



Writers' Village University

MFA & Creative Writing Certificate Programs

Overview

Writers' Village University currently offers three certificate programs: Fiction MFA, Short Story MFA and Creative Writing.

WVU Fiction MFA

WVU's Fiction MFA is modeled on graduate-level university programs. A full-time student typically takes three courses per semester for 3 years (six 16-week semesters). WVU works differently; our courses vary in length according to the subject. For MFA students, courses are grouped by the semester. For example, eight 2-week courses equal a one-semester course. Likewise, two 4-week courses plus one 8-week course equal a one-semester course.

Part time students may take classes according to their schedules. There is no time limit to complete the program.

WVU's Fiction MFA program includes advanced workshops and a balance of craft and literature courses. This is our most comprehensive program with six 16-week semesters.

Short Story MFA

Our Short Story MFA is a 2-year program with a balance of craft and literature courses. It includes four 16-week semesters.

Creative Writing Certificate

Our Creative Writing Certificate program is for beginners and includes two 16-week semesters.

MFA Program Certificate Requirements

Credits are given when course requirements are met. This includes completing all assignments and class participation. Giving feedback is a key part of the learning process, and each class has its own quantity and quality requirements for exchanging feedback with fellow students. Unless a facilitator specifies otherwise, a minimum of 4 feedback responses per assignment is required to qualify for credits. If the class has less than 4 students, then give each student feedback. If help is needed, we recommend taking B112: Constructive Feedback, either with a class or independently. You can also learn by reading feedback given by others in the MFA Program. Also helpful is B101 Orientation, which runs weekly.

Credits

A traditional university credit system is based on a 16-week semesters. Each completed course in a semester earns 3 credits. Because WVU courses vary in length, we've simplified our system. Credits are equivalent to weeks. For example, one 16-week course earns 16 credits, two 8 week courses earns 16 credits and eight 2-week courses earn 16 credits.

	1 YR Creative Writing Certificate	2 YR Short Story MFA Certificate	3 YR Fiction MFA Certificate
MFA PROGRAM CORE COURSES	48 CREDITS	80 CREDITS	112 CREDITS
MFA FOUNDATION COURSES	32 CREDITS	32 CREDITS	16 CREDITS
SHORT STORY COURSES	16 CREDITS	16 CREDITS	16 CREDITS
WESTERN LITERATURE		16 CREDITS	32 CREDITS
WORLD LITERATURE		16 CREDITS	16 CREDITS
WORKSHOPS		16 CREDITS	48 CREDITS
ELECTIVES/INDEPENDENT STUDY		16 CREDITS	16 CREDITS
MODERN LITERATURE			32 CREDITS
Total Credits	96	192	288

MFA Program Core Courses

Each program has required core courses. Typically they are either 8 or 16 week courses such as MFA700 Narrative Design and MFA110 Syntax, Style and Grammar, which are required for all three programs. The two and three year programs have additional core courses, either required or as electives. Core Courses in the MFA700 and MFA800 series are exclusive to students in the MFA Program.

MFA Foundation Courses

All courses that begin with “**MFA**” other than core courses are MFA Foundation Courses. For example: **MFA05** The Contemplative Essay or **MFA216** Voice and Style.

Short Story Courses

Each program requires at least 16 credits of short story courses. All literature courses, including short story courses begin with “**L**.” For example: **L211** Poe and Hawthorne Short Works. Most short story courses are 2-weeks long.

Literature Courses

There are three categories of literature courses, Western, World and Modern. WVU literatures courses include novels, novellas and surveys. Survey courses may include grouped excerpts, essays, novels, novellas, and short stories.

Western Literature is generally works from the European legacy dating back to the ancient Greeks. This includes works from Australia, Russia, the United States, and Canada. A complete list is available [here](#).

World Literature, for our purposes, is a practical term for works not included in Western Literature. It includes Asian, African, Middle Eastern and Latin American authors.

Modern Literature includes novels, novellas and survey courses. This roughly includes works of all origin published within the last 30 years.

MFA Workshops

There are three levels of MFA Program Workshops: 100, 200 and 300. Each has different requirements.

MFA 100 Workshops

MFA 100 Workshop is reserved for students who have completed MFA700 Narrative Design and MFA110 Syntax, Style and Grammar.

MFA 200 Workshops

MFA 200 Workshop is reserved for students who have completed 64 weeks of core courses, including MFA700 Narrative Design and MFA110 Syntax, Style and Grammar.

MFA 300 Workshops

MFA 300 Workshop is reserved for students who have completed 80 weeks of core courses, including MFA700 Narrative Design and MFA110 Syntax, Style and Grammar.

Electives

Electives include all MFA Foundation or MFA Core courses.

Independent Study

Students wishing to specialize may create their own 16-week course. This option is only available to students in 2 and 3 year programs, and only in the final year. The course plan must be submitted then approved in advance by an MFA Advisor. This option will be available in 2016.

No Time Limits

Though programs are designated as 1,2 and 3 years, there are no time limits to complete a program. Students may take courses at their own pace according their schedules. For example, a one year program requires 96 credits, which is equivalent to a full-time student completing 3 16-week courses a semester for 2 semesters. A part-time student will take longer to complete program courses.

