

Creative Writing

Department Website: <http://creativewriting.uchicago.edu>

The Program in Creative Writing takes a comprehensive approach to the study of contemporary literature, criticism, and theory from a writer's perspective, and provides rigorous training in the fundamental practices of creative writing. In our courses, students work with established poets and prose writers towards these pursuits, and both the major and minor in Creative Writing provide ample opportunities for interdisciplinary work across University departments. The program's commitment to interdisciplinary work and academic rigor, coupled with an emphasis on teaching the elements of creative writing that underlie all genres, accounts for the program's vitality and explains why Creative Writing at Chicago is currently the largest initiative in the humanities for the College.

The Program in Creative Writing offers workshops and seminars in poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, as well as an increasing number of translation workshops. The major seminars—including the Technical Seminars and Fundamentals in Creative Writing—are designed to build a critical and aesthetic foundation for students working in each primary genre. Students can pursue their creative writing interests within the formal requirements of the major in Creative Writing or through a joint minor in English and Creative Writing, which is open to students outside those two major programs. Students who do not wish to pursue a formal program in Creative Writing will have access to courses that satisfy the general education requirement in the arts and open-entry "beginning" workshops. They may also apply for advanced workshop courses. Our workshops and technical seminars are cross-listed with a graduate number and open to students in the graduate and professional schools.

Major in Creative Writing

Students who graduate with the bachelor of arts in Creative Writing will both be skilled in writing in a major literary genre and have a theoretically informed understanding of the aesthetic, historical, social, and political context of a range of contemporary writing. Students in the major will focus their studies on a primary genre chosen from fiction, poetry, and nonfiction.

The organization of the major recognizes the value of workshop courses, but incorporates that model into a broader education that furthers students' knowledge of historical and contemporary literary practice, introduces them to aesthetic and literary theory, sharpens their critical attention, and fosters their creative enthusiasm. Valuable experience with group work and peer criticism, which comes from the practices and skills central to Creative Writing pedagogy, will prepare students for success in a range of fields in the public and private sectors.

Program Requirements

The Program in Creative Writing requires a total of 13 courses and completion of a BA thesis, as described below. Students who matriculated in 2016–17 or later may declare this major. Students planning to complete the major must meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies and file a worksheet with the program by the end of the Autumn Quarter of the third year of study.

All interested students should speak with the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Program Manager.

Students contemplating a major or minor in Creative Writing may choose to take one or two Creative Writing courses toward the general education requirement in the arts. These courses will not count towards major requirements, but they do offer an opportunity to test out the program while satisfying a general education requirement.

One (1) Fundamentals in Creative Writing course

CRWR 17000 to CRWR 17999

The Fundamentals in Creative Writing course is a cross-genre, one-quarter seminar to be taken by all students in the major. Every section of the course focuses on a current debate relevant to all forms of literary practice, such as mimesis, translation and appropriation, and art and the market. This course introduces students to a group of core texts from each major literary genre. The course is taught in a seminar format and will require a final paper. Fundamentals in Creative Writing is restricted to students who have declared the major, as its aims are to develop cohort solidarity, promote a culture of articulate exchange, and induct students into a reflection on practice that will serve their artistic and professional development. Students should plan to take the course as early as possible after declaring the major, ideally in the first or second quarter in the program. See *Enrolling in Creative Writing Courses* for additional details.

Two (2) Technical Seminars

Fiction: CRWR 20200 to CRWR 20299; Poetry: CRWR 20301 to CRWR 20399; Nonfiction: CRWR 20400 to CRWR 20499

Students in the major must take two technical seminars in their primary genre of fiction, poetry, or nonfiction. The aims of the seminars are to enlarge students' technical resources through extensive reading and analysis of contemporary literature and to provide practice-based training in technical skills. Students submit papers that address technical questions, chiefly with reference to contemporary texts. For example, poetry students may write on "the line," where fiction students write on "point of view." These courses may also count as electives in the minor. See *Enrolling in Creative Writing Courses* for additional details.

Three (3) Advanced Workshops

Fiction: CRWR 22100 to CRWR 22299; Poetry: CRWR 23100 to CRWR 23299; Nonfiction: CRWR 24001 to CRWR 24199

Students in the major must complete three Advanced Workshops, at least two of which must be in the student's primary genre. The Advanced Workshop is the characteristic pedagogical instrument of Creative Writing as an academic discipline. Workshop practice relies on an understanding of support that is dedicated to improving students' writing, not unconditional approval. Critique is the core value and activity of the workshop, and students will practice it under the guidance of the workshop instructor. Although Advanced Workshops begin with attention to exemplary texts, they typically focus on original student work. See *Enrolling in Creative Writing Courses* for additional details.

