

English Undergraduate Minor Proposal: Creative Writing

Approved June 14, 2007

Executive Summary

Creative Writing Minor / 18 Credits

Creative writing courses provide students with the tools for a deeper understanding of how to use language and to express the intricacies of human experience. This minor will make creative writing accessible to non-English majors who have an interest and talent in creative writing, allowing them to combine pragmatic considerations of career and discipline with the more personal benefits of introspection and development of a personal voice expressed in writing.

The Introduction to Creative Writing course—English 205—typically attracts students from a wide variety of disciplines, including History, Communication Studies, Architecture, Nursing, Communication Studies, Education, Biology, Business, and others. Since there is currently no curricular framework that allows students to pursue creative writing without declaring English as a major, the Creative Writing minor option will likely be of great interest to students from a variety of disciplines, allowing them to hone their creative writing skills without abandoning their primary majors. In fact, many faculty regularly have students in their classes who have a strong interest in English, and who have indicated they would minor in English if such an option were available.

The curriculum for the Creative Writing Minor is based on existing English courses and do not require additional resources or monies to start-up or maintain.

Description of the English Creative Writing Minor

The Creative Writing minor is a minimum 18 credit-hour (6 course) designed to provide students the tools for a deeper understanding of how to use language and to express the intricacies of human experience. The creative writing minor gives students the opportunity to undertake creative writing projects—especially the writing of poetry, fiction, screenplays, and non-fiction—which emphasize the process of writing as well as the end product. In their classes, students read and study a variety of key published works, write from prompts and assignments, and learn techniques for harnessing their own creative resources. The peer workshop, or group critique of student writing, is the cornerstone of growth as a writer.

In order to declare and successfully complete the Creative Writing minor, students should note the following:

1. A student must declare a major before declaring a Creative Writing minor.

2. A student should declare a Creative Writing minor by the first semester of their junior year. A Creative Writing minor cannot be added after graduation.
3. A minimum of 18 credits is required for the Creative Writing minor.
4. The Creative Writing minor will be certified at the same time that the student's major(s) is certified for graduation.
5. Prior to graduation, students in the Creative Writing minor must submit a portfolio that includes at least three substantial pieces, from at least two separate genres (i.e., poetry and fiction). Writing portfolios for both minors shall also include a self-assessment by the student, between 250-500 words long, that indicates the extent to which he or she can demonstrate the learning outcomes.
6. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in Creative Writing minor courses in order for the minor to be posted on the official transcript at the time of graduation.
7. A minor will not be awarded if the student is earning or has already earned a Bachelor's degree with English as the major concentration.
8. At most, six (6) credit hours within the Creative Writing minor may be counted towards both the major and the minor.
9. At least 12 credits (or 4 courses) of the courses required for the minor must be taken at UDM unless the courses are taken as part of a consortium agreement.
10. Where indicated for certain courses in the curriculum (see below) students must complete prerequisite courses before taking the specified course in the Creative Writing minor.
11. No course for the Creative Writing minor can be taken on a pass/fail basis.
12. None of the courses required for the Creative Writing minor may be taken as directed studies or as independent studies.
13. A minimum of nine (9) credit hours must come from courses at the 300- or 400-levels.
14. Each student who selects an English minor in Creative Writing will be assigned a faculty advisor from the English Department.
15. The English Department reserves the right to review and to modify the curriculum for the Creative Writing minor through the same procedures that it uses to review and to modify the English major.

Creative Writing Minor Curriculum

I. One of the following (3 credits):

ENL 235: Study of Fiction	3 cr
ENL 245: Study of Poetry	3 cr
ENL 265: Study of Drama	3 cr

II. The following (3 credits): successful completion of ENL 205 is a pre-requisite for further coursework in the minor.

ENL 205: Introduction to Creative Writing	3 cr
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III. Two of the following (6 credits):

ENL 311: American Literature to 1865	3 cr
ENL 312: American Literature 1865 to 1920	3 cr
ENL 320: Medieval Literature	3 cr
ENL 321: Renaissance Literature	3 cr
ENL 322: English Literature of the 18 th Century	3 cr
ENL 323: English Literature of the 19 th Century	3 cr
ENL 334: Transatlantic Modernisms	3 cr
*ENL 335: Post-1945 Literature	3 cr

(* = recommended)

IV. Two of the following (6 credits):

ENL 301: Writing of Fiction	3 cr
ENL 401: Advanced Writing of Fiction	3 cr
ENL 302: Writing of Poetry	3 cr
ENL 402: Advanced Writing of Poetry	3 cr
ENL 304: Screenplay Writing	3 cr
ENL 404: Advanced Screenplay Writing	3 cr

Total number of credits:	18 cr
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Delivery Format for Creative Writing Minor Courses

All courses in the proposed Creative Writing minor curriculum will be delivered in the same manner as they are right now. Courses will be offered during the day and evening on weekdays and on Saturdays. Courses may involve the use of lectures and internet.

How the Creative Writing Minor Courses Demonstrate Integrity and Academic Merit

The English Department discussed this proposal at several meetings, making sure that the proposed minors are of a standard quality consistent with the Academic Standards for Minors approved on 7 September 2006.

Impact of Proposed Creative Writing Minors on other Departments

Because the proposed Creative Writing minor is based on existing courses, the proposed program is not expected to have any significant effect on enrollment or student retention in other departments. Since there is currently no curricular framework that allows students to pursue creative writing without declaring English as a major, the Creative Writing minor option will likely be of great interest to students from a variety of disciplines, allowing them to hone their creative writing skills without abandoning their primary majors.

The Creative Writing Minor and the UDM Mission

The Department of English has long been central to facilitating the University's mission of integrating the intellectual, spiritual, ethical, and social development of our students. With its emphasis on critical thinking, the Department prepares students to go out into the world with a deeper understanding of the complexity and diversity of human expression. This emphasis also is consistent with the College of Liberal Arts and Education's mission to cultivate intellectual versatility and a moral foundation so that students act with understanding, integrity, and compassion in their personal and professional lives.

Program Objective and Learning Outcomes

A primary objective of the Creative Writing minor is to introduce students to the process of generating creative writing through careful attention to the craft of writing. Students are expected to read and study a selection of important published works in various literary genres, and to generate their own writing by employing memory, imagination, observation, and experience. Students are expected to work together in peer workshops, responding to each others' work, and revising their own work based on feedback from their instructors and their peers.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes for the Creative Writing minor will be assessed in a number of ways, including the following:

- a. **Writing Portfolios:** Students will submit a portfolio that includes at least three substantial pieces, from at least two separate genres (i.e., poetry and fiction). Writing portfolios for the minor shall also include a self-assessment by the student, between 250-500 words long, that indicates the extent to which he or she can demonstrate the learning outcomes.

- b. **Individual Papers/Projects:** The English Department will dedicate meetings in the Fall and Winter of each academic year to discuss in detail the extent to which students, based on their writing performance in our classes, are meeting the learning objectives for the Creative Writing minor.

- c. **Course Evaluations:** The English Department Chair will review faculty evaluations each term and meet with faculty, if necessary, to discuss ways to improve content delivery.

As a result of our assessment of learning outcomes through the above methods, the English Department will meet on a regular basis to review, discuss, and if necessary implement any changes deemed necessary, in accordance with the process used to change the English major.

Use of University Resources

The proposed Creative Writing minor does not require the use of any University resources above and beyond what is currently needed to run existing English courses.