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 10403 Genre Fundamentals: Poetry; ENGL 10709 Genre Fundamentals: Fiction, 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 (http://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 (http://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. In cases in which a CRWR translation workshop relates to a student’s Creative Writing thesis work, one of these workshops may also be approved as a Research Background Elective. 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: 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 a major 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

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

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 (http://my.uchicago.edu), but students who have merely declared online have not yet completed the process. Students must have started a major worksheet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies and declared via my.uchicago.edu in order to receive priority in application-based CRWR courses.

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 Pass/Fail) in all courses counting toward the major or minor. Non-majors may take CRWR courses for P/F grading with consent of instructor. Students must request this consent by the end of week three of the quarter; otherwise Pass/Fail must be approved by the Program Director.

**SAMPLE PLAN OF STUDY FOR THE MAJOR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fundamentals in Creative Writing</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 17000 Fundamentals in Creative Writing; Literary Empathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical Seminars</th>
<th>200</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 20302 Technical Seminar in Poetry: Units of Composition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 20301 Technical Seminar in Poetry: Manifestos, Movements, Modes</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced Workshops</th>
<th>300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 23113 Advanced Poetry Workshop: Waste, Surplus, Reuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 23100 Advanced Poetry Workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 10306 Beginning Poetry Workshop *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Genre Course</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 10403 Genre Fundamentals: Poetry: Rhythm and Myth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature Courses</th>
<th>300</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 17515 Seventeenth-Century Verse *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 22903 Literature of the City: Between Utopia and Dystopia, Design and Occupation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 28614 Contemporary Latina/o Poetry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Electives</th>
<th>200</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMST 14503 Cinema in Theory and Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTV 22502 Data and Algorithm in Art</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BA Workshop</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 29300 Thesis/Major Projects: Poetry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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: 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two CRWR workshop courses *</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three CRWR or ENGL electives</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Thesis/Major Projects Workshop +</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A portfolio of the student’s work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* At least one must be an Advanced Workshop.

**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 10200</td>
<td>Beginning Fiction Workshop</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 22110</td>
<td>Advanced Fiction: Exploring Your Boundaries</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<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 24526</td>
<td>Forms of Autobiography in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRWR 29200</td>
<td>Thesis/Major Projects: Fiction</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 (http://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 (http://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 (http://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 (http://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 Creative Writing courses**

- Autumn Quarter, September 9
- Winter Quarter, November 22
- Spring Quarter, February 28

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 (http://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.**

NOTE: This is a sample course description; section descriptions vary. Please visit creativewriting.uchicago.edu for current quarter descriptions by section. 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.
NOTE: This is a sample course description; section descriptions vary. Please visit creativewriting.uchicago.edu for current quarter descriptions by section. 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.
NOTE: This is a sample course description; section descriptions vary. Please visit creativewriting.uchicago.edu for current quarter descriptions by section. 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 essai, 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/have 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): 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): Peter O'Leary
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.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 30406

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 Ogotemmeli, 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 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 genre and artistic form. How does one tell a ‘Chicago story’? Is the ‘City on the Re-Make’ best told in prose or poem? Is there a clear boundary between the city’s South and North Sides? Is there a ‘Chicago epic’? Working through these questions, students will analyze and explore Chicago writers’ work in fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. Students will then develop their own creative responses, building connections to adopted critical approaches. To these ends, we will examine work by writers including Nelson Algren, Elizabeth Hatmaker, Aleksandar Hemon, and Margo Jefferson, as well as the city’s rich legacies in documentary film, the visual arts, and music.

Instructor(s): Garin Cycholl Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Open bid through classes.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.

CRWR 12117. Intro to Genres: Division and Western. 100 Units.

This course explores literary responses to Chicago’s boundaries and sites of contention through fiction, drama, poetry, and literary journalism. We’ll examine work by writers and artists including Saul Bellow, Lorraine Hansberry, Nate Marshall, Bruce Norris, and Studs Terkel. How does one map the city’s conflicts along zoning ordinances, street corners, playgrounds, and rumors? What histories undergird the city’s racelines? In exploring these aspects of the city, where does a writer draw the boundary between fiction and nonfiction, between verse and prose? Engaging these larger questions, participants will develop their own individual and collaborative creative responses to ‘the city in a garden.’

