

# English and Creative Writing, BA

The major enables students to experience the historical, traditional, and innovative aspects of literature in English and the relationship between critical reading and creative writing. The major provides the transferable skills important for a liberal arts major, including the ability to think deeply and creatively, read complex texts with comprehension, and master writing and speaking skills at an advanced level.

The English and creative writing major introduces students to the wealth of resources associated with the University of Iowa and the Iowa City writing communities. For over 75 years, the Department of English and the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop have been leaders in the area of writing. The MFA offered by the Nonfiction Writing Program and administered by the Department of English has been voted the top MFA program in creative nonfiction in the United States. Likewise, the MFA program in the Writers' Workshop is annually noted as the top graduate program in the country.

The international reputation of writing at Iowa is boosted by synergy across colleges, with the International Writing Program hosting published writers each fall from countries around the world and each spring traveling to other countries, taking Iowa writing on the road. This synergy helps the university and Iowa City draw writers of all ages and nationalities to its writing community. The community is bolstered by the strong readings series offered by the Nonfiction Writing Program, the Writers' Workshop, and Prairie Lights Books, with hundreds of readings archived by the Iowa Digital Library, creating a resource for future writers and scholars.

The status of Iowa City as a UNESCO City of Literature also has enriched the writing community, with people from across the Midwest visiting the city during the annual Book Festival. The Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offered by the Department of English, "Every Atom: Walt Whitman's Song of Myself" and "Walt Whitman and the Civil War," as well as the International Writing Program's online series called "How Writers Write," have enrolled thousands of students and adult learners from around the world, enhancing the reputation of the University of Iowa as the "Writing University." The Iowa Summer Writing Festival, Iowa Young Writers' Studio, the Certificate in Writing, the Center for the Book, the Iowa Playwrights Workshop, and the Iowa Youth Writing Project all help to turn Iowa City into a destination for writers, who are drawn to the city for its heritage and for its current community of writers.

## Learning Outcomes

The goal is for students who graduate from the Department of English to demonstrate the skills of reflective reading, critical thinking, effective speaking, compelling writing, and engaged citizenship.

### Reflective Readers

- Analyze literary and cultural texts through close reading.
- Gain broad knowledge of several fields of literature.
- Grasp formal elements of key literary genres.
- Learn to read comparatively to illuminate aesthetic, social, and cultural contributions of texts.

### Critical Thinkers

- Approach texts with a spirit of critical inquiry and flexibility.
- Formulate productive questions.
- Use textual evidence to support individual interpretations.
- Draw upon several different critical approaches to literature in English.

### Effective Speakers

- Express opinions about the texts they read through discussion and written assignments.
- Listen respectfully to others' opinions.
- Work in class—whether through active listening or discussion—to learn by synthesizing a range of texts, insights, and opinions.

### Compelling Writers

- Express their ideas in clear, fluent, and lively prose.
- Organize their ideas effectively.
- Use textual evidence to illustrate and support their insights and arguments.
- Demonstrate the ability to write in different modes that are appropriate to particular contexts.
- Engage properly with relevant scholarship and creative work.
- Use research skills that include understanding of methods, technology, and conventions.

### Engaged World Citizens

- Communicate respect and understanding for the literatures and cultures of diverse historical periods, geographical regions, and cultures.
- Explore ethical issues raised by literature.
- Reflect on the ways that literature addresses issues of social justice.
- Use reading, speaking, and writing skills to engage with the ethical concerns raised by literature in their daily and professional lives.

## Requirements

The Bachelor of Arts in English and creative writing requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 42 s.h. of work for the major. Of the 42 s.h., at least 36 s.h. must be selected from the Department of English courses (prefix ENGL, CNW, CW). Students must maintain a grade-point average of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core. Transfer students must earn at least 30 s.h. work for the major at the University of Iowa.

Students earning a major in English and creative writing may not earn a major in English.

For more information about teaching in elementary and/or secondary schools, see "Teacher Licensure" below. Students who plan to teach in elementary and/or secondary schools should consult with an advisor in the College of Education as early as possible; contact the Office of Student Services. The BA in English education requires that students choose particular courses in the English and creative writing major in order to meet all related requirements; both degrees may be earned at the same time. Separate application to each degree program is required.

