

MFA in Creative Writing Program Guide: 2021-2022

SWLF and MFA FACULTY AND STAFF

Fiction: Nick Dybek, Susan Jackson Rodgers, Keith Scribner

Poetry: Karen Holmberg, Jen Richter, and David Biespiel

Nonfiction: Elena Passarello, Justin St. Germain, and George Estreich

Program Director: Elena Passarello (elena.passarello@oregonstate.edu)

541-737-1673

Internship Coordinator: Liddy Detar (Liddy.Detar@oregonstate.edu)

541-737-4299

SWLF Director: Tim Jensen (Tim.Jensen@oregonstate.edu)

Director of Writing: Kristy Kelly (Kristy.Kelly@oregonstate.edu)

Office Staff:

Felicia Phillips: for questions about GTAships, contracts, teaching schedules. Felicia.Phillips@oregonstate.edu.

Molly McFerran: for room scheduling and general administrative help.
Molly.McFerran@oregonstate.edu

Website: <http://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/wlf/mfa>

Table of Contents

MFA Program Objectives	3
Graduate Learning Outcomes	3
Summary of Coursework Requirements	3
Creative Writing Workshops	4
Literature, Rhetoric and Composition, Film	4
Thesis or Writing and Conference	4
Practicum Hours	4
Internships	5
Advising	5
Thesis and Oral Examination	5
Thesis Advisors	6
The Thesis	6
The Thesis Defense	6
Scholars Archive	7
Important Deadlines	7
Creative Writing Events	8
Professional Development Funds	8
Satisfactory Progress Toward the Degree	8
MFA Academic Progress Form	10

APPENDIX: THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Academic and Support Resources
Registration
Minimum Course Loads
Continuous Graduate Enrollment
Leave of Absence
Unauthorized Break in Registration
Grievance Procedures
Grade Requirements and Program of Study
Incomplete Grades
Student Conduct and Community Standards
Academic Dishonesty
Office of Equal Opportunity and Access
Student Records

THE MFA PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The MFA program at Oregon State University was founded in 2002. Our objective is to educate students as writers and readers and introduce them to broad areas of knowledge needed for careers in teaching, editing, publishing, communications, arts advocacy, and other fields related to arts and letters. Writing and reading are at the core of the program. We aim to teach students an array of techniques for generating and revising their poetry and prose, and for responding to each other's works-in-progress; to engage them in an intensive study of a range of literary works, authors, styles, and genres; and to build and nurture a diverse, collaborative, and dynamic community. Finally, we take seriously the challenge of employment in the current market. We offer students multiple opportunities for gaining skills beyond classroom teaching, through internships, outreach activities, graduate research assistantships, and alumni networking.

Graduate Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes for Master's Degree programs state the student shall:

- (a) Conduct research or produce some other form of creative work
- (b) Demonstrate mastery of subject material
- (c) Be able to conduct scholarly or professional activities in an ethical manner.

In the MFA program, we recognize that the pursuit of excellence in the arts must be understood in diverse, patient, and supple ways. Some of our graduates (like many writers) will not pursue further advanced degrees or traditional academic careers, or even careers obviously linked to the creative arts. And the realities of the literary publishing world entail long apprenticeships before the first book might be expected. Therefore, when the MFA discusses outcomes for our students, we keep in mind that each of our students will choose different career and artistic paths. The development and the application of outcome measures must be thoughtful and individualized for each graduate. In general, students who graduate with the MFA degree will:

1. Demonstrate a rich and articulate understanding of the elements of the genre(s) in which they write.
2. Develop and employ techniques of intensive revision.
3. Make polished creative work of publishable quality.

Summary of Coursework Requirements

To complete the course of study for the MFA degree in Creative Writing, a minimum of 60 credit hours is required.

- **You must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 hours and a maximum of 16 hours each term.** The **minimum course load** for MFAs is **the workshop in your genre plus one ENG or FILM or 4-credit pedagogy course** (plus WR 503/504 to reach 12 credits total). You **must** be enrolled in the workshop in your genre each term, and, though you **may** take a second workshop in your genre, it counts as an elective. So, for example, if you take two workshops in the winter you will **still** need to enroll in one ENG/FILM/4-credit pedagogy course. Or, if you took your workshop and 2 ENGs in a previous term, you will **still** need to enroll in your workshop plus one ENG/FILM/4-credit pedagogy course each subsequent term; you may **not** opt out and take only workshop and thesis credits.
- 24 credit hours in Creative Writing Workshops (6 workshop courses in your genre)
- 24 credit hours in Literature, Film, and/or Rhetoric and Composition (6 courses)
- 12 credit hours in Thesis and/or Writing and Conference
- In addition, as GTAs you are required to take two practicum courses: WR 517, and, if you want to be eligible to teach creative writing in your second year, WR 521, 522, or 523 (see below).
- No more than 50% of courses used for a graduate program of study may be the 500-level component of a dual-listed course, also called a "slash" course. (In other words, at least 50% of the courses counting toward your degree must be "stand alone" 500-level courses.)

