Students at the University of Chicago pursue creative writing within the larger context of academic study. While the purpose of the program is, above all, to give students a rigorous background in the fundamentals of creative work by providing them with the opportunity to study with established poets and prose writers, it differs from the free-standing creative writing programs at other universities in seeing itself as an integral part of the intellectual life of the University of Chicago, and most particularly in providing opportunities for interdisciplinary work. A playwright working through University Theater under the auspices of Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities may take writing workshops in fiction or poetry as part of the process of developing scripts. Students in the visual arts may join forces with writers in work on graphic novels. And students in non-English languages and literatures may find themselves taking not only literature courses but also poetry or fiction writing workshops as part of developing translation projects. It is this commitment to interdisciplinary work, coupled with the program’s insistence on teaching the elements of creative writing that underlie all genres, that accounts for the program’s vitality and explains why creative writing at Chicago is currently the largest initiative in the humanities for the College.

Students can pursue their creative writing interests within the formal requirements of the two interdisciplinary majors below; within the formal requirements of the minor program in English and Creative Writing described below; in other programs of study, with approval to count writing courses toward requirements; or among the eight to eighteen electives available to students across the range of other programs of study.

Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities

Students wishing to engage the dialogues between creative writing and other studies in the humanities, including artistic media (e.g., dance, film, theater, visual arts), may apply to explore writing opportunities through one of the options in the Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities (collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/archives/2015-2016/thecollege/interdisciplinarystudieshumanities) major.

English Language and Literature

Students majoring in English Language and Literature (collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/archives/2015-2016/thecollege/englishlanguageandliterature) may choose to produce a creative writing thesis to satisfy part of the requirement for honors. Prior to the end of their third year, students must complete at least two creative writing courses in the genre (poetry, fiction, or nonfiction) of their BA project. At least one must be an advanced course, in which the student has earned a B+ or higher. In Winter Quarter of their fourth year, students will work intensively on their projects in the context of a designated creative writing thesis seminar.

To do a creative writing BA project, students must fill out a declaration form available at the English undergraduate office by the spring of their third year. On
this form they declare their intent to write a creative writing BA project in a specific genre and list the two creative writing courses in the relevant genre that they have taken as prerequisites for doing the BA project.

Students work on their project over three quarters. Early in Autumn Quarter of their fourth year, students will be assigned a graduate student preceptor. In Autumn Quarter, students will attend a series of colloquia led by their graduate preceptor. In Winter Quarter, students will continue meeting with their graduate preceptor. In addition, students must enroll in one of the creative BA project workshops in their genre. Students are not automatically enrolled in a workshop; they must receive the consent of the workshop instructor, who will also serve as their faculty adviser for their creative BA project. These workshops are advanced courses limited to eight students and will include not only students majoring in English but also those in Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities (ISHU) and the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities (http://maph.uchicago.edu) (MAPH) who are producing creative theses. Students will work closely with their faculty adviser and with their peers in the workshops and will receive course credit as well as a final grade for the workshop. Students should be aware that because of the high number of students wishing to write fiction for their BA projects, students will not necessarily get their first choice of workshop instructor and faculty adviser.

In consultation with their faculty adviser and graduate preceptor, students revise and resubmit a near final draft of their creative BA projects by the beginning of the third week of Spring Quarter. Students submit the final version of their creative BA project to their preceptor, faculty adviser, and the undergraduate program assistant by the beginning of the fifth week of Spring Quarter. The project will then be evaluated by the faculty adviser, graduate preceptor, and director of undergraduate studies to determine whether the student will be recommended for honors.

MINOR PROGRAM IN ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING

Students who are not English majors may complete a minor in English and Creative Writing. Such a minor requires six courses plus a portfolio of creative work. At least two of the required courses must be Creative Writing (CRWR) courses, with at least one being a Special Topic or Advanced Workshop. Three of the remaining required courses may be taken in either the Department of English (ENGL) or Creative Writing Program (CRWR). In addition, students must enroll in one of the following workshops offered during the Winter Quarter: CRWR 27200 Portfolio Workshop in Fiction, CRWR 27300 Portfolio Workshop in Poetry, or CRWR 29400 Thesis/Major Projects: Creative Nonfiction. Finally, students must submit a portfolio of their work (e.g., a selection of poems, one or two short stories or chapters from a novel, a substantial part or the whole of a play, two or three nonfiction pieces) to the undergraduate program assistant in the English department by the end of the fifth week in the quarter in which they plan to graduate.

