

MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

As of fall 2021, admission to the graduate program in Creative Writing has been suspended.

Applications to the program are not being accepted at this time.

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Program Description

The Master of Fine Arts program at Youngstown State University is part of the Northeast Ohio Universities Master of Fine Arts (NEOMFA) in Creative Writing. The NEOMFA is a multidisciplinary, interdepartmental, and interinstitutional program that provides opportunities for students to pursue the terminal degree in creative writing. The NEOMFA draws its faculty from departments at Youngstown State University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, and The University of Akron.

This program offers workshops in poetry writing, fiction writing, creative nonfiction writing, and playwriting, as well as courses in literature, literary craft and theory, and professional writing and editing. The M.F.A. prepares graduates to pursue opportunities in arts management; in many areas of communication, publicity, and marketing; and in teaching creative writing, literature, and expository writing. Graduates of the program are ready to contribute to the literary life of the nation and the cultural life of the community. The program requires 48 semester hours of coursework.

Advising

All students should have their schedules approved by a graduate faculty advisor every semester. After initial enrollment in the program, the student and his or her advisor will establish a coursework plan including alternate course selections. An advisor may be chosen from the faculty of any consortium school.

Writer in the Community Certificate

The certificate option gives writers a background in community engagement that would multiply the availability of such avenues. The Certificate allows students who wish to pursue a more "practical" option while they are focusing on their creative writing. In a climate where the engagement between academia and community is more and more highly valued, the NEOMFA believes this is an ideal time to introduce this Certificate option into the program. The NEOMFA is already a unique program in being a consortium; the Certificate would only add to its distinctive character and make it more attractive to potential students.

Admission Requirements

In addition to the minimum College of Graduate Studies admissions requirements, applicants must submit three letters of recommendation and a substantive portfolio of creative work that includes either 15 to 20 pages of poetry or 30 pages of fiction, creative nonfiction, or playwriting. All portfolios must include at least one finished work. All items in the portfolio should be double-spaced. The letters of recommendation should come from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic or professional background. The letters

should include an assessment of the applicant's current work quality and ability to successfully complete graduate training. Application to the M.F.A. program authorizes staff members at participating institutions to have access to all student academic records and application materials.

The NEOMFA program accepts students for fall admission only.

Admission to the Creative Writing program as part of NEOMFA (Northeast Ohio Universities Master of Fine Arts) involves applying and submitting items to both YSU and NEOMFA. The materials needed and where they are to be sent are as follows:

1. Official College Transcripts - these should be sent to the Graduate Office of YSU.
2. Three Letters of Recommendation - Each letter needs to be sent as an attachment to both YSU and NEOMFA. They can be sent electronically via email to gradcollege@ysu.edu and neomfa.applicants@gmail.com.
3. Statement of Goals needs to be sent as an attachment to NEOMFA at neomfa.applicants@gmail.com.
4. Creative Portfolio - This needs to be sent to NEOMFA at neomfa.applicants@gmail.com.

Content details for the Statement of Goals and Creative Portfolio and how they are submitted can be found on the NEOMFA website at <http://neomfa.org/prospective-students>.

Graduate Faculty

Christopher Barzak, M.F.A., Professor

Fiction writing; fiction; contemporary British and American literature

All M.F.A. students must complete 48 semester hours in graduate-level courses. There are six areas of coursework in the M.F.A.:

COURSE	TITLE	S.H.
Writing Workshops		15
Craft and Theory courses		9
Literatures courses		6
Internship		3
Electives		9
Thesis		6
Total Semester Hours		48

The thesis must be submitted according to the general requirements established by the College of Graduate Studies. The student is required to defend the thesis in an oral presentation before a committee of graduate faculty from a minimum of two consortium schools.

Writing in the Community Certificate

Course requirement for obtaining the certificate would be 4 classes, 12 credit hours, described below:

1. Teaching Creative Writing in the Community.
This course will prepare students to apply their knowledge of creative writing and participate in a community-based teaching residency.
2. Writing in the Community Internship.
For the practicum experience students will be placed in the community to teach creative writing for at least one contact hour per week for ten to fifteen weeks in a setting agreed upon by the students and the advisor.
3. Writing in the Community Paper.
This is the only new course required by the Certificate (see attached Request for Graduate Curriculum Action). The culminating experience of the Writer in the Community Certificate is the Certificate Paper. The paper is to be a high quality, publishable paper of 20 to 25 pages and draw on practicum experience, research, and developed pedagogy of teaching writing in the community. Regular consultation with the advisor is required.
4. Professional Writing Elective.

