

DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE WRITING
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

**ROUGH GUIDE TO THE M.F.A.
IN CREATIVE WRITING AND WRITING FOR
THE PERFORMING ARTS**

An ever-evolving project written and compiled by

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Brief Introductory Note:

Welcome! You have been accepted to the M.F.A. Program, beating out many other applicants. This means that you deserve to be here, and that you are a writer. Remember this when you become overloaded; remember it when the devil called “self-doubt” knocks on your door.

In order to help you feel organized so that you *don't* become overloaded, you are strongly encouraged to print out, at the beginning of each year, the calendar offered on the Graduate Division website (see below, under “Helpful Sources”)—it comes in a traditional calendar format, with quarters, weeks, deadlines, etc. At the end of this guide are two worksheets—“Check Sheet for MFA Requirements” and “Completed Courses Log”—both of which you should update at the end of each quarter: they will help you track your progress toward graduation. Make sure to scan over the “Check Sheet for MFA Requirements” right away, so that you can get a feel for the road ahead. While faculty and staff are here to assist you in your path toward graduation, you are ultimately responsible for making sure that you are fulfilling all the requirements.

At the risk of stating the obvious: graduate school is not undergraduate school. A degree of professionalism is required of you in the MFA program. Most importantly, you are here to produce a thesis project that, by the time you graduate, is a highly polished and, hopefully, publishable or producible piece of writing.

Take time to get to know your fellow graduate students. These people are going to be the only people in your life for the duration of the program who truly understand what you're going through. They also can be good sources of information. And chances are that one or

two or more of them may end up being your friends for life (and your readers). Try to participate in the Spring MFA Reading Colloquium, where you will have the opportunity to read from your work and to learn about the work of fellow MFA students in other genres.

Speaking of reading series: As part of its reading series and also the annual Writer's Week, the Creative Writing Department puts on many readings throughout the year, in which renowned and not-so-known writers from around the nation and world share their work. Plan to attend as many of these readings as possible. They are opportunities to hear what's going on out there in the world of literature, and to meet and engage the writers themselves.

If you have questions (large or small), or if you're going through a tough time with your work, or if you just need someone to talk to, don't be afraid to approach your Creative Writing or Theatre professors. They have been here a while, they are writers, they are humans (last time we checked)—they understand.

Several faculty members will be key figures for you in terms of making sure you matriculate correctly. First, your Graduate Advisor. Keep in steady touch with your Graduate Advisor, especially in the first year when you're learning the ropes. Let them know how you're doing (writing-wise, grade-wise, teaching-wise, etc.) You are strongly encouraged to run any questions or ideas about course enrollment by them. Secondly, your Thesis Advisor. You will most likely choose your Thesis Advisor in Spring of your first year, or in Fall of your second year. This faculty member, in addition to helping you with your thesis project, will assume much of the work of tracking your path toward graduation.

Finally, and it should be common sense but it merits mentioning: be sure to treat our staff well, giving "thanks" where it's deserved. If someone goes out of their way to make your life easier by answering some questions, fixing a seemingly impossible problem, or "pulling some strings," slip them a "thank you" card to let them know that their kindness is appreciated. Your good will will flow back to you in spades.

The Bottom Line (requirements):

Requirements for completing the MFA consist of 48 units of course work (12 courses) and 8 units of master's thesis project.

Course Work:

The core curriculum includes the following:

- Four workshop courses in genre of choice
- Two workshop courses in a cross-genre

In addition, students must complete the following:

- Two graduate-level literature courses from English or Comparative Literature. (This requirement can be met with upper-division courses in these departments, along with the appropriate 292 course.)
- Three graduate-level seminars from Creative Writing and/or Theatre
- One course in literature in translation (upper-division or graduate level) from Hispanic Studies or Comparative Literature
- or
- One additional workshop in a cross-genre
- Thesis courses

Thesis:

In the areas of poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, the final written project is a novel, or a book-length collection of poetry, short stories, or essays. In the areas of playwriting and screenwriting, the final written project is a full-length play of two or three acts (90–120 pages) or screenplay or teleplay (approximately 120 pages). Each student chooses a thesis committee composed of three faculty members: one faculty member serves as the thesis advisor, and two additional faculty readers also evaluate the thesis project.