Students who elect the minor program in English and Creative Writing must meet with the undergraduate program assistant in the Department of English before the end of Spring Quarter of their third year to declare their intention to complete the minor. Students choose courses in consultation with the undergraduate program assistant. The undergraduate program assistant’s approval for the minor program
should be submitted to a student's College adviser by the deadline above on a form obtained from the adviser. NOTE: Students completing this minor will not be given enrollment preference for CRWR courses, and they must follow all relevant admission procedures described at the Creative Writing (https://creativewriting.uchicago.edu) website.

Courses in the minor (1) may not be doubly counted with the student’s major(s) or with other minors and (2) may not be counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for quality grades (not P/F), and at least half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

### SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two CRWR courses (at least one being a Special Topics or Advanced Workshop)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three CRWR or ENGL electives</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Portfolio/Projects Workshop *</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A portfolio of the student's work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Units</strong></td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* CRWR 27200 Portfolio Workshop in Fiction, CRWR 27300 Portfolio Workshop in Poetry, or CRWR 29400 Thesis/Major Projects: Creative Nonfiction

### Sample Plans of Study

#### SAMPLE PLAN OF STUDY 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 16500</td>
<td>Shakespeare I: Histories and Comedies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 10706</td>
<td>Introduction to Fiction</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 26909</td>
<td>The American Novel, 1950–1990</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 27200</td>
<td>Portfolio Workshop in Fiction</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 12014</td>
<td>Special Topics in Fiction: Not Your Native Language</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 10255</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Fiction: CW Track</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A portfolio of the student’s work (two short stories)

**Total Units**: 600

#### SAMPLE PLAN OF STUDY 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 10400</td>
<td>Introduction to Poetry</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 23100</td>
<td>Advanced Poetry Workshop</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 16500</td>
<td>Shakespeare I: Histories and Comedies</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 26708</td>
<td>Modernist Poetry: Yeats, Eliot, Pound</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 10305</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Poetry</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 27300</td>
<td>Portfolio Workshop in Poetry</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A portfolio of the student’s work (ten short poems)

**Total Units**: 600
PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Creative Writing courses are cross-listed to enable students to apply to courses based on their level of preparation rather than on their level in the degree program. Courses are organized in the following way:

Core
These multi-genre courses are introductions to topics in Creative Writing and satisfy the general education requirement in dramatic, musical, and visual arts in the College. Core classes are generally taught under two headings—"Reading as a Writer" and "Intro to Genres"—and will feature class critiques of students’ creative work. Open to undergraduates only. Fifteen students per class.

Fundamentals
These courses are intended for students who may or may not have writing experience, but are interested in gaining experience in a particular genre. Courses will be focused on the fundamentals of craft and will feature workshops of student writing. Twelve students per class.

Fundamentals: CW Track
These courses are open to all students but will give priority to those who are on track to declare a Creative Writing minor or to complete the Creative BA or MAPH creative writing option. Unlike the normal Fundamentals courses, these courses are not open bid and require submission of a writing sample and the consent of the instructor.

Special Topics
These courses are intended for students with some writing experience in a particular genre. They will be intensive seminars on particulars of form, concept, and method, and will feature workshops of student writing. Admission is determined by submission of a writing sample and requires experience in a Fundamentals course in the same genre or instructor consent. See course descriptions for specific submission requirements. Writing samples are due online in advance of the term by the submission deadline. Twelve students per class.

Advanced
These courses are intended for students with substantive writing experience in a particular genre. They are advanced workshops that will focus on class critiques of student writing with accompanying readings from exemplary literary texts. Admission is determined by submission of a writing sample and requires experience in a Fundamentals course in the same genre or instructor consent. See course descriptions for specific submission requirements. Writing samples are due online in advance of the term by the submission deadline. Ten students per class.

Portfolio Workshop
This course is limited to students working on creative portfolios for the Creative Writing minor requirements, with possible room for non-minor students working on an advanced project in a particular genre. It will revolve around workshops.
of student writing and also concentrate on the larger form students have chosen for their project. Students must check with their respective departments about the prerequisites and requirements necessary to pursue the Creative Writing minor, and they must get permission to take a Portfolio Workshop. Eight students per class.

Thesis/Major Projects

This course is limited to students working on creative theses for BA and MA requirements, with possible room for non-thesis students working on a major project in a particular genre. It will revolve around workshops of student writing and also concentrate on the larger form students have chosen for their project. Students must check with their respective departments about the prerequisites and requirements necessary to pursue creative theses, and they must get permission to take a thesis seminar. Eight students per class.

Cross-Listed Courses

Courses originated by other departments that include creative writing components are cross listed by Creative Writing (CRWR).

Required Writing Samples

Consent of instructor is typically required to enroll in Creative Writing courses, based on faculty review of student writing samples. For specific sample submission requirements, see course descriptions. Submission deadlines are:

- Autumn Quarter, September 11
- Winter Quarter, November 20
- Spring Quarter, February 26

For more information on Creative Writing courses and opportunities, visit the Creative Writing (https://creativewriting.uchicago.edu) website.

