Writing

The English department offers a full range of courses in the writing of poetry, fiction, drama and various forms of nonfiction, as well as advanced courses in expository writing.

An English major with a special interest in writing may complete a major in English literature with a concentration in creative writing (p. 1). Alternatively, a student completing the regular English major may count toward this major up to 9 upper-division units of classes designated Writing toward the English major.

The department also offers a minor in writing (p. 1), which can be combined with any major, including the English major. In this latter case, students are advised to take English and American literature courses (designated L14 E Lit) exclusively for the English major and Writing courses (designated L13 Writing) exclusively for the writing minor.

Except where noted, students are expected to receive a grade of C or better in each course.

Departmental website: http://english.artsci.wustl.edu

Faculty

For a list of affiliated faculty, please visit the Department of English faculty page.

Majors

While the English department does not offer a writing major, they do offer the option of completing an English major with a creative writing concentration. To complete the major, students must take five creative writing courses, including at least three upper-division courses. Students will specialize in one particular genre — poetry, fiction or creative nonfiction — ultimately taking a three-course sequence in that genre (200-, 300- and 400-level) while taking at least one course outside this genre. The concentration will not change the requirements of the English major and thus requires 6 additional credit hours compared to a regular English major.

Students interested in majoring in English literature with a concentration in creative writing should visit the English page of this Bulletin for additional information.

Minors

The Minor in Writing

The Department of English offers a minor in writing. Students who wish to take a writing minor in addition to an English major are advised to take English and American literature courses (designated L14 E Lit) exclusively for the major and writing courses (designated L13 Writing) exclusively for the minor.

Courses

Writing

Visit https://courses.wustl.edu to view semester offerings for L13 Writing.

L13 Writing 203 The Sentence in English

Though formal knowledge of English grammar is not always necessary for effective writing, learning it can help students understand how sentences are put together, and it can allow them to develop their own writing using a new set of skills. The Reed-Kellogg system of diagramming is a method of learning grammar by creating “pictures,” or maps, of sentences. These pictures show the logical relations between words, phrases and clauses, and they illustrate the choices writers are making as they craft individual sentences. Using a recent textbook by Eugene Moutoux, we learn to diagram sentences both famous and ordinary, both contemporary and of historical interest.

Our aims are (1) to learn both the “rules” and the peculiarities of English grammar, (2) to understand how the structure of a sentence can influence its meaning, and (3) to use this knowledge productively in crafting and revising our own prose. By the end of the course, students should be able to diagram just about any sentence in English, whatever the genre or time period, including their own. Extensive practice in writing and revising sentences gives students a consciousness of how grammar and syntax influence the meaning and effectiveness of their own writing.

Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 211 Writing 2

This course invites students to pursue a writing project that centers on their own intellectual interests and that complicates their approaches to researched, creative and analytical work. See section description for details about specific class emphases. Limit: 12 students. Prerequisite: CWP 100 College Writing 1.

Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 212 Principles of Rhetoric

The study of rhetoric, one of the original seven Liberal Arts, is perhaps more relevant today, in a world where diverse opinions reverberate 24/7 from television and the Internet, than in ancient times when rhetors invented arguments to help people choose the best course of action when they disagreed about important political, religious, or social issues. How do we make our voices heard? How can we invent and present compelling written discourse? This course introduces students to common rhetorical principles and to the disciplinary history of rhetoric and compositional studies. Assignments in this class include rhetorical exercise in invention and craft, imitations, and varied compositions, ranging from the personal to critical, from the biographical to argumentative. We examine rhetorical principles (audience, context, kairos, exigency, ethos, pathos, logos, and so forth) that are employed, for example, not only in literary analysis but in law, politics, education and science. We aim for a mastery of craft and a refinement of thought.

L13 Writing 213 The Long Essay
This course is designed for skilled writers who want to bring more complexity and depth to their style and content. Emphasis is on the innovation that can occur when we give sustained interest to our subjects in a long work. The class is particularly well-suited to students who wish to produce extended works of creative nonfiction, honors theses, or artist statements. Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 220 Creative Nonfiction Writing 1
A course designed to introduce students to the fundamental craft elements involved in writing creative nonfiction. While the course covers the major forms within the genre of creative nonfiction, including literary journalism, biography, profiles, nature writing and travel writing, special emphasis is given to personal essay and memoir. Prerequisite: CWP 100 College Writing 1.

L13 Writing 221 Fiction Writing 1
A course designed to introduce students to the fundamental craft elements involved in writing fiction. Prerequisite: CWP 100 College Writing 1.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM

L13 Writing 222 Poetry Writing 1
A course designed to introduce students to the fundamental craft elements involved in writing poetry. Prerequisite: Writing 1.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM

L13 Writing 224 Playwriting
An introductory course in playwriting. Limited to 8 students. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1 and permission of the instructor.