Instructor(s): Garin Cycholl Terms Offered: 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 12121. Intro to Genres: Writing the Visual Arts. 100 Units.

How might language render visual experience? How do verbal representations diverge from visual representations? How might writing help us see art in new ways? How might art objects compel our writing into new forms? With these questions in mind, we will read poems and essays by a variety of writers, visit several of Chicago’s excellent museums, and conduct regular writing experiments. Writers studied may include Berger, Williams, Auden, Barthes, Schuyler, Guest, O’Hara, Waldrop, Swensen, Gander, Young, and Cole. Artists studied may include Breughel, Magritte, Cornell, Twombly, Mann, Kentridge, and Basquiat.

Instructor(s): Patrick Morrissey 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.

Equivalent Course(s): ARTV 20500

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 12136. Reading as a Writer: Adaptation as Form. 100 Units.

The main goal of this course will be to understand the reasons, traditions and methods behind the practice of literary adaptations. From Joyce Carol Oates’s ‘Blue Bearded Lover,’ to Anne Sexton’s ‘Cinderella,’ to Angela Carter’s ‘Wolf-Alice’ and Marina Carr’s ‘By the Bog of Cats,’ there are stories that continue to resonate through the centuries, and others that are made to resonate through the labor of new story tellers. Each text will be explored both independently and within the context of its adaptive genealogy. Students will be expected to read each text carefully, come prepared to actively participate in class discussion and respond to both academic and creative writing prompts based on assigned texts and class lecture.

Instructor(s): Lina Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas
Terms Offered: Autumn
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: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 37001

CRWR 17006. Fundamentals in Creative Writing: The Fantastical Element. 100 Units.

From the short stories of Karen Russell to the conjectures of Danny Glover’s TV show Atlanta, many contemporary writers of speculative craft often introduce fantastical elements into otherwise ordinary narratives set in everyday reality. In this course, we will examine the fantastical element, its typical characteristics, and what it’s trying to do by puncturing the veil of the realism. As a craft course, we will look at how the fantastical element is often implemented, and how the narrative absorbs it or attempts to resolve it. In the process, we will try our hand at writing speculative narratives, along with critical papers on technique. Readings will include poetry, fiction, and nonfiction by authors such as Rachel Ingalls, Carmen Maria Machado, Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah, and more.

Instructor(s): Ling Ma
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory. This is class is restricted to students who have declared a major in Creative Writing.
CRWR 17007. Fundamentals in Creative Writing: The Grammar of Narrative. 100 Units.
Storytelling goes nearly as far back as human consciousness, while the ways in which we tell stories has been expanding ever since. This class will look at several different forms of narrative-fiction, creative non-fiction, narrative poetry, and film-and explore the ‘grammar’ of these different genres, what they share and where they differ and how their particular strengths influence the ways in which they most effectively communicate. How does film (a visual medium) tell a story differently than does fiction (which asks us to project our own imagined version of the story), differently than creative non-fiction, (which must always rely on facts), differently than poetry (which condenses the story to its essentials)? How do these different genres and mediums influence the stories they tell and the effects they achieve? Readings will include primary texts as well as critical and fundamentals texts in each genre. Students will complete weekly reading responses, as well as creative exercises. A paper focusing on a specific element derived from the class will be due at the end of the course.
Instructor(s): Augustus Rose Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Students must be a declared Creative Writing major to enroll. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

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.

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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 Sheila 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.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40200

CRWR 20203. Technical Seminar in Fiction: Research and World-Building. 100 Units.
Writing fiction is in large part a matter of convincing world-building, no matter what genre you write in. And convincing world-building is about creating a seamless reality within the elements of that world: from character dynamics, to setting, to social systems, and even the story or novel’s conceptual conceit. And whether it be within a genre of realism, historical fiction, or science fiction, building a convincing world takes a good deal of research. So while we look closely at the tools and methods of successful world-building, we will also dig into the process of research. From how and where to mine the right details, to what to look for. We will also focus on how research can make a fertile ground for harvesting ideas and even story. Students will read various works of long and short fiction with an eye to its world-building, as well as critical and craft texts. They will write short weekly reading responses and some creative exercises as well. Each student will also be expected to make a brief presentation and turn in a final paper for the class.
Instructor(s): Augustus Rose Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40203
CRWR 20210. Technical Seminar in Fiction: Understanding Point-of-View. 100 Units.
TBD
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 40210

