the same kind of important narrative relativism in the news is exploited by the so-called “Holocaust Revisionists” who present themselves as researching academics and the Holocaust as just an overblown *story* told by a few angry people, and made convincing by “a few piles of shoes.” I give my students the news reports and I show them the ad for the “Holocaust Revisionists” so they can identify how the same arguments may be used to very different ends. In this way and in other ways, I try to model an ethic of learning and to encourage a similar one in my students: to be wary of easy, shallow thinking; to balance the sometimes chaotic process of creation with the thorough, controlled process of revision; to recognize and integrate our academic lives with our lives lived in the community; and to care deeply about learning and the ways in which reading, critical thinking and writing are integral to a democratic culture.

MELANIE ALMEDER

EDUCATION

- Ph. D. English University of Florida. Spring 1999. Dissertation: "Curing Narrative: A Contemporary Poetics of Agency."
M.A. English University of Florida. 1995. Thesis: "Avant-Garde Performance."
M.F.A. Creative Writing University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1992.
B.A. English; *cum laude*. University of Virginia, (Echols scholar). 1987.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Roanoke College, Associate and Assistant Professor (1999 -); 19 different courses
University of Florida, Instructor (1993-1999); 8 different courses
Holyoke Community College, Instructor – 1 course
University of Massachusetts, Instructor – 5 different courses

GRANTS, AWARDS, AND HONORS

Writing:

Poetry Fellowship, Virginia Commission for the Arts, 2007-2008.
Nomination, Library of Virginia Book Awards for Poetry, 2008
Nomination, Great Lakes New Writer's Award, Fall 2007.
Verse Daily, Featured Poem, "Mock Orange," April 21, 2007.
Editor's Prize, On Dream Street (book of poems), Tupelo Press; March 2007.
First Book Prize, On Dream Street. Anhinga Press, 2005.
Finalist, Walt Whitman Award, 2006 (withdrew; already accepted at Tupelo).
Writer-in-Residence, The Island Institute, Sitka, Alaska, April 2006.
Writer-in-Residence, La Napoule Foundation, France, November-December 2005.
Writer-in-Residence, The Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Ireland, Summers 2002, 2005.
Writer-in-Residence, The Woodstock Guild, New York, Summer 2003.
Finalist, Agha Shahid Ali Award, Utah State Press, Spring 2005; Dorset Prize of Tupelo Press, Spring 2005; International Poetry Contest, *The Atlanta Review*, Spring 1999.
Finalist, First Book Award, 6 times, 5 publishers, between 2000 and 2004
Featured Poet, Poetry, March 2004. (On Poetry website; "Country Love Song")
The Painton Memorial Fellowship Award, Paris Writers' Workshop, Summer 2003.
Associated Writing Programs, Writers' Conference Award, Summer 2003.
Writers' Venue National Contest, Best Poem Award, "Verge," Spring 2003.
Diner, Honorable Mention, "Adam and Eve Chassis du Paradis." Spring 2003.
Comstock Review, Best Poem Award, "Poem for the Man," Fall 2002.
Comstock Review, Runner-Up Best Poem, "Above the Town," Fall 2002.
Nominated for the "Pushcart Prize," Spring 2001, Spring 2002, Fall 2005
Semi-finalist, The Nation Discovery Award, Spring 2001.
Finalist, International Poetry Contest, The Atlanta Review, Spring 1999.
Emily Dickinson Award for Best Poem, Universities West Press, Summer 1999.

Research/Teaching/Service at Roanoke College:

Faculty Sponsor, "On Concept's Edge," student literary magazine, 2009 - present
Inaugural Poem read at Inaugural Ceremony for College President, October 2007
Faculty Scholar Award, Roanoke College, 2007-2010; 2002-2005
Curriculum Grant, Roanoke College, Summer 2009, Summer 2006.
Research Grants, Roanoke College, Summers of 2008, 2004, 2003, and 2000
Dean's Council Exemplary Teaching Award, Spring 2003.
Faculty Leadership Award, Student Government Association, Spring 2001, Spring 2002.