L13 Writing 298 Journalism: Communications Internship
For students undertaking projects in newspaper or magazine journalism, in radio or television, or in business, government, foundations and the arts. The student must secure permission of the chair of the Undergraduate Committee, file a description of his or her project with the department and, at the end of the semester, submit a significant portfolio of writing together with an evaluation by the internship supervisor. Up to 3 units acceptable toward the Writing Minor, but cannot be counted toward the English Major or Literature Minor. Prerequisite: CWP 100 College Writing 1. Must be taken credit/no credit. Credit 3 units.

L13 Writing 309 Writing the Natural World
For students interested in the environment and natural sciences. This course brings together essays from a wide range of communities including biology, physics, medicine, environmental studies, creative writing and more. Readings and assignments are intended to enhance students’ understanding of the relationship between writing and their experience/knowledge of the natural world. Major assignments allow students to follow, explore and write about their own unique interest in a related subject, and include a personal essay, an expository essay, and a researched argumentative essay, as well as peer review workshops, oral presentations, and revision. Students record and explore their own experiences of nature in short creative assignments that prepare them for the major papers. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1 and junior standing. Credit 3 units. A&S: LA, WI A&S IQ: HUM, WI Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: SCI EN: H

L13 Writing 310 Guided Research in Composition: Theory and Pedagogy of One-to-One Writing Instruction
This course teaches theoretical and practical approaches to the tutoring of writing, specifically focusing on tutoring writing within the context of undergraduate courses. Students learn collaborative methods of tutoring writing, explore different approaches to writing comments on student work in various content areas, and examine the connections between writing and thinking. Students analyze their own writing processes and learn how to help others through the writing and revision process. Readings and discussions focus on writing theory and pedagogy, and students practice one-to-one methods in mock conferences and with sample essays. Assignments: two short essays, a longer research paper and presentation, and a journal. Credit variable, maximum 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 311 Exposition
This advanced writing course considers style in relationship to audience and purpose, asking the writer to engage more consciously with writing conventions, and to explore strategies appropriate to various writing situations. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1 and junior standing. A note for students and advisers: when registering refer to WebStac for updated information on section times and available seats.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA, WI A&S IQ: HUM, WI Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM

L13 Writing 3111 Exposition (Visual)
This advanced writing course emphasizes writing and visual analysis, asking students to examine important forms of visual media to develop a sophisticated sense of the strategies, techniques and the rhetoric of visual representation. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1 and junior standing. Credit 3 units. A&S: LA

L13 Writing 3112 Exposition: Writing and Medicine
For students who have a particular interest in health, illness and medical care. Exposition is a course that considers style in relationship to audience and purpose, asking the writer to engage more consciously with writing conventions, and to explore strategies appropriate to various writing situations, from the more experimental and performative to the more formal and scholarly. The course involves frequent practice in analyzing and critiquing, with special attention to techniques of organization, argument and emphasis. Students in this special section of Exposition read essays, journalism and personal narratives about the experience of physicians and patients in the modern health care system. Students use expository writing to think critically and personally about their own experiences with illness and disease. Pre-medical students might use this opportunity to write and think about the anticipated rewards and challenges of the profession they hope to join.
Writing 1 or Poetry Writing 1 and wish to further explore the craft of fiction through the medium of the short-short story. The course focuses on reading, writing and thinking critically about short-shorts.

L13 Writing 324 Fiction Writing: Coming of Age in the Short Story
A fiction writing course that explores coming of age themes.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 325 Poetry Writing: The Poetry of Travel
This course is offered for students who have taken Poetry 1 and are interested in further developing their craft.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 326 Fiction Writing: Stories in the Suburbs
In the 1950s, the suburbs were still somewhat of a novelty in American culture — most people still lived in cities and small towns, or on the farm. Back then, Levitowns and the like were embraced with either gee-whiz optimism, or seen as sinister dystopias where youth, ideals and romance went to fester and die. But now that the American mainstream is stucco McMansions, strip malls and big box stores; now that the suburbs have become more ethnically diverse; now that literature is being generated from these places instead of just about them, how have stories set in the 'burbs changed? We read short stories written from the 1950s until the present day exploring this particular setting, and, through a series of exercises, workshops and our own short fiction, we explore the milieu as writers (whether we happen to be from the suburbs or not), always on the lookout for the unexpected in these familiar places.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 327 Creative Nonfiction: Personal Essay and Memoir
This is an intermediate course in writing creative nonfiction, with a concentration on personal essay and memoir. Prerequisite: Writing 220 Creative Nonfiction Writing 1.

