MFA in Creative Writing Goals

To satisfy the Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing degree requirements:

Students, graduating with a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, will revise their Master of Arts thesis to produce a publishable manuscript or begin a new project, building upon the strengths of the M.A. thesis. Additionally, they will produce and present a literary analysis paper, complete a term-long internship in teaching or publishing, and submit a final portfolio that chronicles their work in the entire program, all of which demonstrate their understanding and utilization of their literary tradition and the best practices of teaching pedagogy or the publishing industry.

The Analysis Paper

Acknowledging and understanding the diverse forms, styles, and ongoing tradition of the student’s chosen literary genre.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Describe the breadth and depth of knowledge of the historical context and tradition of the range of forms, conventions, and styles within their selected major area.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the literary tradition and where their own work lives within that literary spectrum.
3. Demonstrate mastery of literary analysis by writing a formal MFA level extensive craft paper (30+ pages).
4. Demonstrate a mastery of an oral presentation that is a cutting of the extensive formal essay (20 minutes).

The Teaching/Publishing Internship

Utilizing the multiple and appropriate teaching methodologies in beginning, workshopping, critiquing, and sustaining the creative work of others, including knowing the diverse strategies, best practices, and genre-specific exercises that lead to the creation of student work.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of how best to teach or work in a variety of artists-in-residency or publishing venues.
2. Demonstrate competency in the best practices of teaching creative writing or in the business of supporting writers and their work in the publishing industry.
3. Demonstrate mastery of genre-specific elements at all levels, both to teach and to model those elements.

The Final MFA Portfolio

Demonstrating the understanding of the best practices of effective teaching and sustaining creative work, in various ways, including the demonstrable and the proven ability to critique and facilitate the creative work of others honestly and vigorously while continuing to produce one’s own creative work.

FINAL M.F.A. portfolio will include:

1. revised M.A. thesis (or new project);
2. 25-65 page craft chapter or essay; (part of CW 612)
3. copies of materials developed, written in internship;
4. final annotated bibliography of readings from entire program;
5. final summary of program work vis a vis a self-analysis paper.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Understand the legal and ethical standards and the practical issues of the teaching or publishing profession, and demonstrate that knowledge in the residencies and portfolio work of the program;
2. Demonstrate competency in the best practices of creative writing pedagogy or the business practices of the publishing industry;
3. Demonstrate advanced writing competency in their own creative work;
4. Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of contemporary literature in their area of study in an oral and written presentation of their analysis of assigned texts.
Residency #1
Students will begin the M.F.A. coursework during the Master of Arts Capstone residency (CW 525R). Students begin that work by attending additional modules taught by literature PhD faculty and meetings with all faculty during that residency. Students will receive a formal reading list from the faculty and develop their analysis plan in those formal meetings and discussions with faculty.

Project Term #1 - CW 612. Literary Analysis
Six Credits
Reading, analyzing, and preparing an extensive graduate paper that demonstrates the students' understanding of the history, tradition, various forms, and diverse styles of contemporary literature in one area of study-fiction, creative nonfiction, film, drama, or poetry. Reading list will be provided by the faculty and students' essays' approach must be approved by faculty mentor and the Program Director.

Final paper presentation is made at the subsequent residency. Hard copy of paper is 25 to 65 pages.

CW 614. Revision Term
Three credits
Students will have the opportunity to continue to work with a faculty mentor to revise their creative thesis and prepare it for publication/production OR begin a new project, built upon the strengths of the Master of Arts thesis.

Residency #2 -- CW 616R. Writing in Education/Publishing
Three Credits/Residency Course
Students will be required to make a formal paper presentation during this residency to complete CW 612. Students will complete work generated by team-taught modules to prepare them for either a teaching or publishing internship. They will meet with peers, mentoring faculty and create and deliver mini-lesson plans for proposed courses or a study plan in publishing. Such work must be drawn upon the best practices of the pedagogy of teaching creative writing or working in publishing in a variety of settings. Students will continue to sharpen their own oral and writing skills as they build an acceptable syllabi, course materials/internship goals for an internship and sample lessons/work plan by week's end. By week's end, students will have an internship experience and internship supervisor assigned to them.

Project Term #2 -- CW 620. Writing in Education/Publishing Internships
Six Credits
Students will be required to teach creative writing in one or several various educational venues from a series of artists-in-the schools residencies to for-credit adjunct/full-time course work OR complete an internship with a magazine, small press, or literary agency. Students will document their work through student portfolios and will be supervised by a faculty mentor. In whatever experience students select, they must demonstrate student contact hours of no less than 40 hours per term for teaching and 20 hours per week for publishing internships. Students will present a final analysis of their teaching or publishing experience in writing and orally at term's end.

CW 630. Continuous Registration
One to Six Credits
This course allows students to continually register where needed for further revision in preparation of their final project. Students must continually register until revisions are complete or they complete the required capstone.