



COLLEGE OF LETTERS AND SCIENCES

# MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

## Take Your Talent for Storytelling to Another Level

In the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program, you'll learn advanced creative writing skills in fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, and screenwriting. You'll be guided through a final project consisting of a publishable thesis in the area you've chosen as your specialty. The program is excellent preparation for a professional career in writing, publishing, or filmmaking and is an essential academic qualification if you plan to teach writing at the college or university level.

You'll work with experienced and published writers on the faculty team to learn writing for fiction, poetry, literary nonfiction, and screenwriting. Your teachers will guide you in refining your own creative practice and in achieving academic success. You'll contribute to the publication of the student literary journal, the GNU, and will participate in seminars that foster creative and critical debate.

Online and On-campus Programs  
 Monthly Starts and Accelerated Classes  
 WSCUC Accredited

Program highlights:

- Entire program can be completed online
- Produce publishable works in fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, or screenwriting
- Apply the fiction principles of plot, characterization, style, point of view, narrative technique, and language
- Apply literary nonfiction principles of plot, characterization, style, point of view, narrative technique, and language
- Apply the poetry principles of language, style, themes, technique, rhythm, and form in the creation of poetry
- Apply the screenwriting principles of plot, characterization, style, point of view, narrative technique, language, form, and dialogue

**LEARN  
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**NATIONAL  
 UNIVERSITY**

## MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

Academic Program Director: Frank Montesonti; (858) 215-4579; fmontesonti@nu.edu

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing is a studio degree where students produce creative work and refine it through workshops that focus on developing craft in fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or screenwriting. In online workshops, students write constructive critiques of the work of their classmates, read contemporary texts from the writer's perspective, and participate in generative writing activities.

Courses are taught by established writers in the field who share their perspective and expertise in the craft. Participating in seminars and workshops, students build valuable skills in their chosen concentration. The culmination of the program is the thesis project, a publishable quality full-length book or screenplay. During the thesis process, students work one-on-one with a faculty mentor in drafting and revising a publishable quality thesis.

This program is excellent preparation for a professional career in writing, working in the areas of publishing or filmmaking, and is the minimal academic qualification appropriate for those who desire to teach creative writing at the college or university level.

Students are expected to focus in one genre but are required to take seminar workshops in different genres in order to broaden the scope of their reading and writing. Students are encouraged to take graduate courses in English Literature as electives, as the critical study of literature goes hand in hand with its composition. Interested students may submit to, or volunteer to work on, the student literary journal, the GNU.

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program is entirely online with no on-ground residency requirement.

### Application Requirements

To be considered for admission, applicants must meet the University graduate admission requirements listed in the general information. In addition, applicants in creative writing should submit portfolios of their writing directly to: fmontesonti@nu.edu. The portfolio should include one of the following: 20-30 (double spaced) pages of fiction or literary nonfiction (a novel chapter, short stories, or essays), 10-20 pages of poetry, an act of a screenplay, or a 20-30 page sample of work mixing several genres. Based on the portfolio, applicants may be advised to complete one or more undergraduate workshops prior to enrolling in the advanced writing workshops.

### BA English to MFA Transition Program

Students who are in the process of completing a BA with a major in English and concentration in creative writing at National University may be eligible for the BA to MFA transition program. Requirements for the transition program are listed under the Bachelor's Degree with a major in English in the catalog.

### Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Evaluate various aesthetic theories of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, or screenwriting.
- Formulate practical and theoretical models of teaching and learning the writing of fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, and screenwriting.
- Critique specific works of literature and screenwriting.
- Develop publishable-quality writing in fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry, or screenwriting.
- Evaluate different literary formats.
- Implement craft principles of plot, characterization, style, point of view, narrative technique, and language in the creation of fiction.
- Implement craft principles of plot, characterization, style, point of view, narrative technique, and language in the creation of literary nonfiction.
- Implement craft principles of language, style, themes, technique, rhythm, and form in the creation of poetry.
- Implement craft principles of plot, characterization, style, point of view, narrative technique, language, form, dialogue, and other issues of screenwriting.

### Degree Requirements

To receive the MFA in Creative Writing, students must complete at least 58.5 quarter units; a total of 13.5 quarter units may be granted for equivalent work completed at another institution, as it applies to this degree, and provided the units were not used in earning another advanced degree. Students should refer to the General Catalog section on graduate admission requirements for specific information regarding admission and evaluation.

MCW 610 and MCW 659 are four-week courses; all other MCW courses are eight weeks in duration.