Faculty and Visiting Lecturers

For a current listing of Creative Writing faculty, visit the Creative Writing (https://creativewriting.uchicago.edu/faculty) website.
CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

CRWR 10205. Fundamentals of Fiction. 100 Units.
This beginning workshop is designed to encourage and refine your skills in writing fiction. Ideally, it will also refine you as a reader and a critic. We will approach every work of fiction we read, whether published or workshopped, from the writer’s perspective: in terms of form, character, and language, and how the writer succeeds, fails, or innovates in these areas. And since fiction, like any art, is essentially an expression of who we are and how we see the world, we will also begin developing our individual voices as writers. For the course, you will complete one full-length story, which you will present for class critique, and then write a significant revision of that story, which you will either present for a second workshop or turn into the instructor at the end of the quarter. The course will also include a series of writing exercises and readings in canonical and contemporary short fiction, all intended to stoke your creativity and illuminate the aesthetic traditions that inform your work.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu.
Note(s): Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30205

CRWR 10255. Fundamentals of Fiction: CW Track. 100 Units.
This course will be roughly one-half lecture/discussion and one-half creative exercises and workshopping of student work. We’ll read and analyze primarily contemporary short fiction by writers like Edward P. Jones, Deborah Eisenberg, Ben Fountain, Daniel Orozco, Mary Gaitskill, and William Gay. Discussions will tend to be focused around one particular subject each week: setting, dialogue, perspective, etc. We’ll also address more subtle concepts like psychic distance, free-indirect style, and movement through time. Students will present their own work to the group for critique and discussion. We’ll seek to both hone our skills as attentive readers and to further develop as writers of clear, sophisticated prose. This course is open to all students but will give priority to those who are interested in pursuing the Creative BA or Creative Writing Minor. Unlike normal Fundamentals courses, this class is not open bid and requires submission of a writing sample and the consent of the instructor.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open to all students but priority given to those who are interested in pursuing the Creative BA or Creative Writing Minor.
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30255
CRWR 10305. Fundamentals of Poetry. 100 Units.
Based on the premise that successful experimentation stems from a deep understanding of tradition, this course will help students gain a foundation in poetic constructions while encouraging risk-taking in expression and craft. It will expose students to ways that poets have both employed and resisted patterns in meter, line, and rhyme, and it will ask students to experiment with constraints as a way of playing with formal limitations in their own poems. Students will also explore innovations in diction, syntax, and voice, and apply what they learn from these investigations in workshop discussions. While delving into work by both canonical and emerging poets, students will draft and revise a significant portfolio of their own poems.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu.
Note(s): Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30305

CRWR 10405. Fundamentals of Nonfiction. 100 Units.
In this workshop you are free to write about anything at all as long as you do so in an intimate and personal, rather than academic, voice. To that end you will try your hand at a true story—be it a memoir, travelogue, anecdote, character study, essay or argument—and submit it to your classmates, who will edit and critique it. Together we will refine our narratives and our prose, primarily by insisting on rigorous reflection and total honesty. Finding your voice takes time, but we have only ten weeks. So come to the first day of class with ideas and work already underway and ready to share. Be prepared to finish three total rewrites of your work in progress. We will also read and discuss published exemplars of the form. You will leave this class with a polished work sample to use for admission to more advanced courses.
Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu.
Note(s): Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30405
CRWR 12010. Special Topics in Fiction: Young Adult Fiction. 100 Units.
The books and stories we read as teenagers are often some of the most influential in developing our tastes as adult readers and writers of fiction. In this advanced workshop course, we’ll discuss the genre of young adult literature through evaluation of your own writing: what are its defining characteristics, and what’s the difference between writing for a young adult audience versus writing books and stories about teenagers but designed for adult readers? Students should be working on projects involving teenaged protagonists, no matter the intended audience; please come to the first session with either work to submit or a sense of when you’d be able to sign up for a slot. We’ll spend most of our time evaluating student work, learning how to become both generous and rigorous critics, and we’ll also talk about the books that influenced us the most as young adult readers and the books we’re reading today, from contemporary writers like John Green and Rainbow Rowell to classic authors like S. E. Hinton and Madeleine L’Engle.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 32010