Creative Writing Workshops: 24 credit hours, or 6 workshops, are required

As stated above, a workshop outside your declared genre counts as an elective, and does not fulfill a program of study requirement. Please contact the workshop professor well in advance of registration to discuss his or her application procedure. The professor may ask for a sample of your work in that genre, and/or a written explanation of what you hope to get out of the course (and what you can bring to it), and/or other supporting documents. Typically, faculty will require these documents 2 weeks prior to the first day of registration.

Fiction writers: take WR 524 Advanced Fiction Writing each quarter (a total of 6 courses)

Poets: take WR 541 Advanced Poetry Writing each quarter (a total of 6 courses)

Creative nonfiction writers: take WR 540 Advanced Creative Nonfiction Writing each quarter (a total of 6 courses)

Literature, Rhetoric and Composition, and/or Film: 24 credit hours, or 6 courses, are *required, which must include:*

- One course in **pedagogy theory**. Take this course during your first year, winter or spring term. (Look for the ***Pedagogy*** designator in the online [course descriptions](#))
- We strongly encourage you to take craft courses. These 500-level courses focus on a particular aspect of craft, and offer you the opportunity to read deeply and to produce new writing, in your own genre or outside your genre. These often include work generated in craft courses. (Look for the ***Craft*** designator in the online [course descriptions](#).)
- We also encourage you to take literature courses to deepen your literary understanding, especially in your genre. If your undergraduate major was not English, OR you don't have a strong foundation in pre-1800 literature, OR you are considering pursuing a PhD at some point, plan on taking one pre-1800 course. Many literature instructors offer a creative option for MFA students in lieu of a scholarly paper. But if you are considering applying to a PhD program in literature or creative writing, you are strongly urged to write at least one research paper.
- With permission from the MFA program director, you may take one 500-level course in another OSU department or School and count it toward the 24 credit hours in Lit/Rhet-Comp/Film, provided that the course aligns with your creative or research goals; includes some aspect of writing, literature, and/or film; and focuses on a subject, critical theory, methodology, etc., not covered by SWLF courses. (Example: WGSS 573: Transgender Lives. "With a particular focus on transgender people of color and transnational constructions of gender, this course will engage issues in the lives of Transgender people through autobiography, memoir, biography, poetry, and documentary film.") Send a proposal to the program director at least one week before registration for the term in question; independent studies are excluded.

Thesis or Writing and Conference WR 503 (Thesis) or WR 504 (Writing and Conference)

- 12 thesis hours are required for the degree (note: you may well take more than this, since you will register for 3-4 credit hours per term to ensure that you are at a full-time, 12-credit load). Each thesis credit hour represents 30 hours of work in a term.
- You may **not** enroll in more than 4 thesis hours in a single term.

Typical course schedule:

While there are variations, a typical term's coursework looks like this:

- 4-credit Workshop in your genre
- 4-credit ENG, WR, or FILM class
- Teaching practicum/internship credits if applicable

- Enough WR503 (thesis) credits to reach 12 credits total.

Practicum Hours

- 2 credits of teaching practicum are required for GTAs, in the fall term of your first year (WR 517)
- 1 credit creative writing practicum is required the spring term of your first year if you want to be eligible to teach creative writing in your second year.*
 - WR 521 (Fiction Teaching Practicum)
 - WR 522 (Poetry Teaching Practicum)
 - WR 523 (Nonfiction Teaching Practicum)

In addition, during the term you teach creative writing, you will need to register for one credit of the appropriate creative writing teaching practicum. Consult with the faculty in your genre to find out who will be your practicum leader.

*While things generally work out, we can't *guarantee* creative writing courses for everyone in every genre.

Internships

Internship opportunities are available in alternative pedagogy, editing and publishing, arts administration, and faculty-led research. Interns earn one ENG 510 internship credit for 30 hours of work per term. (That one credit each term counts as part of your 16-credit maximum.) Liddy Detar will distribute a menu of this year's internships at our MFA Orientation meeting. To express interest in an internship position, first contact Liddy; to apply, you'll be asked to send a letter of interest and current CV to the appropriate internship supervisor.

Registration

The OSU Schedule of Classes is available online and contains academic regulations and registration procedures that apply to all students in the university, as well as the final examination week schedule. The online [catalog](#) is the source for up-to-date changes for the current and immediately upcoming term. It is your responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for any funding eligibility and/or to meet the requirements of the continuous enrollment policy. Problems arising from registration procedures, such as late registration, adding or withdrawing from courses after deadlines, or late changes from letter or S/U grading are resolved through the [petition for late change in registration](#) filed with the Graduate School. A late registration fee may be applied.