Normative Time to Degree: 6 quarters

To continue in good standing and obtain an advanced degree, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.00. In addition, all students must demonstrate acceptable progress toward the degree. Students are considered to be making unacceptable progress and become subject to dismissal when the overall GPA falls below 3.00 or the quarterly GPA falls below 3.00 for two consecutive terms. Teaching Assistants must maintain a GPA of 3.25 or better and be making acceptable progress toward their degree. Fellowship holders must maintain a 3.5 GPA.

Money Matters:

If you're reading this guide, then you already know how much money, if any, the MFA program was able to offer you (in the form of fellowships, grants, fee-reduction, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, etc). A limited amount of TA-ships are available, usually to second-year MFAs. If you are interested in being a TA during your second year, you should write a one-page letter of interest to your Graduate Advisor sometime during the Winter quarter of your first year as an MFA student. The letter should describe any prior teaching experience you might have had, and anything else that enhances your qualifications as a teacher. There is also the possibility of doing a Gluck Fellowship, in which you teach one day a week at a local public school.

In the past, some MFA students have been aggressive about obtaining grants and research funds. Depending on your financial situation, you might want to try to find out about grants

and research funds the summer before you enter, and apply to as many as you can, articulating your research needs. There are mini-grants for attending conferences through the grad division and, each March, the CHASS has a bigger grant for research funds. If you apply the first year, you have another whole year to spend it. Novelists could travel to do research, or use the money for library fees and costs that arise in research. After being awarded monies, you have until the next March to spend it. But if you don't do it until your second year, you have to have it spent before graduation, a mere two months later.

You can also get money from the Graduate Student Association, but only for attending conferences and they don't pay that much if you're not presenting. Still, if you want to head over to AWP or something, it's a help.

Student Reading Series and CRATE:

Do participate in the MFA readings each Spring; it's good practice in understanding your own work as a form of performance, and in taking a professional stance. The readings will be held at the same time each week, as part of CRWT/THEA 280 – Writers' Colloquium. This is a one-unit course that you are strongly encouraged to enroll in. You will also have the opportunity to introduce fellow MFA students as they read from their work.

CRATE is a literary journal published in association with the MFA program, and there are opportunities for MFAs to be involved in various aspects of its production. Get in touch with the editor to find out more.

YEAR ONE

The Writing:

Prepare a folder of poems, stories, chapters, essays, plays, or screenplays, in draft the summer before you arrive, so that you will have manuscripts ready to present to the workshop. With the pressures of studying, employment, and learning the ropes at UCR, students often find it difficult to do new writing in the first quarter.

Once you arrive, remind yourself daily “I came here to write” and that what you came here to do is legitimate, that it's important, that the time is a gift you may not have again. Always remember the final goal: at the end of your two years here, you should have produced a polished, publishable thesis. Ray Bradbury's advice is good: “Every day read a poem, a story, an essay, and write 1,000 words.” (Other writers figure on 500 words, or putting in three hours, and that has worked, too.) Make the place where you do your writing comfortable, well equipped, and as harmonious as possible to be in.

In the workshop sessions, our purpose is to read your work absolutely as well as we can. We attend closely to your voice, and follow your vision. We also try to support your work, in dialogue with you, by seeing how it positions itself in relation to the world of literature and/or to the world of theater and film—which writers may be your natural allies, which books or plays or films can offer challenging models, whether classic or contemporary.

This is the year for making rapid development in your work. You have a fresh group of smart and serious readers: use what they can give you. Enjoy the responsiveness, and sift the criticism you get. The workshop is especially good for letting you know what doesn't get across right now—what feels routine, dated. The workshop can't teach you your subject, what you speak of and what you love, but it can let you know when your voice falls short of, or overshoots, a reader's range.

It's not good to take everybody's advice, especially if it feels intrusive. Just remember to use any resistance to get yourself to raise your own level, to perform better. Do it before the new energy wears off, and familiarity sets in.

Courses:

In addition to writing each day, you also need to take courses to satisfy the MFA requirements. Here is the low-down, straight from former and fellow MFAs, on many of the courses that you will take while with us:

English and Comparative Literature Seminars:

Try to finish your English and/or Comparative Literature graduate seminar requirements in your first year (preferably even in your first two quarters). The second year is going to fly by and having to take these classes while working on your dissertation can prove to be difficult.

