

MA North American Studies: Culture and Literature

Application Period: February 8, 2021 – July 15, 2021 (for the winter term 2021/22)

In the interest of learning more about your intellectual aspirations, the North American Studies Admissions Committee asks that you write a response to **one of the following questions**.

Please write a concise, sharply focused, well-crafted essay of 1000—1500 words.
(Note: This essay serves as your writing sample.)

Question A: Cultural Studies

Describe and discuss the growing urban-rural divide as manifested in the 2020 election.

Question B: Literary Studies

Analyze and interpret the following text by Margaret Atwood, which was published in *Dearlly*, New York, Ecco, 2020, p. 18.

A Genre Painting

Here are the tulips,
budded and full-blown,
their swoops and dips, their gloss and poses,
the satin of their darks.

Here are the linen napkins,
texture and crinkle,
the way they soak up light
from the dwindled candle,
the light blues of their shadows.

Here are the skinned rabbits
hanging from strings
opened to muscle, to shiny gristle,
to raw flesh you can smell:
hot rust, swamp water.

Here is the woman working a knife
among onions and innards,
her sleeves turned back, besmeared.
She's looking at us aslant:
she knows what bodies eat.

This is her job or prayer,
her grace, her offering:
these guts and dying petals,
the candle guttering down.