Students are responsible for staying current on registration requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (i.e., international, financial aid, veteran's).

Schedule Changes and Add/Drop Deadlines

If you want to drop a class, you have to do it by the end of the first full week of the term. After that, you can withdraw from a course until week 7, but a "W" will appear on your transcript. A "W" has no effect on your GPA. Please bookmark the Registrar's [Academic Calendar](#) and put deadlines in your planner.

Academic Advising

Last year the graduate school introduced online Program of Study forms, which should make this administrative process easier. The required steps remain mostly unchanged.

First- and second-year students will meet with the director of the MFA program early in the fall term to fill out an Academic Progress Form, and turn in current resumes. A sign up will be made available at the MFA Orientation Meeting in September.

Second-year students will also meet with the director as a group, late fall term, to fill out their Program of Study Forms, listing all the courses they have taken or plan to take prior to receiving the degree. The

Program of Study must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval at least fifteen weeks prior to the defense date.

Watch for email invitations to these meetings in November. The director will maintain office hours, in case you need assistance with registration decisions, signatures, etc.

Thesis and Oral Examination Requirement

All MFA candidates will be required to complete a thesis, which is to be a sustained piece of creative writing of literary merit (for prose, 70-100 pages, and for poetry, 35-45 pages).

An oral examination is also required. The exam will be given in the student's final term of study, and consists of questions assessing the student's grasp of the history of the genre, contemporary creative writing movements, influences and models, and matters of craft, all within the context of the student's own writing and reading.

Thesis Advising

At the end of the first year, students and faculty in each genre will consult to determine the best fit for thesis advisor. Every effort will be made to give everyone his/her/their first choice. In the second year, students work with their advisor to bring the thesis to its final shape prior to the oral examination.

The Thesis

The thesis must show literary merit, and while the thesis is not a finished book, it should be of publishable quality. The student and the thesis advisor will mutually agree upon the process for developing the thesis, depending on the students' needs and goals. Poetry theses will consist of 35-45 pages of poetry. Prose theses will be 70-100 pages, maximum, and can be either a collection of short stories or essays, a novel/novella (or part of one), or a sustained nonfiction work. The thesis is not intended to be a full-length work; thesis advisors have the right to enforce the page maximum.

The Thesis Defense

The thesis defense will be given in the student's final term of study. The Graduate School refers to this event as an Exam or Final Exam; however, the primary purpose of the thesis oral defense is to measure the student's growth, and assess the coherence and maturity of the student's literary aesthetic.

The examination committee will consist of the student's thesis advisor, a second reader, a third reader, and a fourth reader who is a Graduate Committee Representative (GCR) outside your School. Generally, two creative writing faculty members serve on each committee; the third member must be chosen from the Literature, Rhetoric and Composition, or Film faculty (or, in some cases, from another field of study in which a student has a particular interest).

In order to find a GCR, you must visit the [ONID Login page](#) below, which will generate for you a list of qualified GCR's.

Because the thesis defense provides an opportunity to process, evaluate, and respond to the thesis as a volume, candidates will give a 20-25-minute presentation on their creative project, which will include reading (brief) excerpts from the work; student peers may attend this portion of the defense, but may not be present during the question period.

Each examination will have its own agenda, prompted by the thesis itself. Pertinent issues regarding the thesis are:

- Stylistic characteristics of the collection.
- The strategies of character development, setting, plot, etc.
- The aesthetic qualities of the language (rhythm, tone, syntax, etc.).
- Primary thematic concerns of the collection.

- How the manuscript coheres as a volume.
- Questions about/suggestions for the order of individual pieces in the collection.
- How has the thesis work enlarged the writer's capacity and ambition?
- How has it prepared the way for new projects?

Committee members might pose the following questions to the writer:

- What problems did you encounter in revising and ordering the pieces for your collection? What was the most difficult part of that process?
- Which writers have most influenced your own work? How and why?
- Do you have any sense of direction yet for your next project?
- Which Literature/Film/Composition/Rhetoric courses were most useful to you as a writer? Why/how?
- Where does your work fit in the world of contemporary literature?

The committee's task is to be evaluative of a student's knowledge and progress, but the committee is also designed to be a group of helpful readers.

Scholars Archive

Normally, all OSU theses and dissertations are publicly accessible through the **Scholars Archive**. We have secured an exception for MFA theses so that you can keep your unpublished creative work from appearing on the Internet. We've done this to ensure that you have control over your creative material and are able to publish it in journals and in book form with impunity. In order to secure the exception (it's called an "embargo" at the Graduate School), you will fill out your [ETD form](#) (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Submission Approval Form) as follows: Check off the line "Delay digital access of my work via the World Wide Web but still available with OSU community," and write "permanent embargo" next to it.

*Note: Some MFA alumni have discovered their thesis titles during a Google Books search. If you find your thesis listed under Google Books, and this bothers you, go to the bottom of the Google Books page, click on "Report an issue," and select "I want to report a book for removal due to a copyright or trademark violation." This should trigger a form that you can use to ask that the entry be removed. Rest assured that your actual thesis is **not** online, just the title.*

Important Deadlines

During the second year especially, a multitude of Graduate School deadlines must be met. Bookmark the Graduate School Guide to Success page <https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/graduate-student-success> and check it often. While the program director, office staff, and thesis advisors will send out occasional reminders, it is ultimately *your* responsibility to keep abreast of deadlines and procedures as you progress through your degree.

Satisfactory Progress toward the Degree

- Maintain a GPA of 3.00 or better for all courses taken as a graduate student.
- Finish all Incompletes (courses for which you received an I grade) well before the Defense.
- Meet with the program director
 - Year 1: early fall term, in order to review course work and requirements, and go over your Academic Progress Form (see next page);
 - Year 2: early fall term (to update the Academic Progress Form), and late fall term (as a group, to fill out Program of Study forms).
- Comply in a timely manner with all Graduate School requirements, as outlined on the Graduate School website and in the Second-Year MFA Checklist.

- The **minimum course load** for MFAs is **the workshop in your genre plus one ENG or FILM or 4-credit pedagogy course** (plus WR 503/504 to reach 12 credits total). So, for example, if you take two workshops in the winter you will still need to enroll in one ENG/FILM/4-credit pedagogy course. Or, if you took your workshop and 2 ENGs in a previous term, you will still need to enroll in your workshop plus one ENG/FILM/4-credit pedagogy course each subsequent term.
- Meet regularly with your thesis advisor in the second year, and leading up to the defense.
- Exhibit good citizenship as evidenced by participation in program activities and events (e.g., attending and volunteering to help with Visiting Writers Series, colloquia, Student Reading Series, EdFest, etc.).

EXPECTATIONS

Creative Writing Event Participation

The Visiting Writers Series, Literary Northwest Series, and Stone Award are among the opportunities MFA students have to get involved in the larger literary community. We encourage MFA students to attend all events, and to help with ushering, receptions, escorting guests around campus, etc. Visiting Writers often offer a colloquium or “master class” (usually at 4:00 the day of the reading). These sessions are meant for you! Writers talk about craft and professional development, and answer your questions. Everyone should attend, regardless of genre. If you aren’t familiar with the writer’s work, we will try to make samples available to you before the visit. Come prepared with questions and comments.

Academic Expectations

While each faculty member will make clear his or her expectations in the course syllabus, in general we expect you to attend every workshop and class unless you’re ill or experiencing an emergency that prevents you from getting to campus. Absences that do not fall into these categories may affect your grade. We expect you to do all the readings and assignments, and to come to every class period fully prepared. Learning is sometimes uncomfortable; graduate school is hard work. We trust that you applied to the program because you want to fully engage with the experience, learn as much as you can, and grow as writers.

Be sure to manage your time, your stress, and your health in ways that will ensure you are writing at your best and fulfilling your responsibilities as a student and a GTA to the utmost of your abilities.

Community Expectations

The MFA is an unusual academic degree; the material we work with in order to become skilled writers is often intensely personal, making the workshop a particularly vulnerable space. When we, as writers, make difficult and personal subject matter the material of art, we may not wish to discuss these matters outside their representation in the art itself. Respect your peers’ privacy by not sharing the content of the workshop with others or with the public. Treat each other’s boundaries with respect and sensitivity. If you feel your boundaries are not being respected, please discuss the matter with the workshop leader and/or the Director of Creative Writing. For more information about community expectations, including recourse in case of sexual harassment, bullying, retaliation, or abuse of power, see “Reporting Conduct Violations” on page 15. SWLF is developing its own Statement on Climate, which will be provided below and in the GTA handbook once it is finalized; this resource gives a detailed overview of actions and recourse.

SWLF Statement on Climate

SWLF expects an environment free from discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, bullying, retaliation, and other forms of intimidation or misuse of power. SWLF recognizes that actions that threaten this climate may involve individuals in any position within SWLF.

As a graduate employee, an undergraduate may approach you with concerns about the classroom climate or to report their experience outside the classroom. Depending on the kind of concerns being reported, there are links below for next steps to take. In all cases, it is appropriate to contact a faculty member or SWLF administrator for guidance in taking these next steps. In some cases, graduate employees may be required to report concerns to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access (EOA).