Be on the lookout for seminars offered by English or Comparative Literature that can expand your knowledge of literature and challenge you to grow as a writer. Poetry students may seize on courses incorporating poetic texts, whether Old English, Renaissance, Romantic, or Modernist. Fiction, non-fiction, and Theatre students may find courses dealing with 18C Gothic, 19C English or American fiction, Modernism, and/or contemporary texts. You never know when something is going to benefit you and your work. For example, one former MFA student enrolled in a 19th Century Literature seminar on the historical novel. Initially, she was unsure how much she could benefit from the course, but she ultimately found it to be one of the most rewarding courses that she took while at UCR. While researching for a paper, she came across a novel written in 1880 that was in some ways similar to her own; but its differences proved to be tremendously instructive for this MFA's own work, and helped her pinpoint the problem areas of her novel in a way that nothing had done so far. This former MFA student recommends keeping an open mind as you look out for these little gems that are out there among the seminars offered by English or Comparative Literature.

Some past MFAs have complained that the English graduate courses are designed for English grad students (apparently, English graduate students have to take a class just on terminology their first quarter in the program). Don't let this scare you off. We recommend that you talk to a professor before take his or her class. Feel them out to see how well you will be accepted in their class. A few of the English professors will be very understanding and will be more than willing to work with you to do creative projects instead of a 20 page research paper (Professor Ganim, apparently, is one of them.) That said, be aware that some

professors may take umbrage at such a request. This isn't entirely bad news: One former MFA who took a challenging English seminar felt that the exercise of thinking logically about something and then trying to convey that in a literary-style paper was a good exercise, if still extremely difficult.

The Comparative Literature Department is, for the most part, very excited about MFAs. If English seminars tend to truck in criticism, then Comparative Literature steer more toward "text"—though this isn't always the case. Once again, make sure you visit and talk to the professors before you take the classes. The catalogue descriptions may be wildly off base. Graduate courses in Comparative Literature tend to be a lot of work, but not impossible. One former MFA recommends Professor Danow, with the caveat that he does require a lot of reading. She said that he worked hard to reach out to the three MFA students that were in his class. Other past MFAs have really enjoyed working with Stephanie Hammer (who, incidentally, teaches an amazing upper-division undergraduate course called MetaFiction).

To enroll in graduate English seminars, MFAs have to follow the same procedure as English graduate students. The process is the same each quarter:

- 1) At the beginning of Week Four: walk over to Tina Feldmann's office downstairs in the English Department and examine the posted "Red Sheet," which contains a description of all graduate English seminars that will be offered in the next quarter.
- 2) If you see one or more seminars that you are interested in, immediately fill out a form with Tina Feldmann (tina.feldmann@ucr.edu), which asks for some information from you, plus your top three choices (you'll probably only want into one course, but you need to give Tina several choices, in order of your preference, because you may not get your first choice).
- 3) By the end of Week Five, Tina will inform you which course you will be allowed to enroll in.
- 4) In Week Six, during the two days of Pre-Registration, you need to register online for the approved seminar. Don't forget to do this: If you don't register during this period, you won't be able to enroll in the class, period.

Creative Writing Courses:

In addition to taking four workshops in your main genre, you are required to take two workshops in a cross-genre (and possibly a third, if you don't take a literature in translation course). Former MFAs have found these cross-genre workshops to be helpful to the work they are doing in their main genre. For example, one student reported that taking screenwriting and playwriting helped her with her fiction. She knew she wasn't cut out to be a playwright, but the playwriting workshop helped her approach the construction of fictional characters from a different slant. That same student recommends taking as many different genres as possible. "We can learn from each other," she posits, "from the different types of creative writing that are out there."

In addition to the workshops and reading seminars offered by the Theatre and Creative Writing Departments (see descriptions at the end of this Guide), there are other courses that

you need to know about:

CRWT/THEA 280 – Writers' Colloquium

This class will be held each spring as a way to hold weekly MFA readings. You are strongly encouraged to enroll in this one unit course, where you will get a chance to read your work aloud, and to introduce fellow MFA students as they read from their work. This is your opportunity to practice reading before public audiences, to learn about the work of fellow MFAs in other genres, and to participate in your MFA community.

CRWT/THEA 290 – Directed Studies.

You sign up with a professor, agree on a course of study (for writers, it's a natural to do research for your creative project, i.e. novel, play, etc.) and agree on an evaluative system. Those in the know recommended not to get too heavy-duty in this last area: perhaps three oral conferences between you and the professor. The professor may also want some written work. To register, Cindy Roulette will provide a number affiliated with that professor. Then you fill out a form on the Graduate Division web site, get it signed and submit 3 copies to the Graduate Division.

