

## **M.F.A. IN CREATIVE WRITING**

### **Admissions**

1. Applicants must take the GRE general test (those students seeking entry into the other M.A. options or the Ph.D. program must also take the Advanced Test in English).
2. In addition to the materials required by the graduate school, the applicant must submit a writing sample which should be roughly thirty pages of fiction or creative nonfiction, twenty pages of poetry, or an equivalent amount of other appropriate writing. An applicant wishing to apply in both prose and poetry should submit two writing samples.
3. Admissions will be determined by a committee consisting of Creative Writing faculty chosen by the Creative Writing area faculty.
4. If a student seeks simultaneous entry into the M.A/ Ph.D. program, admission must be approved by both the graduate studies committee and the Creative Writing admissions committee.
5. For regulations of the Graduate School concerning admission, see the regulations of the Ph.D. program.

*Current M.A. and Ph.D. students seeking admission to the Creative Writing Program should submit a statement of purpose and writing sample along with a brief letter indicating their wish to be considered for the program during the regular application period.*

### **Residency**

The Creative Writing Program is designed as a two-year course of study. Students should plan to be in residency for four semesters.

### **Courses**

*The courses discussed below are to be taken over two academic years. The normal course of study is one writing seminar, one literature course, and one thesis preparation course per semester. During the final semester, the student may take a Special Studies course as well as thesis preparation.*

*By taking all of the elective courses in the English department, a student may complete in this two year program the equivalent of one year of study towards the Ph.D.; thus he or she may transfer to it if appropriate. Students planning to complete a joint Ph.D./M.F.A. should NOT apply to receive a Master's degree after the Ph.D. Candidacy Examination (see section on Ph.D. Candidacy Examination).*

1. Thirty-six hours of graduate course credit are required for the degree. Students must take three writing seminars in the first three semesters of residency (a fourth is optional, but encouraged in the final semester, either in the genre of the thesis, or in another genre), four literature courses, four thesis preparation courses and, if necessary, one elective. All carry three credits. Thesis preparation will be supervised by the creative writing faculty. Students must complete their first two writing workshops in the genre in which they were admitted, but they may, with the permission of the

instructor, register for a workshop in the other genre. Students are not allowed to simultaneously take both the poetry and fiction workshops. A student who wishes to complete the thesis in a genre other than the genre in which he or she was admitted must receive permission from the director of Creative Writing.

2. The student must achieve a final average of "B" in order to receive the degree. A student whose course work in the first semester falls below a "B" average will be informed that unless he or she achieves a "B" average for the year the student will not be considered for candidacy.

3. Fifteen hours of course credits per semester constitute the maximum load; nine hours constitute the minimum full-time load.

4. Students are discouraged from taking incompletes. A student is allowed no more than one incomplete per semester, and an incomplete may be assigned by an instructor only after the student has obtained written permission from the director of Creative Writing. Students must complete all work for courses in which they take incompletes within six weeks (including holidays) after the end of the semester. If the work is not completed on time, the student will be put on academic probation and financial aid will be withdrawn.

5. With the permission of the director of the Creative Writing Program and the Graduate School, the student may transfer up to six graduate credits in literature from another accredited college or university if the grade in each course to be transferred is at least a "B," the request is accompanied by an official transcript from the college or university. Creative Writing students may not transfer credits for creative writing workshops taken at another college or university. Undergraduate credits in literature may not be transferred.

6. With the permission of the director of Creative Writing, the student may take for literature or elective credit toward the M.F.A. one (three hours) upper-level undergraduate course (40000-59999), provided that he or she takes at least eighteen hours of graduate courses in English. Those who wish to use an undergraduate course for graduate credit may do so by enrolling in Special Studies with the course instructor, who agrees to augment the course in such a way as to make it commensurate with that of a graduate course. Before enrolling, students are required to provide the director of Creative Writing with the plan agreed upon by the instructor.

7. With the permission of the director of Creative Writing, the student may take up to three graduate credits of Special Studies. Special Studies may help satisfy the literature requirement, though they are not meant to replace regular course offerings, and will only be granted for special cases.

8. Credit for any course is forfeited if the student's program of studies is interrupted for five years.

### **Foreign Language Requirement**

1. No foreign language is required for the creative writing degree.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

1. See the regulation on admission to candidacy--required of all degree candidates--under the M.A. in English and American literature. *When you have met all the requirements for candidacy, see the*

*department administrative assistant for the appropriate form. Normally you do this during the second semester of study. Note that a student must be admitted to candidacy at least one term before the term in which they wish to graduate.*

2. Continuation beyond the first year will require approval of the Creative Writing review committee.

### **Advisors and Thesis Directors**

1. The student's advisor will be the director of Creative Writing, who will ensure that all requirements for the degree are met. Students must meet with the director before registering each semester.

2. Students must choose a thesis director by the end of their second semester. The thesis director will advise the student regarding progress on the thesis. The student is responsible for scheduling a meeting with the thesis director once each semester, or as necessary.

### **Thesis**

1. The thesis consists of a volume of the student's work in a state acceptable for publication. This usually will be a novel, a collection of short stories, a volume of poetry, or a work of literary nonfiction.

2. By the end of the first year of resident study, the student must choose a thesis director and identify the genre of the thesis.