As a graduate student, you may wish to approach a faculty member or administrator to report an experience of misuse of power or to get help resolving classroom climate issues. Depending on the situation, you may also report directly to EOA, to the Bias Response Team, to Student Conduct and Community Standards, and/or to our SWLF graduate representatives.

Sexual Misconduct

All individuals who are participating in university programs and activities have the right to do so fully, free from sexual discrimination, misconduct, and retaliation. The university prohibits sexual/gender-based discrimination and sexual misconduct of any kind. Sexual/gender-based discrimination can include discrimination based on sex, gender, gender identity (including transgender), gender expression, or sexual orientation. Sexual harassment, non-consensual sexual contact, non-consensual sexual intercourse, non-consensual sexual activity, intimate partner violence, stalking and sexual exploitation are considered sexual misconduct and are prohibited. Such misconduct violates university policy and may violate state or federal law. When such misconduct occurs, the university will take steps to stop, prevent recurrence, and remedy the impacts of such behavior.

Under OSU's Responsible Employee policy, any employee receiving information that indicates sexual misconduct or discrimination has occurred is required to immediately report it to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Access.

The full Responsible Employee policy, including a link for reporting and FAQs, can be found here: <https://eo.oregonstate.edu/responsible-employee-policy>

Concerns involving sexual misconduct can be directly reported to EOA via this link: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=2

Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination, or Retaliation

Concerns that do not appear to involve sexual misconduct can also be reported to EOA by the impacted person when that person feels that **harassment, bullying, discrimination, or retaliation** has occurred. If a student approaches you, as a graduate instructor, with such a complaint, directing them to EOA is always a good course of action. The reporting form, which is the same for members of the University community in all roles, can be found here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=4

Bias

When any member of the University community believes that a **bias incident** has occurred, reports (anonymous or signed) may be sent to the University's Bias Response Team. This maybe done separately from, or in tandem with, the above actions, as circumstances suggest. The Bias Response Team performs assessment and takes action per the protocols detailed [here](#), and may suggest that the impacted person file one of the reports described above. The Bias Incident Report Form may be found here: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=10

Reporting Links

A useful website containing all the reporting forms and channels detailed above may be found here: <https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/reporting>

Support Options for Other Climate Concerns

When an individual's concerns center on climate but the reporting individual does not feel that discrimination, harassment, bullying, retaliation, or sexual misconduct has occurred, there are a number of options:

a) Raising the concern with an instructor, faculty member, or program/School administrator. These individuals (including faculty, staff, and GTAs) are often in a position to make informal and positive changes as pertains to a given situation, for instance in the case of dynamics involving classroom discussion. If you are in the position of hearing such a report from a student, it is always appropriate and welcomed to consult a faculty member or program director. If an informal conversation suggests that sexual misconduct in fact may have occurred, please remember that the Responsible Employee policy requires immediately sharing the information with EOA. If an informal conversation suggests that harassment, bullying, discrimination, or retaliation has in fact occurred, referral to EOA is the appropriate next step.

b) Report concerns directly to Student Concern and Community Standards, which may occur in tandem with (a) or not. This is especially appropriate when an individual feels **a violation of the Code of Student Conduct** has occurred. The reporting form may be found here:

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=1

Please note that in 2020 a separate reporting form for alleged violations by students of COVID-19 policies and protocols has been added: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?OregonStateUniv&layout_id=1

c) Report concerns to SWLF graduate student representatives, who could act as liaisons with SWLF administration.

(d) Consult the University Ombuds Office for support and assistance. <https://ombuds.oregonstate.edu/>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development and SWLF Funding

Professional development opportunities such as EdFest and AWP are an essential part of your MFA training. Second-year students who want to attend the AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) conference can take advantage of a small professional development fund intended to offset costs. These \$500 (maximum) grants are contingent upon students signing up to staff the OSU MFA table at the AWP Book Fair.

Normally, these funds can only be used toward travel to a professional conference/professional development activity that will benefit you as an instructor at OSU. Unfortunately, these funds can no longer be used for subscriptions, submission fees, business cards, copy charges, etc.

Honors College Funding

If you screen applications for the Honors College and receive professional development funds, the Honors College transfers those funds to SWLF to distribute. These funds can be used toward travel to a professional conference/professional development activity, or they can be paid out as salary during one of the terms you are teaching one section (appointed at 0.3 FTE). SWLF cannot distribute the funds as salary while you are teaching two sections (appointed at 0.49 FTE) because your FTE is set at its maximum capacity during that period. If you are on an external appointment at 0.49 FTE all year long, the funds cannot be distributed as salary but they can be used for conference travel.