Credit for a Beginning Workshop: Students who have completed a Beginning Workshop in their primary genre and have received a grade of B+ or above will be able to count this course as one of the required Advanced Workshops. Because students must take at least two Advanced Workshops in their primary genre, any qualifying Beginning Workshop may only serve as the third required workshop. This means that students choosing to count a Beginning Workshop towards the major will not be able to count an Advanced Workshop from a genre that is not the primary genre towards the degree. Beginning Workshops offered by other institutions will not count towards the major. Beginning Workshops are open to all students during pre-registration.

One (1) Literary Genre Course

Students are required to take one introductory Literary Genre course related to their primary genre as an introduction to key texts and debates in the history of their chosen genre. This requirement can be met by a cross-listed English course or a comparable course in another literature. Depending on the student's genre, courses like ENGL 10400 Introduction to Poetry, ENGL 10700 Introduction To Fiction: Short Story, or ENGL 11004 History of the Novel may be eligible. Specific courses that are identified as filling this requirement will be listed at creativewriting.uchicago.edu.

Three (3) Literature Courses

Creative Writing majors are required to take three literature courses offered by other departments. These courses can be focused on the literature of any language, but one must involve the study of literature written before the twentieth century and one must center on theory. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will offer guidance and approve all qualifying courses. Specific courses that satisfy the distribution element of this requirement will be listed at creativewriting.uchicago.edu.

Two (2) Research Background Electives

Students take two courses outside the Creative Writing department to support the student's individual interests and thesis project. These courses must be selected in consultation with and approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Depending on a student's interests, courses in e.g., Cinema and Media Studies or Visual Arts might be appropriate. Others may take additional literature course work. The students must provide documentation of these approvals to their College adviser.

BA Thesis and Workshop

Students work on their BA Projects throughout their fourth year. In Spring Quarter of the third year, students will submit a signed BA proposal form to the Program Manager. During Summer Quarter, students are responsible for completing independent reading and research related to their proposed project. Early in Autumn Quarter of their fourth year, students will be assigned a graduate student preceptor, who will lead a series of mandatory colloquia over the course of the quarter. In Winter Quarter, students will continue meeting with the graduate preceptor and must also enroll in the appropriate Thesis/Major Projects Workshop in their genre (CRWR 29200 Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction, CRWR 29300 Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry, or CRWR 29400 Thesis/Major Projects: Creative Nonfiction).

Students are not automatically enrolled in a workshop; they must receive the consent of the workshop instructor, who will also serve as the faculty advisor for their BA Project. 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 advisor. See *Enrolling in Creative Writing Courses* for additional details.

Students will work closely with their faculty advisor and with their peers in the workshops and will receive course credit as well as a final grade for the workshop. In consultation with their faculty advisor and graduate preceptor, students will revise and resubmit a near-final draft of the BA Project by the end of the second week of Spring Quarter. Students will submit the final version of their BA Project to their preceptor, faculty advisor, and the Director of Undergraduate Studies by the beginning of the fifth week of Spring Quarter.

Students graduating in other quarters must consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies about an appropriate timeline before the end of Autumn Quarter of the third year of study. The Winter Thesis/Major Projects Workshop is mandatory.

Program Honors

The faculty in the Program in Creative Writing will award program honors based on their assessment of the BA theses, with input from graduate student preceptors. To be eligible, students must have an overall GPA of at least 3.6 and overall

GPA of 3.25. Honors will be awarded only to the most exceptional projects from a given cohort; the majority of students will not receive this designation.