CRWT/THEA 292 – Concurrent Analytical Studies

“In a dry quarter,” as one person put it, referring to a lack of interesting graduate seminars in English or Comp. Lit., you may take an upper-level undergraduate course in English or Comp. Lit. coupled with a 292 with the professor. You need to get permission for the 292 from the professor, and an "extra" project is agreed upon.

CRWT/THEA 299 – Research for Thesis

Use this when working on thesis, to bring unit requirements to full-time status (12 units per quarter).

CRWT/THEA 301

Students interested in being a TA their second year are encouraged to enroll in 301, which offers training in pedagogy, and discussion of practical teaching issues.

CRWT/THEA 302

This enables someone who is a TA to use their teaching hours as university credit, keeping that magic 12 units minimum. Just like the 290, you need to sign up with a professor. You can take up to 4 credit hours a quarter.

All of the above courses are S/NC, meaning no grade unit credit is factored in to your GPA, and no letter grades are given.

Year End Evaluations:

At the end of every academic year, your Graduate Advisor must submit an evaluation of your performance and progress to the Graduate Dean. Please prepare a brief report detailing your progress toward your degree, including thesis work, courses taken and grades, and any achievements or honors. Please submit your report to your Graduate Advisor no later than sixth week of Spring Quarter.

Comment: This form is used for students who are beyond the normative time for completion of degree, i.e., 4th year students.

YEAR TWO

The Writing:

The formal task of this year is the development of a thesis manuscript. This is the time for writers in the program to focus on the longer thematic or narrative arc, and to commit decisively to the direction of the work. This can often be difficult and you may need to seek guidance. Ask for more workshop discussions of how to form a collection, or how the larger arc is working for the play, novel, screenplay, etc. Much of this advising will have to take place in one-on-one conferences with faculty. Make the appointments, put forth the hard questions.

As you revise, never throw a piece of writing away. There will be ways to rewrite, recombine elements of everything you do—if not now, then in a few months, or years.

In the second year, too, have the courage to break out of whatever safe decorum you may have reached. Forming the thesis will almost certainly require new thinking to reframe the work you're engaged in, to take the farther leap and arrive at closure. And at the same time, the process must not degrade into mere grind (c.f. Edmund Wilson's advice: "Correct toward joy").

Fiction note: It has happened that a writer in the program will develop a separate novel project for the thesis, while presenting mostly stories in the workshop. Often writing needs the protection of privacy in its early stages; and sometimes it's wonderful to keep two projects going alternately—the day and night work. So long as it's getting done.

You deliver the thesis by a date close to the end of spring quarter. Note: you can hold the thesis over the Summer and file it in September, without running into leave of absence and Fall tuition costs.

Thesis Committee:

You need to identify a thesis committee by Fall Quarter of your second year. The Thesis Advisor is responsible to help get you graduated, so choose one you have rapport with. You will be limited by your genre, but there are choices even with this limitation. The Thesis Advisor should be familiar with your project and you should like his or her working style. They will be evaluating (hopefully tearing apart and helping you fix) your thesis. Figure out a timetable: if your advisor wants your thesis in January of 2nd year, then you may want to take at least four of your required eight Thesis 299 units that Fall, in order to finish up the writing. Then take another three (or more) thesis units again in spring to do the edits they ask of you. If you decide to do a third year, the timetable varies.

Teaching:

If you have been assigned a TA-ship, here are a few tips. Obviously, you want and need to do a good job as a teacher. As soon as possible, budget strictly the time spent on preparation and reading papers. It's not meant to be a full-time job; you still need to fulfill your coursework requirements and work daily on your own writing. Talk to experienced TAs, borrow tips, syllabi, plans. Teaching will strengthen your own sense of clarity and structure in writing. Give classes the readings you think are good and can respond to.

Filing Fee:

The Filing Fee policy established by the Board of Regents applies to students who have completed all requirements for a terminal degree except for the formal submission of a thesis. The policy states that graduate students (resident and nonresident alike) may pay a Filing Fee of one-half the registration fee (currently \$120) rather than register and pay full fees for the quarter in which they file the thesis if prior to the beginning of that quarter all other requirements for the degree have been approved by the entire thesis committee except for final corrections or minor revisions. Students must pay full fees if they are still doing research or if any other use of University facilities or more than twelve hours of faculty time is anticipated.

