

**RETIREMENT OF CHRISTOPHER J. MacGOWAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

Christopher J. MacGowan received his B.A. from the University of Cambridge (King's College) with a major in English Literature. He earned his M.A. and Ph.D. in English Literature from Princeton University. Professor MacGowan joined the faculty of William & Mary in 1984 as an Assistant Professor of the English Department. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1990, and Professor in 1996. Professor MacGowan held the Margaret H. Hamilton Professorship from 1999-2002 and was awarded the William R. Kenan Jr. Eminent Professorship in 2017. He received the Plumeri Award in 2011.

Professor MacGowan has served William & Mary in countless ways. Professor MacGowan was a trusted and effective Chair of the Department of English from 2001-2006—the last person to hold the chair for that many consecutive years—and has done stalwart service on the department's crucial Personnel Committee (elected) and Undergraduate Program Committee (appointed). He chaired the erstwhile graduate program in English from 1989-94. He has been on a number of university and Arts & Sciences Committees, including the Retention, Promotion, & Tenure, Faculty Research, and International Studies Advisory Committees. Twice he has held interim leadership roles at the Reves Center. In every role, he has been a voice of reasoned judgment, constructive caution, and deep institutional memory.

As a scholar, Professor MacGowan's research has focused on 20th century American literature, primarily the eminent Modernist poet William Carlos Williams. He edited two volumes of Williams's letters, was President of the William Carlos Williams Society, and served as editor of *The William Carlos Williams Review*. Professor MacGowan has spoken and lectured around the world on the life and work of Williams, from academic audiences to community festivals. He has also published on other important writers such as Denise Levertov, Sherwood Anderson, and Ford Madox Ford. His notable impact on his research field has included publishing two monographs, an *Oxford Handbook of American Literature*, five edited collections of letters, and a plethora of articles. A comprehensive *History of American Literature 1900-1950* volume is upcoming.

Professor MacGowan's deep commitment to the university's teaching mission has been an inspiration to colleagues for decades, befitting the honor he received in 1994, the Phi Beta Kappa Award for Excellence in Teaching. Professor MacGowan's courses on American literature and film are notable for their diversity, from a first-year seminar on the American short story to a College Curriculum course on Paterson, New Jersey, the hub of William Carlos Williams's career. Though Paterson may not at first blush seem a likely candidate for interdisciplinary cultural study, students are drawn in from the moment they glance at the syllabus, which cites lyrics from Bob Dylan's 1976 song "Hurricane," among such other touchstones of Paterson cultural history as John Updike, Nelson Algren, and Junot Diaz. Professor MacGowan also has taught an innovative course on Hollywood culture, a course entitled "American Writers in England," and, time and again, his two curricular staples: Modern Poetry and American Literature 1912-60s. Generations of William & Mary students understand 20th century America better through Professor MacGowan's tutelage.

Professor MacGowan has likewise provided exceptionally effective out-of-class mentoring and advising, particularly for first-year students. He has taken particular interest in nurturing ties to the W&M School of Education, shepherding students through school and state requirements in secondary education in English. Professor MacGowan was recognized as Advisor of the Year for 2015-16.

Colleagues and students alike have been impressed and shaped by his keen intellect and wisdom, dry wit, understanding, and compassion. One colleague particularly cherishes “the mood of authenticity and honesty” set whenever Professor MacGowan turns raconteur. This is just to say, so much depends on Christopher MacGowan.

BE IT RESOLVED, That the William & Mary Board of Visitors acknowledges the retirement of Christopher J. MacGowan, expresses its profound appreciation for his many contributions to William & Mary; and approves, with deep gratitude for his forty years of service, a change in status from the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of English to Professor of English, Emeritus.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Board and a copy of the same be delivered to Professor Christopher J. MacGowan with best wishes from a grateful Board for his years of dedicated service to William & Mary.