Summary of Requirements

One (1) Fundamentals in Creative Writing course *	100
Two (2) Technical Seminars (in the student's primary genre) †	200
Three (3) Advanced Workshops (at least two in the student's primary genre) §	300
One (1) Literary Genre Course	100
Three (3) Literature Courses	300
Two (2) Research Background Electives	200
One (1) BA Workshop, chosen from:	100
CRWR 29200 Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction	
CRWR 29300 Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry	
CRWR 29400 Thesis/Major Projects: Creative Nonfiction	
Total Units	1300

* CRWR 17000 to CRWR 17999

† Technical Seminars in Fiction: CRWR 20200 to CRWR 20299; Poetry: CRWR 20301 to CRWR 20399; Nonfiction: CRWR 20400 to CRWR 20499

§ Advanced Workshops in Fiction: CRWR 22100 to CRWR 22299; Poetry: CRWR 23100 to CRWR 23299; Nonfiction: 24001 to CRWR 24199. Beginning Workshops may count as the third workshop if they meet the stipulations listed under the Program Requirements.

Advising

Students considering the major should meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies as early as possible to discuss program requirements and individual plans of study. Declaration of the major must be formalized through my.uchicago.edu.

The Program Manager and Director of Undergraduate Studies will provide guidance to students choosing courses to complete the major requirements. By Autumn Quarter of their third year, all students will be required to file a major program worksheet with the department, and the student's final major program must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students will need to regularly provide documentation of any approvals for the major to their College advisers for the necessary processing.

Graduate student preceptor support will be available to students while they write BA theses and minor portfolios during their final year of study, and faculty instructors will serve as thesis advisors for the students in their winter workshops.

Courses outside the Department Taken for Program Credit

A maximum of three courses outside Creative Writing and the Department of English Language and Literature (or another literature) may count toward the total number of courses required by the major. Ordinarily, two of these courses will be Research Background Electives. Substitutions for a further course will be subject to approval, but students may not substitute non-literature courses for the Literature Course requirement.

For students double majoring, this means a maximum of three courses can count towards both majors (pending approval from both departments).

Double Majors in English Language and Literature and Creative Writing

When students choose a double major in Creative Writing and English Language and Literature, they may count up to four courses towards both majors. These four courses will typically include the three Literature Courses and the Literary Genre course, but in some cases one of the slots might be filled by a CRWR course (with Director of Undergraduate Studies approval). However, the two Research Background Electives required for the Creative Writing major should be taken outside of the Department of English Language and Literature.

This means that a maximum of four English Language and Literature courses, including the Literary Genre course, can count towards the Creative Writing major.

Students who are pursuing only the English Language and Literature major may count up to four CRWR courses towards the major in English as electives without a petition. However, when students are pursuing a double major in English Language and Literature and Creative Writing, they must observe the shared four-course maximum, so any eligible CRWR courses beyond this cap must be counted towards English only.

Grading

Students with a major in Creative Writing must receive quality grades (not P/F) in all courses counting toward the major or minor. Non-majors may take CRWR courses for P/F grading with consent of instructor.

Sample Plan of Study for the Major

Fundamentals in Creative Writing		100
CRWR 17000	Fundamentals in Creative Writing: Literary Empathy	
Technical Seminars		200
CRWR 20302	Technical Seminar in Poetry: Units of Composition	
CRWR 20301	Technical Seminar in Poetry: Manifestos, Movements, Modes	
Advanced Workshops		300
CRWR 23113	Advanced Poetry Workshop: Waste, Surplus, Reuse	
CRWR 23100	Advanced Poetry Workshop	
CRWR 10306	Beginning Poetry Workshop ⁺	
Literary Genre Course		100
ENGL 10400	Introduction to Poetry	
Literature Courses		300
ENGL 17515	Seventeenth-Century Verse [*]	
ENGL 22903	Literature of the City: Between Utopia and Dystopia ^{**}	
ENGL 28614	Contemporary Latina/o Poetry	
Research Electives		200
CMST 14503	Cinema in Theory and Practice	
ARTV 22502	Data and Algorithm in Art	
BA Workshop		100
CRWR 29300	Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry	
Total Units		1300

⁺ Beginning Workshop is eligible because it met the conditions outlined in the Program Requirements (above).

^{*} Satisfies period requirement (pre-20th century)

^{**} Satisfies theory requirement

Minor in English and Creative Writing

Students who are not English Language and Literature or Creative Writing 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) workshop courses, with at least one being an Advanced Workshop. Three of the remaining required courses may be taken in either the Department of English Language and Literature (ENGL) or the Program in Creative Writing (CRWR). This may include CRWR Technical Seminars or general education courses, as long as they are not already counted toward the general education requirement in the arts.

In addition, students must enroll in one of the following workshops offered during the Winter Quarter: CRWR 29200 Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction; CRWR 29300 Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry; 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, two or three nonfiction pieces) to the Creative Writing Program Manager by the end of the fifth week in the quarter in which they plan to graduate. Students will work with a graduate student preceptor to compile and refine their final portfolios.

Students who elect the minor program in English and Creative Writing must meet with the program administrator for Creative Writing 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 administrator. The administrator'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.

Students completing this minor will be given enrollment preference for CRWR Advanced Workshops and Thesis/Major Projects Workshops, and they must follow all relevant admission procedures described at the Creative Writing (<https://creativewriting.uchicago.edu>) website. For details, see Enrolling in Creative Writing Courses.

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 in English and Creative Writing

Two CRWR workshop courses [*]		200
Three CRWR or ENGL electives		300
One Thesis/Major Projects Workshop ⁺		100
A portfolio of the student's work		
Total Units		600

- * At least one must be an Advanced Workshop.
- + CRWR 29200 Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction, CRWR 29300 Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry, or CRWR 29400 Thesis/Major Projects: Creative Nonfiction.

Minor to Major and Major to Minor

Student circumstances change, and thus a transfer between the major and minor programs may be desirable to students who begin a course of study in either program. Workshop courses (including Beginning Workshops) and one Technical Seminar may count towards the minor, but Fundamentals in Creative Writing will not. The Thesis/Major Projects Workshop will also function as a portfolio workshop for minors. Students should consult with their College adviser if considering such a transfer and must update their planned program of study with the Program Manager or Director of Undergraduate Studies in Creative Writing.

Sample Plan of Study for the Minor

CRWR 10200	Beginning Fiction Workshop	100
CRWR 22110	Advanced Fiction: Exploring Your Boundaries	100
ENGL 16500	Shakespeare I: Histories and Comedies	100
ENGL 10706	Introduction to Fiction	100
ENGL 24526	Forms of Autobiography in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries	100
CRWR 29200	Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction	100
A portfolio of the student's work (two short stories)		
Total Units		600

Enrolling in Creative Writing Courses

General education courses and Beginning Workshops are open to all students via the standard pre-registration process. Other courses require consent, and some may require submission of work for evaluation. These courses may prioritize students in the major. Note: Students who have not formally declared the major will not receive priority in consent-based courses. Those interested in the major should see Advising (above) and meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies before the end of Autumn Quarter of third year. Students who have not yet met with the Director of Undergraduates Studies to begin a worksheet are not considered formally declared and therefore are not guaranteed priority in course enrollment.

Applications for consent-only courses **must** be received by the deadlines listed below.

Creative Writing courses for the general education requirement in the arts

These multi-genre courses are introductions to topics in Creative Writing and satisfy the general education requirement in the arts in the College. General education courses 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 all undergraduate students during pre-registration. These courses do not count towards the major in Creative Writing, but students in the major may use these courses to satisfy their general education requirement in the arts.

Beginning Workshops

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. Open to all undergraduate students during pre-registration.

Fundamentals of Creative Writing courses

Focuses on a current debate relevant to all forms of literary practice and aims to develop cohort solidarity, promote a culture of exchange, and induct students into a reflection on practice that will service their artistic and professional development. Open to declared majors only. Those students may apply to take the course by submitting a course application form, found at creativewriting.uchicago.edu.

Technical Seminars

These seminars enlarge students' technical resources through extensive reading and analysis of contemporary literature and provide practice-based training in technical skills. Priority is given to declared majors. Those students may apply to take the course by submitting a course application form, found at creativewriting.uchicago.edu.

Advanced Workshops

These courses are intended for students with substantive writing experience in a particular genre. Advanced workshops will focus on class critiques of student writing with accompanying readings from exemplary literary texts. Priority is given to students in the major, minor, or the Creative Writing Option of the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities. All students may apply to take the course by submitting a course application form, found at creativewriting.uchicago.edu. A writing sample in the genre of the relevant course is required for faculty review. Specific submission requirements appear in the course descriptions.

Thesis/Major Projects

This course will revolve around workshops of student writing and also concentrate on the larger form students have chosen for their creative thesis. Priority is given to students in the major, minor, or the Creative Writing Option of the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities. All students may apply to take the course by submitting a course application form, found at creativewriting.uchicago.edu. A writing sample in the genre of the relevant course is required for faculty review. Specific submission requirements appear in the course descriptions.