Students pursuing the BA in English and creative writing can choose to complete the requirements for the publishing track; see "Publishing Track" below for information.

Only courses numbered above 2000 count toward the English and creative writing major. The following courses do not count toward the major.

Course #	Title	Hours
CNW:1620	Introduction to Creative Nonfiction	3
CW:1800	Creative Writing Studio Workshop	3

Courses numbered ENGL:1000-ENGL:1999

The BA with a major in English and creative writing requires the following coursework.

Requirements	Hours
Introductory Courses	6
Literature Core Courses	15
Creative Writing Core Courses	18
Electives (prefix ENGL, CNW, or CW courses)	3

## Introductory Courses

Students complete both of the following.

Course #	Title	Hours
ENGL:2010	Foundation of the English Major: Histories, Literatures, Pleasures	3
ENGL:2020	Foundations of Creative Writing: Craft, Practice, Pleasure	3

## Literature Core Courses

Core courses help students to learn and practice critical reading and analysis, to understand the relation of literature to history and culture, and introduce students to the context and tradition of literature written in English.

The area and historical periods for English courses are identified under English Courses in this section of the catalog and in the MyUI course descriptions. Since most courses satisfy both an area requirement and a historical period requirement, most students complete these requirements with the same courses.

## Area Requirement

A minimum of 3 s.h. must be completed from each of the following five areas of English literary study for a minimum total of 15 s.h. of coursework:

- American literature and culture;
- literary theory and interdisciplinary studies;
- medieval and early modern literature and culture;
- modern British literature and culture; and
- transnational literature and postcolonial studies.

## Historical Period Requirement

A minimum of 3 s.h. from each of the following three historical periods in English literary study (total of 9 s.h.) must be completed:

- early literatures through the 17th century;
- 18th/19th-century literature; and
- 20th/21st-century literature.

## Multiethnic Literature and Culture Requirement

Students must complete at least one course (3 s.h.) from the following.

Course #	Title	Hours
ENGL:2463	Topics in African American Literature	3
ENGL:2465	Selected African American Authors	3
ENGL:2475	Asian American Literature	3
ENGL:3441	Native American Literature	3
ENGL:3444	Literatures of the American Peoples	3
ENGL:3455	Jewish American Literature	3
ENGL:3459	African American Literature Before 1900	3
ENGL:3460	African American Literature After 1900	3
ENGL:3461	Twenty-First Century African American Literature	3
ENGL:3462	African American Drama	3
ENGL:3465	African American Autobiography	3
ENGL:3467	Latina/o/x Literatures and Cultures	3

The following courses may fulfill the Multiethnic Literature and Culture requirement depending on course content, which varies by semester; consult MyUI for semester-specific information.

Course #	Title	Hours
ENGL:2409	Selected American Authors Before 1900	3
ENGL:2410	Selected American Authors After 1900	2-3
ENGL:3160	Literary Genres and Modes	3
ENGL:3431	American Novel Since 1945	3
ENGL:3440	American Drama Since 1900	3
ENGL:3450	American Regional Literatures	3
ENGL:4150	Introduction to Book Studies	3
ENGL:4720	Advanced Creative Writing: Special Topic	3

## Creative Writing Core Courses

The creative writing core provides courses in a range of literary genres. Students choose a minimum of 9 s.h. in electives and a minimum of 9 s.h. in advanced courses, as listed below. Students also can count any course from the "Advanced Requirements" list below as an elective (where appropriate) if they take more than the three required advanced courses.

## Creative Writing Electives

The creative writing electives give students flexible choices to focus on fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or other genres of writing, and allow students to experiment across genres. Courses

focus on the particulars of craft, tradition, and innovation. Many of the courses are repeatable, enabling students to further develop in a particular writing form. Some of these courses have prerequisites.

Students must select a minimum of 9 s.h. from the following.