CRWR 20211. Technical Seminar in Fiction: The Dilemma. 100 Units.
Some of the most compelling works of fiction are built around moral, social, and psychological dilemmas. Characters are set loose in a dark woods of ambiguity and conflicting values, where they reveal themselves (and their/our humanity) through the decisions they make, the actions they undertake. Such stories present a dramatized prism of arguments and resist easy ‘lessons.’ Rather, they end with a question mark that invites conversation between reader and narrative long after the story has ended. The challenge for writers, of course, is to avoid polemic, instead exploring this moral, social, and psychological terrain in a way that is even-handed and flows organically out of character. In this technical seminar, we will read fiction (by writers like James Alan McPherson, Graham Greene, Tayari Jones, and Cynthia Ozick, among others) that centers on an uneasy choice between moral positions. We will examine how the dilemma shapes conflict and plot, and, perhaps most important, how the writer invites the reader to get lost in a dark woods alongside the story’s characters. The emphasis of this course will be on critical writing, but students will also have opportunities to write creative responses to the readings and experiment with the craft techniques we discuss.
Instructor(s): Stephanie Soileau Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40211

CRWR 20212. Technical Seminar in Fiction: Literary Digressions. 100 Units.
In this technical seminar, we will set about exploding the traditional ‘rules’ of fiction craft in order to broaden our grasp of intention and technique. Each week, using Charles Baxter’s Burning Down the House as our textbook, we will focus on a nontraditional approach to a craft element (e.g., anti-epiphanic endings, counterpointed characters, rhyming action, etc.). We will analyze the fictional element in an assigned short story and write a short craft analysis, meditating on both the risk and payoff of these literary digressions. Then we’ll experiment with the technique in a short writing exercise. Although this is not a formal workshop, we will share and receive feedback in brief ‘10 Minute Workshops.’ The end of the semester will culminate in a portfolio of exercises and techniques.
Instructor(s): Julie Iromuanya Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40212

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 20305. Technical Seminar in Poetry: Imagery and Description. 100 Units.
This technical seminar explores different theoretical and practical approaches to imagery and description in poetry. To begin with, we’ll try to distinguish between the two terms, to the extent necessary and possible. Then we will examine and practice writing radically different approaches to image making and description (e.g. synesthetic, collaged, surrealist, eco-poetic, abstract, juxtagpositional, haiku, etc.). Along the way, we’ll consider theories about the rhetorical functions of imagery and description in the poetic text. Although this course focuses on poetry, it is certainly relevant to prose writers interested in the role of descriptive detail in literary writing, and for comparison we will examine famous examples of description in works of fiction. Students should plan to submit a weekly exercises, write a critical essay, and give a class presentation.
Instructor(s): Nathan Hoks Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40305
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 20404. Technical Seminar in Nonfiction: Forms of the Essay. 100 Units.
The essay, derived from the French term essayer meaning ‘to try’ or ‘to attempt,’ is not only a beloved sub-genre of creative nonfiction, but a form that yields many kinds of stories, thus many kinds of structures. Araceli Arroyo writes that the essay can ‘reach its height in the form of a lyric, expand in digression, coil into a list, delve into memoir, or spring into the spire of the question itself all with grace and unexhausted energy.’ In this course, we will analyze the essay’s continuum, marked by traditional, linear narratives on one end, and at the other, everything else. In our class, we will investigate the relationship between content and form. What does it mean to be scene-driven? What happens when a narrative abandons chronology and event, propelled instead by language and image? What is gained through gaps and white space? You will leave this class with a strong grasp of content’s relationship to form, prepared to participate effectively in creative writing workshops. You will also create a portfolio of short writings that can be expanded into longer pieces. Readings will include: Nox by Anne Carson; A Bestiary by Lily Hoang; Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions by Valeria Luiselli; Citizen: An American Lyric by Claudia Rankine; Essayists on the Essay edited by Ned Stuckey-French
Instructor(s): Kathleen Blackburn Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40404

CRWR 20405. Technical Seminar in Nonfiction: Narrative Pacing. 100 Units.
The goal of this course will be to understand the methods and mechanisms of effective narrative pacing in creative nonfiction by carefully dissecting a variety of texts, ranging from Woolf’s ‘The Death of the Moth,’ to Solzhenitśyn’s The Gulag Archipelago, and Bechdel’s Fun Home. Students will be expected to actively participate in class discussion, read from a broad assorted of texts, and complete a series of corresponding creative writing prompts testing the principles discussed in class.
Instructor(s): Lina Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 40405