Quarterly Deadlines to apply for consent-based CRWR courses

- Autumn Quarter, September 12
- Winter Quarter, November 16
- Spring Quarter, February 22

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.

Visit creativewriting.uchicago.edu for upcoming quarter course lists and schedules, the online submission form, and application instructions.

Creative Writing Courses

CRWR 10206. Beginning Fiction Workshop. 100 Units.

Fiction writing is part magic and part mechanics. This course will pay homage to the magic but concentrate on how a story is built: the architecture of structure, the mechanisms of character development, the fluid dynamics of dialogue. We'll take a close look at some of the building blocks that make up fiction writing: character, dialogue, plot, point of view, and setting. We'll also read and discuss a variety of short stories, always with an eye to craft and to what you, as writers, can steal for your own work. That's right, steal. Much of this course is devoted to learning how to steal the tools of great fiction writing, then to using those tools to realize your own vision. You'll write extensively in and out of class, from weekly reading responses to writing exercises that build toward a polished piece of work. Finally, you will write a complete draft and one extensive revision of a short story or novel chapter. The last third of the course will be devoted to student workshops, where each student will turn in a draft of a story or chapter to be read and critiqued by the whole class.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Autumn, Spring, Winter

Prerequisite(s): Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30206

CRWR 10306. Beginning Poetry Workshop. 100 Units.

This course will introduce students to the fundamentals of poetry in a creative writing workshop context. We will focus on a different topic each week—image, prosody, form, and so on—by reading extensively in the work of contemporary American poets and by composing our own literary exercises as well. We will also attend poetry readings and talks on poetry by visitors to our campus. The course will follow a workshop format, with peer critiques of student work and intensive readings across a spectrum of literary aesthetics.

Instructor(s): Staff. Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open bid through my.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is necessary.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30306

CRWR 10406. Beginning Nonfiction Workshop. 100 Units.

A personal essay can employ a chain of events, but it's essentially a train of thought. Like thought, it's protean, able to take any shape and yet remain an essay. In this workshop you'll write two drafts of your own essay, or attempt, at the form, while line editing and critiquing your classmates' attempts. You'll also do close readings, starting with "Why I Write," by George Orwell, and "Why I Write," by Joan Didion. Then James Baldwin's "Autobiographical Notes." Once we've had a taste of the present we'll go back four thousand years to the essay's beginnings in Babylon, following its evolution in Greece and Rome—Heraclitus, Plutarch, Seneca—then Europe: Montaigne, Max Beerbohm, Walter Benjamin, and Natalia Ginzburg, returning to contemporary English-language writers, including Adrienne Rich and Margaret Atwood, ending with Didion's "Goodbye to All That," paired with Eula Biss's contemporary cover version, also titled "Goodbye to All That."

Instructor(s): Dan Raeburn; Staff Terms Offered: Autumn, Spring, Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open bid through my.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30406

CRWR 12106. Intro to Genres: Science Fiction. 100 Units.

A monolith manifests in orbit around Jupiter, emitting a signal. A beacon? A man spontaneously discovers the ability to teleport. An evolutionary accident? The origin of human life proves to be malicious. Divine fate? Space travel is enabled by the ingestion of enormous quantities of a geriatric spice a messianic figure auspiciously learns to manipulate. A drug trip?! Among popular genres, science fiction is the riskiest conceptually and among the trickiest to master. The difference between an amazing idea and a rotten story is often slim. What makes good sci-fi work? And how best to write it? Let's put on our gravity boots and solar visors and see what we can discover. In this course, you'll read some novels (by Frank Herbert, Alfred Bester, and Ursula K. LeGuin), poetry (by Andrew Joron), a graphic novel (by Chris Ware), and screenplays (by Damon Lindelof, and Stanley Kubrick & Arthur C. Clarke). And all the while, you'll try your hand at bending each other's minds with your own science fiction.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open bid through my.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.

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 forever 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, detail, irony, perspective, narrative structure and research methodologies—of such writers and poets as Raymond Chandler, Patricia Highsmith, Walter Mosley, Joyce Carol Oats, Denis Johnson, Carolyn Forché, CK Williams, Ai, Jo Ann Beard, Joan Didion, 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. Students will turn in weekly reading responses and a final paper.

Instructor(s): Augustus Rose 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 the arts.

CRWR 12109. Introduction to Genres: Wizards. 100 Units.