Course #	Title	Hours
Courses numbered CNW:2680-CNW:4999		
Courses numbered CW:2000-CW:4999		
CINE:3361	Screenwriting: Short Form	3
CINE:3367	Screenwriting: Long Form	3
COMM:2077	Writing and Producing Television	3
SPAN:3060	Introductory Workshop on Creative Writing in Spanish	3
THTR:2301	Playwriting I	3
THTR:3301	Playwriting II	3
THTR:3310	Undergraduate Playwriting Workshop	1-3
THTR:3320	Writing for Film	3
THTR:3325	Iowa Writers' Room	3
TRNS:3179	Undergraduate Translation Workshop	3
WLLC:2473	Cinderella	3
WLLC:3208	Classical Chinese Literature Through Translation	3

## Advanced Requirements

Students must first complete the two introductory courses —ENGL:2010 Foundation of the English Major: Histories, Literatures, Pleasures and ENGL:2020 Foundations of Creative Writing: Craft, Practice, Pleasure—before they enroll in advanced courses. Advanced courses give students flexible choices so they can focus on fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or other genres of writing, and provide the opportunity to experiment across genres. Courses focus on the particulars of craft, tradition, and innovation. Most of the advanced courses are repeatable and most have prerequisites.

Students must select a minimum of 9 s.h. in advanced creative writing courses from the following.

Course #	Title	Hours
ENGL:4011	Honors Seminar: Creative Writing	3
ENGL:4012	Honors Seminar in Fiction	3
ENGL:4013	Honors Seminar in Poetry	3
ENGL:4014	Honors Seminar in Creative Nonfiction	3
ENGL:4020	Honors Thesis Workshop	3
ENGL:4030	Undergraduate Honors Project in Creative Writing	1-3
ENGL:4720	Advanced Creative Writing: Special Topic	3
ENGL:4721	Advanced Writers' Seminar: Fiction	3
ENGL:4722	Advanced Writers' Seminar: Poetry	3
ENGL:4723	Advanced Writers' Seminar: Nonfiction	3
ENGL:4724	Advanced Writers' Seminar: Literary Translation	3

ENGL:4725	Advanced Writers' Seminar: Playwriting	3
CNW:4631	Advanced Essay Workshop	3
CNW:4635	Advanced Creative Nonfiction Writing	3
CW:4870	Undergraduate Writers' Workshop: Fiction	arr.
CW:4875	Undergraduate Writers' Workshop: Poetry	arr.
CW:4885	Undergraduate Writers' Seminar	arr.
CINE:4377	Advanced Screenwriting I	4
CINE:4378	Advanced Screenwriting II	4
THTR:3310	Undergraduate Playwriting Workshop	1-3
THTR:6310	Special Topics in Playwriting	3

## Publishing Track

The world of publishing includes many different careers: editors, designers, agents, and even sales representatives. Students who are interested in these careers may wish to pursue the publishing track. By selecting courses carefully, students may complete the track without adding additional semester hours to their total credit required for graduation.

Courses range across print and digital media, exposing students to the history and practice of literary publishing while developing their skills in editing, proofreading, and writing with clarity and purpose. Internships and hands-on class learning offer students the opportunity to produce their own publications and gain practical experience.

Students in the publishing track must complete the following.

## Literary Publishing

Course #	Title	Hours
Both of these (6 s.h.):		
CNW:2991	Publishing I: Introduction to Literary Publishing	3
CNW:2992	Publishing II: Advanced Literary Publication	3

## Editing, Book Design, or Revision

Course #	Title	Hours
One of these (3 s.h.):		
ENGL:2900	Book Design for Publishing	3
ENGL:2901	The Book in Global History	3
ENGL:3145	Editorial Practice	3
ENGL:3148	Literary Editing	3
CNW:3632	Prose Style	3

## History of the Book and the Publishing Industry

Course #	Title	Hours
One of these (3 s.h.):		
ENGL:3140	Literature and the Book	3
ENGL:3142	Topics in Book History	3
ENGL:3181	Digital Media and Poetics	3
ENGL:3182	Digital Cultures and Literacies	3
ENGL:4150	Introduction to Book Studies	3

## Career Preparation

Course #	Title	Hours
One of these (1-3 s.h.):		
ENGL:2040	English at Work	1
ENGL:4010	Special Project for Undergraduates	arr.
CCP:1201	Academic Internship	1-3

Students should consult the department's advisor for information about completing the English and creative writing major with the publishing track.

## Teacher Licensure

Students interested in teaching in elementary and/or secondary schools should seek admission to the Teacher Education Program (TEP) in the College of Education.

