CREATIVE WRITING

College of Liberal & Creative Arts

Dean: Andrew Harris

Department of Creative Writing

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Program Scope

The Department of Creative Writing offers undergraduate and graduate programs. The three degree programs emphasize the primary importance of the study and practice of imaginative writing in the genres of creative nonfiction, fiction, literary translation, playwriting, and poetry. All three degree programs combine an intense workshop requirement and a variety of special topic creative process classes with requirements in the English Department. The core literature classes assure that students will continue to absorb and be trained in a study of the best literature of the past. In Creative Writing classes, students work with an active, publishing faculty. They learn by vigorous practice; by focused studies of craft; and by extensive reading, analysis, and discussion of their work, as well as that of published authors.

The undergraduate major combines the academic specifications of the traditional English major with the experiential needs of the writing student. Students who enter this program should do so only under the strongly held assumption that they have abilities as writers that may be fostered and trained by such a discipline as is described here. It is hoped that this combined program of writing and literature will lead students to a cohesive study and discipline that combines breadth with intensity.

Accordingly, some greater latitude of choice in literature courses is allowed in the creative writing major. Studies will lead them to a degree in English with a creative writing emphasis. Ample guidance of the creative writing advisors helps insure that students will not be deprived of a sense of the history of literature. In this regard they will continue to be fully qualified as potential graduate students in English as well as prepared should they wish to continue as M.A. or M.F.A. candidates in a creative writing program.

The two graduate programs differ in scope. Both programs are distinguished by innovative classes. Both include seminars, opportunities for community projects, and a thesis. Students may apply for admission to either the Master of Arts in English with Concentration in Creative Writing (30 units) or the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (54 units). In no case will a student be admitted to both programs simultaneously.

The Master of Arts in English with Concentration in Creative Writing serves a double purpose: to extend and broaden the student’s familiarity with literature and to provide the help of a faculty of professional writers and critics in developing the student’s own potential as a professional writer. The Creative Writing Department has a strong core faculty and invites several visiting faculty each semester.

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing is regarded as the terminal degree in the field. The M.F.A. in Creative Writing offers extended experience in small seminars and in individual instruction with faculty. It also develops the student’s understanding of the history and theory of literature and incorporates correlative patterns of study in elective areas such as other cultures, other arts, technical studies, and/or the teaching of writing.

Career Outlook

The career goal is to train and encourage writers of creative nonfiction, fiction, literary translation, plays, and poetry. Many celebrated and distinguished writers are graduates of the department. In the job market, good writers are hard to find. The skills developed in creative writing translate well into corporate editing, publishing, teaching, and working for arts organizations.

Professors

Carter, Caspers, Chernoff, Conboy, Hoover, Mirosevich, Orner

Assistant Professors

De Robertis, Joron, Tigay

Lecturers

Bellamy, Davison, de la Perrière, Dickison, Galjour, Kim, Phillips, Tomash, Tran

Major

- Bachelor of Arts in English: Concentration in Creative Writing (bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/creative-writing/ba-english-concentration-creative-writing)

Masters

- Master of Arts in English: Concentration in Creative Writing (bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/creative-writing/ma-english-concentration-creative-writing)
- Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing (bulletin.sfsu.edu/colleges/liberal-creative-arts/creative-writing/mfa-creative-writing)

C W 101 Introduction to Creative Writing (Units: 3)
The creative writing process. Exercises in writing poetry, fiction, and dramatic scripts. Selected readings of exemplary stories, poems, and plays. Open to all students.

Course Attributes:

- E1: Lifelong Learning Develop
- C1: Arts

C W 301 Fundamentals of Creative Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.

Practice in writing poetry, fiction, and plays. Required for majors.

C W 302 Fundamentals of Creative Reading (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 114 or equivalent. Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.

Students learn to read like writers through lecture-discussion and reading assignments. Submerges the student in literature and asserts the importance of reading.
C W 465 Modern Greek Poetry in Comparative Perspective (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Survey of Greece’s prominent modern poets in comparison with major Anglo-American and European poets. Poets to be studied can include Cavafy, Seferis, Elytis, Mastoraki, Yeats, Eliot, Pound, and Rich. (This course is offered as MGS 465, CWL 465, and C W 465. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

C W 497 Modern Greek Literature (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: ENG 214 or equivalent.
Introduction to Greece’s major modernist and postmodernist writers. Exploration of experimental writing techniques using 20th Century literature. (This course is offered as MGS 497 and C W 497. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

C W 506 The Business of Creative Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 806: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.
Prerequisites for C W 506: Restricted to CW majors; C W 101 or C W 301 with a grade of C or better; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.
Covers agents, corporate and small publishing houses, E-publishing, markets, publicity, etc. Students write letters to agents/editors, press releases for book tours, and several short papers. (C W 806/C W 506 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 507 Writing on the Body (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Upper division standing; C W 101 or C W 301.
Concerns themes of human sexuality and gender in their psychological, social, political, moral, and aesthetic dimensions, combined with personal experience and personal expression. Sexual values are examined through artistic expression and analysis of expressive works.

C W 508 Introduction to Environmental Literature (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Major in creative writing, liberal studies, or environmental studies with a concentration in humanities and the environment; second year composition with a grade of C- or better.
Exploration of the history of contemporary environmental literature; examination of questions of environmental stability and change, environmental justice, human connections to the non-human world and biological studies to discover connections between nature and writing.
Course Attributes:
- UD-C: Arts and/or Humanities
- Environmental Sustainability

C W 510 The Creative Process (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: C W 101 or C W 301 with grade of C or better. Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.
Examination of creative process, emphasizing techniques, style, and structure. Topic to be specified in Class Schedule. May be repeated when topics vary.

C W 511GW Craft of Poetry - GWAR (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to Creative Writing major; ENG 214 or equivalent with a grade of C- or better; CW 301 or equivalent.
Focus on basic craft elements of poetry: diction, imagery, rhythm, voice and form. Close readings of published poetry. Creative and critical writing. (ABC/NC grading only)
Course Attributes:
- Graduation Writing Assessment

C W 512GW Craft of Fiction - GWAR (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to Creative Writing major; ENG 214 or equivalent with a grade of C- or better; C W 301 or equivalent.
Focus on basic craft elements of fiction: plot, dialogue, character, point of view and place. Discussion of student and professional writing. (ABC/NC grading only)
Course Attributes:
- Graduation Writing Assessment

C W 513GW Craft of Playwriting - GWAR (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to Creative Writing major; ENG 214 or equivalent with a grade of C- or better; C W 301 or equivalent.
Focus on basic craft elements of playwriting: scene, story, dialogue, character, and conflict. Discussion of student and professional writing. (ABC/NC grading only)
Course Attributes:
- Graduation Writing Assessment

C W 514 Contemporary World Poetry (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; C W 301 or C W 101 with a grade of C or better; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.
Study of techniques and craft in a wide selection of contemporary poetry from various cultures and nations. (C W 814/C W 514 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 520 Writers on Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 820: Graduate standing or consent of instructor.
Prerequisite for C W 520: ENG 214 or equivalent; open to all students.
Faculty and visiting writers representing a range of styles and subjects read from their works and discuss their creative process with students. (C W 820/C W 520 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 550 Poetry Center Workshop (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 850: Graduate standing in any discipline or consent of instructor.
Prerequisite for C W 550: ENG 114 or consent of instructor; open to all students.
A poetry writing and study course aligned with The Poetry Center Reading Series, featuring guest performances throughout the semester by outstanding local, national, and international poets, writers, musicians and related artists. (C W 850/C W 550 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)
C W 600 Special Topics in Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: C W 301 or C W 101 with a grade of C or better. Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.

Intensive study of a particular area in poetry, fiction, or play writing. Writing projects in area of study. Topic to be specified in Class Schedule. May be repeated when topics vary. (Plus-minus letter grade only)

C W 601 Work in Progress (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to senior creative writing major.

Capstone course for seniors in which undergraduate final project is completed.

C W 602 Playwriting (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to C W major; C W 301 and C W 511GW or C W 512GW or C W 513GW; or consent of instructor

Writing and analysis of plays. Discussion of problems such as craft, aspects of voice, form, characterization, and dialogue. May be repeated for a total of 6 units. (Plus-minus letter grade only)

C W 603 Short Story Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: C W 301 and C W 511GW or C W 512GW or C W 513GW. Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.

Writing and analysis of short fiction in a workshop setting. Lectures on craft, reading for development, and story development. May be repeated for a total of 6 units.

C W 604 Poetry Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to creative writing majors; C W 301 and C W 511GW or C W 512GW or C W 513GW.

Writing and analysis of poetry in a workshop setting. Emphasis on poetic form, style, voice, the line, as well as rhyme, rhythm, meter, imagery and metaphor. May be repeated for a total of 6 units.