PUBLICATIONS

- "Homage" and "Iridescence of Life," The Seneca Review (special issue on The Lyric Body), Fall 2009/Spring 2010.
- "Tuscawilla Lullabye," Old Florida Journal, Fall 2009.
- Book Review: "Cambridge History of Irish Literature." Sixteenth Century Journal, 2008.
- On Dream Street (Book of Poems). Tupelo Press, March 2007.
- "This Tropic of Resemblances: Catalogue Introduction," Miami Dade Public Library, 2007
- "The Necessary Angel: Exhibition Introduction, Miami Dade Public Library, 2007.
- "Canticle: Pioneer," Exhibition Poem, Beatrix Reinhardt; Finland, 2006.
- "Hermeneutics of Lust," Mississippi Review, Winter, 2006.
- "Landscapes," (3 poems) Connotations: A Journal of the Island Institute, Oct. 2006.
- "From Ten Cures," (3 poems) The Courtland Review. November 2005.
- "The Lowell Sonnets," and "Verge," 32 Poems. Fall 2005.
- "Lonely," Margie: A Journal of Contemporary American Poetry, Fall 2004.
- "Dreaming Industry," Margie: A Journal of Contemporary American Poetry, Fall 2004.
- "Decline of a Century." Minnesota Review Special Issue: Absurdity, Summer 2004.
- "Country Love Song," Poetry, March 2004.
- "Adam and Eve Chased," Diner, Fall 2003.
- "Ouroboros," Exhibit Catalogue Essay, Cork Art Exhibit, Ireland, Fall 2003.
- "Dumb Luck" and "Poem for a Sad River," Iron Horse Literary Review, Summer 2003.
- "For Silence," 32 Poems, Spring 2003.
- "Poem for the Man," and "Above the Town," Comstock Review, Fall 2002.
- "The Old Lie" and "Elegy for Grief." American Literary Review. Spring 2001.
- "Elegy for Market Street," "Ode to Eastern Birds." Seneca Review. Winter 1999/2000.
- "A Brute Given." flyway. Fall 1999.
- "Mock Orange." Five Points. Summer 1999. (Reprint Fall 2006, Blackstaff Press.)

CONFERENCE PAPERS/READINGS

- In 2009/2010 – 8 Readings, 4 Workshops
- In 2007/2008 – 7 Readings, 3 Workshops, 1 Panel Discussion, 1 Radio Interview
- Chateau de la Napoule, Resident Fellow Readings, November and December 2006
- The Island Institute Visiting Writer Readings (two public and one Rotary Club reading)
- Invited Poetry Reading, Southern Atlantic Modern Language Assoc. Conf., Nov. 2004.
- "Witnessing First Person in Composition Classrooms," CCCC Conference, Spring 2001.
- "Writing Cure: Shamanism Meets the Stock Market." Science and Lit. Society, 1998.
- "You Cannot Just Fly Off from a Body: Politics of Healing." Sci. and Lit. Society, 1997.

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (selected)

Past and Current: Creative Writing Curriculum Committee; Multi-cultural Advisory Board; Multi-cultural Curriculum Committee; Visiting Writers Committee; Advisor, After School Writing Programs; Faculty Grievance Committee; Scholarship Committee; Editor, *Roanoke Review*; Advisor, Undergraduate Literary Journal; English Curriculum and Hiring Committees

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Shelter for homeless women in Miami (wrote poems for fundraiser, 2010); Writing Arts Group (2009 - ongoing); Refugee Center (volunteer projects, 2005 – ongoing); Amnesty International (1997 - ongoing); Battered Women's Shelter (writing workshops), Sitka, Alaska (April 2006); Board of Directors, Bethany Hall: Halfway House (2001 - 2005); Poets in the After-School Programs, Roanoke (2000 - 2003); Arts and Medicine Program, Shands Hospital, Gainesville, FL(1997-1998)

Letters of Support

Students

“She was available to me 24/7 and she meant it for real, not just because it was her job as an advisor... I can only hope that I will one day achieve her humility, her intelligence, and her open-mindedness. She is certainly one of my mentors.” *Melissa W. Baker, Class of 2003*

“Dr. Melanie Almeder is one of the most dedicated individuals to the cause of education and community... she was a constant inspiration, urging us on when the project began to wear on us...As I continue working on a Masters in Creative Writing, Dr. Almeder remains a steadfast source of encouragement, advice, and friendship.” *Jeremiah Merceruio, Class of 2001*