To qualify for licensure in secondary teaching, students in the TEP complete a degree in education as well as a related College of Liberal Arts and Sciences degree. See Apply on the College of Education website for details on requirements and deadlines for applying to the College of Education and about TEP choices of majors leading to licensure.

### Honors

## Honors in the Major

Students have the opportunity to graduate with honors in English and creative writing and thereby enhance their course of study through honors seminars. All those interested in taking honors coursework are welcome to apply to the English Honors Program as soon as they qualify. The process begins with an online application; visit English Honors Programs on the Department of English website.

Students take three honors seminars and must achieve a University of Iowa grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.33 and a major GPA of at least 3.50.

Each year the department offers between four and six creative writing seminars covering a wide range of genres, modes, and styles. Small and often workshop-oriented, these honors courses are open only to English and creative writing majors who have completed at least 24 s.h. of college-level work. Seminars are limited to 16 students, carry 3 s.h. of credit, and meet three hours each week.

Two of the three honors seminars are chosen from these selective admission courses. Early in the previous semester, those interested apply with a portfolio of their creative work; no minimum GPA is required, and decisions are made in time for preregistration. Successful applicants then register for ENGL:4011 Honors Seminar: Creative Writing through ENGL:4014 Honors Seminar in Creative Nonfiction. Students may apply for only one seminar per semester.

The second of the two creative writing seminars may be replaced by ENGL:4030 Undergraduate Honors Project in Creative Writing, a capstone project. For this independent study option, interested students should seek out possible mentors in their junior year.

The third required honors course is a scholarship and criticism seminar chosen from courses numbered ENGL:4001 Honors Seminar: American Literature, 20th/21st Century through ENGL:4009 Honors Seminar: Medieval and Early Modern Literature, Early Literature/17th Century, courses that offer a

wide range of subjects, authors, methods, and eras. Limited to 16 students, these courses also carry 3 s.h. of credit, meet three hours each week, and encourage class discussions that are lively and knowledgeable. Substantial reading and research are required and culminate in a 15–20 page essay.

To register for a scholarly seminar, honors students in English and creative writing are encouraged to have a University of Iowa GPA of at least 3.33. They also must have completed at least three courses: ENGL:2010 Foundation of the English Major: Histories, Literatures, Pleasures; ENGL:2020 Foundations of Creative Writing: Craft, Practice, Pleasure; and a third departmental course of their choosing.

## University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the university's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the English and creative writing major.

### Career Advancement

The English and creative writing major prepares students for a wide variety of career paths including teaching, medicine, law, graduate school, and jobs in the private and nonprofit sector where writing, organization, research, and communication is highly valued. Within a year of graduation, over 92% of Department of English students are employed or in graduate programs.

The department's advisor helps guide students in their career path. The Department of English partners with the Pomerantz Career Center to introduce career development strategies and offer resources to help students find internships and jobs. For more information, students are encouraged to explore Careers and Opportunities on the Department of English website, or enroll in the 1 s.h. course, ENGL:2040 English at Work.

### Academic Plans

## Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the university's Four-Year Graduation Plan.

**Before the fifth semester begins:** at least six courses in the major, including ENGL:2010 Foundation of the English Major: Histories, Literatures, Pleasures; ENGL:2020 Foundations of Creative Writing: Craft, Practice, Pleasure; and an approved introduction to creative writing course (consult advisor).

**Before the seventh semester begins:** at least four more courses in the major and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree.

**Before the eighth semester begins:** at least two more courses in the major.

**During the eighth semester:** enrollment in all remaining coursework in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate.



## Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

### English and Creative Writing, BA

Course	Title	Hours
<b>Academic Career</b>		
<b>Any Semester</b>		
GE CLAS Core: Sustainability <sup>a</sup>		
<b>Hours</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>First Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
ENGL:2020	Foundations of Creative Writing: Craft, Practice, Pleasure	3
RHET:1030	Rhetoric	4
GE CLAS Core: Diversity and Inclusion <sup>b</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts <sup>b, c</sup>		3
CSI:1600	Success at Iowa	2
<b>Hours</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
ENGL:2030	Literary Readings Attendance	1
Major: creative writing elective <sup>d</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues <sup>b</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning <sup>b</sup>		3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>		3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>		2 - 3
<b>Hours</b>		<b>15-16</b>
<b>Second Year</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
ENGL:2010	Foundation of the English Major: Histories, Literatures, Pleasures <sup>f</sup>	3
Major: creative writing elective		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences without Lab <sup>b</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: Values and Culture <sup>b</sup>		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level		4 - 5
Proficiency or elective course <sup>g</sup>		
<b>Hours</b>		<b>16-17</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
Major: ENGL:4720 Advanced Creative Writing: Special Topic or ENGL course numbered 4721-4725 or English CW honors seminar (ENGL:401X)		3
Major: literary theory course numbered ENGL:21XX, ENGL:31XX, or ENGL:41XX		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab <sup>b</sup>		4
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level		4 - 5
Proficiency or elective course <sup>g</sup>		
Elective course <sup>e</sup>		2 - 3
Students with a second major in screenwriting arts should complete CINE:1300 Foundations of Screenwriting, CINE:1601 Introduction to Film Analysis, and CINE:1834 Modes of Film and Video Production by the end of the second year to be on track for graduation with a double major.		
<b>Hours</b>		<b>16-18</b>

### Third Year

#### Fall

Major: multiethnic American literature and culture course numbered ENGL:24XX or ENGL:34XX (refer to degree audit or advisor's notes for approved courses)	3
Major: ENGL:4720 Advanced Creative Writing: Special Topic or ENGL course numbered 4721-4725 or English CW honors seminar (ENGL:401X) or other advanced writing course	3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts <sup>b, h</sup>	3
GE CLAS Core: Social Sciences <sup>b</sup>	3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Third Level Proficiency or elective course <sup>g</sup>	4 - 5
Elective course <sup>e</sup>	1
<b>Hours</b>	<b>17-18</b>

#### Spring

Study Abroad (optional)	
Major: British 18th/19th-century literature course numbered ENGL:23XX or ENGL:33XX or ENGL:4006 Honors Seminar: British Lit, 18/19 C	3
Major: ENGL:4720 Advanced Creative Writing: Special Topic or ENGL course numbered 4721-4725 or English CW honors seminar (ENGL:401X) or other advanced writing course	3
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives <sup>b</sup>	3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level Proficiency or elective course <sup>g</sup>	4 - 5
Elective course <sup>e</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>	1
<b>Hours</b>	<b>17-18</b>

### Fourth Year

#### Fall

ENGL:2040	English at Work	1
Major: advanced writing elective or creative writing honors course or approved independent study project (see advisor)		3
Major: early literature/17th-century literature course numbered ENGL:22XX or ENGL:32XX		3
Major: elective writing or literature course		3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>		3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>		2
<b>Hours</b>		<b>15</b>

#### Spring

Major: transnational literature course numbered ENGL:25XX or ENGL:35XX	3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>	3
Elective course <sup>e</sup>	3
Degree Application: apply on MyUI before deadline (typically in February for spring, September for fall) <sup>i</sup>	
<b>Hours</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>123-129</b>

a Sustainability must be completed by choosing a course that has been approved for Sustainability AND for one of these General Education areas: Natural Sciences; Quantitative and Formal Reasoning; Social Sciences; Historical Perspectives; International and Global Issues; Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts; or Values and Culture.

- b GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.
- c Recommended courses to fulfill this requirement:  
THTR:2301 or CW:1800
- d Students with a second major in screenwriting arts or theatre arts will usually fulfill this elective with a writing course from that major.
- e Students may use elective courses to earn credit towards the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.
- f Major courses can be taken in any order as long as ENGL:2010 is taken before any 3000-level course.
- g Students who have completed four years of a single language in high school have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course.
- h Students majoring in English are not required to fulfill the GE CLAS Core Interpretation of Literature requirement but instead may substitute a Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts course excluding: DANC:1010 through DANC:2040, MUS:1001, and MUS:1020.
- i Please see Academic Calendar, Office of the Registrar website for current degree application deadlines. Students should apply for a degree for the session in which all requirements will be met. For any questions on appropriate timing, contact your academic advisor or Graduation Services.