

III. 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 graduate poetry or prose workshops 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. 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 should complete the work of graduate courses at the 60000-90000 level during the regular academic term in which they are taken. This expectation of students should also guide faculty members who teach graduate courses. That is, faculty are obligated to evaluate and grade graduate work by the end of the term in which the course is offered.

A grade of "Incomplete" (I) should be given only in exceptional circumstances when there are compelling reasons. When a student receives a grade of I, he or she has 30 days from when grades were due (for the semester in which the I was given) to complete the coursework for a grade. If the coursework is not completed by this date, the grade of I will be changed permanently to a grade of F. Extensions for Incompletes require formal approval from the associate dean of students in the Graduate School.

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.

Opportunities for Teaching

1. Students must enroll in the *Teaching Creative Writing Practicum* in the Fall of their first year in order to be considered for teaching creative writing in their second year. This course provides an introduction to the theory and practice of teaching creative writing. The course is typically taught by the Director of Creative Writing, who is also responsible for second-year teaching assignments.

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 Master's 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 10th 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.

3. The Appeal Process: If a student is dismissed for academic reasons, he or she may appeal the program's decision. This procedure is not to be used to address issues of sexual or discriminatory harassment or disability-related grievances (see du Lac: A Guide to Student Life at <http://orlh.nd.edu/dulac/>) or of academic fraud (see 'Academic Integrity' section of the Graduate School Bulletin at <http://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/16757/bulletin.0910.pdf>).

The appeal is a two-step process; the first is through the department. If the student does not agree with the department's decision, she or he may appeal to the dean of the Graduate School, who makes the final determination. The Graduate School's grievance process can be found at:

http://graduateschool.nd.edu/assets/9047/info_appeal_procedure.pdf.

The following is intended to provide guidance for the first appeal or the local appeal.

4. Proposed Departmental Appeal Process: Complaints must be initiated by a written statement from the student to the chair of the English department and the director of Creative Writing within 14 days from the time when the student is informed of dismissal. To hear the appeal, the department chair appoints an ad hoc committee composed of him/herself and at least two faculty members unconnected factually with the case or the reasons for the appeal, and one graduate student. If

the department chair has been involved in the case, the associate dean of the college should appoint the committee and designate the person to serve as its chair.

The student's statement should indicate details on the nature of the problem, the date(s) the problem occurred, the grounds upon which the appeal is based, background information that the student considers important and the relief requested.

The appeals committee will promptly and thoroughly investigate the appeal to determine whether the relief requested is warranted. The investigation may include interviews and/or written statements from the student, any student witnesses, faculty or staff members who may be able to provide pertinent information about the facts, as well as a review of any pertinent documents. In most situations, the appeals committee will complete the investigation in 30 business days (Note: Business days do not include weekends or employee holidays as recognized by the University). There may be some reports that cannot be investigated within 30 business days. In such cases, the chair of the appeals committee will communicate to the student that the investigation is going to take longer than 30 business days and will also include a statement indicating when the committee anticipates completing the investigation. The department chair will notify the student in writing of the chair's decision. If the chair has been involved in the case, the decision will be made by the designated chair of the ad hoc committee.

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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).

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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. 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. See the discussion of incompletes in the Ph.D. program regulations under **Courses** no. 6.
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 graduate credit two upper level undergraduate courses, provided that he or she takes at least eighteen hours of graduate courses in English.

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

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