Do you believe in wizards? Are you a wizard? Then pack up your talismans, fetishes, and gamelans into the mysterious little satchel you carry at your side and get ready for some incantatory magic. We will investigate the figure of the wizard as an archetype, a literary symbol, a vehicle for fantasy, and as a commanding reality, while considering such things as A Wizard of Earthsea, the figure of Merlin, The Teachings of Don Juan, The Teachings of Ogotemmel, Harry Potter, Aleister Crowley, the poetry of W. B. Yeats, Nathaniel Mackey, Jay Wright, and Ronald Johnson, as well as some other things too secret to reveal at present, including the nature of esotericism.

Instructor(s): Peter O'Leary 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 the arts.

CRWR 12127. Reading as a Writer: Hallucinations. 100 Units.

In this course we ask: How is historical material made—figured/disfigured by loss, desire, violence, suffering, exhaustion, death; by restlessness and the unbearable, abyssal, vertigo of living inside time? Where is the aperture of experience? The apparitions, which partition night, its many voices, bodies which are forgotten, and then remembered, why? What is the time of writing, of reading? This course goes a little back and a little forward between the two world wars, hoping to track an itinerary of history material, its incandescence, between situations of mourning and mystical experience. Students will be asked to keep a reading notebook as well as to produce weekly creative responses for class discussion.

Instructor(s): Lynn Xu Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Open bid through my.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. Satisfies the College Arts/Music/Drama Core requirement.

CRWR 12128. Reading as a Writer: The Sea. 100 Units.

What is the temporality of the sea? Its consciousness? Where does it begin? Or end? In this course, we will consider the sea both as a figure in our literary, critical, visual, political, historical, and ecological imaginations, as well as a body in itself, iridescent and gleaming at the end of the world. We will look at practices of burial at sea, the infamous "wine dark sea" of Homer, the Middle Passage, the hold and wake of the ship, necropolitics, the concept of sovereignty and bare life, stowaway and asylum seekers, piracy and floating armories, eco-materialism, the post-human and alien worlds of our oceanic origins, the moon . . . and so on. Students will be asked to keep a reading notebook as well as to produce weekly creative responses for class discussion. "And as you read /the sea is turning /its dark pages /turning /its dark pages" (Denise Levertov, from #To The Reader).

Instructor(s): Lynn Xu Terms Offered: Autumn Spring

Prerequisite(s): Open bid through my.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. Satisfies the College Arts/Music/Drama Core requirement.

CRWR 17000. Fundamentals in Creative Writing: Literary Empathy. 100 Units.

In this fundamentals course, students will investigate the complicated relationship between writers, fictional characters, and readers, toward determining what place literary empathy has in our conversation about contemporary literature. James Baldwin once observed that, "You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read. It was books that taught me that the things that tormented me most were the very things that connected me with all the people who were alive, or who had ever been alive." We will use weekly reading assignments including fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction to ask questions about what Virginia Woolf described as the "elimination of the ego" and "perpetual union with another mind" that take place when we read. Students will write critical responses, creative exercises, and a final paper on a topic to be approved by the instructor. Readings include Baldwin, Bishop, Beard, Carson, Walcott, and Woolf.

Instructor(s): Rachel DeWoskin Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Students apply for consent by filling out the CW Seminar Consent Form on creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Students must meet the course application deadline specified on the website. This course is open only to students who have declared the Major in Creative Writing. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

CRWR 17001. Fundamentals in Creative Writing: Testimony. 100 Units.

To give testimony is to bear witness and to provide evidence. To give testimony is also to draw the reader or listener into an individual point of view. In this course, we will study the first-person voice in various forms of personal testimony. Drawing from a mix of memoirs, personal essays, letters, fiction, and other first-person narratives, we will analyze the techniques and rhetorical devices used by writers, standup comedians, memoirists in transporting the listener or reader into unknowable, unfamiliar experiences. Expect to engage with texts by authors such as Franz Kafka, Patricia Lockwood, Richard Pryor, and William Maxwell. We will compose our own personal writings through creative exercises. A critical paper is also due.

Instructor(s): Ling Ma Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Students apply for consent by filling out the application form on creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Students must meet the course application deadline specified on the website. This course is open only to students who have declared the Major in Creative Writing. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 37001

CRWR 18200. Poetry and the Human III. 100 Units.

