

Master of Fine Arts

Creative Writing with a Concentration in Non-Fiction (MFA)

Kent Wascom, Graduate Program Director
 kwascom@odu.edu

The Master of Fine Arts in creative writing is widely regarded as a terminal degree. It is designed to prepare students for careers as published writers in fiction, poetry, or creative nonfiction. A secondary goal is to emphasize not only preparation for college-level teaching (the practical vocational goal of most M.F.A. programs in creative writing), but also includes preparation of graduates for careers in literary editing and publishing, or as free-lance writers (magazines, newspapers, reviews, and features).

Admission

Applicants must have completed a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution with at least a 3.0 G.P.A. Candidates must also submit writing samples in their genre (candidates should note genre on title page of submission), three letters of recommendation, academic transcripts, and a personal statement.

Curriculum Requirements

Students in the M.F.A. program must complete 54 total credit hours (39 hours of required courses and 15 hours of approved electives). In addition, students must also maintain a 3.00 GPA overall, satisfy a mid-program review at the end of the third semester in the program, and complete all work within three years (full-time students) or six years (part-time students). Students choose courses based upon their genre of study, and should consult the graduate program director or their advisor when selecting a schedule.

Students must take at least 12 credit hours of ENGL 650 15
 (CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP), most of these in the genre area of concentration, to count toward core requirements for the degree.

ENGL 650	Creative Writing	
ENGL 660	Craft of Literary Forms	
Literature (select four of the following): **		12
ENGL 507	Chaucer's Canterbury Tales	
ENGL 516	English Renaissance Drama	
ENGL 521	British Literature 1660-1800	
ENGL 523	The Romantic Movement in Britain	
ENGL 533	Victorian Literature	
ENGL 538	The Twentieth-Century British Novel	
ENGL 547	The American Novel to 1920	
ENGL 548	The American Novel 1920 to Present	
ENGL 559	New Literatures in English	
ENGL 561	American Poetry of the Early Twentieth Century	
ENGL 565	African-American Literature	
ENGL 566	Asian American Literature	
ENGL 592	Modern World Drama	
ENGL 593	Contemporary World Literature	
ENGL 595	Topics in English	
ENGL 615	Shakespeare	
ENGL 659	American Literature 1945-Present	
ENGL 681	Contemporary Classics: The Thesis Reading List	

ENGL 682	Literature for Writers (This course is specifically recommended for MFA Creative Writing students.)	
ENGL 695	Topics	
ENGL 727	London Calling: 20th and 21st Century British Literature	
ENGL 728	Eighteenth Century British Literature	
ENGL 735	Postcolonial Literature and Theory	
ENGL 741	Nineteenth Century British Literature	
ENGL 751	American Literature to 1810	
ENGL 756	Pocahontas Unplugged: Jamestown, Pocahontas and the Forging of American Identity	
ENGL 757	American Literature 1810-1870	
ENGL 758	American Literature 1870-1946	
ENGL 791	Seminar in Literary Studies	
ENGL 694	Thesis Colloquium ***	3
Students must complete 3-9 Thesis Hours to complete curricular requirements in the program		9
ENGL 698	Thesis Research	
ENGL 699	Thesis	
Electives+		15
ENGL 664	Teaching College Composition	
ENGL 683	Literary Editing and Publishing	
Total Credit Hours		54

- * These are the Graduate Creative Writing Workshops in Fiction, Poetry, and Nonfiction; course may be repeated up to 6 times with 3 different topics. Cross-genre experience is recommended (taking ENGL 650 Creative Writing Workshops in a concentration other than the student's major), but ONLY after the first year in the program. Instructor approval must be sought.
- ** No more than 12 hours of courses at the 500 level may be counted toward the degree.
- *** Should be taken in the last semester of the second year, or the first semester of the third year.
- + Additional Creative Writing Workshops, additional American, British, or World Literature Courses, or courses in other fields (approved in advance by GPD) that may count toward Electives ~ MFA Creative Writing students may also elect to take ENGL 596 Topics: Writing Tutorial (1 credit), which offers the opportunity to work in tutorials with the program's Visiting Writer in Residence. Three (3) of these 1-credit ENGL 596 Writing Tutorial courses are equivalent to one Elective (3 credits) in the MFA Creative Writing curriculum. Students *in their first year* of the program, especially those with GTAs/GAAs/RAAs, are strongly encouraged to take as one of their Electives, ENGL 664 The Teaching of College Composition; this course is typically a requirement for any teaching assistantship assignments in the classroom.

Additional Requirements

Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing Thesis

All candidates for the M.F.A. in creative writing must complete a thesis manuscript of publishable quality in their chosen genre (poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction). Each student will select an advisor from the graduate faculty and work with that advisor and a committee of readers to prepare the manuscript. At the completion of the thesis, students will schedule an oral defense with the advisor and the committee, at which point the thesis will be adjudged as to its readiness for final acceptance.

For more information relating to this program and its requirements, please visit <https://www.odu.edu/englishdept/mfa-creative-writing> (<https://www.odu.edu/englishdept/mfa-creative-writing/>)