

CAVE CANEM RETREAT FAQS

How many fellows attend each retreat?

Typically 54.

How many poets apply for first-year residencies, and how many are accepted?

Usually 15-22 are accepted out of approximately 160-235 applicants. Because many fellows return for second and third years, space is limited.

What are accommodation and the campus like? Food?

With four bedrooms, two full bathrooms, a kitchen and living room, each dormitory suite comfortably accommodates four fellows. Every bedroom is furnished with a single bed (with basic linen), desk and chair, clothing rod and set of drawers. Every suite is equipped with two computers with internet access, networked to a centralized printer. There is no wireless access. Though not luxurious, accommodations consistently have been graded as “satisfactory” by retreat residents.

The 219-acre campus is located 35 miles east of Pittsburgh. Classrooms, auditoriums and dormitories are air-conditioned and in close proximity. The dining hall is a five-minute walk from dorms. Residents may use athletic facilities—an outdoor basketball court, tennis courts and the gym— when not reserved by another conference.

Three buffet-style meals, with vegetarian and vegan options, are served each day. Provided you have or can arrange transportation, you may wish to purchase your own food and prepare meals in your suite’s fully equipped kitchen. Grocery stores and a natural food store are nearby. Cheese-and-fruit trays are set out after evening readings for participants who keep late hours.

Greensburg retail stores are a short drive from campus.

Describe a typical day.

8:30 – 9:30 am: Eat breakfast, exercise, write or sleep.

10 am: The poem you wrote last night or in the wee hours is due. Yes, a new poem is due every day, Monday-Saturday!

10:15 - 11:30 am: Optional activities. Fellow-led workshops on various topics and a presentation by the guest poet are offered during the week.

12:30 – 1:15 pm: Eat lunch, write, talk, rest, exercise.

2 – 5 pm: Required participation in a workshop led by one of six faculty members. Your workshop group of nine will work with a different faculty member every day, for a total of six workshops.

6-7:15 pm: Dinner.

After dinner: Attend a faculty or fellows reading, or opt for quiet time.

How are workshop groups composed?

Randomly. You choose your group by drawing from a hat on the first evening of the retreat.

Will I have access to transportation?

Shuttles from and to Pittsburgh International Airport are available on days of arrival and departure. Bussing to/from a mid-week off-site faculty reading is provided. In the event of a medical emergency, transportation will be provided to the nearby hospital emergency room.

Are there restrictions?

Off-campus overnights and on-campus guests are not permitted (with the exception of public readings). All dorms are quiet dorms after 11 pm. Smoking is confined to a designated outdoor area. Of-age adults may consume alcohol in moderation in designated indoor spaces. A tolerance policy is in effect at all times.