

CREATIVE WRITING, MFA

The program leading to the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree in creative writing is a studio/academic course of study. Imaginative writers enroll in writing workshops, forms courses, and literature classes, gaining exposure to a broad range of writing models and experimenting with a variety of strategies and forms. Guided development of each writer's talents culminates in a complete, carefully conceived final project (the thesis), typically a book-length manuscript. The program can be completed in three intensive years; a fourth year of study, in which work on the final project is the central activity, may be elected. All admitted MFA students receive support in the form of graduate teaching assistantships or fellowships. Support is available for up to four years, subject to satisfactory performance.

Admissions

Applications are only accepted for the fall semester. While new applications to the Creative Writing MFA program will continue to be read until admissions decisions have been made, the application deadline for best consideration for all funding opportunities is December 1.

In addition to the minimum Graduate School admission requirements, to be considered for regular admission an application must follow these guidelines:

- Applicants must select "Prose" or "Poetry" in the Specialty Area field of the online application and upload a writing sample as appropriate.
- A writing sample consists of 20-30 pages of Prose (fiction, creative nonfiction, or a combination of the two), or 10-20 pages of Poetry.
- For second language speakers of English applying to the MFA program, one of the following minimum language test scores is required. Note that this departmental requirement is more stringent than the Graduate School's requirement.
 - o TOEFL IBT = 100
 - o IELTS = 7
 - o Pearson Test of English (PTE) = 68
 - o DuoLingo English Test (DET) = 120

The GRE general test is accepted but not required.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

Curricular Requirements

Candidates for the MFA degree are required to spend a minimum of two semesters in residence and to complete 48 hours of graduate-level credit, divided as follows. At least half of all coursework must be at the 600 level.

Code and Title	Hours
Workshops and Forms Courses ¹	24
EN 601 Fiction Workshop	
EN 603 Poetry Workshop	
EN 605 Workshop Special Topics	
EN 608 Forms Special Topics ²	
Writers at Work: Form Theory Practice	3
EN 609 Form Theory Practice ³	
Literature, Criticism, Rhetoric, or Linguistics Courses	9

Select 9 hours of literature, criticism, or linguistics courses in the Department of English at the 500 or 600 level from the following list:

EN 500	Special Topics
EN 512	Computers And Writing
EN 523	History English Language
EN 524	Modern English Grammar
EN 525	Dialectology
EN 529	Directed Studies
EN 532	Approach Teach Composition
EN 535	Literary Criticism
EN 537	Intro to Grad Studies
EN 610	Meth Teaching English Sec Lang
EN 612	Topics In Applied Linguistics
EN 613	Second Language Development
EN 617	Teach Esl Acad Language Skills
EN 620	Descriptive Linguistics
EN 630	Directed Studies
EN 635	Literary Criticism
EN 637	Workshop In Academic Writing
EN 638	Sem Rhetoric & Composition
EN 640	Spec Topics Sem American Lit
EN 641	Sem American Lit Before 1850
EN 643	Sem 20th Century American Lit
EN 647	Seminar Southern Literature
EN 648	Seminar African-American Lit
EN 651	Politics of Teaching Writing
EN 652	Composition Theory
EN 653	Research Methodology
EN 654	Sem Visual & Digital Rhetoric
EN 658	History of Rhet/Comp II
EN 662	Middle English Lit Ex Chaucer
EN 663	Sem Renaissance Lit I
EN 664	Sem Renaissance Lit II
EN 667	Shakespeare Performance
EN 668	Sem Renaissance Lit III
EN 669	The Strode Seminar
EN 674	Sem 18th Century Literature
EN 683	Seminar Romantic Literature
EN 685	Seminar Victorian Literature
EN 690	Modern British Literature
EN 693	Seminar in Postcolonial Lit
Electives	6
Select two three-hour elective courses at the 500 or 600 level in English, a foreign language or literature, the Program in Book Arts, Gender and Race Studies, American Studies, or any other department in the university.	
Thesis Preparation	6
EN 599	Thesis Research
Total Hours	48

