

CREATIVE WRITING (MFA)

Graduate School

Program Website (<https://english.cornell.edu/mfa-program-creative-writing/>)

CIP: 23.1302 | HEGIS: 1507.00 | NYSED: 13650

Graduate Field

English Language and Literature (<https://catalog.cornell.edu/graduate-school/english-language-literature/>)

Program Description

The Creative Writing program in the department of Literatures in English offers an M.F.A. degree only, with concentrations in either poetry or fiction. Each year the department enrolls only eight students, four in each concentration. Our small size allows us to offer a generous financial support package, details of which are outlined on our department website. At the same time, we have a large and diverse graduate faculty with competence in a wide range of literary, theoretical, and cultural fields.

Students participate in a graduate writing workshop each semester and take 6 additional one-semester courses for credit, at least four of them in English or American literature, Comparative Literature, literature in the modern or classical languages, or cultural studies (typically two per semester during the first year and one per semester during the second year). First year students receive practical training by working as Editorial Assistants for *Epoch*, a periodical of prose and poetry published by the Creative Writing staff of the department. The most significant requirement of the M.F.A. degree is the completion of a book-length manuscript: a collection of poems, short stories, or a novel.

The Special Committee: Every student selects a Special Committee who will be responsible for providing the student with a great deal of individual attention. The University system of Special Committees allows students to design their own courses of study within a broad framework laid down by the department, and it encourages a close working relationship between professors and students, promoting freedom and flexibility in the pursuit of the graduate degree. The student's Special Committee guides and supervises all academic work and assesses progress through a series of meetings with the student.

Teaching: Teaching is considered an integral part of training for the profession. The Field requires a carefully supervised teaching experience as part of the training for the degree. The Department of English, in conjunction with the John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines (<https://knight.as.cornell.edu/>), offers excellent training for beginning teachers and varied and interesting teaching within the university-wide First-Year Writing Program. Graduate students are assigned to writing courses under such general rubrics as "Portraits of the Self," "American Literature and Culture," "The Mystery in the Story," "Shakespeare," and "Cultural Studies," among others. Serving as a Teaching Assistant for a lecture course taught by a member of the Department of English faculty is another way graduate students participate in the teaching of undergraduates.

Concentrations

- Creative writing

Program Information

- Instruction Mode: In Person
- Location: Ithaca, NY
- Minimum Credits for Degree: 93

Program Requirements

- 6 semesters of GRAD research course, including summer enrollment
- Minimum Semesters for Degree: 4

Graduate School Milestones

- Responsible Conduct of Research Training: Required
- Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID): Required
- Student Progress Reviews (SPR) begin: Second Year
- Masters Exam (M Exam): Summer of second year
- Thesis: Summer of second year

Field Specific Milestones

- Field progress review conducted every year
- Two semesters of teaching assistantship required

Course Requirements

- Additional course requirements may be set by the student's Special Committee. Program specific requirements that apply to all students are included below.

Year 1 (Fall)

- ENGL 7800 MFA Seminar: Poetry or ENGL 7801 MFA Seminar: Fiction
- ENGL 7880 Literary Small Publishing
- Additional graduate level course
- Graduate Research course

Year 1 (Spring)

- ENGL 7800 MFA Seminar: Poetry or ENGL 7801 MFA Seminar: Fiction
- Two additional graduate level courses
- Graduate Research course

Year 1 (Summer)

- WRIT 7100 Teaching Writing
- Graduate Research course

Year 2 (Fall)

- ENGL 7800 MFA Seminar: Poetry or ENGL 7801 MFA Seminar: Fiction
- Additional graduate level course
- Graduate Research course

Year 2 (Spring)

- ENGL 7800 MFA Seminar: Poetry or ENGL 7801 MFA Seminar: Fiction
- Additional graduate level course
- Graduate Research course

Year 2 (Summer)

- Graduate Research course

University Graduation Requirements Requirements for All Students

In order to receive a Cornell degree, a student must satisfy academic and non-academic requirements.

Academic Requirements

A student's college determines degree requirements such as residency, number of credits, distribution of credits, and grade averages. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific major, degree, distribution, college, and graduation requirements for completing their chosen program of study. See the individual requirements listed by each college or school or contact the college registrar's office (<https://registrar.cornell.edu/service-resources/college-registrar-directory/>) for more information.

Non-academic Requirements

Conduct Matters. Students must satisfy any outstanding sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed or agreed to under the Student Code of Conduct (Code) or Policy 6.4. Where a formal complaint under the Code or Policy 6.4 is pending, the University will withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the adjudication process set forth in those procedures is complete, including the satisfaction of any sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed.

Financial Obligations. Outstanding financial obligations will not impact the awarding of a degree otherwise earned or a student's ability to access their official transcript. However, the University may withhold issuing a diploma until any outstanding financial obligations owing to the University are satisfied.