C W 605 Writing and Performing Monologues (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to Creative Writing, English Education, and Drama majors; TH A 130. For C W majors: C W 301, C W 511GW or C W 512GW or C W 513GW.

Workshop in creation of contemporary performance monologues. Development of original pieces through writing, performance, and critique; study of artists in the field. (This course is offered as TH A 605 and C W 605. Students may not repeat the course under an alternate prefix.)

C W 609 Directed Writing for B.A. Students (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Apply to instructor during semester prior to desired enrollment. Preference given to majors. Individual conferences to direct the student's project in one of the creative writing forms. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 640 Transfer Literary Magazine (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: C W 301 or consent of instructor.

Selection of original work for an undergraduate literary magazine. Book reviews, interviews, design, production, and distribution. May be used to fulfill 3 units of the creative process requirement.

C W 675 Community Projects in Literature (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 875: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing program or consent of instructor.
Prerequisites for C W 675: Restricted to creative writing major; C W 301 or C W 101 with a grade of C or better, or consent of instructor.

Students use their writing skills by doing internships with community literary organizations. May be repeated for a total of 6 units under one level. (Plus-minus letter grade only) [CSL may be available]
(C W 875/C W 675 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 685 Projects in the Teaching of Creative Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Advanced undergraduate standing in creative writing and approval of chair; a grade of C or better in course in which student will be aide.

Students are placed with a creative writing faculty member in a supervised practicum/internship experience where they explore the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching creative writing. (Students may earn a maximum of 4 units toward the baccalaureate degree for any course(s) numbered 685 regardless of discipline.)

C W 699 Independent Study (Units: 1-3)
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Under exceptional circumstances upper division students may enroll for special work under the supervision of a member of the Creative Writing faculty. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 785 Graduate Projects in the Teaching of Creative Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Classified graduate standing in creative writing; a grade of B or better in the course or its equivalent in which the student will be an aide; consent of instructor.

Supervised practicum/internship experience with a creative writing faculty member; exploration of theoretical and practical aspects of teaching creative writing; practice in leading group discussions and tutoring. MFA students may apply a total of 9 units toward degree; MA students may apply no more than 3 units toward degree.

C W 803 Advanced Short Story Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Writing short stories, emphasizing the development of the student's creative and critical abilities. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 804 Advanced Poetry Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Writing poetry with emphasis on analysis of student work and growth of critical abilities. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 806 The Business of Creative Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 806: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.
Prerequisites for C W 506: Restricted to CW majors; C W 101 or C W 301 with a grade of C or better; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.

Covers agents, corporate and small publishing houses, E-publishing, markets, publicity, etc. Students write letters to agents/editors, press releases for book tours, and several short papers.
(C W 806/C W 506 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)
C W 807 Developing the Novel (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Writing workshop for students in the early phases of writing a novel.

C W 808 Novel Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing; C W 807; or consent of instructor.

Writing and analysis of longer forms of fiction. Personal consultations. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 809 Directed Writing for Graduate Students (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing and consent of instructor.

Apply to instructor during the semester prior to desired enrollment. Through individual conferences the student is directed in a project in one of the forms of creative writing. May be repeated for a total of 9 units. Students may register for different genres concurrently.

C W 810 Seminar in the Creative Process (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Examination of creative process, emphasizing techniques, style, and structure. Topic to be specified in Class Schedule. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

C W 814 Contemporary World Poetry (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Enrollment limited to creative writing majors; C W 301 or C W 101 with a grade of C or better; non-majors admitted with consent of instructor.

Study of techniques and craft in a wide selection of contemporary poetry from various cultures and nations.

(C W 814/C W 514 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 820 Writers on Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 820: Graduate standing or consent of instructor. Prerequisite for C W 520: ENG 214 or equivalent; open to all students.

Faculty and visiting writers representing a range of styles and subjects read from their works and discuss their creative process with students. (C W 820/C W 520 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 825 Playwright’s Theatre Workshop (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate students in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Projects designed to give playwrights opportunities to refine their craft through workshops, rehearsals, readings, and dramaturgical assignments. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 840 Fourteen Hills Literary Magazine (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing; or consent of instructor.

Editing and publishing Fourteen Hills, the graduate literary magazine of the Creative Writing Department. Selection of material, design, production, and distribution. May be repeated for a total of 6 units.

C W 850 Poetry Center Workshop (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 850: Graduate standing in any discipline or consent of instructor. Prerequisite for C W 550: ENG 114 or consent of instructor; open to all students.