A student who pays the Filing Fee in lieu of registration is not eligible for University administered financial assistance, or student services requiring a student ID card, or to be appointed to a student employment title, such as a TA or GSR. The Filing Fee cannot be used for more than one quarter. If the student does not complete all degree requirements during the quarter in which the Filing Fee is paid, the student must register and pay all applicable fees for each subsequent academic quarter, until all degree requirements are completed. The student should notify the Graduate Division in the event that they will not be able to finish on Filing Fee status so that registration materials may be ordered.

PLANNING FOR AFTER THE MFA

Large summer writing conferences such as the Squaw Valley Community of Writers Summer Writers Conference and Breadloaf in Middlebury, Vermont can be good places to bring a book manuscript or finished chapters and a synopsis with the idea of showing it to prospective agents. But—don't hand people a giant manuscript to read unless you have evidence that they're very interested in your work.

2nd year students whose plans permit this option should think about applying for a period of residency in one of the numerous 'artist's colonies', a few of which are in California. These can be fine low-cost places to work and to make the acquaintance of people who share your interests and commitments, and many colonies don't require extensive publication, though they do ask for recommendations from people who have read your work. Typically, there are 2-3 application cycles per year, 4-6 months in advance of going.

Information is available from many reference sources, and from *Poets & Writers* magazine. Your own reference shelf might well include *Literary Marketplace*, *Writer's Market*, *The Insider's Guide to Book Publishing*, *Editors & Agents*, and other more specific works.

If you haven't already done so, start sending out your MSS now, and keep doing it. Keep a Submissions Logbook, listing where you've sent each MS, the date, any comments received back from editors whom you'll send to again--and keep the MSS moving out there! There are guidelines in the usual reference books for the mechanics of presentation of work. *Poets & Writers* magazine and *AWP* journal both list contests—send out to all relevant journals and contests that you can afford.

Use all the factors that can legitimately make your work more visible to the editors—e.g., send to journals like those on the West Coast which prefer writers in the area (like *Zyzzyna*), be alert to other regional tie-ins in the matter of theme, and so forth. Scan the current issues of literary journals in the library, and send to the ones you like, referring to what you liked in your cover letter to the editor. All publication, except for vanity presses, is good publication for the young writer.

If you plan to apply to Ph.D. programs in English/Creative Writing, do your research on programs (the AWP Directory lists Ph.D. programs in departments strong in creative writing) and organize it now. You'll need a convincing set of writing samples, and good recommendations.

HELPFUL SOURCES

If you haven't heard it already, Cindy Roulette is veritable wellspring of information. If she doesn't know it, no one does.

An extremely helpful website is the Graduate Division's Publication & Forms: <http://www.graddiv.ucr.edu/ESforms.html> You are strongly encouraged to print out, at the beginning of each year, the calendar on the Grad Div. website. It comes in traditional calendar format, with quarters, weeks, deadlines, etc.

New graduate students may find the following website useful for finding off-campus housing. It provides a list of apartments near UCR, and includes price quotes and office phone numbers:

http://www.bioscigrad.ucr.edu/new_std/ApartmentList.html

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE MFA PROGRAM IN CREATIVE WRITING AND WRITING FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS:

CRWT 201. The Writer's Life: Literary Strategies and Structures (4) Seminar, 3 hours; reading (extra), 1 hour; outside research, 1 hour; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Explores the artistic, practical, and professional aspects of life as a working novelist, poet, playwright, screenwriter, or essayist. Topics

include publishing, literary journals, commercial magazines, the film industry, the theatre industry, agents, and overviews of genre and art. Cross-listed with THEA 201.

CRWT 230. Creative Nonfiction (4) Workshop, 3 hours; outside writing and reading, 6 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Intensive formal study of contemporary creative nonfiction, with emphasis on style, structure, and form. Primary focus is on the production of original work. Course is repeatable to a maximum of 20 units.

CRWT 246. Special Topics in Fiction (4) Seminar, 3 hours; outside reading, 3 hours; term paper, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Explores various movements and themes in literature.