Composition Assistant Funding

CA funds can be used toward travel to a professional conference/professional development activity, or they can be paid out as salary during one of the terms you are teaching one section (appointed at 0.3 FTE). SWLF cannot distribute the funds as salary while you are teaching two sections (appointed at 0.49 FTE) because your FTE will be set at its maximum capacity during that period.

As individuals earn funds in these categories, the Assistant to the Director will reach out to everyone individually to confirm preferences.

If you have questions about professional development money, please see Felicia.

Other Professional Development Funding:

In addition to professional development funding provided through SWLF, OSU offers several other avenues for professional funding. You may apply to use these funds for conference and workshop attendance, or for research travel.

President's Commission on the Status of Women: \$250-500 to support qualified trainings, research costs, or travel for conference participation.

Professional Development Award: \$250 to support costs of qualified trainings, resources, and activities

Graduate Travel Award: \$500-1000 to cover travel to a national or international conference.

Academic and Professional Resources

As an AWP member program, we receive benefits that are tremendously useful to your graduate work. You will receive an issue of the *AWP Chronicle* every two months, and you can log on to the AWP site to access job information, as well as information on teaching, residencies, grants, and awards.

In addition, you have access to three Canvas sites which host program and professional information.

- **MFA Program in Creative Writing:** this Canvas site houses the forms and sign-up sheets for advising, program of study completion, and opportunities such as the MFA Reading Series and 45th Parallel. The Director will draw your attention to these resources via Announcements, as needed.
- **Creative Writing Practicum:** this Canvas site is a resource for those who are teaching Intro to Creative Writing courses in their second year. You will be enrolled in this automatically at the end of your first year.
- **MFA Professional Resources:** this Canvas site contains information on publishing, the job market, process and craft, residencies, and inclusive pedagogy, among many others. You are signed up for this Canvas resource upon entering the program.

University Emergency Contacts

OSU is dedicated to providing a safe and secure learning and living environment for its community members. [The Department of Public Safety](#) provides resources, information, emergency phone numbers, and protocols for maintaining personal safety. Sign up for [OSU Alerts](#) to get timely messages delivered right to your phone or inbox regarding university closures and other emergency situations.



School of Writing, Literature, and Film

MFA Academic Progress Form

*This form must be completed and signed before your Program of Study will be approved.

Name: _____

Pedagogy must be
checked **once** for
4-credit course

FIRST YEAR

Fall

	credits	course number	course name	pedagogy?
Workshop in your genre				
500-level craft/lit/ pedagogy/film				
Elective (optional)				
Elective (optional)				
Thesis—WR 503				
Writing & Conf—WR 504				

Winter

	credits	course number	course name	pedagogy?
Workshop in your genre				
500-level craft/lit/ pedagogy/film				
Elective (optional)				
Elective (optional)				
Thesis—WR 503				
Writing & Conf—WR 504				

Spring

	credits	course number	course name	pedagogy?
Workshop in your genre				
500-level craft/lit/ pedagogy/film				
Elective (optional)				
Elective (optional)				
Thesis—WR 503				
Writing & Conf—WR 504				
Creative writing practicum				

SECOND YEAR

Fall

	credits	course number	course name	pedagogy?
Workshop in your genre				

500-level craft/lit/ pedagogy/film				
Elective (optional)				
Elective (optional)				
Thesis—WR 503				
Writing & Conf—WR 504				
cw prac only if teaching cw				

Winter

	credits	course number	course name	pedagogy?
Workshop in your genre				
500-level craft/lit/ pedagogy/film				
Elective (optional)				
Elective (optional)				
Thesis—WR 503				
Writing & Conf—WR 504				
cw prac only if teaching cw				

Spring

	credits	course number	course name	pedagogy?
Workshop in your genre				
500-level craft/lit/ pedagogy/film				
Elective (optional)				
Elective (optional)				
Thesis—WR 503				
Writing & Conf—WR 504				
cw prac only if teaching cw				

Student signature: _____

MFA Program Director signature: _____

See Summary of **Coursework Requirements** in the **MFA Handbook** for guidance.

A few reminders:

- Be sure to register for a minimum of 12 credits and a maximum of 16 credits each term.
- You may not enroll in more than 4 thesis hours in a single term.
- You will register for the creative writing practicum in your genre in the spring of your first year; you'll also enroll in this practicum any term in which you're teaching creative writing.
- The **minimum course load** for MFAs is **the workshop in your genre plus one ENG or FILM or 4-credit pedagogy course** (plus WR 503/504 to reach 12 credits total). So, for example, if you take two workshops in the winter you will still need to enroll in one ENG/FILM/4-credit pedagogy course. Or, if you took your workshop and 2 ENGs in a previous term, you will still need to enroll in your workshop plus one ENG/FILM/4-credit pedagogy course each subsequent term.
- List internship credit under "electives."

