

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

EP.11.24

Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs

Swanlund Administration Building
601 East John Street
Champaign, IL 61820



January 6, 2011

Abbas Aminmansour, Chair
Senate Committee on Educational Policy
Office of the Senate
228 English Building, MC-461

Dear Professor Aminmansour:

Enclosed is a copy of a proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to revise the MFA in Creative Writing.

This proposal has been approved by the Courses and Curricula Committee of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College Executive Committee. It now requires Senate review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kristi A. Kuntz'.

Kristi A. Kuntz
Assistant Provost

KAK/njh

Enclosures

c: S. Davenport
A. Golato
A. Mester
C. Perry
A. Petty
A. Pollock

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN



Graduate College

202 Coble Hall, MC-322
801 South Wright Street
Champaign, IL 61820-6210

December 16, 2010

Kristi Kuntz
Office of the Provost
207 Swanlund, MC-304

Dear Kristi:

Enclosed is the proposal entitled "Revision of the MFA in Creative Writing." The Graduate College Executive Committee did vote unanimously to approve it.

I send it to you now for further review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrea Golato". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Andrea Golato
Associate Dean, Graduate College

cc: S. Davenport
M. Lowry
A. Mester
A. Pollock
P. Santic

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

RECEIVED
OCT 15 2010
GRADUATE COLLEGE

Office of the Dean

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
294 Lincoln Hall
702 South Wright Street
Urbana, IL 61801-3631



October 15, 2010

Andrea Golato
Associate Dean
Graduate College
204 Coble Hall MC-322

Dear Dean Golato:

On behalf of the Committee on Courses and Curricula, Dean's Cabinet, Executive Committee and the Faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, I administratively approve the following proposal:

Revision of the MFA in Creative Writing

We ask for an administrative review of this proposal. Please address all correspondence concerning this proposal to me.

Sincerely,

Ann M. Mester
Associate Dean

enclosure

C: Professor Curtis Perry
Professor Audrey Petty
Professor Anthony Pollock
Dr. Steve Davenport



Proposal to the Senate Educational Policy Committee

PROPOSAL TITLE: Revision of the MFA in Creative Writing

SPONSOR: Anthony Pollock, Director of Graduate Studies, Associate Professor of English, 333-3575, ajp2@illinois.edu.

Steve Davenport, PhD, Associate Director of Creative Writing, Department of English, Office # (217) 333-3979, sdavenpo@illinois.edu

COLLEGE CONTACT: Ann Mester, Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 3-1350, mester@illinois.edu

BRIEF DESCRIPTION: Creative Writing is revising its curriculum to replace the deposit of a thesis with completion of a final project that is deposited in the department. The intent is to discontinue CW 599 (Thesis) and replace it with a new course, CW 595 (Final Project). No other requirements will change.

JUSTIFICATION: The final product our MFA Creative Writing students produce (i.e., a book-length manuscript of poetry or fiction) is more analogous to Sculpture or Photography than it is, say, to research-based Literary scholarship or Industrial Design with its emphasis on product development. In other words, our students produce Art. It is a coincidence that our Art form has historically involved the printed page, and given developments in technology and movement toward different forms of writing (e.g., Joseph Squier's Writing with Video course), even the printed page and its reliance on the word (and, consequently, the word's reliance on an alphabet) begins to look old-fashioned. It is the nature of our medium (i.e., Art in general, Creative Writing in particular) that we must be able, both as a program competing for top students and as a body of writers who understand shifts in our Art form, to react to such changes without worrying that our product looks like a research-based thesis or dissertation and should be treated as such. Like all but one of the other thirteen MFA programs on campus, we better describe what it is our students produce at the end of their degree as a Final Project and not a Thesis.

