

Creative Writing, B.A.

The B.A. in Creative Writing

Carnegie Mellon is one of only a few English departments in the country where undergraduates can major in Creative Writing (CW). In the CW major, students develop their talents in writing fiction, poetry, screenwriting, and creative nonfiction. While studying with faculty members who are writers, CW majors read widely in literature, explore the resources of their imaginations, sharpen their critical and verbal skills, and develop a professional attitude toward their writing. The extracurricular writing activities and a variety of writing internships available on and off campus provide Creative Writing majors with valuable experiences for planning their future. After graduation, our Creative Writing majors go on to graduate writing programs and to careers in teaching, publishing, public relations, advertising, TV and film, freelance writing, and editing, among others.

Program Learning Outcomes

Creative theory & contextual analysis

Students will be able to:

- explain the terminology and theoretical techniques specific to a given creative writing genre
- explain how cultural, historical, and social context affect both the writing and reading of creative texts

creative production & personal style

Students will be able to:

- produce short creative texts (including poems, creative nonfiction essays, short stories, and novel chapters) by applying genre-specific creative theory
- utilize feedback from multiple sources to write secondary drafts of such creative texts
- produce long form creative work (poetry chapbooks or collections, novellas or novels, collections of short stories or creative nonfiction essays) by applying genre-specific creative theory
- utilize feedback from multiple sources to write secondary drafts of such creative texts
- explain creative choices through the use of genre-specific terminology and techniques

professional practice

Students will be able to:

- utilize knowledge of publishing practices to submit creative texts for publication consideration
- apply career-based skills to class work, including tasks related to publishing and other professional creative writing contexts

Curriculum

The Creative Writing curriculum consists of **11 courses** for a **minimum of 99 units**.

Creative Writing Core (7 courses)		63 units
Introductory Genre Writing Courses (2 courses)		18 units
Introductory Genre Writing Courses		Units
76-212	Introduction to TV Writing	9
76-260	Introduction to Writing Fiction	9
76-261	Intro to Writing Creative Nonfiction	9
76-265	Introduction to Writing Poetry	9
76-269	Introduction to Screenwriting	9
Reading in Forms Course (1 course)		9 units
Reading in Forms Courses		
76-362	Reading in Forms: Nonfiction	9
76-363	Reading in Forms: Poetry	9
76-364	Reading in Forms: Fiction	9

Creative Writing Workshops (4 courses) 36 units

Students must complete four Creative Writing workshops, with at least two in a single genre. (NOTE: Fiction and Creative Nonfiction count as the same genre. TV Writing and Screenwriting count as the same genre.) Workshops in all genres may be taken more than once for credit.

Additionally, if a student has been accepted into the **Dietrich College Senior Honors Program** (<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/students/undergraduate/honors-preprofessional/senior-honors/>) and is completing their thesis in the field of Creative Writing, they may use one semester of thesis credit (66-501 H&SS Senior Honors Thesis I or 66-502 H&SS Senior Honors Thesis II) to fulfill one of the four required workshops.

Creative Writing Workshops		
76-320	The Writer's Room: TV Writing Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-212 Introduction to TV Writing OR 76-269 Introduction to Screenwriting	9
76-365	Poetry Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-265 Introduction to Writing Poetry	9
76-368	Role Playing Game Writing Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-260 Introduction to Writing Fiction or 76-269 Introduction to Screenwriting	12
76-460	Beginning Fiction Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-260 Introduction to Writing Fiction	9
76-462	Advanced Fiction Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-460 Beginning Fiction Workshop	9
76-465	Advanced Poetry Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-365 Beginning Poetry Workshop	9
76-464	Creative Nonfiction Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-260 Introduction to Writing Fiction OR 76-261 Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction OR 76-265 Introduction to Writing Poetry	9
76-469	Screenwriting Workshop Prerequisite: earn an A or B in 76-269 Introduction to Screenwriting	9

English Electives (4 courses) 36 units minimum

Complete a minimum of four additional elective courses and 36 units from the English Department's **course offerings**, while adhering to the specifics below:

- No more than two of the four elective courses may be at the 200 level.
- The other electives must be at the 300 and/or 400 level.
- A minimum of two of the four English Electives must be courses that are designated as **Literature Electives** and focus on the close reading of literary text.

Literature Electives (2 courses) 18 units minimum

Literature Electives		
76-207	Special Topics in Literature & Culture	9
76-210	Banned Books	9
76-217	Literature & Culture of the 20th and 21st Century	9
76-219	Law & Blame	9
76-220	Mystery! From Detective Fiction to True Crime	9
76-221	Books You Should Have Read By Now	9
76-230	Literature & Culture in the 19th Century	9
76-236	CMU Prison Education Project:	12
76-239	Introduction to Film Studies	9
76-241	Introduction to Gender Studies	9
76-242	American Woman Writers	9
76-244	Immigrant Fictions	9
76-245	Shakespeare: Tragedies & Histories	9
76-247	Shakespeare: Comedies and Romances	9
76-259	Film History	9