CRWR 12011. Special Topics in Fiction: The Realists. 100 Units.
This course examines some of the foundations of late-19th-century social realism. We’ll look at works by Flaubert, Maupassant, Tolstoy, and Turgenev and consider how their innovations in prose style, storytelling structure, and portrayal of character inform our contemporary literature. We’ll read lesser known works by each, mostly short stories, as well as some correspondence, particularly that between Flaubert and Turgenev. It will also be instructive for us to consider the fictional devices that we’ve tended to discard in 20th and 21st century fiction, and to examine, briefly, a few of the late-19th century writers who fell well outside the soon to be dominant realist mode.
Instructor(s): Will Boast Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 32011
CRWR 12012. Special Topics in Fiction: World-Building. 100 Units.
Readers can be quick to accept an unbelievable story as long as the cover asserts
that it’s true, but fictional narratives come with no such scaffolding, and therefore
must feel authentic to overcome the fact that they’re inventions. Not all stories worry
over plausibility in the same way—an absurd tale, a science fiction narrative, and a
realistic contemporary drama carry different expectations of what can be real, but all
of them employ devices to make the experience feel reasonable and compelling to
a reader. In this course we’ll explore the ways in which a narrative universe can be
built into something which feels rich and immersive, without bogging down plot or
losing sight of character. We’ll discuss the particular responsibilities different stories
have to offer character background, setting detail, or plot-explanation, with special
attention on how individual scenes are designed, including the ways in which
writers balance exposition and action on the page, and how a fictional universe can
establish its own inner logic. Over the quarter, students will study a wide range of
mostly short fiction, eventually bringing their own stories to workshop.
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning
Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via
www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 32012

CRWR 12013. Special Topics in Fiction: Genre Rules and Rebels. 100 Units.
In this specialized fiction workshop, students will explore and create works that
defy genre boundaries. By studying the intersections between fiction, non-fiction,
and poetry—in novels in verse, graphic novels, and poetic essays—we will work on
importing into fiction the careful economy of poetic language and the truth-seeking
clarity of nonfiction. Readings include Carson, O’Brien, and Pope.
Instructor(s): Rachel DeWoskin Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning
Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via
www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 32013
CRWR 12014. Special Topics in Fiction: Not Your Native Language. 100 Units.
In this specialized fiction workshop, students will read work written in English by writers whose first languages are not English, as well as works in translation. We will explore how linguistic heritage shapes our phrases, and work to create prose that is inimitable, lyrical, and absent of cliché. Students will practice translating both from languages they know and don't know. Readings include Xiaolu Guo, Ha Jin, Nabokov, and Pound.
Instructor(s): Rachel DeWoskin Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42014

CRWR 12107. Reading as a Writer: Crime and Story. 100 Units.
If prostitution is the earliest profession, then crime is probably the earliest narrative engine. Crime has always been a driving force behind story, a vehicle not only of plot but of human psychology, social exploration, philosophical investigation, and just plain old suspense. There’s something about the darker side of human nature that invites explorations of characters pushed to their extremes. Through analyzing the writing techniques and processes—such as point of view, scene, setting, voice, narrative structure and research methodologies—of such writers and poets as Raymond Chandler, Patricia Highsmith, Walter Mosley, Joyce Carol Oates, Denis Johnson, Carolyn Forché, CK Williams, Nami Mun, James Ellroy, and Richard Price among others, students will examine how elements of crime in story can be transformed beyond simple genre. By examining writers’ choices, students will explore how they may use these techniques to develop such mechanics of writing as point of view, poetics, dramatic movement and narrative structure in their own work.
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in dramatic, musical, and visual arts.
CRWR 12112. Reading as a Writer: Chicago "City on the Remake" 100 Units.
This course invites writers to reconsider the influence of Chicago's public spaces on artistic craft and form. How does one tell a “Chicago story?” Is the city better told in prose or poem? Is there a “Chicago epic?” Working through these questions, students will analyze and explore Chicago writers' work in prose and poetry. Students will then develop their own creative responses, building connections to their adopted critical approaches. To these ends, we will examine work by writers including Nelson Algren, Saul Bellow, Gwendolyn Brooks, Stuart Dybek, Lorraine Hansberry, and Chris Ware, as well as the city's rich legacies in documentary film, the visual arts, and music.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in dramatic, musical, and visual arts.