“Because of her generosity of spirit and self, I really felt motivated to seek an opportunity to affect students’ lives in the same way I’d seen her do. As a teaching assistant, I try to model my interaction with my own students after Melanie’s...I know few people who are willing to give so much of themselves to others and to their work, in this setting or any other. No one as consistently puts the needs of others above her own or finds such beauty in the simple power of words and human interaction.” *Mandy Catron, Class of 2003*

“Her willingness to open her office or home at any needed time and help me construct a story ... had such a profound impact on me ... Melanie has an incredibly kind disposition and challenges her student unequivocally ... In fact, it is just this challenge that drives Dr. Melanie Almeder’s students.” *Mary Cunney, Class of 2002*

“She does not make the writing class easy (nor should she), but she does provide an open environment for reading and sharing...Her kindness, genuine interest in her students, and devotion to her job are extraordinary.” *Sarah Sneary, Class of 2005*

“She is so open to discussion in class... It is, in part, because of (her) class that I’m studying English and intend to go to grad school and become a teacher. She served as our professor/ advisor for a group of students who worked to teach poetry at an after school program for local kids, and it really went well. She was very involved... helped us with setting up a reading for the kids ... there were people standing in the back of the room to hear the kids read. And read they did, and very well at that, and it wouldn’t have been at all possible without Melanie. She really is there for her students and advisees.” *Evan R. Williams, Class of 2004*

“She became a role model. She extends this love of humanity in everything that she does from teaching to offering her office as a safe haven for anyone needing a helping hand, hug, or smile...She has been a huge supporter of our diversity movement. *Misty Thomas, Class of 2005*

“Melanie Almeder is the sort of teacher who makes her students want to come to class. She is an amazing, charismatic, sagacious person who loves learning as much as she loves sharing her knowledge with others... She works diligently and happily to help every student who needs her help, and she constantly goes above and beyond the call of duty ... she is a person who I and many of my fellow students strive to emulate.” *Elizabeth Leming, Class of 2005*

“She is not only brilliant in her field, but a gracious, humble, and enlightening woman. Very few teachers have touched my life the way Dr. Almeder has, as other past and present students would agree. She has a natural gift of motivating her students to love learning as well as developing a close bond with every student she meets.” *Christin Liquore, Class of 2003*

"I knew that what I would say in class was not going to be ridiculed, rather it would be celebrated. I was always aware that she had a standard of excellence for all her students. Even though she expected commitment, she fully supported each and every student despite the level the student was at and she was always willing to provide help outside the classroom. ... She is truly an inspiration to my own work in poetry and in my life." *Kate Mussen, Class of 2004*

"She is captivating.... She has such an incredible passion for everything that it bleeds into the classroom and students ... There are a hundred more quotes that I can recall (from other students) about the passion for learning that Melanie instills in students ...any student who has had the pleasure of learning from her knows just how wonderful and beautiful a person she is for having touched so many of our lives." *Bradley Haugen, Class of 2005*

"Dr. Almeder's classes are structured to inspire critical thinking and creativity while cultivating a rigorous work ethic and respect among students....I have gained knowledge of and appreciation for international issues and grown more confident as a scholar and human being. She always challenged her students to consider the obligations associated with knowledge—what is its purpose and what does it call one to do. Everyone leaves Dr. Almeder's classroom knowing that they have the power to effect change throughout this world." *Casey Nobile, Class of 2006*

"If the primary role of the college professor is to inspire then Melanie Almeder is undoubtedly unsurpassed in her field. Her abilities to infuse a classroom with profound wisdom and enormous respect for all are the keys to her high-standing on the campus and community. She focuses her energy and heart towards her students ... As an advisor Dr. Almeder is fully dedicated to the success and advancement of her students, not just in the classroom but in the community as well... Overall, no professor brings the same degree of passion, genius, modesty, and charisma to a classroom as does Melanie Almeder." *Scott Segerstrom, Class of 2002*

Colleagues

"She is that rare thing these days, a real poet, someone who has a way with words and something to say... She's everything you could want in a teacher of creative writing, and in a colleague.... One can't praise her enough. The real reward of teaching is having the opportunity to work with such a rare creature." *Debora Greger, Prof. of English, University of Florida*