CRWT 251. Hollywood and the Novel: The Transformation of Fiction into Film. (4) Lecture, 2 hours; screening, 1 hour; reading (extra), 2 hours; outside research, 2 hours; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Explores the transformation of novels into screenplays and films. Examines four novels and their corresponding screenplays and films. Focuses on differences in style, content, and format. Course is repeatable as content changes to a maximum of 8 units.

CRWT 252(E-Z). Theory and Craft of Writing (4) Seminar, 3 hours; research, 2 hours; reading, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Analyzes writing techniques, structures, and approaches to craft in traditional, contemporary, and avant garde literary works. E. Fiction; F. Poetry; G. Nonfiction; I. Playwriting; J. Screenwriting; K. First Person.

CRWT 253. Stories as Collections (4) Seminar, 3 hours; research, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Analysis of the order, shape, and structure of story collections to aid in an appreciation of characters, conflicts, and themes.

CRWT 255. Graphic Novel (4) Seminar, 2 hours; studio, 2 hours; reading, 1.5 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. An in-depth consideration of the historical development and craft of graphic novels. Examines the intellectual, literary, and artistic evolution of this narrative form.

CRWT 262. Fiction (4) Workshop, 3 hours; extra writing and reading, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Intensive formal study of contemporary fiction, with emphasis on style, structure, and form. Primary focus is on production of original work. Course is repeatable to a maximum of 20 units.

CRWT 263. Fiction Workshop (4) Workshop, 3 hours; extra writing and reading, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. A comprehensive introduction to the craft of fiction writing. Allows students to develop their abilities as fiction writers in addition to their critiquing skills of the genre. Intended for students whose primary emphasis is not fiction.

CRWT 270. Poetry Workshop (4) Consultation, 1 hour; workshop, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Intensive formal study of contemporary poetry with emphasis on style, structure, and form. Primary focus is on production of original work. Course is repeatable.

CRWT 275. Modern American Poetry (4) Lecture, 3 hours; reading (extra), 2 hours; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Focuses on various modern poets. Explores their contributions to the evolution of an American poetic tradition and aesthetic. May be taken Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC) with consent of instructor and graduate advisor. Course is repeatable as content changes to a maximum of 8 units. **Simon**

CRWT 276. Poetry and Translation (4) Seminar, 3 hours; ; extra writing and reading, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Discusses the efficacy and difficulty of translating poetry from the Spanish language into English. Students read twentieth- and twenty-first century major Spanish language poets. Provides a forum to render and compare translations.

CRWT 277. Poetry and the Sacred (4) Seminar, 2 hours; reading (extra), 2 hours; outside research, 2 hours; written work, 2 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. An in-depth introduction to sacred poetic texts from antiquity to the present. May be taken Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC) with consent of instructor and graduate advisor.

CRWT 278. Contemporary American Poetry (4) Workshop, 3 hours; reading (extra), 3 hours; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Focuses on influential contemporary American poets. Discusses their styles and the evolution of poetry over the last fifty years. May be taken Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC) with consent of instructor and graduate advisor. Course is repeatable as content changes to a maximum of 8 units.

CRWT 279. The Fire This Time: Twentieth-Century Poetry of Witness (4) Seminar, 3 hours; reading (extra), 1 hour; outside research, 1 hour; written work, 1 hour. Examines the poetry of crises and witness written by poets in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries from America and around the world. Topics may include war; genocide; religious, ethnic, and political persecution; exile; imprisonment; ecological degradation; and domestic and urban violence in the United States.

CRWT/THEA 280. Writers' Colloquium (1) Colloquium, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Colloquia featuring writers in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, playwriting, and screenwriting. Students who present a seminar receive a letter grade; other students receive a Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC) grade. Course is repeatable to a maximum of 6 units. Cross-listed with THEA 280.

CRWT 285. The Literary Memoir (4) Workshop, 3 hours; research, hours. An in-depth survey of the literary memoir. Explores how memoirists employ craft and memory to create meaning. Asks what obligation memoirists have to drama and to real lives and places.

CRWT/THEA 290. Directed Studies (1-6) Outside research, 3-18 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing; consent of instructor and graduate advisor. Literature studies, directed by a faculty member, on special topics. Course is repeatable.

CRWT/THEA 292. Concurrent Analytical Studies in Creative Writing (1-4) Taken concurrently with a 100-series course but on an individual basis. Devoted to research, criticism, and written work related to the 100-series course.

CRWT/THEA 299. Research for Thesis (1-12) Thesis, 3-36 hours. Prerequisite(s): consent of thesis director. Research and preparation for the Master of Fine Arts thesis. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable.