### Core Requirements

(5 courses; 22.5 quarter units)

Students are required to take MCW 610 and MCW 659, one seminar in their chosen specialty, and two additional courses of their choice in different areas.

Students are encouraged to begin the program with:

MCW 610 Textual Strategies

and

choose **three (3)** of the following courses:

MCW 630 Seminar in Fiction

MCW 645 Seminar in Poetry

MCW 650 Seminar in Creative Nonfiction

MCW 685 Basics of Screenwriting

Students should preferably conclude the core requirements with:

MCW 659 Pedagogy of Creative Writing

### Core Specialized Study

(2 courses; 9 quarter units)

Students are expected to take two advanced workshops in their specialty. All advanced creative writing courses are conducted by teachers who are accomplished creative writers sensitive to the efforts of writing. Classes are conducted as workshops, with student work comprising much of the text for the course.

MCW 630A Advanced Workshop in Fiction

*Prerequisite: MCW 630*

and

MCW 630B Advanced Workshop in Fiction

*Prerequisite: MCW 630*

or

MCW 640A Advanced Workshop in Poetry

*Prerequisite: MCW 645*

and

MCW 640B Advanced Workshop in Poetry

*Prerequisite: MCW 645*

or

MCW 650A Adv Workshop in Lit Nonfiction

*Prerequisite: MCW 650*

and

MCW 650B Adv Workshop in Lit Nonfiction

*Prerequisite: MCW 650*

or

MCW 680A Adv Workshop in Screenwriting

*Prerequisite: MCW 685*

and

MCW 680B Adv Workshop in Screenwriting

*Prerequisite: MCW 685 and MCW 680A*

### Elective Requirements

(4 courses; 18 quarter units)

A minimum of two (2) electives should be chosen from the list below. All graduate courses with the prefix ENG except the capstone courses are approved electives for the MCW program.

MCW 635 Writing for Young Adults

MCW 636 Genre Fiction Workshop

ENG 600 Seminar in Literary Theory

ENG 610 Multicultural Literature

ENG 620A Literary Period or Movement I

ENG 620B Literary Period or Movement II

ENG 640 Seminar in Poetry

ENG 655 Composition Pedagogy

ENG 656 History of Rhetoric

ENG 657 Modern Rhetoric

ENG 660 Seminar in Literary Hypermedia

ENG 665 Film Theory

ENG 666 Silent Film

ENG 667 American Film History

ENG 668 Film Genre Studies

ENG 669 World Film

ENG 670 Comparative Literary Studies

ENG 680A Seminar in a Theme I

ENG 680B Seminar in a Theme II

ENG 685 American Directors

ENG 686 International Directors

ENG 599 Intro to Grad English Studies

ENG 690A Major Author Seminar I

ENG 690B Major Author Seminar II

The remaining **two (2)** electives may be from the above list, or if the student wants to take more workshop courses, additional advanced MCW writing workshops that the student has not already taken as part of her/his specialized study may be taken as electives. These include:

- MCW 630A Advanced Workshop in Fiction  
*Prerequisite: MCW 630*
- MCW 630B Advanced Workshop in Fiction  
*Prerequisite: MCW 630*
- MCW 640A Advanced Workshop in Poetry  
*Prerequisite: MCW 645*
- MCW 640B Advanced Workshop in Poetry  
*Prerequisite: MCW 645*
- MCW 650A Adv Workshop in Lit Nonfiction  
*Prerequisite: MCW 650*
- MCW 650B Adv Workshop in Lit Nonfiction  
*Prerequisite: MCW 650*
- MCW 680A Adv Workshop in Screenwriting  
*Prerequisite: MCW 685*
- MCW 680B Adv Workshop in Screenwriting  
*Prerequisite: MCW 685 and MCW 680A*

### **Thesis Courses**

(2 courses; 9 quarter units)

Thesis: The thesis must be a mature, substantial body of work e.g. a collection of stories, essays, or poems, a novel, or a full-length screenplay. The thesis will include an aesthetic statement (minimum 2000 words) in which the writer discusses their evolution as an artist and the evolution of the work. The student will choose a mentor for the thesis and will work with the mentor in an individualized manner, decided upon through conference with the mentor.

- MCW 660 Thesis I (Practicum)  
*Prerequisite: Requires completion of MFA CW portfolio all core, specialized study, and elective courses*
- MCW 670 Thesis II (Revision)  
*Prerequisite: MCW 660*

### **Language Requirement**

There is no language requirement for this program. It is possible, however, to pursue a series of electives in a particular language when such study is demonstrably essential to the student's creative work. The candidate must work out a specific program in conjunction with the lead program faculty.