Footnotes

- ¹ MFA candidates must earn a total of 24 credit hours in this area. These three-hour courses may be repeated for credit. All MFA candidates are welcome to take any of these courses.
- ² These three-hour courses examine traditional and contemporary practice. Students read primary works, and respond with their own creative writing. Sample topics include: Comedy, The Long Poem, Characterization Across Genre, Reiteration, Collaboration, The Prose Poem and the Short Short Story, The Uses of History, Apocalypse Literature, Autobiography, The Graphic Novel, Creative Writing for Kids, The First Person, Modern Poetics, Forms of Poetry, Documentary Poetics, Three Dimensional Poetry, Magical Realism and the Marvelous Real, Screenwriting, Embodied Writing, 21st Century Short Fiction, Speculative Fiction, The Novel, Writing Habit Writing Process, Page to Stage: Acting for Fiction Writers, Contemporary Essay.
- ³ These one-hour courses examine specialized topics of interest to creative writers. MFA curriculum shall require students to complete 3 one-hour sections of EN 609 Form Theory Practice *OR INSTEAD* complete a third three-hour elective course. Sample topics include: Pedagogy for 200-level creative writing courses, Pedagogy for 300-level creative writing courses, Profession of Authorship, Giving a Reading, Forest Bathing, The Sentence, Travel Writing, Business of Writing, Academic Job Market, Non-academic Job Market, Writing with the Internet.

Transfer Credit

Graduate School information on Transfer Credit.

Final Project

A thesis, typically a book-length manuscript, is prepared in consultation with a thesis advisor who is a member of the graduate creative writing faculty. The candidate for the MFA defends the thesis before a committee of three graduate faculty members (including the thesis advisor).

Time Limits for Degree Completion Requirements

Graduate School information on Time Limits.

Academic Misconduct Information

Graduate School information on Academic Misconduct.

Withdrawals and Leave of Absence Information

Graduate School information on Withdrawals and Leave of Absence.

Academic Grievances Information

Graduate School information on Academic Grievances.

Grades and Academic Standing

Graduate School information on Grades and Academic Standing.

Graduate School Deadlines Information

Information on Graduate School Deadlines.

Application for Graduation Information

Information on the Application for Graduation.

Financial Support

Students admitted to the MFA graduate program are typically guaranteed up to four years of full financial support, pending the fulfillment of Assistantship responsibilities. Unlike many other graduate programs, all of UA English's admitted students qualify for Graduate Assistantships, which include a stipend paid over nine months, and full payment of up to 15 credit hours of graduate tuition.

For information regarding current Graduate School policy on Graduate Assistant health coverage, please consult the Graduate School directly. The Graduate School will provide single-coverage health insurance for each qualified assistantship, based on the FTE (Full-Time Equivalency, or number of assigned work hours) of the appointment.

Graduate Assistantships

First-year Graduate Assistants with fewer than 18 hours of prior graduate coursework in English will be assigned to work in the Writing Center, serve under the supervision of a faculty member as small section discussion leaders for 200-level literature lecture courses, or be assigned other duties as appropriate.

In the second year and beyond, Graduate Assistants usually teach a 1-2 or 2-1 course load of first-year writing. In this first year of teaching, GAs receive ongoing training and support from the department's composition specialists. Later, GAs are eligible to request other appropriate teaching opportunities, such as literature surveys, advanced composition courses, and creative writing courses.

Continuation of Graduate Assistantships depends on the successful completion of assigned responsibilities, such as teaching or tutoring and following departmental guidelines as outlined by program directors.

Fellowships and Awards

New and returning graduate students are also eligible for awards other than Assistantships, including

- Graduate Council Fellowships
- Dean's Graduate Recruiting and Opportunity Awards
- McNair Graduate Fellowships
- National Alumni Association Fellowships
- Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Doctoral Scholarships
- Alumni Heritage Scholarships

There are no separate application processes for these awards; all eligible students receive consideration. More information is here. Other awards, fellowships, special positions, and grants include

- Excellence in Teaching Awards – Open to all MA, MFA, and PhD students who have taught at least 2 semesters
- Excellence in Research Awards – Open to all graduate students
- Outstanding Service Awards – Open to all graduate students
- Prison Arts Fellowships – Open to MFA students
- Black Warrior Review editorial positions – Open to MFA students

Research and Travel Funding

The department has use of certain endowments to help with graduate student research and conference travel expenses. The Graduate School and the College of Arts & Sciences also offer significant assistance with research and travel costs. The Student Government Association and the department's own English Graduate Organization (EGO) are additional sources of research and travel funding, along with the

Capstone International Center, which allocates funding for international research and travel.

Additional Information

More information about MFA Program funding is [here](#).