76-268	Comic Books & Pop Culture	9
76-278	Japanese Film and Literature: The Art of Storytelling	9
76-295	Russian Cinema: From the Bolshevik Revolution to Putin's Russia	9
76-296	20th Century Russian Masterpieces	9
76-299	19th Century Russian Masterpieces	9
76-312	Crime and Justice in American Film	9
76-314	Data Stories	9
76-317	Contemporary American Fiction	9
76-326	Contemporary Global Fiction	9
76-329	Performing Race in Early Modern Drama	9
76-337	Intersectional Feminism	9
76-339	Topics in Film and Media	9
76-341	The Age of Jane Austen	9
76-342	Love: A Cultural History	9
76-343	Rise of the American Novel	9
76-347	Major Fiction	9
76-348	Adaptation: Fiction to Film	9
76-350	Critical Theories about Literature	9
76-353	Transnational Feminisms: Fiction and Film	9
76-362	Reading in Forms: Nonfiction	9
76-363	Reading in Forms: Poetry	9
76-364	Reading in Forms: Fiction	9
76-367	Fact Into Film: Translating History into Cinema	9
76-370	Independent Study in Literary and Cultural Studies (instructor permission required)	Var.
76-376	Crafting Race in 19th-Century Britain	9
76-382	Media: Past, Present, and Future	9
76-392	Special Topics in Literature & Culture	9
76-401	Hollywood vs. the World	9
76-407	Topics in Literary & Cultural Studies	9
76-409	History of German Film	9
76-410	The Long Eighteenth Century	9
76-414	Decolonial Imaginaries	9
76-423	Transnational Feminisms	9
76-424	Theories of Social Class	9
76-429	Introduction to Computational Humanities	9
76-431	Gender Play in Early Modern Drama	9
76-434	Literature & Social Change in the 19th Century	9
76-439	Seminar in Film and Media Studies	9
76-442	Black Lives in Pre-1900 Britain	9
76-445	Milton	9
76-446	Revenge Tragedy	9
76-450	Law, Culture, and the Humanities	9
76-452	Generations and Culture	9
76-453	Literature of Empire	9
76-454	Rise of the Blockbuster	9
76-455	The Pittsburgh Review of Books (PRoB)	9
76-461	Refugee Stories: Literature, Art and Film	9
76-467	Crime Fiction and Film	9
76-468	Space and Mobilities	9
76-482	Rise of the Art Film	9
76-495	Other People's Words: The History, Theory, and Practice of Interviews	9

300 or 400-Level English Electives (2 courses) 18 units minimum

- The remaining two English Electives must be at the 300- or 400- level. In choosing English Electives, students are encouraged to sample courses from across the Department.

Double Counting

Students may double count up to two courses with other programs outside of the Department of English. **NOTE:** courses being used for the **Dietrich College General Education** (<http://coursecatalog.web.cmu.edu/schools-colleges/dietrichcollegeofhumanitiesandsocialsciences/general-education/>) requirements do not have a double-counting limit.

Transfer Courses

Students may transfer up to two courses from other non-CMU programs/institutions toward the primary or additional major in Creative Writing or the BHA in Creative Writing, with the exception of one of the two required Introductory Genre Writing courses. If the two-course maximum is met, other related transfer courses will be considered for general education requirements and/or free electives for graduation. Please see the **Dietrich College Advanced Standing and Transfer Credit Policy** (<https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/advisory-center/scheduling-classes/ap-and-transfer-credit.html>) for more information.

Recommended Curriculum Pathway: B.A. in Creative Writing

Below is the recommended plan, or pathway, for completing the B.A. in Creative Writing in four years. This pathway includes the Creative Writing course requirements as well as requirements for the **Dietrich College General Education curriculum** (<http://coursecatalog.web.cmu.edu/schools-colleges/dietrichcollegeofhumanitiesandsocialsciences/general-education/>). While it is not required for students to follow this pathway precisely, it is highly recommended for students to do so, and we recommend students begin the major's courses as early as possible. (Students in Dietrich College may declare their primary major as early as the beginning of their second semester.) Students who have not yet declared their major in the Department of English may still take courses with us.

Students may also view the pathway for the B.A. in Creative Writing via the **Stellic Degree Audit Application** (<https://www.cmu.edu/es/stellic/>).

First-Year		Second-Year	
Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
GEN ED: Foundations: Communication	GEN ED: Foundations: Data Analysis Course	GEN ED: Foundations: Computational Thinking	GEN ED: Disciplinary Perspectives: Logic/Math Course
GEN ED: Disciplinary Perspectives: Humanities	GEN ED: Disciplinary Perspectives: Social Sciences Course	GEN ED: Foundations: Intercultural & Global Inquiry	GEN ED: Foundations: Contextual Thinking
GEN ED: Grand Challenge Seminar	CW: Introductory Genre Writing Course #2	GEN ED: Perspectives on Justice & Injustice	CW: Workshop #2
CW: Introductory Genre Writing Course #1	Free Elective	CW: Workshop #1	CW: English Elective #2
CW: English Elective #1	Free Elective	CW: Reading in Forms	Free Elective

Third-Year		Fourth-Year	
Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
GEN ED: Disciplinary Perspectives: The Arts Course	Open for course exploration, requirements for other majors/minors, study abroad, etc.	CW: Workshop #4	Free Elective
GEN ED: Foundations: Scientific Inquiry	Open for course exploration, requirements for other majors/minors, study abroad, etc.	CW: English Elective #4	Free Elective
GEN ED: Disciplinary Perspectives: Additional Disciplines	Open for course exploration, requirements for other majors/minors, study abroad, etc.	Free Elective	Free Elective
CW: Workshop #3	Open for course exploration, requirements for other majors/minors, study abroad, etc.	Free Elective	Free Elective
CW: English Elective #3	Open for course exploration, requirements for other majors/minors, study abroad, etc.	Free Elective	Free Elective