

The MFA in Professional Writing Course Descriptions

FIRST YEAR COURSES

WRT 543, 579 Online Multi-Genre Workshops (4 credits)

The student will participate regularly with student colleagues and with an instructor in on-line discussion of student work in multiple genres. The course will help students to develop the capacity to analyze, edit, and discuss their own work and the work of others. It will also train them to benefit from editorial observations and critiques. The workshop instructor may also introduce outside texts and writing exercises.

WRT 536 Reading for Writers I (Primary Genre) (4 credits)

This guided, self-designed course provides the writer with a foundation of readings in the genre. Under the guidance of a professional writer in the genre, each student will develop a substantial reading list of “classics” of the particular writing field as well as the work of important contemporary practitioners.

WRT 539 Genre History, Criticism and Theory (4 credits)

Under guidance of a professional writer or scholar in the writing field, the student will design a specific curriculum for achieving a working awareness of the history, range of criticism, and critical theory associated with the writing genre. Reading will certainly be a part of this, but papers or interviews, attendance at lectures, formal courses or other modalities may also be a part of this course.

WRT 542 Writing in the Primary Genre I (4 credits)

With the guidance of a faculty mentor, the student will research, develop, and write a customized project or projects for the course.

WRT 537 Reading for Writers II (Second Genre) (4 credits)

The rationale for this course is the same as that for Reading for Writers I. However, depending upon the student’s individual background and choices of genres, the second genre may be less familiar to the student and, therefore, may require extra attention. Under the guidance of a professional writer in the genre, each student will develop a substantial reading list of books the student should be familiar with.

WRT 576 Writing in the Primary Genre II (4 credits)

This second required course in the primary genre will further develop the writer’s skills. Again, students will research, develop, and write a project or projects for the course.

WRT 578 Writing in the Second Genre (4 credits)

The professional writer needs the ability to move from one genre of writing to another. The program, therefore, requires the student to concentrate on a second genre of writing. With the guidance of a faculty mentor, the student will research, develop, and write a project or projects for this course.

SECOND YEAR COURSES

WRT 582, 583 Online Multi-Genre Workshops (4 credits)

The student will participate regularly with student colleagues and with an instructor in on-line discussion of student work in multiple genres. The course will help students to develop the capacity to analyze, edit, and discuss their own work and the work of others. It will also train them to benefit from editorial observations and critiques. The workshop instructor may also introduce outside texts and writing exercises.

WRT 577 Writing in the Primary Genre III (4 credits)

This third required course in the primary genre will further develop the writer's skills. Again, students will research, develop, and write a project or projects for the course.

WRT 569 Internship or Teaching Practicum (4 credits)

The program requires students to share their understandings as writers with others who want or need to write. The student will work as a teacher or coach of writing under the tutelage of a qualified mentor. Alternatively, the student may participate in an internship to gain hands-on experience in a chosen field. The student will be required to keep a journal of his or her experience and to write a substantial evaluation of the experience.

WRT 571 The Individual and Aesthetic Process (4 credits)

The program requires students to develop a sense of their own voices and to learn how to be self-critical about their writing. The student will write a theory of writing that examines his or her own view of what makes effective and significant writing. The goal is to develop standards of value appropriate to the genre in which the writer wishes to excel. The writer must articulate a theoretical basis that involves awareness of critical perspectives on his or her principal genre.

WRT 584 Thesis (8 credits)

The student will write a book-length piece of writing in the primary genre. The writer will develop this thesis in consultation with a thesis director and second reader. The program requires students to complete the thesis in a publishable form as judged by the thesis advisor and M.F.A. coordinator and reviewed by the M.F.A. committee.