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.
Instructor(s): Anne Janusch Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 41500
CRWR 21502. Advanced Translation Workshop. 100 Units.
All writing is revision, and this holds true for the practice of literary translation as well. We will critique each other’s longer manuscripts-in-progress of prose, poetry, or drama, and examine various revision techniques—from the line-by-line approach of Lydia Davis, to the ‘driving-in-the-dark’ model of Peter Constantine, and several approaches in between. We will consider questions of different reading audiences while manuscripts for submission for publication, along with the contextualization of the work with a translator’s preface or afterward. Our efforts will culminate in not only an advanced-stage manuscript, but also with various strategies in hand to use for future projects. Students who wish to take this workshop should have at least an intermediate proficiency in a foreign language and already be working on a longer translation project.
Instructor(s): Jason Grunebaum Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu (include writing sample). Attendance on the first day is mandatory. Students who wish to take this workshop should have at least an intermediate proficiency in a foreign language and already be working on a longer translation project.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 41502

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 22133. Advanced Fiction Workshop: Writing the Uncanny. 100 Units.
Sigmund Freud defines ‘the uncanny’ (‘unheimlich’) as something that unnerves us because it is both familiar and alien at the same time, the result of hidden anxieties and desires coming to the surface. In this advanced fiction workshop, we will explore how fiction writers use the uncanny to create suspense, lend their characters psychological depth, thrill and terrify their readers, and lay bare the darkest and most difficult human impulses. We will read and discuss fiction by writers like Shirley Jackson, Jamaica Kincaid, Octavia Butler, Kelly Link, Ben Okri, Haruki Murakami, and Victor Lavalle, drawing craft lessons from these writers to guide our own attempts at writing the uncanny. Much of our class time will be dedicated to evaluating student work and honing our skills of composition and critique. In addition to shorter writing exercises and ‘mini-workshops’ throughout the quarter, every student will complete a full-length ‘uncanny’ short story for workshop and compose critique letters for each of their peers. Students will be required to significantly revise their full-length short story by the end of the quarter.
Instructor(s): Stephanie Soileau Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42133

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 22132. Advanced Fiction Workshop: Strange Magic in Short Fiction. 100 Units.
In this workshop-based course we’ll investigate how strangeness and magic function in short fiction. We’ll read stories by Edgar Allen Poe and Vladimir Nabokov, as well as from contemporary writers like Kelly Link, Carmen Maria Machado, Aimee Bender, Alice Sola Kim, Ludmilla Petrushevskaya, and Stephen Millhauser, examining how these authors portray the fantastical and impossible. We’ll also read excerpts from essays by Viktor Shklovsky, Sigmund Freud, and Charles Baxter, exploring concepts such as defamiliarization, verisimilitude, and the uncanny. We will contemplate how magical realism and surrealism differ from sci-fi and fantasy genre writing, and ask how we, as writers, can make the quotidian seem extraordinary and the improbable seem inevitable, and to what end? Students will complete several short creative exercises and two short stories that utilize magic or strange effects. Students will also be expected to write thoughtful, constructive critiques of peer work. Throughout the course, we’ll consider how the expectations of literary fiction might constrain such narratives, and how we can engage with and transcend these archetypes.
Instructor(s): Benjamin Hoffman Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42132

CRWR 22136. Advanced Fiction Workshop: Writing Social Change. 100 Units.
In this course, we will examine character-driven novels about worlds in the midst, on the brink, or during the aftermath of social change. We’ll observe the strategies that authors deploy to construct a compelling and immersive world, and we’ll catalog the methods they use to alter social systems and social order. Who has power and who doesn’t? How is power maintained and how is it subverted? How does the human spirit engage with a world beyond its comprehension? And how do authors, using characters as the vehicle, illuminate larger thematic and moral questions? This class will concentrate on longer works (novels, novellas, and novels-in-stories), and we will workshop the first 30-40 pages of your manuscript, focusing in particular on its promises and possibilities. The end goal is for you to leave the class with the beginning of your novel, a synopsis, a chapter outline, and a plan for how to proceed with your project.
Instructor(s): Julie Iromuanya Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42136
CRWR 22137. Advanced Fiction Workshop: The College Novel (& Story) 100 Units.
In this advanced fiction workshop, we will examine and write narratives set at college, the so-called campus and varsity novels (and, in our case, short stories). We will try to capture the attendant promise and uncertainty of life on the cusp of adulthood, asking what it means to come of age, to age, to experiment, and possibly, to regress. We’ll attempt to veer away from cultural cliché and caricature to portray the truth of life on campus and come to grips with the way you live right now, as we consider what it means to borrow the title of one novel-to make our home among strangers. Students will read published works and submit two stories or novel excerpts for workshops. Please expect a rigorous but constructive workshop environment where being a critic and an editor is essential.
Instructor(s): Ben Hoffman Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 42137

