Creative Writing, MFA

For the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing

The Department of English offers a program of study in Creative Writing leading to the Master of Fine Arts degree. We welcome qualified students who wish to pursue their interests in fiction or poetry writing.

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Admission

A candidate for the MFA must spend at least four semesters or the equivalent in residence and complete at least 48 graduate hours. A full-time student typically completes this program in three academic years. Because applications for admission usually far exceed capacity, in recent years undergraduate grade point averages of students admitted have been significantly higher than the 3.0 (A = 4.0) required by the Graduate College.

All applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores. Currently, a minimum score of 550 on the paper-based test (213 on the computer-based test) is required. Before a teaching assistantship involving classroom instruction or student consultation can be awarded to a non-native speaker of English, the applicant must take the Test of Spoken English (TSE) and achieve a score of 50 or higher (230 or higher before 1996).

The committee on admissions tends to select those applicants who have a solid array of undergraduate courses, strong recommendations, and above all a compelling writing sample: in short, a demonstration of an academic record that shows promise of a student capable of doing outstanding work in the field and earning a degree within a reasonable time. Preference is given to applicants who will be full-time students and active degree candidates. Applicants are considered only in spring for fall admission, and the deadline for submitting applications is December 1st.

Graduate Teaching Experience

Experience in teaching is considered a vital part of the graduate program and all MFA candidates will have ample opportunity to teach undergraduate writing classes.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available to students in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, and waivers of tuition and service fees. For complete information about the program, prospective applicants should consult our website at https://english.illinois.edu/admissions/our-mfa-creative-writing (https://english.illinois.edu/admissions/our-mfa-creative-writing/).

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For additional details and requirements refer to the department’s program requirements (http://creativewriting.english.illinois.edu/graduate/requirements/) and the Graduate College Handbook (http://www.grad.illinois.edu/gradhandbook/).