This spring-quarter Arts course is related to the Humanities course "Poetry and the Human" and is intended as a potential sequel to its first two quarters, but can also be taken as a freestanding course. Through a combination of seminar discussions and creative writing workshop sessions, it focuses upon creative practice (form, flow, and voice) as way of approaching many of the questions raised over the Autumn and Winter terms. It considers the role of poetry in different traditions (Japanese, English, Persian, etc.) from aesthetic, philosophical, and performative angles. Students in the Poetry and the Human sequence (HUMA) will have priority registration for this course; other students may register for any remaining seats.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Spring

Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.

CRWR 20200. Technical Seminar in Fiction: Characterization. 100 Units.

This reading and writing seminar will acquaint students with one of the essential tools of fiction writers: characterization. We will read primary texts by authors including Baldwin, Flaubert, Munro, and Wharton, as well as critical work by Danticat, Forester, and Vargas Llosa, toward exploring how some of literature's most famous characters are rendered. How do writers of fiction create contexts in which characters must struggle, and how does each character's conflicts reveal his or her nature? Students will complete both creative and analytical writing exercises, reading responses, and a paper that focuses on characterization in a work of fiction.

Instructor(s): Rachel DeWoskin Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Students apply for consent by filling out the CW Seminar Consent Form on creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Students must meet the course application deadline specified on the website.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40200

CRWR 20201. Technical Seminar in Fiction: Auto Fiction, Essayism, Truth. 100 Units.

This inter-genre readings course will be of special interest to student writers interested in both fiction and creative nonfiction. We'll look at hybrid works by W.G. Sebald, Teju Cole, Rachel Cusk, and Shelia Heti and also consider writers like Kathryn Harrison, Tobias Wolff, and Gregor von Rezzori, who have addressed the same subjects in both fiction and nonfiction. Finally, we'll dip into Robert Musil's notion of "essayism" as a modern mode of thought and the recent debate over the "lyric essay." We'll also look at journalistic and/or documentary works by Werner Herzog, Truman Capote, Tom Bissell, Katherine Boo, and Ryszard Kapuściński. By exploring the interestingly smudged line between factual and fictional texts, we'll interrogate both genre categories and ways of perceiving and presenting what's true.

Instructor(s): Will Boast Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Students apply for consent by filling out the CW Seminar Consent Form on creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Students must meet the course application deadline specified on the website. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40201

CRWR 20302. Technical Seminar in Poetry: Units of Composition. 100 Units.

This course aims to investigate, through a range of readings and writing exercises, various units of composition and the ways that they interact with each other in poems. We will study and imitate traditional formal approaches, such as the poetic foot, meter, caesuras, sprung rhythm, rhymed stanzas, and refrains. We also will study and imitate modernist and contemporary "units," such as the word (approached, for example, etymologically or connotatively), the free verse line, the variable foot, vers libre, serial form, the sentence (the "new" sentence, but also modulations of basic syntax), the paragraph, the page, and forms of call and response. This reading intensive course will draw from a selection of mostly modern and contemporary poetry, poetics, and criticism. Students will be expected to submit weekly technical exercises, complete several short critical responses, write a longer essay, and submit a final portfolio of revised material.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40302

CRWR 20401. Technical Seminar in Nonfiction: The Synecdoche. 100 Units.

Every writer of personal nonfiction knows that ultimately the story isn't about them: it's about something larger, perhaps universal, and their personal story is merely a means to that end. The key to this paradox is the synecdoche, or the part that stands for the whole. It's the grain of sand that contains the universe, the one story that by implication tells other peoples' stories. When Anne Fadiman told the story of a Hmong immigrant to the United States, she told a larger story about immigration in general. So did Joan Didion, in *Where I Was From*; by telling the story of her family, she told the story of California, and by telling the story of California she told the story of the West and thus of America. Rian Malan did the same in *My Traitor's Heart*: by telling the story of his family he told the story of Apartheid, and thus of South Africa, and of our segregated world. Through weekly exercises and analytic essays you'll see how these and other writers locate the universal in their particulars, and you'll apply their examples to your own work.

Instructor(s): Dan Raeburn Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40401

CRWR 21500. Advanced Translation Workshop: Prose Style. 100 Units.

