

## How to Apply the MFA in Creative Writing Program

Although not required, we prefer applicants to the MFA Program in Creative Writing to hold a bachelor's degree in English or creative writing, or to have taken a significant number of workshops or literature classes as an undergraduate. However, in the past, students without this background have performed well in the program. Therefore, we consider the entire application package in our admission decisions.

The minimum admission standard for all graduate students is an undergraduate grade point average of B, or 3.0 (see bottom of this page for exceptions), or the functional equivalent for students who have attended universities outside of the United States.

Submit the following application materials to be considered for admission (details below):

1. Graduate School Application through Banner
2. Optional GRE (recommended for fellowship consideration)
3. TOEFL or other tests (for international students only)
4. Official Transcripts (from all colleges attended)
5. Creative Writing Application Form
6. Résumé or CV
7. Personal Statement
7. Writing Sample
8. Three Letters of Recommendation

Materials may be submitted via one of these delivery methods (details below):

- Email
- Interfolio (additional fees will be incurred)
- Regular Mail

We only accept applications for Fall admission. All materials should be submitted or postmarked by February 15th. If you would like to be considered for a fellowship, please turn in your materials (including the optional GRE scores that are recommended for fellowship consideration) by December 15th. Applications submitted after December 15 will still be considered for a fellowship (even those without the recommended GRE scores) or a teaching assistantship, but those meeting the initial deadline will be prioritized. Basically, if you are seeking funding through a fellowship or teaching assistantship, the earlier you submit your application, the better. (Information about fellowships and teaching assistantships can be found on the [Financial Aid Information](#) page. After the February 15 deadline, applications may still be considered on a rolling, case-by-case basis (though not for funding), depending on the availability of space and the applicant's credentials; inquire by emailing [creatwrt@temple.edu](mailto:creatwrt@temple.edu).

Writers (or graduate students from other departments at Temple) who wish to take a class in the MFA program as non-matriculated students should inquire about the possibility first, emailing us at least two weeks before the start of the semester about specific classes. Check Temple's [course schedule](#) (select the semester, then look under English, Graduate). If there is space and the instructor is amenable, you will most likely be asked for a writing sample and other information for further consideration. Non-matriculated students may transfer up to 9 credits for courses with a grade of B or higher upon admission to the program.

## **Application Materials**

1. General Graduate School Application: Complete the general [Graduate School application](#). There is an option on the website to download a paper application, which should be mailed to: Creative Writing Program, Dept. of English, Temple University, Anderson Hall, Room 1020, 1114 Polett Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090.) The online application fee is \$60. The paper application fee is \$75.
2. Optional Graduate Record Examination (GRE): The GRE is not required to apply to the MFA Program in Creative Writing. However, if you wish to be considered for a fellowship, you are strongly encouraged to take the GRE and to have your scores for the general test forwarded electronically by ETS to Temple University by December 15. Fellowship nominations are decided by the Graduate Board, which tends to focus on traditional academic records. A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.5 is usually required. See eligibility requirements for fellowships and teaching assistantships on the Financial Aid Information page. Scores must be from the last five years. The institutional code for Temple is 2906. The department code is 2501.
3. International applicants: TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE scores should be sent to Temple University electronically by ETS or the appropriate agency. The following minimum scores are required: TOEFL score of 79/550, or IELTS score of 6.5, or PTE Academic score of 53. Please refer to the Graduate School's [International Application](#) page.
4. Official Transcripts: Request that official transcripts from all institutions of higher education you previously attended (no matter how briefly, e.g., for study-abroad or as a non-matriculated student) be sent to us, either as eTranscripts to [creatwrt@temple.edu](mailto:creatwrt@temple.edu) or mailed to: Creative Writing Program, Dept. of English, Temple University, Anderson Hall, Room 1020, 1114 Polett Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090. Additionally, we ask that unofficial copies or scans of your transcripts be emailed or sent to us with the other application materials.
5. Creative Writing Application Form: Fill out the one-page Creative Writing Application Form.
6. Résumé or CV: A personal résumé or curriculum vitae is required. Work experience—academic or non-academic—is as important as any publishing credits (the latter is not required or expected at this stage of applicants' careers).

7. Personal Statement (750–1,000 words): Discuss literary influences and models that feed your creative work; we're interested in which writers and texts have been important to you in recent years, as well as what critical approaches, if applicable, you have found useful. Describe your work or teaching experience. Discuss your aims in attending an MFA program. Mention what attracts you to Temple's program and whether you're familiar with Philadelphia. Give us a sense of who you are—a more detailed, personal picture than what can be gleaned from transcripts or résumés, especially if you have a non-traditional background or atypical undergraduate record. Double-space the lines, paginate the pages, use a standard font such as Times New Roman sized to 12 points, and have margins of at least one inch on all sides. (you will also be required to post a personal statement on the online Banner system for the general Graduate School application. Simply copy and paste.)