Students select a professional writing course, to be approved by an advisor, to further expand the connection between creative writing and organizational writing. At YSU, such courses would include the following: ENGL 6943, 6949, 6953

Learning Outcomes

Students will create a high quality publishable work of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, play writing, and literary translation

Students will be able to critique literary works in a workshop environment

Students will have knowledge of a wide range of theories and practices of creative writing and the creative process

Students will have hands-on experiences in real-world writing and writing-related situations such as art agencies, public schools, and community centers

ENGL 6900 Methods of Literary Research 3 s.h.

Basic concepts and methods of literary research and analysis.

ENGL 6901 Methods of Composition Research 3 s.h.

Theories and methods of composition research; emphasis on strategies for conducting, analyzing, and writing about classroom and workplace studies.

ENGL 6902 Literary Thought 3 s.h.

May focus on particular theoretical approaches or provide an overview of literary criticism. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6906 Teaching of Literature 3 s.h.

Problems, issues, practices, and research that affect the teaching of literature at various grade levels and in college courses.

ENGL 6907 Teaching of Writing 3 s.h.

Problems, issues, practices, and research that affect the teaching of writing at various grade levels and in college courses.

ENGL 6911 The Medieval World 3 s.h.

Study of selected literary works reflecting medieval thought and culture. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6912 Sixteenth- and 17th-Century British Studies 3 s.h.

Nondramatic literature of the British Renaissance. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6913 Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama 3 s.h.

Varying emphases on the dramatic works of Shakespeare and/or his contemporaries. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6914 Restoration and 18th-Century British Studies 3 s.h.

Prose, poetry, and/or drama of the period studied in historical and cultural context and from various critical perspectives. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6915 Early American Studies 3 s.h.

Prose, poetry, and/or drama from the colonial period up to the early 19th century examined in their historical and cultural contexts. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6916 Nineteenth-Century British Studies 3 s.h.

Prose, poetry, and/or drama of the period studied in historical and cultural context and from various critical perspectives. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6917 Nineteenth-Century American Studies 3 s.h.

Examines 19th-century American literature and culture through particular themes, genres, styles, periods, and/or figures. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6918 Studies in Children's Literature 3 s.h.

Contemporary children's literature. Emphasis may be on development, trends, critical standards, cultural context, classroom selection and use. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6919 Studies in Young Adult Literature 3 s.h.

Contemporary young adult literature. Emphasis may be on development, trends, critical standards, cultural context, classroom selection and use. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6920 Twentieth-Century British Studies 3 s.h.

Prose, poetry, and/or drama of the period studied in historical and cultural context and from various critical perspectives. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6922 Twentieth-Century American 3 s.h.

Studies. Examines works in relation to the history and social and cultural developments of the period. Nonliterary texts may be included, such as film, visual arts, and music. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6923 Working Class Literature 3 s.h.

A study of working-class literature, culture, and artistic production, with emphasis on the literary history, the material conditions, and the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in the works of literature by and about the working class.

ENGL 6927 Historical Survey of Literature for Young People 3 s.h.

Survey of historical developments from the 18th through mid-20th centuries in British and American literature for young people.

ENGL 6935 Studies in Romanticism 3 s.h.

Prose, poetry, and/or drama of the period studied in historical and cultural context and from various critical perspectives. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6943 Public and Professional Writing 3 s.h.

Exploration of scholarly and practical approaches for writing for public, professional, and technical audiences. Students examine the use of writing in public and professional organizations, government, nonprofit sectors, safety and health professions, and political and social campaigns. With an emphasis on theories and practices of approaching audience and purpose, students consider rhetorical and ethical demands of writing in public, professional and technical contexts.

ENGL 6944 Document Design and Production 3 s.h.

Application of computer software and hardware to design and produce professional/technical documents.