CRWR 12118. Reading as a Writer: Waste, Surplus, and Reuse. 100 Units.
What do we do with surplus, with the extras, leftovers, and other excesses of production? Is there a creative use to put it to? When matters of ecology and economy are concerned, is there an ethical imperative to do so? Or is there also an ethics and aesthetics of the useless? This course considers forms of excess (literary, artistic, economic, etc.) and how they may be approached creatively. We'll examine diverse types of waste, including literal trash, architectural ruins, bodily waste, wasted time, the dream, and everyday texts (such as emails, text messages, and media). Texts may include Agnes Varda’s documentary The Gleaners and I, Lyn Hejinian's The Fatalist, Georges Perec’s An Attempt at Exhausting a Place in Paris, Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony, Kafka’s fiction, art movements such as Dada and Fluxus, Internet memes, Apollinaire’s conversation poems, Tom Phillips A Humument, Ronald Johnson’s Radio, Eliot’s The Waste Land, A. R. Ammon’s Garbage, Hopkins’ environmental poems, André Breton’s Mad Love, and essays by Georges Bataille and Eliot Weinberger.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in dramatic, musical, and visual arts.
CRWR 12119. Intro to Genres: Walking. 100 Units.
“Walking is the human way of getting about.” That’s Scottish poet Thomas A. Clark.
“I think that I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least—and it is commonly more than that—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and field, absolutely free from all worldly engagements.” That’s Thoreau. “In summer, I stalk… I have to seek things out.” That’s Annie Dillard.
The textures of walking and writing are deeply woven together. In this workshop, we will walk and explore various theories and practices of walking approaching them from the angles of poetry, essay, aphorism, anthropology, architecture and hybrid writing. Including those already mentioned, we’ll read Rousseau, Whitman, Lisa Robertson, Devin Johnston, Jeffrey C. Robinson, Basho, Rebecca Solnit, Bruce Chatwin, and Shawn Micallef. Though the classroom is our workshop, the environs of Chicago will be our experimental laboratory. Classwork will involve weekly walking requirements, topological writing assignments, and regular reflections, as well as occasional group expeditions and forays in which we will explore varieties of walking: sauntering, strolling, strutting, foraging, skulking.
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in dramatic, musical, and visual arts.

CRWR 12120. Reading as a Writer: Writing and Desecration. 100 Units.
To write in any genre is a gesture that puts one in a relationship with predecessors. While this relationship if often constructed as a dialogue, but it can also be a conflict, full of clatter, disagreement and offensiveness. In this sense, the writer’s mark crosses out the predecessors’ work, and becomes an act of desecration. Writing becomes an act of rebellion that calls into question the conventional, the canonical, and the sacred. Drawing on a variety of media, including art, literature, and music, this class invites students to consider writing that functions as desecration. Students will explore writing projects that may involve elements of parody, satire, violence, the sacred, kitsch, obscenity, transgression, deviancy, and iconoclasm. Texts may include Robert Motherwell’s The Dada Painters and Poets, Kanye West’s Yeezus, Allen Ginsberg’s Howl, excerpts from Joyce’s Ulysses, Kafka’s short fiction, poetry and plays by Amiri Baraka, Kathy Acker’s Great Expectations, Salman Rushdie’s East West, poetry and manifestos by Benjamin Péret, Rimbaud’s A Season in Hell, Greil Marcus’s Lipstick Traces, George Bataille’s Story of the Eye, and erasure poetry.
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in dramatic, musical, and visual arts.
CRWR 13010. Special Topics in Poetry: Poetry, Sound, Voice. 100 Units.
This is not a course in formal metrics, but a course in prosody as a mode of thinking. It will begin to address rhythm, rhyme, vowel and consonantal patterns, line-breaks, openings, endings, harmonics, dissonance, punctuation, the hard to speak, and other non-semantic (chiefly sonic) resources for verse writers. Highly disparate practices will be discussed. Workshops will focus on non-semantic features of students’ writing.
Instructor(s): John Wilkinson
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Poetry (CRWR 10305), Beginning Poetry (CRWR10300), or Honors Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10350)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 33010

CRWR 13011. Special Topics in Poetry: Essayistic Poetry and Prose. 100 Units.
This cross-genre course queries and challenges the division between poems and essays. What differentiates poetic prose and prose poetry? What is a lyric essay, and what is a prose poem? How can we write across generic distinctions? We will read prose texts that incorporate poetry, poems that incorporate prose, and works that straddle the space between: William Carlos Williams’s Spring and All, Gertrude Stein’s Tender Buttons, Susan Howe’s THAT THIS, Anne Carson’s Glass, Irony, and God, Lyn Hejinian’s My Life, The Gorgeous Nothings: Emily Dickinson’s Envelope Poems, and essays by John D’Agata, Eula Biss, and Ander Monson. Using these models, we will explore hybrid techniques in our own writing and draft and polish several pieces of our own essayistic poetry and prose.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Poetry (CRWR 10305), Beginning Poetry (CRWR10300), or Honors Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10350)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 33011
CRWR 13012. Special Topics in Poetry: Ekphrastic Poetry. 100 Units.
Ekphrasis was originally a Greek term meaning a highly detailed description of an object that offered a fully realized experience of that object, embodying not only its physical qualities but also its emotional impact and other intangible qualities. In modern times that concept has been reinterpreted in artistic terms: as a written form of art that responds to a visual form of art. For the purposes of our class, we will take on an expansive definition of ekphrastic poetry, studying and generating poetry that responds to any non-literary medium. We will begin by considering poems by John Keats, W.H. Auden, Anne Sexton, and many others that respond to visual art, but then we will also consider poems that respond to other artistic media, such as music, movies, dance, etc. We will also read critical work, tracing broadly the various ways that poets have interpreted the ekphrastic relationship between poem and inspiration. How does the extra-textual origin of these poems influence them? How does it affect their form and diction? How does it affect the reader’s experience to have or lack access to the original inspiration? In this hands-on class, students will complete a writing exercise each week, accompanied as often as possible by field trips to art galleries, museums, and performances.
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Poetry (CRWR 10305), Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10300), or Honors Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10350)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 33012