CRWR 23110. Advanced Poetry Workshop: The Long Poem. 100 Units.
This advanced writing workshop will explore the many ways in which poets since antiquity have approached the idea of ‘the long poem.’ In a world of ever-decreasing attention spans, we’ll begin by considering what might motivate such a work today, and will read a wide range of contemporary texts, from linked sequences, to ‘middle-distance’ or multi-part poems, to book- (or books-) length projects, that offer a rich variety of responses. Over the course of the quarter, students will conceive and develop a sustained poetic project that extends beyond the parameters of the conventional ‘lyric’ poem. In addition to students’ original work, primary texts to be considered may include excerpts from Homer’s Iliad, H.D.’s Helen in Egypt, Anne Carson’s ‘Glass Essay,’ Robin Coste Lewis’ ‘Voyage of the Sable Venus,’ Alice Oswald’s Memorial, Inger Christenson’s Alphabet, and A.R. Ammon’s Garbage.
Instructor(s): Suzanne Buffam Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(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 23127. Advanced Poetry Workshop: Make It Old. 100 Units.
Poetry after Modernism has been shaped by Ezra Pound’s directive to ‘Make it new.’ Yet Pound himself derived this slogan from the most ancient of sources-an inscription on the washbasin of the first Shang dynasty king Ch’eng T’ang (1766-1753 BC). In this advanced poetry workshop, we will study some of the ways that contemporary poets revisit ancient texts from various cultures in order to open up new aesthetic and historical dimensions in our own poetry. Students will enjoy considerable freedom in how they conceive of their own poetry’s relationship to diverse histories; from one week to the next, they may choose to write in a historical genre or form (the Latin hexameter, the Japanese haibun), in response to some ancient work (the Sundiata epic of old Mali, the ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead), or they may invent their own ways to ‘make it old.’ Texts may include Armand Schwerner’s The Tablets, Anne Carson’s Autobiography of Red, Aga Shahid Ali’s Call Me Ishmael Tonight, Christopher Logue’s War Music, and Cecilia Vicuña’s New and Selected Poems, to name only a few possibilities.
Instructor(s): Srikanth Reddy Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 43127

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, dissonance, questions of reparation and reconciliation after systematic violence, and environmental activism. Students will undertake significant research and produce a substantial essay to be workshops 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 24013. Advanced Nonfiction Workshop: The Great American Essay. 100 Units.
This course is an advanced fiction course 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.
Equivalent Course(s): CRWR 44013

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 writing 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): 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 24014. Advanced Nonfiction Workshop: The Performative Essay. 100 Units.
The advantage of working within a non-genre is best understood as a spatial metaphor: the house of fiction has kicked us out, but so what? That only means we are free to roam a limitless landscape, mingling with other genres and establishing new traditions. In recent years publishers have begun to recognize that nonfiction writers are necessarily hybrid creatures, and as a result we are witnessing an explosion of exciting books that challenge our impulse to categorize literature. To name a few pioneers: Claudia Rankine, Joe Wenderoth, Anne Carson, Solmaz Sharif, and Jenny Boully. In this course, students will close read a variety of works that dissolve the lines between poetry and prose and visual art, exploring what is becoming known as ‘the performative essay.’ Our aim will be simple: to playfully experiment with innovative sources of narrative momentum each week, and to share our original hybrid works for energetic workshop discussions. A revision of the workshop essay, along with a critical essay on a reading of your choosing, will be turned in at the end of the quarter.
Instructor(s): Dina Peone Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Instructor consent required. Apply via creativewriting.uchicago.edu. Attendance on the first day is mandatory.

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: 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; Lina Ferreira Cabeza-Vanegas 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