L13 Writing 330 Fiction Writing: Fiction and Obsession
Desire is at the heart of fiction, from the forces that drive the decisions characters make to the ways stories work on us as readers.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 331 Fiction Writing: Historical Fiction
A literature/creative writing hybrid course, students read a number of contemporary historical fictions and then write one of their own. We consider the ways in which these fictions inhabit, depart from and reflect upon the historiography and history they're built from — upon the indeterminacy of the historical record, and the limits of its reach — but we also discuss fiction's responsibility to historical "facts" and documents, and the relevance of fictions among non-fictions in approaching an event or figure. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1, Writing 221 Fiction 1.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H
L13 Writing 352 Introduction to Screenwriting
Writers explore the various elements, structures and styles used in crafting a motion picture screenplay. They experience this process as they conceive, develop and execute the first act of a feature-length script. Writers create a screenplay story, present an outline for class discussion and analysis, then craft Act One. Writers are encouraged to consult with the instructor at various stages: concept, outline, character and scene development, and dialogue execution. While the students fashion their screenwriting independently, the class also explores the general elements of theme, genre and voice. A more specific examination of mechanics, the nuts and bolts of story construction, plotting, pacing, etc., follows to support the ongoing writing process. In-class exercises aid the writer in sharpening skills and discovering new approaches to form and content. Writers’ work is shared and discussed regularly in class. Screening of film scenes and sequences provides students with concrete examples of how dramatic screenwriting evolves once it leaves the writer’s hands.
Same as Film 352
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM

L13 Writing 401 Writing for Children and Young Adults
In this course we examine various genres of writing for young people: poetry, fiction, and nonfiction.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA

L13 Writing 403 Dramaturgy Workshop
A laboratory course that investigates dramaturgy from four vantage points: New Play Dramaturgy, Institutional Dramaturgy, Dramaturgy of Classics, and Dramaturgical Approaches to Nontraditional and Devised Theater. This is a “hands-on” course where student dramaturgs not only pursue the study of dramaturgy, but work actively and collaboratively with playwrights, actors and each other. Prerequisite: Drama 343.
Same as Drama 403
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM

L13 Writing 4131 Topics in Composition
Composition topics course — offerings vary from semester to semester.
Credit 3 units. A&S: TH A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 421 Advanced Fiction Writing
For qualified students who wish to continue their creative writing and reading through immersion in an intensive fiction workshop. Students wishing to enroll must not only register but also submit a 15-page (double-spaced) fiction sample. The sample must include a cover page with: student’s name, the semester he or she took Fiction Writing 2, and the name of the Fiction Writing 2 instructor. Submit samples to the English Department mailbox of the L13 Writing 421 instructor no later than April 20. No one is officially enrolled in this class until contacted by the instructor. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1, Writing 221 Fiction Writing 1, Writing 321 Fiction Writing 2.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 422 Advanced Poetry Writing
For qualified students who wish to continue their creative writing and reading through immersion in an intensive poetry workshop. Students wishing to enroll must not only register but also submit eight poems. The sample must include a cover page with: student’s name, the semester he or she took Poetry Writing 2, and the name of the Poetry Writing 2 instructor. Submit samples to the English Department mailbox of the L13 Writing 421 instructor no later than April 20. No one is officially enrolled in this class until contacted by the instructor. Prerequisites: CWP 100 College Writing 1, Writing 222 Poetry Writing 1, Writing 322 Poetry Writing 2.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 423 Proseminar in Writing: Nonfiction Prose
For qualified students who wish to continue their creative writing in nonfiction prose; criticism by other members of the class and by the instructor. Limit: 12 students. Prerequisite: permission of instructor upon submission of writing samples.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA

L13 Writing 424 Poetry Tutorial
These credits are available to students who have completed Writing 222 Poetry I and Writing 322 Poetry II. This is an opportunity for students who have already completed Writing 422 Advanced Poetry, or who are not able to take Advanced Poetry because of scheduling conflicts, to meet individually with the instructor to develop a portfolio of poems. During weekly meetings students explore various writing processes and revision techniques. There are directed readings and discussions of selected topics related to contemporary poetry and poetics. Credits may be taken concurrently with Advanced Poetry. Permission of the instructor is required.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 431 Craft of Fiction
A literature/creative writing hybrid course; students read a number of contemporary historical fictions — an increasingly important and innovative genre — and then write one of their own.
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 432 The Craft of Poetry
An investigation into the art and craft of poetry, in order to consider the choices a poet makes in the process of composing and revising. The students are asked to complete many poetry writing exercises, as well as the writing of critical papers, in their investigation of poetic forms and modes from many historical periods. (This course is highly recommended for those who have completed or are taking the 300-level creative writing courses and to students in The Writing Program.)
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM Art: HUM

L13 Writing 4521 Advanced Screenwriting
This course is intended for students who have already taken Film 352 Introduction to Screenwriting. Building on past writing experiences, students explore the demands of writing feature-length screenplays, adaptations and experimental forms. Particular attention is paid to the task of rewriting. Same as Film 452
Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

L13 Writing 4731 Advanced Playwriting
This course explores the tendencies and relationship between each individual student writer and the page. Exercises dispel any lingering doctrine that presupposes a certain style of writing. A large part of the class centers around collaborations. The writers
write scenes as a final project for an acting class, and also work with two professional actors in an extended writing project that culminates in a script-in-hand presentation. The informal moments between collaborations look at the process beyond the first draft — i.e., the playground of language, nonverbal options, and the maintaining of "the work" through rewrites, readings, workshops and productions. