

MFA IN CREATIVE WRITING



Why the MFA in Creative Writing?

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing is a studio-based program, designed for students ready to concentrate on the creation of original literary work. For two years, students work with a small group of peers under the guidance of experienced writers and teachers to complete a book-length thesis of publishable quality, while also gaining skills in literary editing and publishing and experience in teaching. Graduates go on to careers in writing, teaching, journalism, technical writing, editing, and publishing, and some pursue doctoral degrees in Creative Writing.

Why the MFA in Creative Writing at BGSU?

The MFA in Creative Writing at BGSU is widely recognized as one of the country's most prestigious. For more than fifty years, graduates of BGSU's Program in Creative Writing have contributed to contemporary literary culture and published hundreds of books, including Anthony Doerr's 2015 Pulitzer Prize winner *All the Light We Cannot See*.

Students at BGSU enjoy a vibrant writers' community at a university devoted to excellence in the arts. In addition to small classes taught by actively publishing writers and teachers, the experience of students is enriched by a Visiting Writers' Series and annual coursework with a Distinguished Visiting Writer. All qualified students will receive the opportunity to teach courses in First Year Composition and Creative Writing. Students also gain experience in literary editing and publishing through their work on the nationally-distributed literary journal *Mid-American Review*.

Learning outcomes

Students who graduate with the MFA in Creative Writing will have developed individual, original approaches to writing fiction and poetry; produced a book-length thesis comparable in quality to the published work of contemporary poets and fiction writers; developed an understanding of their work's place within the context of contemporary literature; evaluated literary work for publication and produced and distributed a literary journal through relevant technologies; and developed pedagogical skills sufficient to design and teach courses at the college level.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Jeanne Berry, Creative Writing Program, Department of English, at jberry@bgsu.edu or 419-372-6864

Program strengths and uniqueness

- A studio-based program, consisting primarily of writing workshops, including a minimum of one course in techniques and one in literary editing.
- Funding and support: all qualified students receive a two-year teaching fellowship that includes a stipend, tuition waivers, and a thorough training in pedagogy.
- Small class size: the program admits a limited number of students each year, and each student will have the opportunity to work in close concert with faculty.
- Experienced and accomplished faculty.
- BGSU hosts a weekly Reading Series, featuring visiting writers, faculty members, and current MFA students.
- All students spend at least one semester working on the staff of *Mid-American Review*, a nationally-distributed literary journal. Experience in literary editing and publishing is a key feature of the program.
- A record of success: for more than fifty years, graduates of the program have made outstanding contributions to our contemporary literary culture.

Professional opportunities

Our graduates write and publish original work and find teaching opportunities in higher education. The degree also provides credentials for any field in which proven writing and communication skills, as well as creativity and initiative, are desired, including marketing, advertising, editing, arts administration, journalism, and library science.



"My time in the MFA program allowed me to hone my writing skills and my identity as a writer. I wrote several stories in my collection at BGSU; actually, my thesis was the first draft of my short story collection. I made lifelong friends in the program, learned how to be a writer, and came away with the manuscript that would become my first book."

— Liz Breazeale, MFA 2015, author of *Extinction Events* (University of Nebraska Press, 2019)

Admission requirements

Applicants are required to submit scanned copies of official or unofficial transcripts from all institutions attended. Upon admission, final official or notarized copies of transcripts from all institutions where degrees were earned and diplomas from international institutions must be submitted.

Applicants are also required to submit:

- Official scores from the GRE
- Three letters of recommendation
- A statement of purpose articulating their reasons for pursuing a graduate degree in Creative Writing. The statement of purpose could include their personal history with writing, their accomplishments in the field, their education thus far, and a vision of their future work.

In addition, all applicants must submit two writing samples:

- A sample of their creative writing -- FOR FICTION: 20-30 double-spaced pages. FOR POETRY: 10-15 pages with poems single- or double-spaced.
- An 8- to 15-page double-spaced sample of academic or professional writing.

International applicants are also required to submit scores from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTEA), or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Successful completion of ELS 112 will also be accepted for this requirement. We generally look for a TOEFL score of 100 or higher (and written and speaking scores of 25 or higher), or the equivalent for the IELTS exam.

Cost of tuition

Please refer to www.bgsu.edu/offices/bursar for current information on tuition and fees.

Financial assistance

All qualified students admitted to the program will receive a two-year teaching fellowship that includes a stipend, tuition waivers, and pedagogical training. In the second year of the program, students will have the opportunity to teach an undergraduate class in Creative Writing as part of BGSU's Bachelor of Fine Arts Program. In addition, all students can apply for summer funding opportunities.

Domestic students enrolled in four (4) or more credit hours are eligible to apply for financial aid using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to calculate student contribution and financial need. You may apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Curriculum

A total of 36 credit hours of coursework at the graduate level are required.

Required courses: 30 semester hours

- ENG 6320: Writers' Workshop - 12 semester hours
- ENG 6300/6310: Techniques Course - 3 semester hours
- ENG 7820: Advanced Writer's Workshop - 3 semester hours
- ENG 6330: Editing the *Mid-American Review* - 3 semester hours
- ENG 6370: Pedagogy of Creative Writing - 3 semester hours
- ENG 6990: Thesis Research Hours - 6 semester hours

Required Electives: 6 semester hours

Electives can be taken at the graduate level in any program or department. Students have taken electives in English, Popular Culture, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, American Culture Studies, Ethnic Studies, History, Art, and Music.

How to apply

Visit the BGSU Graduate College website at www.bgsu.edu/graduate/admissions.

Fall Application Deadline: Deadline for all materials is January 15th.