ENGL 6945 Grant Writing 3 s.h.

Study of various issues and strategies involved in writing grant proposals to help solve a range of problems and support various causes that improve people's lives and communities. Students learn how grant proposals enable significant research in natural, behavioral, and social sciences; facilitate civic and educational projects; and advance community development and artistic initiatives. Students learn the functions and conventions of grant proposals, the range of research required to write grant proposals, and the rhetorical and practical processes that produce them and lead to approval. The course emphasizes two key stages of writing grant proposals: developing the proposal (including defining needs, reviewing existing projects and literature, and researching sources of funds), and writing the proposal with a particular audience in mind.

Prereq.: Graduate Standing.

ENGL 6946 Historical Editing 3 s.h.

Project-based approach to theoretical and practical aspects of editing historical and literary documents for both print and digital contexts. Topics include document selection, transcription, verification, and annotation, as well as the implications for teaching and learning using traditional print and electronic archives and texts.

Cross-Listed: HIST 6946.

ENGL 6947 Proposal Writing 3 s.h.

Graduate level introduction to the structural, rhetorical, and linguistic aspects of professional proposals, with a focus on grant proposals. Students examine the role of proposals in serving the needs and interests of organizations and individuals. Requirements include writing one grant proposal for a client and one other type of proposal (e.g., a research project proposal or book prospectus).

ENGL 6948 Healthcare Communication 3 s.h.

Graduate level introduction to how healthcare information is conveyed by healthcare researchers, providers, and writers, to experts and non-experts. Students examine how people find and use medical information in making healthcare decisions. Students consider issues of health literacy, research methods, ethics, public and private clinical communication, patient education, and visual design. Requirements include writing a report on a medical talk, a healthcare-related press release, and a client-based healthcare communication project.

ENGL 6949 Professional and Technical Editing 3 s.h.

A study of the skills needed to make appropriate changes in the content, grammar, mechanics, style, format, and organization of manuscripts for scholarly, trade, journalistic, and other professional publications. The course deals with stages in the publishing process, hard-copy versus online editing, mechanical and substantive editing, and the use of house and press styles.

ENGL 6950 Sociolinguistics 3 s.h.

An investigation of the relationship between language and society. Includes discussion of dialects and standard languages, language planning, linguistic identity, multi- and bilingualism, class, gender, ethnicity, and social interaction.

ENGL 6951 Language Acquisition 3 s.h.

A study of research on the learning of first and second languages. Topics include developmental sequences, learner variables, critical periods and conditions for learning, and the roles of input and interaction. The course is designed for those planning to teach languages.

ENGL 6952 Linguistics of Literacy 3 s.h.

An investigation of the linguistic, social, and cultural dimensions of literacy. The course covers theoretical frameworks of language and literacy, the relationship between speech and writing, cultural notions of literacy, and the acquisition of literacy in first and additional languages.

ENGL 6953 Publications Issues and Management 3 s.h.

Exploration of the issues involved in managing and producing professional publications, including publications in students' own fields. Focus on organizational, editorial, and authorial voice; editorial policies; audience analysis; and the processes by which publications are conceived, designed, and produced.

ENGL 6954 Language Assessment 3 s.h.

This course seeks to develop the language assessment literacy of teachers and TESOL Endorsement candidates. The content of the course emphasizes theoretical and practical study of instruments and procedures for assessing culturally and linguistically diverse students. Candidates will design and use standardized (formal) and instructional (informal) evaluative methods to learn to assess students' linguistic and academic development, and will conduct critical analyses of existing tools for assessment in terms of their reliability, bias, and validity. Candidates will be able to use assessment to distinguish between levels of language proficiency in decisions of educational plan or placement.

ENGL 6955 Advanced Linguistics 3 s.h.

In-depth study of selected issues in contemporary linguistic theory.

ENGL 6956 TESOL Methods 3 s.h.

Introduction to teaching English as a second language (ESL), including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Focus will be on using communicative methods with nonnative speakers.

ENGL 6957 TESOL Practicum 3 s.h.

Supervised teaching in an English as a second language (ESL) program. Additionally, weekly seminar attendance is required.

ENGL 6958 English Grammar 3 s.h.

