CREATIVE WRITING, MFA

The program in creative writing offers a two-year master of fine arts degree in creative writing in the areas of fiction and poetry. The MFA program is a small program within a large and vibrant writing community. The program typically admits six new students each year.

The MFA program is the only program of its kind to have an “alternating genre” admissions policy. The program admits fiction writers in even-numbered years and poets in odd-numbered years. This alternating admissions schedule allows the program to provide a 2-to-1 student/teacher ratio and lets fiction instructors focus entirely on one group of fiction writers, and poetry instructors on one group of poets for the two-year instructional period.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program’s admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program’s website. Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet the minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).

Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Deadline</td>
<td>December 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Deadline</td>
<td>The program does not admit in the summer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)</td>
<td>Not required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Proficiency Test</td>
<td>Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (<a href="https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency">https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency</a>).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT) | n/a |
Letters of Recommendation Required | 3 |

Details about the admissions process can be found here (https://creativewriting.wisc.edu/gradapply.html).

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Prospective students should see the program website (https://creativewriting.wisc.edu/teachingaid.html#financialaid) for funding information.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Instruction</th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students are able to complete a program with minimal disruptions to careers and other commitments.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW-Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Credit Requirement</td>
<td>42 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Residence Credit Requirement</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement</td>
<td>Half of degree coursework (27 credits out of 42 total credits) must be completed graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide (<a href="https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/">https://registrar.wisc.edu/course-guide/</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Graduate GPA Requirement</td>
<td>3.00 GPA required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REQUIRED COURSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 781</td>
<td>Graduate Fiction Workshop (Fiction Genre)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 782</td>
<td>Graduate Poetry Workshop (Poetry Genre)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 783</td>
<td>Creative Writing Pedagogy Seminar (Both Fiction and Poetry Genres)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 785</td>
<td>MFA Thesis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Grade Requirements

- To be considered a student in good standing in the MFA program in creative writing, a student must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and receive no grade lower than an AB in any creative writing course. If a student does not meet this requirement, or if a student receives an F in any course, the student could no longer be considered to be in good standing. Consequently, a student who is not in good standing could have their TAship or other financial aid support revoked, and could be asked to leave the program.

Assessments and Examinations

- MFA candidates must submit a publishable written thesis in the genre in which they were admitted (fiction or poetry).

Language Requirements

- No language requirements.

Requirements

**REQUIRED COURSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students take workshops in their primary genre (fiction or poetry) which are held in the first, second, and third semesters. Workshops include:

- **ENGL 781** Graduate Fiction Workshop (Fiction Genre)
- **ENGL 782** Graduate Poetry Workshop (Poetry Genre)
- **ENGL 783** Creative Writing Pedagogy Seminar (Both Fiction and Poetry Genres)

**Pedagogy (during the first semester)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 785</td>
<td>MFA Thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Students take 3 credits in each of the first, second and third semesters, then 6 thesis credits in the fourth semester. These are not courses—rather, they're the means by which the University gives MFAs credit for their independent writing.

2. **15 credits of electives** drawn from appropriate courses across the curriculum. While students are expected to focus on and produce book-length theses by the end of their two years here, they are also encouraged to pursue other intellectual interests via these electives. In the past, MFA students have fulfilled their elective requirements by enrolling in literature courses, studying foreign languages, pursuing other artistic interests such as dance, bookmaking, and classical guitar, augmenting research for historical novels by taking appropriate history classes. MFA students may also hone their writing skills in other genres by taking intermediate and advanced undergraduate workshops and graduate level workshops in genres outside the one for which they were admitted, as electives with the permission of the instructor. Students may also take up to 6 elective credits in the form of additional thesis hours in the second and third semesters.
GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
- Dean of Students Office (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
  - Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances.

OTHER

Each student receives financial aid in the form of teaching assistantships, prize scholarships, tuition remission, and health benefits.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Develop the creative and technical skills necessary to conceive, execute, and revise original literary work in a student’s chosen genre (fiction or poetry).
2. Demonstrate sensitivity to language and style on both the artistic and technical levels.
3. Develop the critical, analytical, and editing skills necessary to evaluate literary works in progress, both in the student’s own work-in-progress, and in that of the student’s peers.
4. Develop the ability to read literary works not only for their social, historical, intellectual, formal, and interpretive value, but for their capacity to inspire and generate new work, and to see in a finished work the process of its being made.
5. Develop through study and practice the pedagogical skills necessary to teach creative writing courses to undergraduate students.
6. Demonstrate understanding of professional and pedagogical practices and opportunities within and related to the field of creative writing.
7. Recognize and apply principles of ethical conduct with respect to one’s work.
8. Engage with local communities of creative writers.

PEOPLE

Faculty: Professors Barry, Johnson, Kercheval, Mitchell, Wallace; Assistant Professor Evans