8. Writing Sample: Your writing sample is the most crucial single element of your application. Send a packet of writing in one genre only (poetry or fiction). For poetry, submit ten pages. These pages may include shorter poems, longer poems, and/or an excerpt from a longer project. Individual poems should be separated by page breaks, not run together. Poems may be single-spaced or formatted in whatever way you see fit. For fiction, send a total of 15–25 pages. The pages may include a single story, a series of stories, and/or an excerpt from a longer work (please identify if it is from a long story, novella, novel, or hybrid work). Double-space the lines, paginate the pages, use a standard font such as Times New Roman sized to 12 points, and have margins of at least one inch on all sides. For applicants in either genre, if you would like to include a critical essay in addition to the creative sample, please feel free to do so; it should be double-spaced and formatted like the fiction sample.

9. Three Letters of Recommendation: Request three signed, confidential letters of recommendation to be sent directly to us on official letterhead. Your recommendations should address your performance in previous academic, creative, and/or professional roles. Evaluators may email a PDF of the letter to [creatwrt@temple.edu](mailto:creatwrt@temple.edu) from their institutional email address, or mail the letter to: Creative Writing Program, Dept. of English, Temple University, Anderson Hall, Room 1020, 1114 Polett Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090. Please have the evaluator write "MFA Recommendation for," followed by your full name, as the subject line of the email, or as a notation somewhere on the front of the envelope.

In addition, we may request a phone or video interview with you at a later time.

## **Delivery Methods**

### **Email**

Combine your application materials into one PDF in this order: Creative Writing Application Form, résumé or CV, unofficial copies of transcripts for all colleges, personal statement and writing sample. If needed, use the free [pdfmerge.com](https://pdfmerge.com) service or something similar to produce a single PDF. Email the PDF to [creatwrt@temple.edu](mailto:creatwrt@temple.edu).

Additionally, ask your three evaluators to send their letters of recommendation directly to us (see instructions above); complete the general [Graduate School application](#) on Temple's or through the paper option); have your test scores, if applicable, sent to us; and arrange for the delivery of your official transcripts.

## **Interfolio**

Interfolio's dossier service collects application materials and submits them electronically to schools. Interfolio charges fees for this service. (Note that you will still have to pay the standard Temple University Graduate School application fee.) If you still wish to apply through Interfolio:

- Create or log in to your [Interfolio](#) dossier account.
- Request signed, confidential letters of recommendation from three evaluators. If done through Interfolio, your evaluators do not need to also send copies of their letters to us by email or mail.
- Upload and arrange all the required documents in this order: Creative Writing Application Form, résumé or CV, unofficial copies of transcripts for all colleges, personal statement and writing sample.
- Send all required documents as one delivery to Temple University Department of English through the following procedure:
  - From the Dossier options, click on "Start Delivery," then search for Temple University's Department of English by entering "Temple English" in the box for Institution/Organization Destination.
  - Select "Creative Writing MFA Program-Temple University."
  - Complete the electronic delivery.
- Additionally, complete the general [Graduate School application](#) (or through the paper option); have your test scores, if applicable, sent to us; and arrange for the delivery of your official transcripts.

## **Regular Mail**

Assemble your application materials in this order: Creative Writing Application Form, résumé or CV, unofficial copies of transcripts for all colleges, personal statement, and writing sample. Mail everything in one package to: Creative Writing Program, Dept. of English, Temple University, Anderson Hall, Room 1020, 1114 Polett Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090.

Additionally, ask your three evaluators to send their letters of recommendation directly to us (see instructions above); complete the general Graduate School application on Temple's online Banner system (or through the paper option); have your test scores, if applicable, sent to us; and arrange for the delivery of your official transcripts.

## **Mailing Address**

Use the following address to submit application materials, official transcripts, and/or letters of recommendation by regular mail:

Creative Writing Program  
Dept. of English  
Temple University  
Anderson Hall, Room 1020  
1114 Polett Walk  
Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090

### **Application Deadline**

All materials should be submitted or postmarked\* by February 15th. If you would like to be considered for a fellowship, please turn in your materials (including the optional GRE scores that are recommended for fellowship consideration) by December 15. Applications submitted after December 15th will still be considered for a fellowship (even those without the recommended GRE scores) or a teaching assistantship, but those meeting the initial deadline will be prioritized. Basically, if you are seeking funding through a fellowship or teaching assistantship, the earlier you submit your application, the better.

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Applications are accepted only for Fall admission.

### **Exceptions for GPAs Less than 3.0**

The Dean's Office considers exceptions to the admissions requirement if the student meets one of these criteria:

- Achieved a 3.25 cumulative grade point average in a least 9 credits of graduate work at an accredited university in the United States or equivalent academic performance in a university outside the United States.
  - Scored above the 65th percentile on the verbal or quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Exam (or other standardized test, such as the Graduate Management Admission Test).
  - Earned a 3.5 grade point average during her/his final two years of undergraduate work.
- In special circumstances, particularly with an exceptional writing sample, other exceptions may be granted.

If you have questions or need further assistance, please contact Sharon Logan, the Program Coordinator, at [logansd@temple.edu](mailto:logansd@temple.edu) or [215.204.1796](tel:215.204.1796).

\*By “postmarked,” we mean that materials should be sent before or on December 15 or February 15. They do not need to be delivered on those dates. Regular USPS mail service, e.g., First Class or Priority Mail, is fine. You need not spend extra money on overnight services.