Descriptions and analysis of English grammar structure.

ENGL 6960 Studies in Linguistics 3 s.h.

Examines a specific topic such as stylistics, semantics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, TESOL, or computational linguistics. May be repeated twice with a different topic.

ENGL 6963 Perspectives in Multicultural Studies 3 s.h.

An advanced study of primary and secondary texts from the field of multicultural literature and multicultural education. The course will emphasize the formation of social identities, the intersections of race, class, and gender, relationships among dominant and nondominant subjects in U.S. and other global cultures. The course will pay special attention to the theory and application of multiculturalist paradigms to education, professional work, and graduate study. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6965 Studies in Film 3 s.h.

Analysis of motion pictures and their creators; topics may include classic and contemporary styles, genres, and methods of production, as well as film theory and criticism. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6966 Writing of Poetry 3 s.h.

Discussion and application of approaches, techniques, and forms involved in the writing of poetry. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6967 Writing of Prose 3 s.h.

Discussion and application of approaches, techniques, and forms involved in the writing of fiction and/or nonfiction. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6968 Studies in Literary Form 3 s.h.

Examines forms such as poetry, the novel, the short story, essay, biography, autobiography, or travel literature. Emphasis may be on definition, development, cultural context, figures, or themes. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6969 Writing the Youth Novel 3 s.h.

Discussion and application of approaches, techniques, and forms involved in the writing of novels.

ENGL 6974 English Education Workshop 1-3 s.h.

Intensive study and activity in a topic related to teaching English and the language arts. Does not count toward degree credit. Grading is S/U. May be repeated.

ENGL 6975 English Education Seminar 1-3 s.h.

Approaches to teaching English and the language arts. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6976 Studies in English Education 3 s.h.

Theories, issues, and/or criticism in the teaching of English. May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6989 Teaching Practicum 1-3 s.h.

Techniques and strategies for teaching college composition, including course design and classroom practice. Required of and limited to graduate assistants who are teaching in the English Department. First-year graduate assistants must register for three semester hours of Teaching Practicum in two successive semesters for a total of six semester hours. Does not count toward degree credit. Grading is S/U.

ENGL 6990 Special Topics 3 s.h.

May be repeated once.

ENGL 6991 Special Topics MFA 3 s.h.

Special topics in literature and creative writing for students in the Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program in creative writing. May be repeated once.

Prereq.: Acceptance in the MFA program.

ENGL 6992 Professional Communication 3 s.h.

Focus on a selected topic in technical writing or professional communication (e.g., proposal writing, science writing, computer documentation, nonfiction prose). May be repeated once with a different topic.

ENGL 6993 Discourse Theory 3 s.h.

Examination and discussion of contemporary theories of discourse analysis, with some attention to the history and development of rhetorical theory.

ENGL 6996 TESOL/Applied Linguistics Internship 1-3 s.h.

Supervised work-and-learn experience for students interested in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) and/or applied linguistics. Students spend 3-10 hours per week working for an approved field site, in-person or online. Enrollment is contingent upon the availability of internships. Students must be recommended for this experience by program faculty. ENGL 6996 may be repeated once.

Prereq.: ENGL 6956, ENGL 6957, program faculty recommendation.

ENGL 6997 English Internship 1-3 s.h.

Supervised work-and-learning experience in English under the direction of an English Department faculty member and an employee of a participating firm. Ten to 20 hours a week of student time are expected. Enrollment is contingent upon the availability of internships. Students are selected on the basis of personal qualifications, including GPA, courses taken, recommendations, and an interview. Either ENGL 6997 or ENGL 6998 may count toward the degree, not both.

ENGL 6998 Professional Writing Internship 1-3 s.h.

Supervised work-and-learning experience in professional communication under the direction of a University faculty member and an employee of a participating firm. Ten to 20 hours a week of student time are expected. Enrollment is contingent upon the availability of internships. Students are selected on the basis of personal qualifications, including GPA, courses taken, recommendations, and an interview. Either ENGL 6997 or ENGL 6998 may count toward the degree-not both.

ENGL 6999 Thesis 1-3 s.h.

Thesis.

Prereq.: Thesis proposal accepted by departmental committee.