Another concern of ours is that electronic accessibility threatens to short-circuit the route MFA projects have historically taken through publication venues, whether prose or poetry. Because their mission depends on discovery, literary magazine editors like Jeanne Leiby of *The Southern Review* and Jodee Stanley of *Ninth Letter* have taken the

consistent position of not publishing poems, short stories, and essays that are available on-line. On this matter, Martin Riker of Dalkey Archive Press, which publishes literary fiction in book form, says, "I can't imagine us taking on a book that is already available online. It would have to be some extraordinary circumstance--so extraordinary that I cannot currently imagine it." MFA graduates who apply for a prestigious Stegner Fellowship in Creative Writing at Stanford (the criteria being high-quality literary production likely to attract the attention of a reputable publisher within a couple of years, the proof of which is a list of publications in reputable literary magazines like *The Southern Review* and *Ninth Letter*) run the risk of losing potential publication credits, both at the book and the literary magazine levels if electronic publication gets in the way. The proposed change in the status of the final project (i.e., from thesis to non-thesis) will allow for the local deposit and storage of MFA final projects (i.e., within the Department of English) and make sure those projects are not distributed against the will of the authors who produced them. Creative Writing faculty is unanimous in their desire to replace the current thesis requirement (Creative Writing 599) with a non-thesis final project (Creative Writing 595).

BUDGETARY AND STAFF IMPLICATIONS:

- a. Additional staff and dollars needed: None. We are replacing CW 599 with CW 595.
- b. Internal reallocations: (e.g., change in class size, teaching loads, student-faculty ratio, etc.) None. We are replacing CW 599 with CW 595.
- c. Effect on course enrollment in other units and explanations of discussions with representatives of those departments: No effect on any other units.
- d. Impact on the University Library: None, We are replacing CW 599 with CW 595.
- e. Impact on computer use, laboratory use, equipment, etc.: None. We are replacing CW 599 with CW 595.

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: December 1, 2010.

STATEMENT FOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY CATALOG: (updated information in RED)

Creative Writing

creativewriting.english.illinois.edu/

Head of the Department: Curtis Perry

Director of Graduate Studies: Anthony Pollock

Director of Creative Writing: Audrey Petty

Associate Director of Creative Writing: Steve Davenport

210 English Building

608 South Wright Street

Urbana, IL 61801

(217) 333-3646

E-mail: engl_resources@ad.uiuc.edu

Major: Creative Writing

Degrees Offered: M.F.A.

Graduate Degree Programs

The Department of English offers a program of study leading to a Master of Fine Arts. A candidate for the MFA must spend at least four semesters or the equivalent in residence and complete at least 48 graduate hours. A full-time student typically completes this program in three academic years.

Admission

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores are required, but the GRE subject test for literature in English is not. All applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores. Currently, a minimum score of 550 on the paper-based test (213 on the computer-based test) is required. Before a teaching assistantship involving classroom instruction or student consultation can be awarded to a non-native speaker of English, the applicant must take the Test of Spoken English (TSE) and achieve a score of 50 or higher (230 or higher before 1996). Because applications for admission usually far exceed capacity, in recent years undergraduate grade point averages of students admitted have been significantly higher than the 3.0 (A=4.0) required by the Graduate College. The committee on admissions tends to select those applicants who have a solid array of undergraduate courses, strong recommendations, and a compelling writing sample: in short, an academic record that shows promise of a student capable of doing outstanding work in the field and earning a degree within a reasonable time. Preference is given to applicants who will be full-time students and active degree candidates. Applicants are considered only in spring for fall admission, and the deadline for submitting applications is December 17.

Degree Requirements

*For additional details and requirements refer to the department's program requirements: <http://creativewriting.english.illinois.edu/graduate/requirements/> and the Graduate College Handbook <http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook>.

Master of Fine Arts

Required Courses:	Required Hours
Workshops	16
Craft course in the appropriate genre	4
Proseminar	4
Approved Literature courses at the 400 and 500 level	8
CW 595 Final Writing Project	8-12
Total Hours	48

Minimum 500-level Hours Required Overall:	12
Other Requirements:*	
Four semesters in residence	
A public reading from the completed final project is required for graduation	
Teaching experience is required.	
Minimum GPA:	2.75

Graduate Teaching Experience


Experience in teaching is considered a vital part of the graduate program and is required as part of the academic work of all MFA candidates in this program.

Financial Aid


Financial aid is available to students in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, and waivers of tuition and service fees. For complete information about the program, prospective applicants should consult our website at <http://www.english.illinois.edu/graduate/program/>.

CLEARANCES: (Clearances should include signatures and dates of approval) - - These signatures must appear on a separate sheet. If multiple departments or colleges, add lines.)

Signatures:


Unit Representative:

10/12/10 / 10/12/10
Date:


College Representative:

10/15/10
Date:


Graduate College Representative:

12/16/10
Date:

Provost Representative:

Date:

Educational Policy Committee Representative:

Date: