English (creative writing), M.F.A.

The Master of Fine Arts in English with a creative writing subprogram features advanced courses in writing fiction and poetry. Students in creative writing study at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, renowned as a pioneer in teaching writers since its founding in 1936.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

• develop a common understanding and appreciation of the history and range of traditions of nonfiction writing, including forms such as the essay, lyric essay, memoir, journalism, and experimental writing;
• explore and practice the range of narrative strategies, prose styles, and approaches to stylistic analysis through workshop courses;
• develop familiarity and experience with a range of research skills necessary to support the rigorous practice of nonfiction, including major theoretical approaches, and engage in reading-intensive discussions exploring new fields of nonfiction, including new writing technologies and media;
• develop an individual teaching philosophy and practical skills for teaching creative nonfiction writing, including designing courses for different audiences, crafting syllabi, producing exercises, maintaining vibrant classroom discussions, and learning helpful strategies for providing constructive feedback to the writing of others;
• engage in outreach programs making nonfiction expertise and instruction available to various audiences through master classes and other public formats;
• develop an understanding of the practical aspects of a writer's professional life, including an understanding of the basic operations of the publishing world and the necessary protocols leading to publication; and
• craft a long-form project in nonfiction: write a thesis of at least 75 pages of publishable-quality prose, the capstone of a graduate student's career in the Nonfiction Writing Program.

Requirements

The Master of Fine Arts program in English with a creative writing subprogram requires a minimum of 48 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must maintain a cumulative University of Iowa g.p.a. of at least 3.00. The degree is offered through the Creative Writing Program (Iowa Writers' Workshop), a two-year residency program that culminates in a creative thesis, such as a novel, a collection of stories, or a book of poetry.

Throughout the program, workshop students craft their manuscripts and engage in an exchange of ideas about writing and reading with each other and with the renowned teacher-authors who make up the workshop’s faculty.

Admission to the program is competitive.

For details about the M.F.A. in English (creative writing) and about the Iowa Writers' Workshop, see Creative Writing (Iowa Writers' Workshop) in the Catalog.