Purple, lean, evocative, muscular, literary, exuberant, lucid, stilted, economical. These are all labels that critics and reviewers have used to characterize prose styles that call attention to themselves in distinct ways. Of course, what constitutes style not only changes over time, but also means different things in different literary traditions. How, then, do translators carry style over from one language and cultural milieu to another? And to what extent does style structure storytelling? We will explore these questions by reading a variety of modern and contemporary stylists who either write in English or translate into English, paying special attention to what stylistic devices are at work and what their implications are for narration, characterization, and world building. Further, we'll examine the range of choices that each writer and translator makes when constituting and reconstituting style, on a lexical, tonal, and syntactic scale. By pairing readings with generative exercises in stylistics and constrained writing, we will build toward the translation of a short work of contemporary fiction into English. To participate in this workshop, students should be able to comfortably read a literary text in a foreign language.

Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 41500

CRWR 22113. Advanced Fiction Workshop: The Love Story. 100 Units.

This advanced fiction workshop will examine the ways we write about love in fiction: romantic love, familial love, unconventional love, etc. Our basis will be the notion that love is ultimately self-knowledge, which lies at the core of all great fiction, and like self-knowledge it involves an endless and inexhaustible act of seeking. We will read and discuss stories centered on the topic of love, this act of seeking, and we will do writing exercises that help us write compellingly, convincingly, and unsentimentally about deeply sentimental things. Every student will also complete and workshop a full-length story that explores the idea of love on some level. They will additionally write a significant revision of this story, which they will either present for a second workshop or turn in at the end of the quarter. Please expect a rigorous but constructive workshop environment where being a critic and an editor is as essential as being a writer.

Instructor(s): Vu Tran Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42113

CRWR 22118. Advanced Fiction Workshop: Constructing a Full Length Novel. 100 Units.

In this advanced fiction workshop, students will work on novel-length projects, completing one to two polished chapters and an outline of a full novel. We will explore how to structure a book that is both propulsive and character-driven, and how to create a compelling, unique narrative voice. Works by James Baldwin, Edith Wharton, Ha Jin, Vladimir Nabokov, and Akhil Sharma will help us consider the crucial relationship between characters and their contexts.

Instructor(s): Rachel DeWoskin Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42118

CRWR 22119. Advanced Fiction Workshop: Music in Fiction and Improvised Composition. 100 Units.

This workshop-based course is suitable for any student wishing to refine and expand their understanding of how fiction gets made, and will be of particular interest to those exploring new stylistic possibilities or working in both the disciplines of prose writing and music. We'll look at the Modernists' experiments with refrain, repetition, and pure verbal music, their attempts "to find out what's behind things," as Woolf put it. We'll consider literary improvisation as Ellison meant the term: the gathering of seemingly disparate materials to synthesize something wildly new. We'll explore how musicians are often allowed (or forced) to cross cultural boundaries through texts like Baldwin's "This Evening, This Morning, So Soon" and interviews with Wendy Carlos and Fred Hersch. We'll also look at the burgeoning field of rhythmology, and use it as a bridge to examine how music also borrows from fiction, through storytelling in song and a guest lecture from a Pulitzer-Prize-nominated composer.

Instructor(s): Will Boast Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42119

CRWR 22121. Advanced Fiction Workshop: Young Adult Literature. 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 book-length 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. Students will read at least one or two novels during the quarter as well.

Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42121

CRWR 24004. Advanced Nonfiction Workshop: Writing in Crisis. 100 Units.

In this course, we'll work to write about people and communities who are in crisis, on the verge of crisis, or looking back at crisis. We'll discuss reporting, interviewing, oral history, historical research, working from photography and video, and the ethical situation of the writer. We'll read works by writers such as Liu Xiaobo, Elena Poniatowska, Claudia Rankine, Rebecca Solnit, Edwidge Danticat, Ryszard Kapuscinski, Philip Gourevitch, Arundhati Roy, Leslie Marmon Silko, Rachel Carson, and Ta-Nehisi Coates, on subjects including migration, exile, prison, totalitarian regimes, dissidence, questions of reparation and reconciliation after systematic violence, and environmental activism. Students will undertake significant research and produce a substantial essay to be workshopped in class.

Instructor(s): Rachel Cohen Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 44004

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, Ling Ma, Augustus Rose Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Required for students working on BA or MA thesis in fiction, as well as students completing a minor portfolio in fiction. Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

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 Creative Writing Minors completing the portfolio. 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): Lynn Xu Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Required for students working on a BA or MA thesis in poetry, as well as students completing a minor portfolio 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. Instructor consent required. Submit writing sample via www.creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

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



Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.