APPENDIX: THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The [Graduate School](#)

The Graduate School at OSU assures quality and consistent interpretation of Graduate Council policies related to graduate education across all programs. The [OSU Catalog](#) is the official source for information regarding OSU graduate education policy and procedures. It is the student's responsibility to refer to the catalog for this information.

The Graduate School supports students throughout the academic [lifecycle](#), from admissions to degree completion. Master's students are encouraged to explore the [Master's Student](#) page.

The Graduate Schools offers an array of [professional development opportunities](#) specific to the success of graduate students. Topics covered in these offerings include: research and ethics, teaching and facilitation, writing and communication, leadership and management, career skills, grad life and wellness. Please visit the Graduate School links to browse student success offerings.

Below you will find some of the most commonly consulted resources.

Academic and Non-Academic Support Resources

OSU offers a wide array of academic and wellbeing support resources designed to meet graduate student needs. For a comprehensive list, please visit the Graduate School's [Student Resources web page](#).

Information on campus facilities, learning, and assistance/resources can be found on this site.

[Campus Safety](#) – Emergency phone numbers, university alerts

[Career Development Center](#) – Resume/CV, networking, job search strategies

[Childcare and Family Resources](#) – University child care centers, child care assistance

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) – Individual and group counseling

[COVID-19 Resources](#):

[Cultural Resource Centers](#) – Cultural based community centers, social support

[Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#) – Academic accommodations

[Equal Opportunity and Access \(EOA\)](#) – Employment accommodations, discrimination or bias response

[Financing your education](#) – Funding options and information, graduate awards

[Graduate Student Success Center \(GSSC\)](#) – Lounge, study space, printing, reservable meeting rooms

[Graduate Writing Center](#) – Writing workshops, groups, and 1:1 writing coaching

[Health Insurance](#) – Plans for graduate students and graduate employees

[HSRC Food Pantry](#): Provides food and emergency food boxes to students.

[Human Services Resource Center \(HSRC\)](#) – Food pantry, housing and food stamp assistance

[Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) – Review for human subjects research

[Office of International Services \(OIS\)](#) – Visa and immigration advising

[Ombuds Conflict Management Services](#) – Informal, impartial conflict resolution advising

[Recreational Sports](#) – Dixon Recreation Center, intramural sports

[Statistics Consulting Service](#) – Graduate student research statistical advising

[Student Health Services \(SHS\)](#) – Clinic and pharmacy

[Student Multimedia Services \(SMS\)](#) – Poster printing, equipment and laptop loans

Transportation Alternatives [SafeRide](#), [Bike](#), [Bus](#)

[Transportation and Parking Services \(TAPS\)](#) – Parking permits, maps

[Valley Library](#) – Reference and research assistance, study spaces, research tools

SUMMARY OF GRADUATE SCHOOL ACADEMIC POLICIES

Minimum Course Loads

Course load requirements for graduate students are established by the Registrar and the Graduate School. You are considered a “full-time” graduate student if you are registered for 9–16 credits in a given academic term. If you are a degree-seeking student, you must be registered for a minimum of three graduate credits in any term you wish to be enrolled and access university resources, including the term of the final defense.

Students are responsible for staying current on course load requirements that may supersede the Graduate School requirements (i.e., international, financial aid, veteran’s)

Continuous Graduate Enrollment

All graduate students enrolled in a degree program must register continuously for a minimum of 3 graduate credits each term (fall, winter, and spring terms) until all degree requirements are met, regardless of student’s location. Students on approved leave are exempt from the continuous enrollment policy for the term(s) they are on leave.

Graduate students who use facilities or faculty/staff time during summer session are required to register for a minimum of 3 credits during the summer session. Students defending in the summer term are required to register for a minimum of 3 graduate credits.

Students may appeal the provisions of the continuous graduate enrollment policy if extraordinary circumstances arise by submitting a detailed request in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School. Scheduling difficulties related to the preliminary oral exam or the final oral exam are not considered an extraordinary circumstance.

Graduate assistantship eligibility requires enrollment levels that supersede those contained in this continuous enrollment policy. Various agencies and offices maintain their own registration requirements that also may exceed those specified by this continuous enrollment policy (e.g., those of the Veterans Administration, Immigration and Naturalization Service for international students, and those required for federal financial aid programs.) Therefore, it is the student’s responsibility to register for the appropriate number of credits that may be required for funding eligibility and/or compliance as outlined by specific agency regulations under which they are governed.

NOTE: Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the continuous enrollment policy.