3. The thesis director indicates his or her final approval of the thesis and readiness for the readers when he or she signs the thesis. Two fair working copies of the thesis must then be submitted to the Creative Writing Program office in sufficient time that it may be read before the date specified for submission of master's theses in the Graduate School calendar. A schedule of due dates will be provided by the director of Creative Writing.

4. The thesis will be read by two readers assigned by the director of Creative Writing. Ordinarily, the readers will be drawn from the creative writing faculty.

5. The remaining regulations are the same as regulations nos. 4-6 of the Masters in English and American Literature.

### **Dismissal Policy**

1. Rationale: One of the realities of graduate experience is that not everyone who begins an M.F.A. completes it. The dismissal policy is intended to protect both students and the program in cases where students must be dismissed. The Creative Writing dismissal process is restricted to academic issues; issues of personal misconduct are handled by Student Affairs.

2. Dismissal: Students may be dismissed for poor performance: failure to achieve a 3.0 average, or participate in the graduate writing workshops at a level that can reasonably be expected of all students (e.g. not produce enough quality work, participate at a graduate level in class discussions, etc.). Since the M.F.A. at Notre Dame is a two-year program, the Creative Writing faculty will make assessments by the 10<sup>th</sup> week of students' second semester.

If a student is deemed to be performing poorly, the Creative Writing director will write the student informing him or her of the poor performance and provide information about any recourse of action that the student might have; including the expectations necessary to remain in the program, and a specific time when the student will be re-evaluated.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT APPEAL PROCEDURE**

**(Approved by the Graduate Council, Nov. 16, 2005)**

### **1. Preamble**

The purpose of this procedure is to afford graduate students at the University of Notre Dame the opportunity to resolve complaints dealing with academic issues and other program decisions that terminate or impede progress toward the degree, such as dismissal from graduate standing, placement on probationary status, and denial of readmission to the same program (if the student was previously in good standing).

This procedure is not to be used to address issues of sexual or discriminatory harassment (see grievance procedure available through the Office of Institutional Equity), of academic fraud (see the 'Grievance and Appeal Procedures' section of the *Graduate School Bulletin of Information*), or for disability-related grievances (see grievance procedure available through the Office of Disability Services).

This procedure is provided for continuing and returning graduate students in the Graduate School. It is not to be used by applicants for admission or by students in the Mendoza College of Business, the Law School, or the School of Architecture.

### **2. Program Resolution Process**

Programs are required to develop a formal grievance procedure approved by the Graduate School. Graduate students must first attempt to resolve complaints at the lowest level, i.e., within the student's program, according to grievance procedures specified in the program's graduate student guide. If a graduate student believes that the program reached its decision resolving the student's grievance in error, the student may appeal the decision to the Dean of the Graduate School, subject to and in accordance with Section 3 below.

### **3. Formal Appeal Procedure to the Dean of the Graduate School**

If a graduate student decides to formally appeal a program's decision resolving the student's grievance, the student must submit a written request for appeal to the Graduate School's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs as set forth below. The only grounds upon which an appeal may be based are:

1. A procedural error within the program's stated grievance procedure which may have substantially affected the fairness or outcome of the grievance procedure.
2. New evidence that becomes available only after the conclusion of the program's grievance procedure which reasonably may have impacted the fairness or outcome of the grievance procedure.

3. An inappropriate sanction which is grossly disproportionate to the conduct initiating the sanction, considering the relevant aggravating and/or mitigating factors.

Dissatisfaction or disagreement with a decision is not grounds for appeal.

The request for appeal must include the following information: (1) the graduate student's name, address, email address, and phone number; (2) relevant information from the program's grievance process (date of hearing, any written decision(s) from the program, and sanction(s)); (3) the ground(s) upon which the request for appeal is based; and (4) for each ground stated, an explanation of why the student's appeal meets that ground (e.g., identify specific procedures that were not followed during the grievance procedure, identify any evidence discovered following the conclusion of the grievance process, or explain why the sanction is not commensurate with the underlying conduct).

The request for appeal must be submitted to the Graduate School's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs within 30 calendar days of the program's decision. Only the Graduate School's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may extend this deadline, at his or her sole discretion, in extenuating circumstances. If no request for appeal is submitted within the 30-day appeal period, and no extension has been granted by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, then the program's decision becomes final and is not subject to appeal.

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will then convene a meeting of an *ad hoc* academic appeals committee, composed of three faculty members chosen by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, all of whom will be current members of their respective College Council. Two of the three faculty members on the appeals committee shall be from the appellant's college, and one shall be from outside the appellant's college, unless an appellant is enrolled in a trans-college program, in which case each college will be represented on this committee. The committee will also include one non-voting graduate student. This student may be either one of the current Graduate Student Union representatives or a substitute from the appellant's college selected by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs from a pool of students identified by the Graduate Student Union. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, who does not vote, will chair the committee. At the appellant's request or by request of the committee, this appeals committee will also meet with the appellant. The committee may also meet with other individuals involved.

The appeals committee will make a written recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal. The Dean may or may not accept the committee's recommendation, but in either case, the Dean will issue a written decision to the appellant within 30 calendar days of receipt of the committee's recommendation. The Dean, at his or her sole discretion, in extenuating circumstances, may extend these 30-day deadlines. The Dean will send a copy of this decision letter to the department chair or the director of the program. The judgment of the Dean of the Graduate School is final.

Students who have been dismissed from their program cannot register or complete the ND Roll Call process for subsequent semesters, including the summer session, during the appeal process.

JRL 5/14/2015