

CREATIVE WRITING, MASTER OF ARTS

The Graduate Program in Creative Writing offers an M.A. in five concentrations: Genre Fiction, Nature Writing, Poetry, Publishing, and Screenwriting for Feature Film and Television. Western's curricula differ from most other comparable programs by emphasizing intense training in craft, close study of diverse and marginalized authors, and exposure to the business of being a writer.

All M.A. programs in the Graduate Program in Creative Writing use a low-residency format that engages students in two ways:

1. on-campus seminars and workshops for two weeks during two consecutive summers, and
2. a plan of non-residency study during two full-time academic semesters, during each of which students work one-to-one with writing faculty and members of their peer cohort of students.

All programs require a high degree of commitment and excellence from candidates, who must maintain a 3.00 course average to complete the program. A minimum grade of B- in each course is required.

In both the first and second summer residencies, M.A. candidates complete a 2-credit intensive course in their concentrations. They also complete one credit each summer of CRWR 600 (<https://western-preview.courseleaf.com/search/?P=CRWR%20600>) Summer Orientation, which involves attending craft talks, readings, workshops, and other literary events; participating in online discussion of them; and writing a short reflective essay at the conclusion of the residency.

During the academic year, full-time students should expect to spend a minimum of 25-30 hours per week to complete writing assignments, for which professors will provide feedback online. Students also participate regularly in online discussion boards and videoconference calls with other students and professors. Students earn 12 credits each semester for this work (six credits per course).

Program Information

Western's low-residency MA in Creative Writing offers a rigorous, one-year course of study involving intensive creative work and the development of critical and pedagogical skills. Students select one of five emphases: Genre Fiction, Nature Writing, Poetry, Publishing, and Screenwriting for Feature Film and Television. The program takes 13 months to complete as a full-time student, which includes two regular academic semesters and two on-campus residencies. During the fall and spring academic semesters, students engage in coursework through the use of both videoconferencing and online learning platforms. During each of the two summer semesters, students take an intensive course in their concentration and attend a one-week, on-campus residency, which takes place at the end of July.

Total Credits for the MA in Creative Writing

Two summer residencies @3 hours/summer = 6 credits

Two academic semesters @12 hours/term = 24 credits

Total Credits: 30

Requirements for Full Admission to the MA in Creative Writing

Candidate must submit:

- An official transcript of the bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university showing recommended 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher.
- An 800- to 1,000-word personal statement describing the applicant's experience and commitment to writing. This statement should include a self-assessment of qualifications for admission to Western's Graduate Program in Creative Writing for the chosen degree and concentration.
- A writing sample in the appropriate genre, double spaced and numbered, or properly formatted for the appropriate genre:
 - The Genre Fiction concentration sample should include 20 to 25 pages, ideally from a single work.
 - The Screenwriting concentration sample should include a complete scene or short.
 - The Nature Writing concentration sample should include 20 to 25 pages, in any genre or a mix of genres.
 - The Poetry concentration sample should include 10 to 15 pages of poetry.
 - The Publishing concentration sample should consist of a 3- to 5-page critical assessment of a story's suitability for publication (story to be provided to applicant during application process).
- Two letters of professional recommendation from those capable of assessing the applicant's preparation to succeed in graduate-level work. All letters must be originals submitted on letterhead, must be signed by the person giving the recommendation, and must be less than a year old.
- Payment of university application fee

Provisional Admission to the MA in Creative Writing

An applicant who does not meet the requirements for full admission to the Master of Arts in Creative Writing may be considered for provisional admission upon the recommendation of the program director and approval by the Dean of Graduate Studies. A provisionally admitted student will have a maximum of one calendar year to complete any pre-requisite academic coursework. The program director or Dean of Graduate Studies may set additional timeline requirements.

Program Concentrations

Concentration in Genre Fiction

The Concentration in Genre Fiction includes instruction in writing for such forms as science fiction/fantasy, the mystery, romance, and other forms of mainstream commercial fiction. Study includes short and long written forms, as well as strategies and techniques for the effective teaching of creative writing.