"She is a celebrated young poet and gifted teacher in a rich variety of classroom settings ... (dissertation) project represents not only an important contribution to the fields of contemporary United States, Native-American, African-American, and ethnic literatures, but also to feminist and post-structuralist theory." *Phillip E. Wegner, Department of English, University of Florida*

"That students have been fully engaged in and enlivened by Melanie's teaching is evident in the outstanding student evaluations she consistently received ... Because she is an extraordinary instructor, the department awarded her several of its teaching assistant awards for excellence in teaching, and the Graduate School awarded her one of its few awards....Melanie Almeder is a splendid example of the kind of teacher-scholar who gives generously in time, energy, and thought to the development of a student's ability to think and write critically while also freely." *Dr. Carolyn H. Smith, former Director of Writing Programs, University of Florida*

"She is a brilliant critic, an excellent poet, a superb, award-winning teacher, and a stellar researcher... her distinguished teaching has won her a prestigious, University-wide teaching award; she was one of only ten teaching assistants selected from among our more than 2500 (at Univ. Of Florida) ... *Elizabeth Langland, Dean, University of California, Davis*

“Melanie’s extraordinary talents as a writer, her dedication to the writer’s craft, her awareness of the inner workings of language ...her ability to share this knowledge – all of these qualities have made her an exceptionally good teacher... this assessment has been confirmed by her award-winning teaching ... Melanie will make that kind of unique contribution ... through her academic brilliance, her creative energy, her superb teaching, and her generosity of spirit.” *John Cech, Professor of English, Director of the Center for Children’s Literature and Culture, Univ. of Florida*

“This young poet was the first to win a double scholarship to Paris Writers Workshop; one from our own Patricia Painton Scholarship Fund and a scholarship from the Association of Writers and Writing Programs. Ms. Almeder was a delightful participant who contributed to the positive sense of community.” *Rose Marie Burke, Co-Director, Paris Writers Workshop*

We’ve had few residents who have given of their time more generously than Melanie did while here. She used her particular talents as a writer and poet to work with a range of people, including women and children at our domestic violence shelter. She has a keen understanding of how the arts can be constructively used in community. People in Sitka responded enthusiastically to her as a person and to her poetry. We hated to see her leave.
Carolyn Servid, Co-Director, The Island Institute, Sitka, Alaska

“Melanie M. Almeder possesses a well developed poetic sensibility as she beautifully meshes seeing with saying, the natural world processed through the viewer’s imagination, emotional life, and passion for language. Almeder’s poetry is lush, alliterative, full of figures and vigor; hardly a phrase passes without a fresh image.” *Jeffrey Greene, Judge - Patricia Painton Scholarship*

“Melanie ... participated in a panel discussion for students on paths to publication. Not only is Melanie an accomplished poet, but also an astute listener whose comments and advice are thoughtful and constructive. She is one of the rare breed of poets who is modest about her talents and open to others.” *Marcia Lebre, Director, Paris Writers Workshop*

“She exceeded every expectation I had of her....She taught an intensive four-part workshop in poetry for which she designed the curriculum.... The workshop participants came to me with nothing but praise and hallelujahs at my having found such an outstanding instructor.... Melanie Almeder is talented, generous, and complete joy to work with.” *Sarah Bewley, Writers Program Coordinator, Gainesville Association for the Creative Arts*

“Melanie Almeder is, after all, one of the best young poets in America. I don’t say that lightly. As the editor of the national poetry journal, *32 Poems Magazine*, who has hundreds of poems cross his desk each month, as a professor who teaches poem after poem each week, I can say that Ms. Almeder’s poems stand up to the best we have to offer in contemporary poetry. If editors ask me what young poets they might publish, I tell them to contact Melanie ... her well-crafted, imaginative, exceptional poems.” *Dr. John Poch, Dir. of Creative Writing, Texas Tech*

“She has volunteered herself as a teacher ... The joy on the faces of those children are forever etched in my mind as is the fact that Dr. Almeder saw the need and made it happen. She has simply sat, with a beautiful and needy child on her lap watching videos; a child whose face turned from frightened to serene as she was simply held by this wonderful woman....I would be hard pressed to think of a more dynamic, energetic, intelligent, thoughtful and compassionate teacher and human being. Her spirit nurtures and challenges, understands and expects, cares and demands. She is the person and teacher that is once in a lifetime. The one you talk about 10, 20, 30 years later; the one who actually made you want to be more....” *Amy Nasta, On-Site Coordinator, Virginia Tech’s Pilot Street Project (assimilating African refugees into our society)*