1 YEAR CREATIVE WRITING CERTIFICATE SAMPLE SCHEDULE		weeks/credits
MFA CORE COURSES	MFA700 Narrative Design	16
	MFA110 Syntax, Style and Grammar	16
	MFA702 Subtext	8
	MFA703 Maps of the Imagination	8
TOTAL MFA CORE COURSES		48
SHORT STORIES COURSES	L106: Anton Chekhov Short Stories	2
	L116: Virginia Woolf Short Stories	2
	L200 Proust - Short Works	2
	L211 Poe and Hawthorne Short Stories	2
	L230 Italo Calvino Short Stories	2
	L231 Paul Yoon Short Stories	2
	L232 Kevin Moffett & Nam Le Short Stories	4
TOTAL SHORT STORY COURSES		16
MFA FOUNDATION COURSES	MFA214 Describing and Withholding	2
	MFA215 Inflection, Tone and Pitch	2
	MFA216 Voice and Style	2
	MFA217 Magical Realism, Breaking Rules	2
	MFA218 Adding Humor to Fiction	2
	MFA219 The Purpose and Practice of Revision	2
	MFA220 Editing and Polishing	2
	MFA231 Art and Artifice	2
	MFA232 Backstory	2
	MFA233 Cliffhangers and Thrusters	2
	MFA250: How to Hook the Reader	2
	MFA251: Story Focus	2
	MFA252 Emotions and POV	2
	MFA253 What Protagonists Want	2
	MFA254 Protagonist Inner Issues	2
MFA255 Story Is in the Specifics	2	
TOTAL MFA FOUNDATION COURSES		32
TOTAL WEEKS/CREDITS		96

Sample Program Comparison

WVU 3 Year Fiction MFA	Sem 1	Sem 2	Sem 3	Sem 4	Sem 5	Sem 6
	Narrative Design	Subtext & Art of Time & Workshop	Metaphor & Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
	Short Stories	Western Lit	Western Lit	World Lit	Modern Lit	Modern Lit
	Syntax and Grammar	MFA Series	MFA Series	Six Memos & Maps of the Imagination	Theory Survey	Elective or Independent Study
WVU 2-Year Short Story MFA						
	Narrative Design	Subtext & Art of Time & Workshop	Metaphor & Workshop	Workshop		
	Short Stories	Western Lit	World Lit	Elective or Independent Study		
	Syntax and Grammar	MFA Series	MFA Series	MFA Series		
WVU 1-Year Creative Writing Certificate						
	Narrative Design	Workshop				
	Syntax and Grammar	MFA Series				
	Short Stories	MFA Series				

MFA FAQs

How to Keep Track of Completed Courses in Course Manager

1. Select Add Record
2. Complete Form
3. Submit

Editing Course Records in Course Manager

1. Select Edit Record
2. Make changes
3. Select Save and Close

Note: Records may be modified but not deleted. If you need a record deleted, change the Course ID to "DELETE." This will notify administrator to delete the record.

MFA Advisors and Facilitators

WVU Facilitators and Advisors are volunteers. Facilitators help guide courses and answer questions about the assignments and readings. Advisors assist students with independent studies.

Courses

All courses will repeat at least twice a year. Students may take multiple courses at the same time, though no more than 3 is advised unless you have the stamina and over 20 hours a week to devote to studies.

What classes qualify for MFA credits?

All MFA courses and literature courses qualify for credits. Course number begin with either **MFA** or **L**, e.g. **MFA210** or **L200**

Class and Workshop Sizes

It's impossible to predict how many will participate in each class, so adjustments are made for each session. Classrooms and workshops are added as needed.

Changing Programs

All three programs have common MFA Core courses, so you can step from one to another at any time.

What Happens After We Register?

There is no application process other than filling out the form. All members qualify.

Register and take MFA courses as you normally would. Most courses are in the same classrooms. The MFA workshops, Narrative Design, and the advanced courses will run in the MFA Program area. All registered for the programs have access to this private area.

Be prepared to work. If you're an absolute beginner, this will not be easy. Taking a few of standard courses and workshops first is recommended. Get involved with a WVU Group. It makes a difference.

MFA Workshops

MFA 100 Workshops require a higher level of competence to be effective, so there are prerequisites: Narrative Design (16-week course) and Syntax, Style and Grammar (16-weeks). MFA 200 and MFA 300 Workshops are for 2 and 3-year programs, each with its own requirements.

Initial Texts Needed for All Programs:

[Narrative Design: Working with Imagination, Craft, and Form by Madison Smartt Bell](#) (Kindle)

[Narrative Design: Working with Imagination, Craft, and Form](#) (Print)

[Sin and Syntax: How to Craft Wicked Good Prose by Constance Hale](#) (Kindle)

[Sin and Syntax: How to Craft Wicked Good Prose](#) (Print)

Many of the texts we use are also available to Scribd.com subscribers.

Writers' Village University - April 21, 2015