The MA Concentration in Genre Fiction requires the following 30 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRWR 600	Summer Orientation (taken two times with different emphasis each summer)	2
CRWR 601	Fundamentals of Writing Genre Fiction I	2
CRWR 604	Career Planning for Genre Writers	2

or CRWR 613	Introduction to the Publishing World	
CRWR 608	Genre Writing I- Romance and Mystery Fiction	6
CRWR 609	Genre Studies I-Romance and Mystery	6
CRWR 618	Genre Studies II- Western, Speculative, and YoungAdult Fiction	6
or CRWR 619	Genre Writing II- Western, Speculative, and Young Adult Fiction	
CRWR 684	Pedagogy and Practicum	6
Total Credits		30

Concentration in Nature Writing

The Concentration in Nature Writing teaches students a wide range of literary techniques and styles writers have used in their creative responses to the natural environment and human interactions with it. The concentration provides training in all the major literary sub-genres relevant to the field, including memoir, science writing, political writing, history, poetry, fiction, and various forms of the essay and creative nonfiction. Courses include significant reading in primary and secondary sources, along with extensive work in short and long creative writing forms, focusing on creative nonfiction but also including other genres, as well as strategies and techniques for the effective teaching of creative nonfiction and other forms of creative writing.

The MA Concentration in Nature Writing requires the following 30 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRWR 600	Summer Orientation (taken two times with different emphasis each summer)	2
CRWR 681	Nature Writing Intensive	2
CRWR 682	Nature Writing Now	2
CRWR 685	Craft of Creative Nonfiction	6
CRWR 686	Genres of Nature Writing	6
CRWR 687	Writing about Nature and Science	6
CRWR 688	Writing about Nature and Society	6
Total Credits		30

Concentration in Poetry

The Concentration in Poetry brings students into the ongoing conversation of poetics, introducing them to the ideas, questions, approaches and techniques that have been the concerns of poets across time and cultures. The M.A. curriculum includes workshop-style courses focused on developing voice and expanding range, as well as courses in which the poetics of diverse contemporary authors are closely examined. In their second summer, M.A. students complete their studies with a course on the art of organizing a poetry manuscript.

The MA Concentration in Poetry requires the following 30 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRWR 600	Summer Orientation (taken two times with different emphasis each summer)	2
CRWR 630	First-Year Poetry Intensive	2
CRWR 634	Major Authors I	6
CRWR 635	Poetry Workshop I	6
CRWR 640	Second-Year Poetry Intensive	2
CRWR 644	Major Authors II	6

CRWR 645	Poetry Workshop II	6
Total Credits		30

Concentration in Publishing

The concentration in Publishing brings together the study and real-world practices of traditional, independent and new models of publishing in a rapidly changing industry. The concentration provides training in traditional and alternative methods of publishing, including the various print, electronic, and audio formats, as well as training in editorial, production, and marketing of published materials. Courses include extensive work in designing and producing original and reprint books, formatting for the electronic market, and a wide variety of other publishing business skillsets, including copyright law, and working with authors and agents.

The MA Concentration in Publishing requires the following 30 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRWR 600	Summer Orientation (taken two times with different emphasis each summer)	2
CRWR 613	Introduction to the Publishing World	2
CRWR 614	Traditional Publishing I	6
CRWR 615	Publishing and Marketing a Book	2
CRWR 623	Independent and New Model Publishing I	6
CRWR 624	Traditional Publishing II	6
CRWR 625	Independent and New Model Publishing II	6
Total Credits		30

Concentration in Screenwriting for Feature Film and Television

The Concentration in Screenwriting for Feature Film and Television includes instruction in the history and analysis of classical and contemporary screenwriting texts and the resulting films. The program emphasizes instruction in writing the visual narrative, three- and four-act structure, character development, thematic development, conflict, genre, story arc, and dialogue, for both the feature-length screenplay and television writing. Students also learn to apply strategies and techniques for the effective teaching of creative writing.

The MA Concentration in Screenwriting requires the following 30 credits:

Code	Title	Credits
CRWR 600	Summer Orientation (taken two times with different emphasis each summer)	2
CRWR 661	Film History and Analysis; the Visual Narrative	2
CRWR 663	Screenwriting, Competition, Representation, the Option (Representation, the "Option")	2
CRWR 665	Screenwriting Genre	6
CRWR 668	Television Drama and Sit Comedy	6
Select two of the following:		12
CRWR 675	Writing the TV Pilot	
CRWR 678	Adaptation	
CRWR 684	Pedagogy and Practicum	
Total Credits		30