Evaluative Data from Students

During eight years at Roanoke College, Dr. Melanie Almeder has taught 46 courses (25 in the English Department, 14 first-year writing courses and 5 Senior Symposium serving the General Education curriculum, and 2 May Term Intensive Learning courses). All of these courses except those taught in Summer sessions have been evaluated by an institutionally-administered Course and Instructor Evaluation System (CIES) and analyzed by the director of the Office of Institutional Research. Students rate instructors and courses on 10 items (course improved my knowledge and skills in the field; instructor's presentations were well prepared and organized; instructor communicated effectively; instructor stimulated my intellectual curiosity and interest; instructor conveyed a positive feeling about the material; instructor graded students without showing favoritism; instructor was open to questions in class; instructor was willing to provide assistance outside of class; rate the course; rate the instructor). Students use a five-point scale, anchored at 1 ("Very Poor") and 5 ("Excellent"). The table below shows data for the courses taught by Dr. Almeder at Roanoke College and evaluated with this CIES:

<u>Semester</u>	<u>Course</u>	<u>Mean of 10 Items</u>	<u>Mean rating for Instructor</u>
Spring 2007	Engl 260 – World Literature	4.91	4.94
	Engl 316 – Adv. Creative Writing: Poetry	4.85	4.94
	GST 400 – Senior Symposium	4.55	4.79
Fall 2006	Engl 240 – British Literature	4.75	4.84
	Engl 352 – Studies in Contemp. Poetry	4.87	4.90
	GST 102 – Writing Course II	4.83	5.00
May Term '05	IL 277 – Contemporary Irish Literature	4.81	4.87
Spring 2005	Engl 316 – Adv. Creative Writing: Poetry	5.00	5.00
	GST 102 – Writing Course II	4.77	4.91
Fall 2004	Engl 216 – Creative Writing: Poetry	4.90	4.94
	Engl 352 – Contemporary Poetry	4.94	5.00
	GST 101 – Critical Writing/Reading	4.77	4.82
Spring 2004	Engl 316 – Adv. Creative Writing	4.90	5.00
	GST 400 – Senior Symposium	4.72	4.88
Fall 2003	Engl 216 – Creative Writing: Poetry	4.94	5.00
	Engl 220 – Native American Literature	4.93	4.92
	GST 101 – Critical Writing/Reading	4.59	4.65
Spring 2003	Engl 220 – Novels of the Family	4.94	5.00
	Engl 316 – Adv. Creative Writing	4.74	4.94
Fall 2002	Engl 216 – Creative Writing: Poetry	4.80	4.93
	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.80	4.95
Spring 2002	Engl 216 – Creative Writing: Poetry	4.79	5.00
	Engl 230 – Intro to Literary Analysis	4.90	4.95
	Engl 230 – Intro to Literary Analysis	4.80	4.95
Fall 2001	Engl 215 – Creative Writing: Fiction	4.87	4.92
	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.79	4.84
	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.90	4.92
May Term '01	IL 277 -- Contemporary Irish Literature	4.84	4.93
Spring 2001	Engl 316 – Adv. Creative Writing	4.85	5.00
	GST 102 – Writing Course II	4.84	4.89
	GST 102 – Writing Course II	4.73	4.79
Fall 2000	Engl 301 – Literature of Witness	4.93	4.93

	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.80	4.94
	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.78	4.88
Spring 2000	Engl 216 – Creative Writing: Poetry	4.91	4.92
	Engl 230 – Intro to Literary Analysis	4.86	4.86
	GST 102 – Writing Course II	4.59	4.58
Fall 1999	Engl 222 – Advanced Composition	4.84	5.00
	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.85	5.00
	GST 101 – Writing Course I	4.69	4.80

Two things about the data in the table above are worthy of note. One is the consistency of the ratings (whether it be for a 200-level English course, a 300-level course typically taken by English majors, or GST 101 and GST 102, which are required writing courses for first-year students as part of the General Education program). The ratings are consistently extremely high. How high can be seen by noting the second observation: Dr. Almeder's mean for all 10 of the summative items, and her mean for the "instructor" rating, are well above the 75th percentile of the campus norms. The comparison of her mean scores with campus norms is as follows:

Dr. Almeder's overall mean of 10 summative items:	4.82
Campus overall mean of the 10 summative items:	4.28 (SD = .395)
Campus 25 th and 75 th percentiles:	4.03 and 4.56, respectively
Dr. Almeder's mean rating for "rate the instructor":	4.91
Campus mean rating for "rate the instructor":	4.27 (SD = 0.52)
Campus 25 th and 75 th percentiles:	3.95 and 4.65, respectively.

Thus, the mean instructor rating given to Dr. Almeder by 663 students across 40 different course sections the eight years during which this Course and Instructor Evaluation form was given is 4.91 on a 5.0 scale (and nearly half of these are by first-year students taking required courses in Writing I and Writing II). (**Note:** That CIES form was not given during the last two years. A new form, one lacking global course and instructor ratings, is now being used. Last year's mean ratings in 9 areas for Dr. Almeder's courses were as follows: Fall – Engl 220, 4.74; Engl 260, 4.78; GST 400, 4.73; Spring – Engl 316, 4.24; Engl 352, 4.65. Thus, ratings continue to show consistent, and consistently high, student response to Dr. Almeder's teaching.)

Evaluative Comments from Supervisors

Dr. Anita Turpin, Professor of English and present English Department Chair, has been Dr. Almeder's chair during the past four years. The following comments are taken from her Annual Evaluations during these past four years.

"The language seems trite when I try to apply it to Melanie's teaching and advising. She would be exceptional by any standard, in any setting ... her (evaluation) scores are continually high ... highest marks are often in response to questions about stimulating intellectual curiosity and interest and conveying a positive feeling about the material.... Also, Melanie's scholarship connects seamlessly with her teaching. Consequently, her students benefit enormously from her work outside the classroom Melanie's (student evaluation) scores are phenomenal....I repeat: phenomenal.... Using the axiom that "less is more," let me say only this about Melanie's teaching and advising: she is absolutely remarkable.... Melanie devotes an extraordinary amount of time to her students ... Melanie lives a life of service to others.... Strengths: compassion coupled with intellectual rigor, versatility in pedagogical approach, integrity, an abiding concern for the well-being of students."

Evaluative Comments from Supervisors (continued)

Dr. Michael A. Heller, Professor of English and former English Department Chair, was Dr. Almeder's chair during her first four years at Roanoke College, from Fall 1999 through Spring 2003. The following comments are taken from his Annual Evaluations during her first four years plus Dr. Heller's letter to the Faculty Affairs Committee recommending her for tenure.

"She is an inspiration to her students, inside and outside the classroom; she is a successful publishing poet and scholar; and she contributes through service in profound ways....students respond positively to the ways she challenges them and actively involves them in the important issues of her discipline... She demands a great deal from students, but perhaps more importantly she expresses a faith in them....She treats students with extraordinary respect intellectually, not only discussing ideas genuinely with them, but also holding them accountable for doing what they need to do... Melanie's teaching affects and is affected by her work outside of the classroom. To take a few examples, she founded and supervised a program in which some of her best students teach poetry writing to junior high students at the West End Center, a program which has been running now for several years and which has inspired and motivated our students; she supervised a staff of students working with her to edit the *Roanoke Review*, which she worked to promote through national literary journals and the creation of a new web site; she has worked to organize the English Department's fine Visiting Writers series; her interest in Irish literature inspired an Intensive Learning May travel course and has led to her own sojourn as a writer in Ireland; ... Her numerous independent studies and honors-in-the-major projects are another indication of Melanie's excellent teaching. More students seek her out for these than she can supervise. She puts a great deal into these supervisions and provides students an excellent experience....She is an excellent academic advisor. More students request Melanie to be their advisor than any other English professor ... Melanie is especially commended for her support for her students emotionally and spiritually, whether by having lunch with them or by visiting them in the hospital ...Melanie's professional activities are indeed impressive, and again these have greatly fueled her teaching. These include her very active life as a practicing writer publishing in national literary journals. She has either won or been nominated for numerous, national writing awards .. Melanie's work this past year as editor of the *Roanoke Review* is helping to move our college's professional literary journal into the ranks of nationally recognized journals...Melanie Almeder's college and department service has important ties to her teaching, research, and writing interests. Because of her integrity and her expertise, Melanie is becoming highly valued by colleagues to serve on committees and by students to support their co-curricular needs and interests. She is commended for her excellent work with the Creative Writing Board, taking students to a conference in Charlottesville, creating opportunities to celebrate student writing, serving as faculty advisor to the student literary magazine, and working hard to bring to campus writers of national stature ...Perhaps most importantly, Melanie should be recognized for her excellent and important work helping to support Sacred Space, a group for women survivors of sexual assault, and for supporting Amnesty International on campus. Both of these groups directly relate to her research work on narratives of healing and to her new course, English 301: Literature of Witness, which was highly praised by students... she has worked closely with people across campus on various art and creative writing projects, and she has co-managed all of the English department's numerous creative writing projects, which include student readings, student writing contests, and the student literary magazine, On Concept's Edge... For two years (Spring 2001 and Spring 2002) she won the SGA Faculty Leadership Award, two much-deserved awards expressing the students' respect for Melanie's leadership. ... She contributes a great deal to our college ... she has had a profound impact on her students. They truly are fortunate to have such a wonderful teacher. ... I have no doubt she is positively changing many students' lives."

