

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) Creative Writing

Degree Program

- This is a terminal degree, normally equivalent to the PhD for teaching creative writing in a university. Students usually select a specialty in fiction or poetry
- A minimum of 39 credit hours is required: 18-21 hours in creative writing courses, 15 hours in literature, language, writing theory or literary journal editing, and three to six hours in electives. A creative thesis of 6 hours completes the program. This thesis is an independent writing project under the guidance of an MFA faculty member and defended before a committee of three other writers.
- All students have an opportunity to work as editorial assistants on the internationally distributed literary journal, Natural Bridge, as well as the opportunity to work with well-published and working writers and artists.

Program Website

<http://www.umsl.edu/~mfa/>

Application Requirements

1. Application
 - a. <http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/prospective/apply-now.html>
2. Official transcripts from all universities attended
 - a. Successful applicants must have at least the equivalent of the B.A. degree before beginning the master's program. At least 18 hours of English courses above the freshman level and at least nine hours in literature are strongly preferred.
3. Writing sample
 - a. Submit 15-20 poems or 2-3 short stories for a total of 20-40 pages.
4. Entrance examinations
 - a. The Graduate Record Examination General Test (optional but required for teaching assistantships) (see <http://www.gre.org/ttindex.html>).
 - b. International students are required to document English proficiency by providing scores from an internationally accepted standardized examination before a decision is made on admission.
5. Grade Point Average
 - a. Minimum of 3.00 on 4.0 scale.
 - b. Students whose GPA is 2.75 to 2.99 may be admitted under some circumstances.
6. Two Letters of Recommendation
 - a. Optional, but required for teaching assistantships

Application Deadline

1. Annual deadline: March 1
 - a. Students will be notified of admission between April 1 and April 15
 - b. Applications that are not received by the posted date will not be considered.

Assistantships and Fellowships

1. Teaching Assistantships are currently funded at \$ 9,000 per year for two semesters. The Graduate School provides a scholarship for educational fees for graduate assistantships. Students teach two courses a semester and must maintain full-time status (6 credit hours).
2. To apply for assistantships, in addition to the required sample of creative work, submit:
 - a. An application for a teaching assistantship
 - b. A writing sample of scholarly or critical prose, such as a paper written for a literature class
 - c. GRE general test scores.

The deadline for assistantships is **March 1st** and must be sent to the Director of the MFA Program. Other equal assistantships at a nearby community college are available, often for second year students who did not get Teaching Assistantships. We also fund a Graduate Research position who serves as the Managing Editor of Natural Bridge. This is given to second or third year students, and is highly competitive. It pays \$9000 a year, and the graduate school covers educational fees. Additionally, there may be partial scholarships for exceptionally talented students.

Application fee

\$50 for domestic applicants; \$40 for international applicants

Graduate Program Director

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