English and Creative Writing, B.A.

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; and
  - 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; and
  - 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; and
  - 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; and
  - 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; and
  - use reading, speaking, and writing skills to engage with the ethical concerns raised by literature in their daily and professional lives.

Overview

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 M.F.A. offered by the Nonfiction Writing Program and administered by the Department of English has been voted the top M.F.A. program in creative nonfiction in the United States. Likewise, the M.F.A. 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 new Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) offered by the Department of English, “Every Atom: Walt Whitman’s Song of Myself,” and by the International Writing Program’s series called “How Writers Write” have enrolled thousands of students and adult learners, enhancing the reputation of the University of Iowa as the “Writing University.” The 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 young writers, who are drawn to the city for its heritage and for its current community of writers.

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 g.p.a. 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.

Students pursuing the B.A. in English and creative writing can choose to complete 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CNW:1620</td>
<td>Introduction to Creative Nonfiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW:1800</td>
<td>Creative Writing Studio Workshop</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courses numbered ENGL:1000-ENGL:1999

The B.A. with a major in English and creative writing requires the following course work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2010</td>
<td>Foundation of the English Major: Histories, Literatures, Pleasures</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2020</td>
<td>Foundations of Creative Writing: Craft, Practice, Pleasure</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 Courses 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 course work.

- American literature and culture
- Literary theory and interdisciplinary studies
- Medieval and early modern literature and culture
- Modern British literature and culture
- 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 literature through the 17th century
- 18th/19th-century literature
- 20th/21st-century literature

**Diversity Requirement**

**Multiethnic American Literature and Culture**

Students must complete one multiethnic American literature and culture course (at least 3 s.h.) from the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2460</td>
<td>Black Literature and Politics: Controversies of National Allegiance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2462</td>
<td>The Look of Blackness: African American Literature and Visual Art</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2463</td>
<td>Topics in African American Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2465</td>
<td>Selected African American Authors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2475</td>
<td>Asian American Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3441</td>
<td>Native American Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3444</td>
<td>Literatures of the American Peoples</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3455</td>
<td>Jewish American Literature</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3459</td>
<td>African American Literature Before 1900</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3460</td>
<td>African American Literature After 1900</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3462</td>
<td>African American Drama</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3465</td>
<td>African American Autobiography</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4410</td>
<td>Midwest African American Literature and Culture</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The following courses may be designated as fulfilling the Multiethnic American Literature and Culture requirement depending on course content, which varies by semester (consult MyUI for semester-specific information):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2409</td>
<td>Selected American Authors Before 1900</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:2410</td>
<td>Selected American Authors After 1900</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3431</td>
<td>American Novel Since 1945</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CINE:2861</td>
<td>Screenwriting: Short Form</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINE:2867</td>
<td>Screenwriting: Long Form</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Courses numbered CNW:2680-4999
Courses numbered CW:2000-4999
THTR:2301 Playwriting I 3
THTR:3301 Playwriting II 3
THTR:3310 Undergraduate Playwriting Workshop 1-3
THTR:3320 Writing for Film 3
TRNS:3179 Undergraduate Translation Workshop 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4020</td>
<td>Honors Thesis Workshop</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4720</td>
<td>Advanced Creative Writing: Special Topic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4721</td>
<td>Advanced Writers' Seminar: Fiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4722</td>
<td>Advanced Writers' Seminar: Poetry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4723</td>
<td>Advanced Writers' Seminar: Nonfiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4724</td>
<td>Advanced Writers' Seminar: Literary Translation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4725</td>
<td>Advanced Writers' Seminar: Playwriting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNW:4631</td>
<td>Advanced Essay Workshop</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNW:4635</td>
<td>Advanced Creative Nonfiction Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW:4870</td>
<td>Undergraduate Writers' Workshop: Fiction</td>
<td>arr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW:4875</td>
<td>Undergraduate Writers' Workshop: Poetry</td>
<td>arr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAN:4950</td>
<td>Advanced Workshop on Creative Writing in Spanish</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THTR:3310</td>
<td>Undergraduate Playwriting Workshop</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Publishing Track

The world of publishing includes many different careers: editors, designers, agents, 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3140</td>
<td>Literature and the Book</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3142</td>
<td>Topics in Book History</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3180</td>
<td>Media Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3181</td>
<td>Digital Media and Poetics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:3182</td>
<td>Digital Cultures and Literacies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL:4150</td>
<td>Introduction to Book Studies</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Career Preparation

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.

Honors

Honors in the Major

Students have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. They must complete these requirements:

- maintain a University of Iowa g.p.a. of at least 3.33 and an English and creative writing major g.p.a. of at least 3.50;
- complete 6 s.h. of course work in Department of English honors seminars, ENGL:4000 English Honors Seminar-ENGL:4009 Honors Seminar: Medieval and Early Modern Literature, Early Literature/17th Century (3 s.h. each), with a grade of at least A-minus in one enrollment;
- complete a 3 s.h. enrollment in ENGL:4020 Honors Thesis Workshop; and
- successfully complete a thesis in accordance with existing requirements in the English Honors Program. Information on thesis guidelines is available on the English Honors Program web page.
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.

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 course work in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate

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 percent 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 Career Planning for English Majors on the Department of English website, or enroll in the 1 s.h. course, ENGL:2040 English at Work.