A poetry writing and study course aligned with The Poetry Center Reading Series, featuring guest performances throughout the semester by outstanding local, national, and international poets, writers, musicians and related artists.

(C W 850/C W 550 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 852 MFA Workshop in Creative Nonfiction (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to graduate student in MFA creative writing; priority enrollment given to MFA creative nonfiction students; open to other MFA genre and MA creative nonfiction students only on a space available basis, to be determined at the first class meeting.

Creation and revision of original creative nonfiction to a finished, publishable state. May be repeated for a maximum of 18 units.

C W 853 M.F.A. Workshop in Fiction (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Students are expected to concentrate on revision of fiction, on bringing work to a finished, publishable state. Emphasizes the short story. May be repeated for a total of 18 units.

C W 854 M.F.A. Workshop in Poetry (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Students are expected to concentrate on revision of poetry, on bringing work to a finished, publishable state. May be repeated for a total of 18 units.

C W 855 M.F.A. Workshop in Playwriting (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Students are expected to concentrate on revision of a play, on bringing work to a finished state, ready for production. May be repeated for a total of 18 units.

C W 856 M.F.A. Workshop in Short Plays (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Students write a series of five-minute plays, ten-minute plays, and a one-act play that may be presented in conjunction with TH A 661. May be repeated for a total of 9 units.

C W 859 Practicum in Teaching (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing; or consent of instructor.

Pedagogical grounding for pragmatic classroom teaching work and structure in which to work with undergraduates, under the supervision of experienced faculty and in collaboration with other graduate students.

C W 860 Teaching Creative Writing (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Theoretical and practical aspects of teaching creative writing. (Plus-minus letter grade only.)
C W 866 Craft of Translation (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Literary translation: the art and craft of translation. Students familiarize themselves with the best models and develop skills in their own translation.

C W 867 Theory of Translation (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Restricted to graduate student in M.A. English: Creative Writing or M.F.A. Creative Writing; working knowledge of a language other than English.

Examination of the art of translation from a wide range of theoretical perspectives. Focus on linguistic, literary, political, and philosophical aspects of transfer of meaning between languages in an era of globalization. Evaluation of contending theories and application to the practice of translation.

C W 875 Community Projects in Literature (Units: 3)
Prerequisite for C W 875: Restricted to graduate student in creative writing program or consent of instructor.
Prerequisites for C W 675: Restricted to creative writing major; C W 301 or C W 101 with a grade of C or better; or consent of instructor.

Students use their writing skills by doing internships with community literary organizations. May be repeated for a total of 6 units under one level. (Plus-minus letter grade only) [CSL may be available]
(C W 875/C W 675 is a paired course offering. Students who complete the course at one level may not repeat the course at the other level.)

C W 880 M.F.A. Craft and Process Tutorial in Fiction (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Examination of creative process, emphasizing techniques, style, and structure. Topic to be specified in Class Schedule. May be repeated for a total of 18 units when topics vary.

C W 881 M.F.A. Craft and Process Tutorial in Poetry (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in MFA in creative writing or consent of instructor.

Examination of creative process, emphasizing techniques, style, and structure. Topic to be specified in Class Schedule. May be repeated for a total of 18 units when topics vary.

C W 882 M.F.A. Craft and Process Tutorial in Playwriting (Units: 3)
Prerequisite: Restricted to graduate student in the M.F.A. in Creative Writing or consent of instructor.

Examination of creative process, emphasizing techniques, style, and structure. Topic to be specified in Class Schedule. May be repeated for a total of 18 units when topics vary.

C W 893 MA Written M.A. Creative Project (Units: 3)
Prerequisites: Consent of instructor and major adviser; approval of Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) for the Master of Arts in English: Creative Writing and Culminating Experience (CE) forms by Graduate Studies. ATC and Proposal for Culminating Experience Requirement forms must be approved by the Graduate Division before registration. (CR/NC grading only)

C W 893 MFA Written M.F.A. Creative Work (Units: 6)
Prerequisites: Consent of instructor and major adviser; approval of Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) for the Master of Fine Arts and Culminating Experience (CE) forms by Graduate Studies. ATC and Proposal for Culminating Experience Requirement forms must be approved by the Graduate Division before registration. (CR/NC grading only)

C W 899 Independent Study (Units: 1-3)
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

A special study is planned, developed, and completed under direction of a faculty member. Open only to graduate students of demonstrated ability to do independent work. Enrollment by petition (form available in department office).