Leave of Absence

Leave of Absence status is available to eligible students who need to suspend their program of study for good cause. The time the student spends on approved leave will be included in any time limits prescribed by the university relevant to degree completion. Students on approved leave may not a) use any university facilities, b) make demands upon faculty time, c) receive a fellowship or financial aid, or d) take course work of any kind at Oregon State University. Leave of Absence/Intent to Resume Graduate Study Forms must be received by the Graduate School at least 15 working days prior to the first day of the term involved. Family Medical Leave (FML) may be granted at any point during a term. FML inquiries should be directed to medical.leave@oregonstate.edu. **NOTE:** Students who are pursuing a certificate only are not subject to the Leave of Absence Policy.

Unauthorized Break in Registration

Degree seeking graduate students who take an unauthorized break in registration relinquish graduate standing at the University.

To have graduate standing reinstated after an unauthorized break, students are required to reapply to their program (complete the online graduate admission application, pay the application fee, and may be required to register for three graduate credits for each term of unauthorized break in registration). It is advisable that students in this situation state that they are applying for readmission in the application packet. A reapplication does not ensure admittance to the program.

Grievance Procedures

All students desiring to appeal matters relating to their graduate degree should follow the Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students. These procedures are available at <http://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/progress/grievance-procedures>. Graduate assistants, whose terms and conditions of employment are prescribed by the collective bargaining agreement between OSU and the Coalition of Graduate Employees, American Federation of Teachers Local 6069, should also refer to that document and seek guidance from OSU's Office of Human Resources.

Grade Requirements and Program of Study

A grade-point average of 3.00 is required: 1) for all courses taken as a degree-seeking graduate student, and 2) for courses included in the graduate degree or graduate certificate program of study. Grades below C (2.00) cannot be used on a graduate program of study. A grade-point average of 3.00 is required before the final oral or written exam may be undertaken. Enforced graduate-level prerequisite courses must be completed with a minimum grade of C. Programs may have more stringent grade requirements than those prescribed by the Graduate School.

Incomplete Grades

An "I" (incomplete) grade is granted only at the discretion of the instructor. The incomplete that is filed by the instructor at the end of the term must include an alternate/default grade to which the incomplete grade defaults at the end of the specified time period. The time allocated to complete the required tasks for the course may be extended by petition to the University Academic Requirements Committee. You can obtain the form from the Registrar's Office. It is the student's responsibility to see that "I" grades are removed within the allotted time. **Note: you cannot defend your thesis if you have an "I" on your transcript.**

Student Conduct and Community Standards

Graduate students enrolled at Oregon State University are expected to conform to basic regulations and policies developed to govern the behavior of students as members of the university community. The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (SCCS) is the central coordinating office for student conduct-related matters at Oregon State University.

Choosing to join the Oregon State University community obligates each member to a code of responsible behavior which is outlined in the Student Conduct Code. The assumption upon which this Code is based is that all persons must treat one another with dignity and respect in order for scholarship to thrive.

Violations of the regulations subject a student to appropriate disciplinary action.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another. It includes:

- CHEATING — use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.
- FABRICATION — falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.
- ASSISTING — helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).
- TAMPERING — altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents
- PLAGIARISM — representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, ***or using one's own previously submitted work***. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.

Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

Reporting Conduct Violations

The [Office of Equal Opportunity and Access](#) provides investigation for sexual harassment claims.

The OSU Office of Equal Opportunity and Access defines sexual harassment as the following:

- Unwelcome* sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
- Submission to or reject of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment of education –related decisions affecting such an individual; or
- Such conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it has the effect, intended or unintended, of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance because it has created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment and would have such an effect on a reasonable person of that individual's status.

**Employee conduct directed towards a student – whether unwelcome or welcome – can constitute sexual harassment under EOA.*

All OSU employees are [mandatory reporters of child abuse and child sexual abuse](#). This means we are legally required to report suspected or witnessed abuse to authorities.

There are two confidential (mandatory reporting doesn't apply) resources you can consult:

[Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence](#) (CARDV) provides 24/7 confidential crisis response at 541-754-0110 or 800-927-0197.

[OSU Sexual Assault Support Services](#) is available weekdays at 541-737-7604.

Student Records

Both federal and state laws permit Oregon State University staff to release directory information (e.g. name, address, degree program, birth date) to the general public without your consent. You can prohibit the release of directory information to the public by signing the Confidentiality Restriction form available from the Registrar's Office. It will not prohibit the release of directory information to entities of Oregon State University that have a "need to know" to accomplish their required tasks. It further will not prohibit Oregon State University departments from including your name on mailing lists for distribution of materials that are essential to your enrollment at Oregon State University. For more information on your FERPA rights and responsibilities, consult OSU's [FERPA](#) page.