

# MASTER OF FINE ARTS: CREATIVE WRITING AND MEDIA ARTS

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from this program will:

- Create works that are artistically complete and show a mastery of structure, style, grammar, and mechanics.
- Analyze texts deeply and thoroughly, with recognition of the writer's artistic decisions.
- Judge all technical and aesthetic aspects of craft showing mastery of appropriate vocabulary.
- Evaluate literary history and tradition, especially within a chosen genre.

The Department of English offers the degree Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Creative Writing and Media Arts. This interdisciplinary degree includes coursework in allied programs in Film and Media Arts and Theatre. The 42-hour program provides learning opportunities in writing, literary publishing, broadcasting, screen and stage writing, and production skills. The M.F.A. is a terminal degree in the field of Creative Writing and is designed to prepare students for careers as literary artists, authors, playwrights, poets, teachers, and screenwriters.

## Admission

The application process is competitive. Satisfying the admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the program.

The applicant should have:

- a B.A. in English is recommended, but not required.

Applicants will be asked to submit the following materials with their online application:

1. **Academic information**, including institutions attended, degrees earned, GPA, foreign language experience, honors and awards, and relevant work experience
2. **Writing sample** that demonstrates the applicant's writing abilities in a single emphasis area (no more than 10 pages for poetry; no more than 30 pages for fiction, creative nonfiction, playwriting or screenwriting)
3. **Statement of purpose** that describes the applicant's academic and professional objectives in an essay of 500-600 words, discussing in detail their interest, research, and writing in their emphasis area (upload file)
4. **Three letters of recommendation** that evaluate the applicant's readiness for graduate study written by three professors or others who know the applicant's abilities and potential well (provide email addresses and recommenders will receive instructions to upload letters)
5. **Transcripts** from all post-secondary schools attended (mail to UMKC Office of Admissions, 5100 Rockhill Road, 120 Administrative Center, 64110)
6. **Graduate Teaching Assistantship** application materials, if applying, including a 250-500 word teaching statement addressing the applicant's interest in and qualifications for teaching, and an academic writing sample from an upper-level college course (upload files)

Students may not take more than six hours of graduate credit in English before entering the program as a "fully admitted" student.

## Degree Requirements

Students must earn 42 graduate credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. Of these, at least 27 hours must be at the graduate level (courses numbered 5500 and above) and taught by a member of UMKC's graduate faculty.

Students must maintain a 3.0 (B) grade-point average to remain in the M.F.A. program and to complete the degree.

Students must remain continuously enrolled, except in summer, for a minimum of 1 credit hour per semester. ENGLISH 5899 is the continuous enrollment course number.

Students must complete a formal Program of Study and have it signed within a year after admission. A final Program of Study must be submitted and signed during the semester a student files to graduate.

Students must complete all coursework within seven years.

Students must focus on one or more of the following genres:

- Creative Nonfiction (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/humanities-social-sciences/academic-departments-programs/english-language-literature/master-of-fine-arts-creative-writing-media-arts/creative-nonfiction/>)
- Fiction (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/humanities-social-sciences/academic-departments-programs/english-language-literature/master-of-fine-arts-creative-writing-media-arts/fiction/>)
- Playwriting (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/humanities-social-sciences/academic-departments-programs/english-language-literature/master-of-fine-arts-creative-writing-media-arts/playwriting/>)

- Poetry (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/humanities-social-sciences/academic-departments-programs/english-language-literature/master-of-fine-arts-creative-writing-media-arts/poetry/>)
- Screenwriting (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/humanities-social-sciences/academic-departments-programs/english-language-literature/master-of-fine-arts-creative-writing-media-arts/screenwriting/>)

With approval from the Director of Creative Writing and the instructor of the course, students may arrange to submit creative work in their core genre in a workshop of another genre.

Residency requirements: a minimum of 33 hours must be completed at UMKC.

## Requirements for M.F.A. Thesis

In consultation with the faculty, the student will choose a thesis committee comprised of three members: a thesis director from the M.F.A. faculty and two other faculty members approved by the director and selected from the M.F.A. faculty, the faculty of another institution, or the faculties of the Departments of English, Media, Art and Design, or Theatre. Under the guidance of the thesis director, the student will complete a publishable or producible manuscript of one of the following:

- a book of poems (48-80 pages, single spaced); or
- a book of short stories or creative nonfiction essays (180 pages, double spaced); or
- a novel or novel-length nonfiction book (180-page minimum, double spaced); or
- a full-length play or several one-act plays; or
- a feature-length screenplay (95-120 pages) or a series bible and two 1-hour episodes (20 pages + two 45-page episodes); or
- a full-length cross-genre work, with Committee Chair permission.

At the completion of the writing project, the student will meet with his or her committee for a one-hour defense of the thesis.

Advisors may approve courses in other departments that may be highly valuable for particular student programs, e.g., History for documentary film, Foreign Language for translation work, Philosophy for aesthetics and theoretical/experimental approaches, and Art. Collaborative directed studies may be offered to allow two or more students to use two or more genres/media. Students may also seek collaborative opportunities in the Conservatory and in Computer Science.

In addition to the department requirements above, graduate students in English must comply with the requirements listed in the General Graduate Academic Regulations and Information (<https://catalog.umkc.edu/general-graduate-academic-regulations-information/>) section of this catalog.