**Book Recommendations List**

**Eberly College of Arts and Sciences**
P.O. Box 6296
Morgantown, WV 26506-6296

**Lara Farina**, Faculty, recommends:  
*The Buried Giant*  
by Kazuo Ishiguro

Recent Nobel Prize winner Ishiguro turns toward the legendary past of King Arthur’s reign for this timely meditation on ... classics like Beowulf and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight but speaks to present-day crises of loyalty and justice.

**Marilyn Francus**, Faculty, recommends:  
*The Secret History of Wonder Woman*  
by Jill Lepore

An unexpected origin story of the most famous female superhero, involving the development of the lie detector, the fight to have access to birth control, and a ménage à trois.

**Ryan Kalis**, MFA Student, recommends:  
*A Prayer for Owen Meany*  
by John Irving

Although set in 1987, this story returns to two New Hampshire boys growing up in the ’50s and ’60s. Owen Meany believes he is “God’s Instrument” despite his minuscule voice. The narrative is fanciful, delving into topics that range from religion to fate. It is a beautiful story, I think.

**Aaron Rovan**, PhD Student, recommends:  
*Panic in a Suitcase*  
by Yelena Akhtiorskaya

It’s a fun story, filled with entertaining characters, about a family of Russian immigrants who are forced by their young daughter to confront what it means to be American by confronting what it means to be Russian.

**Hannah Rubenstein**, MA Student, recommends:  
*The People of Paper*  
by Salvador Plascencia

A fun and thought-provoking read. It’s a visually stunning piece of meta-fiction about a group of characters that become aware of the presence of the author, and begin to write in all directions, written in all directions, and some illustrations.

**Katie Ryan**, Faculty, recommends:  
*Brothers and Keepers*  
by John Wideman

A memoir of two brothers—one, an Ivy League graduate and accomplished writer; the other sentenced to life for murder. How do you write this story? John and Robby Wideman composed a stunning meditation on time, in and out of prison. Be sure to read the 2005 edition for updated information.

**Mary Ann Samyn**, Faculty, recommends:  
*The Sound of Poetry*  
by Robert Penn Warren

Written for poets and readers of poetry alike, this collection will increase your knowledge and appreciation of the art, its history, its influence, and its delight. P’liss, it’s pocket-sized. You won’t want to carry it around, but you will.

**Timothy Sweet**, Faculty, recommends:  
*A Constellation of Vital Phenomena*  
by Anthony Marra

In this riveting novel, set during the Chechen wars (1994-2004), the matter is grim but the meditation on history is important, and of a kind of hope is built into the structure of the sentences.

**Glenn Taylor**, Faculty, recommends:  
*Black Glass*  
by Kay Robson

This is a strong collection of short fictions first published in 1938 and recently reissued with a preface by the author (which I love). I am also aware of a beautiful collection of short stories, sometime it is, deep down, there is something that feels like an old and somewhere much better.

**Natalie Updike**, MA Student, recommends:  
*Oscar and Estelle*  
by David Mitchell

This 2004 novel is one of the best examples of voice and inter-textual form in all western literary history. It is constructed as a series of six stories that span from the nineteenth century South Pacific to a futuristic, Korean dystopia, recreating the possibilities of reincarnation and love.

**Johanna Winant**, Faculty, recommends:  
*A Pillow Book*  
by Suzanne Buffam

This is a slim book of “Poetry? Prose? Hilarious lists? All of the above—and more.” The plot, in as much as there is one, is the thirty-sixth attempt by a woman to fall asleep after fighting with her husband, experiencing anxiety about her own derailed career, and explaining death to her young daughter. But it is also very funny, as the narrator puts together late-night lists, for example, of “Iffy Similes” and “Dubious Doctors” (Who, No, Zhivago, Moreau, Strangelove, Feelgood, to name a few of hers). Oh, and it’s also a version of a similarly uncategorizable book written over a thousand years ago by a woman in the imperial court of Heian Japan, Sei Shonagon.

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Reasons for Recommending

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