Dean's Council Exemplary Teaching Award: 2002-2003 --- Dr. Melanie Almeder
(citation read at the Faculty Meeting of April 16, 2003)

From the statement of Teaching Philosophy of this year's recipient of the Exemplary Teaching Award: "My goal is to teach my students to be active, rigorous, and ethical learners. . . I try to model an ethic of learning." And during her four years at Roanoke College, she has, indeed, lived and taught such an ethic of learning.

"To be active learners," she wrote. She works hard to promote active learning. Her department chair has written of her impressive ways of involving students in research and "engaging them in the intellectual enterprise of the liberal arts." Course designs intentionally foster the asking of questions and the applications of their own and their peers' ideas; quizzes and exams include theoretical questions or application questions; assignments ask students to make connections between texts; portfolio projects and research projects, such as the poetry research poem, encourage students toward active learning from the first day of class. On her GST 101 Research Project Checklist, she asks students to ask themselves, "Am I writing with vitality? Am I working on a project that engages and moves me?" In other areas of active learning, this professor last year alone supervised 8 independent studies, served on 2 honors project committees, and supervised a Summer Scholar.

"To be rigorous learners," she wrote. Her course designs expect preparation for classes, involving a range of texts read at a rigorous pace. Strategies include rigorous revisions of earlier essays; identifying inherent assets and defects in writers' strategies; writing an essay about how the students researched and used the research in their writing. She teaches editing skills to students who help to produce the *Roanoke Review*. As her department chair put it, she has "high expectations for students .. she has faith in their potential as thinking, capable human beings ... she is positively changing many students' lives by academically challenging them."

"To be ethical learners and to model an ethic of learning," she wrote. One of the things this professor loves about teaching and learning is, in her words, the "ethic that our learning is not distinct from our community lives." Thus, her creative writing students see and write about the art being made in Roanoke. They attend after school programs to help "troubled" kids write poems. They learn how narrative relativism in the news can be exploited.

Given that teaching and learning are not distinct from our community lives, this professor's department chair has commended her for her support for her students emotionally and spiritually, whether by having lunch with them, visiting them in the hospital, advocating for students who are victims of sexual abuse or assault. It is no wonder that she is in such very great demand as an academic advisor.

Not only does this professor strive to model an ethic of learning, she works to encourage a similar one in students: "to be wary of easy, shallow thinking, to care deeply about learning and the ways in which reading, critical thinking and writing are integral to a democratic culture." She strives to be, in her words, "unafraid to be passionate in teaching."

Described by her department chair as an "outstanding teacher, a fine scholar and poet, an excellent advisor," she has been said to be "admired, respected, and loved as an excellent professor." The Dean's Council, acknowledging her students' admiration, respect, and love as an excellent teacher and advisor as well as her colleagues' recognition of a model *par excellence* of an ethic of learning and caring, proudly bestows its 2002-2003 Exemplary Teaching Award upon Dr. Melanie Almeder.