THEA 200. Advanced Play Analysis (4) Seminar, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Analysis of dramatic structure from a sophisticated perspective. Covers strategies for dealing with openness, ambiguity, and metatheatricality. Also discusses tied versus gratuitous elements, archetypes, motifs, and symbolism.

THEA 201. The Writer's Life: Literary Strategies and Structures (4) Seminar, 3 hours; reading (extra), 1 hour; outside research, 1 hour; written work, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Explores the artistic, practical, and professional aspects of life as a working novelist, poet, playwright, screenwriter, or essayist. Topics include publishing, literary journals, commercial magazines, the film industry, the theatre industry, agents, and overviews of genre and art. Cross-listed with CRWT 201.

THEA 210. Literature and Improvisation: The Intersection of Culture and Performance (4) Lecture, 3 hours; studio, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Examines the literary and performative tools needed to construct original, language-based plays. Combines improvisational performance with storytelling to challenge students to develop and explore the connectivity between cultural history, oral tradition passed on through personal narratives, and public discourse.

THEA 227. Theories of the Modern Theatre (4) Seminar, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Examines the major theories underlying twentieth-century theatre practice. Emphasis is on the wide range of styles in modern theatre, including realism, symbolism, expressionism, surrealism, absurdism, Epic Theatre, and Theatre of Cruelty.

THEA 264. Seminar in Playwriting (4) Seminar, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Intensive formal study of playwriting with emphasis on plot, character, theme, dialogue, and style. Course is repeatable.

THEA 266. Screenwriting (4) Workshop, 3 hours; screening, 2 hours; consultation, 1 hour. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Students outline and complete the first draft of a feature-length screenplay and complete a short paper comparing two movies in the same genre. Course is repeatable.

THEA 281. Oscar Wilde and Late Victorian Theatre (4) Seminar, 4 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing or consent of instructor. Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), an Irish, feminist, aesthete, socialist, homosexual Victorian author, becomes a focus for the study of late Victorian theatre and culture. Readings are of Wilde's plays and nondramatic writings and plays by related playwrights such as Ibsen and Shaw.

PROFESSIONAL COURSES

CRWT/THEA 301. Directed Studies in the Teaching of Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts. (4) Lecture, 2 hours; practicum, 1 hour; outside research, 2 hours; written work, 3 hours. Prerequisite(s): enrollment in the M.F.A. program. Prepares students for teaching introductory undergraduate Creative Writing courses by offering a flexible curriculum of meetings and conferences on effective pedagogical methodology. Students create course syllabi and lesson plans and discuss a range of practical teaching issues. Required of all TAs for at least one quarter. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable to a maximum of 8 units.

CRWT/THEA 302. Teaching Practicum (1-4) Practicum, 2-8 hours; consultation, 1-4 hours. Prerequisite(s): graduate standing. Supervised teaching in undergraduate Creative Writing courses. Credit is not applicable to graduate unit requirements. Graded Satisfactory (S) or No Credit (NC). Course is repeatable.

Name _____

Area _____

**Check Sheet for MFA requirements in
Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts**

48 units of course work (12 courses) and 8 units of thesis for a total of 56 units

Course	Quarter Taken	Grade
1. Workshop in genre of choice		
2. Workshop in genre of choice		
3. Workshop in genre of choice		
4. Workshop in genre of choice		
5. Workshop in cross-genre		
6. Workshop in cross-genre		
7. ENGL or CPLT graduate seminar (<i>requirement can be met with upper-division courses in these areas along with the appropriate 292</i>)		
8. ENGL or CPLT graduate seminar		
9. CRWT or THEA graduate seminar		
10. CRWT or THEA graduate seminar		
11. CRWT or THEA graduate seminar		
12. Literature in translation or cross-genre		
Thesis units (8 units count towards graduation)		
CRWT/THEA 299		
CRWT/THEA 299		

Thesis advisor(s)

Faculty readers:	

Name _____ Area _____

Completed Courses Log

Fall Quarter-Year One (12 units)

1. _____
2. _____
- 3., _____

Winter Quarter-Year One (12 units)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Spring Quarter-Year One (12 units)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Fall Quarter-Year Two (12 units)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Winter Quarter-Year Two (12 units)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Spring Quarter-Year Two

(12 units)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____