CRWR 14010. Special Topics in Nonfiction: Fiction Writers as Nonfiction Writers / Nonfiction Writers as Fiction Writers. 100 Units.
This class will be invested in doing lots of reading in two genres by the same author. We’ll look at James Baldwin, George Saunders, George Orwell, Susan Sontag, Zadie Smith, Joan Didion, Colson Whitehead, and Charles Baxter. We’ll also read W.G. Sebald and try to figure out if generic designations even apply to him. We’ll try our hand writing both fiction and non-fiction and talk about the way the skillsets diverge and intersect.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Nonfiction (CRWR 10405), Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10400), or Honors Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10450)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 34010
CRWR 14011. Special Topics in Nonfiction: Reading and Writing Memoir. 100 Units.
Are memoirs inherently self-indulgent, or is the self that they indulge that of the reader, not the author? In this class you’ll a) write your own attempt at a memoir, learning firsthand the pitfalls of the genre, and b) look at the genre’s historical landmarks, such as Rousseau’s *Confessions* and St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, and at early novels, which almost invariably presented themselves as found texts or letters, i.e., as faux memoirs, and still do. ("Call me Ishmael.") Although your memoir is about what happened, ultimately it has to be about what what happened *means*. So we’ll ask each other this question in workshop, via intensive line edits and more qualitative, essayistic critiques. We’ll study exemplars by Orwell, Nabokov, Rian Malan, and Lucy Grealy, as well as craft books such as *The Situation and the Story*, by Vivian Gornick, *Then, Again: Time and the Art of Memoir*, by Sven Birkerts, *To Show and To Tell*, by Phillip Lopate. You’ll learn the history of the form by reading *Memoir: A History*, by Ben Yagoda.
Instructor(s): Dan Raeburn Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Nonfiction (CRWR 10405), Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10400), or Honors Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10450)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 34011

CRWR 14012. Special Topics in Nonfiction: Knowledge Journalism. 100 Units.
Knowledge journalists specialize in covering complex topics for a general audience, informing their coverage with current research findings and often infusing their coverage with overt advocacy. They have been praised for bringing intelligent focus to vital issues, such as climate change, and blamed for oversimplifying or misusing science. We will study the knowledge journalists with an eye to practicing and perfecting their craft, both in the synthesis of research and the execution of eloquent writing. Students will choose an area of speciality and practice translating current research into language accessible and enjoyable to a lay audience. Readings will include prominent knowledge journalists past and present including Walter Lippman, Rachel Carson, Joan Didion, David Brooks, Fareed Zakaria, Naomi Klein, and Michael Pollan, as well as vital texts on the phenomenon of knowledge journalism including “A Free and Responsible Press” (1947) by Robert Maynard Hutchins, et al, and “Informing the News” (2013) by Harvard Professor Thomas Patterson.
Instructor(s): Jeff McMahon Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Nonfiction (CRWR 10405), Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10400), or Honors Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10450), OR Instructor Consent.
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 34012
CRWR 14013. Special Topics in Nonfiction: The Lyric versus the Narrative. 100 Units.
It has been said that there is no lyric without a narrative behind it. It’s also been said that narrative is the least of the essay’s abilities. Lines have been drawn. Journals have been published emphasizing one mode over the other. What are we really talking about with these two modes? Are they as opposed as people like to think? We’ll read exemplars of both sides: Jenny Boully, Bernard Cooper, Brenda Miller, Maggie Nelson, David Sedaris, Edward Hoagland, Jo Ann Beard, Virginia Woolf, Beryl Markham, and James Baldwin among others. We’ll write in both modes and try to determine if there are really two distinct modes.
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Nonfiction (CRWR 10405), Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10400), or Honors Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10450)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 34013

CRWR 22100. Advanced Fiction Workshop. 100 Units.
This course will build on the foundational elements of storytelling introduced in Fundamentals of Fiction Writing and encourage you to consider those ideas in a more nuanced, expansive manner. We’ll engage with works of short fiction on the micro level—diction, sentence construction, etc.—and the macro level—narrative, perspective, movement through time. The very best stories are built one sentence at a time, accumulating meaning through tone, careful examination of character, and close attention paid to the implications of dramatic incidents. As Flannery O’Connor is often quoted, “A story is a way to say something that can’t be said any other way, and it takes every word in the story to say what the meaning is.” We’ll read, analyze, and discuss works of short fiction by the likes of Mary Gaitskill, Sherman Alexie, Amy Bloom, and Edward P. Jones. The majority of our class time, however, will be devoted to workshopping of student work.
Instructor(s): Will Boast Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42100
CRWR 22110. Advanced Fiction: Exploring Your Boundaries. 100 Units.
This advanced fiction workshop is for students who have taken Beginning or Intermediate Fiction Writing and produced a body of work, large or small, that reflects their developing aesthetic. Our workshops will focus on the fundamentals of craft like language, voice, and plot and character development, but with an eye also on expanding the formal possibilities in our storytelling. To that end, we’ll examine the work of writers (Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortazar, Donald Barthelme, David Foster Wallace, Alice Munro, Tim O’Brien, et al.) who experiment with form, who unravel the rules of the “well-made story” and reconfigure it in order to present their unique vision of the world—an encouragement for you not necessarily to be “experimental” writers, but to explore more meaningful, memorable, and perhaps innovative ways of telling your own stories.
Instructor(s): Vu Tran Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42110

CRWR 22111. Advanced Fiction: The Importance of Plot. 100 Units.
What is plot—beyond the dramatic events that take place in a work of fiction? Why is it important—beyond engaging us in what happens to a story’s characters? Can plot be just as consequential to character-driven, aesthetic-driven, or idea-driven fiction as it is to fiction that privileges incident and action? And what exactly do we mean when we label stories in this fashion? This advanced fiction workshop will examine these questions and the many others that concern this crucial but often underrated element of craft. We will begin with the basic mechanics of plot and work towards a deeper understanding of all its effects on a narrative, whether they be dramatic, formal, characterological, even philosophical. Most importantly, we will try to apply these lessons to our own work, no matter the label we assign to our narrative and aesthetic interests. For the course, students will complete one full-length story, which they will present for class critique, and then write a significant revision of that story, which they will either present for a second workshop or turn in at the end of the quarter. Students should expect a rigorous but constructive workshop environment where being a critic and an editor is as essential as being a writer. The course will also include writing exercises and readings of exceptional published fiction, all intended to advance the course’s investigation of plot.
Instructor(s): Vu Tran Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42111
CRWR 22114. Advanced Fiction: Home and Away. 100 Units.
In this specialized fiction workshop, students will read and write about leaving and arriving, exploring notions of home, exile, diaspora, and national identity. We will work on creating stories that have momentum and meaning, with a focus on language, translation, and landscape. Readings include Adichie, Lahiri, Sharma and Strauss.
Instructor(s): Rachel DeWoskin Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Fiction (CRWR 10205 or CRWR 10255), Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10200), or Honors Beginning Fiction (CRWR 10250)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42114

CRWR 23110. Advanced Poetry: The Long Poem. 100 Units.
In this course, you will propose and then begin to execute the composition of a long poem. Your proposals will focus not only on quality of inspiration in subject and idea, but also on formal concerns (in what manner to write a long poem), and issues of feasibility. The goal of the course is to have you on your way to completing your own long poem by the end of ten weeks, aided by extensive reading of long-form poetry for class discussions, and intensive mutual scrutiny of the projects of everyone involved in the class. Among the long poems we will consider: Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself”; Gerard Manley Hopkins, “The Wreck of the Deutschland”; H.D., Trilogy; Vicente Huidobro, Altazor; Aimé Césaire, Notebook of a Return to a Native Land; Ronald Johnson, Radi os; Anne Carson, “The Glass Essay”; Alice Oswald, Memorial; Pam Rehm, The Larger Nature; and Jeff Clark, The Little Door Slides Back.
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Poetry (CRWR 10305), Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10300), or Honors Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10350)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 43110
CRWR 23111. Advanced Poetry: Poetry Chapbooks. 100 Units.
This course is designed for graduating fourth-years who have written creative BA theses. We will investigate the poetry chapbook as both text and texture by attending closely to the content and construction of the medium. Using students’ manuscripts-in-progress, drafted during the Winter Quarter thesis workshops, we spend the first three weeks polishing and refining manuscript drafts. We will attempt to contextualize our efforts in the history and theories of chapbooks, editions, editing, artist’s books, etc. Then we will move to production, where we will each use InDesign to lay out the contents of a book; we will also explore multiple technologies (old and new) to design our books’ formats and covers. The course will culminate at the BA thesis readings, where we will celebrate each writer’s chapbook and distribute the books to a wider public.
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Poetry (CRWR 10305), Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10300), or Honors Beginning Poetry (CRWR 10350)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 43111

CRWR 24001. Advanced Nonfiction: Aiming for Publication. 100 Units.
This workshop is for students who are about to enter the real world and want to leave the ivory tower with a realistic view of their strengths and limitations. A forewarning: I can’t get you an editor or an agent. The only way to do that is to have a forceful and beautifully-written manuscript. This course is about how to begin that manuscript. It’s a workshop, meaning that you’re responsible for generating the majority of our text and our discussions. Every week we’ll read and discuss successful published work I’ve selected to specifically illustrate solutions to the problems that have come up in your and your classmates’ work. That’s because the best way to become a better writer is to become a better reader. If you learn nothing else in this course, you’ll learn that.
Instructor(s): Dan Raeburn Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Fundamentals of Nonfiction (CRWR 10405), Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10400), or Honors Beginning Nonfiction (CRWR 10450)
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 44001
CRWR 27200. Portfolio Workshop in Fiction. 100 Units.
This course is for students minoring in creative writing or any advanced student working on a serious fiction project. It is primarily a workshop, so please come to our first class with a project in progress (short stories from a collection, excerpts from a novel or a novella), ready for you to discuss and to submit for critique. Everyone will workshop two pieces from their project, and as in any writing workshop, we will stress the fundamentals of craft like language, voice, and plot and character development, with an eye also on how to shape your work for the longer form you have chosen. Throughout the quarter, will also read and discuss a selection of essays and fiction that will hopefully deepen everyone’s engagement with their own work.
Instructor(s): Vu Tran Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Required for the Creative Writing Minor.
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 47200

CRWR 27300. Portfolio Workshop in Poetry. 100 Units.
This course is for students minoring in creative writing or any advanced student working on a serious poetry project. It is primarily a workshop, so please come to our first class with a project in progress, ready for you to discuss and to submit for critique. Everyone will workshop several poems from their project, and as in any writing workshop, we will stress the fundamentals of craft like language and voice, with an eye also on how to shape your work for the longer form you have chosen. Throughout the quarter, we will also read and discuss a selection of essays and poems that will hopefully deepen everyone’s engagement with their own work.
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Required for the Creative Writing Minor.
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 47300

CRWR 29200. Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction. 100 Units.
This advanced fiction course is for BA and MA students writing a creative thesis or any advanced student working on a major fiction project. It is primarily a workshop, so please come to our first class with your project in progress (a story collection, a novel, or a novella), ready for you to discuss and to submit some part of for critique. As in any writing workshop, we will stress the fundamentals of craft like language, voice, and plot and character development, with an eye also on how to shape your work for the longer form you have chosen. And as a supplement to our workshops, we will have brief student presentations on the writing life: our literary influences, potential avenues towards publication, etc.
Instructor(s): Vu Tran, Rachel DeWoskin, Will Boast Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Required for students working on BA or MA thesis in fiction.
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 49200
CRWR 29300. Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry. 100 Units.
This course is an advanced seminar intended primarily for students writing a Creative BA or MA thesis, as well as advanced students who are working on major projects. Because it is a thesis seminar, the course will focus on various ways of organizing larger poetic “projects.” We will consider the poetic sequence, the chapbook, and the poetry collection as ways of extending the practice of poetry beyond the individual lyric text. We will also problematize the notion of broad poetic “projects,” considering the consequences of imposing a predetermined conceptual framework on the elusive, spontaneous, and subversive act of lyric writing. Because this class is designed as a poetry workshop, your fellow students’ work will be the primary text over the course of the quarter.
Instructor(s): Srikanth Reddy Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Required for students working on a BA or MA thesis in poetry. Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 49300

CRWR 29400. Thesis/Major Projects: Creative Nonfiction. 100 Units.
This course is for students writing a creative BA or MA thesis in nonfiction, as well as Creative Writing Minors completing the portfolio. If space allows I’ll also admit those who are working on a long piece of nonfiction on their own. It can be an extended essay, memoir, travelogue, literary journalism, or an interrelated collection thereof. It’s a workshop, so come to the first day of class with your work underway and ready to submit. You’ll edit your classmates’ writing as diligently as you edit your own. I focus on editing because writing is, in essence, rewriting. Only by learning to edit other people’s work will you gradually acquire the objectivity you need to skillfully edit your own. You’ll profit not only from the advice you receive, but from the advice you learn to give. I will teach you to teach each other and thus yourselves, preparing you for the real life of the writer outside the academy.
Instructor(s): Dan Raeburn Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Required for students working on the BA/MA thesis in creative nonfiction, as well as Creative Writing Minors completing the portfolio in nonfiction.
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 49400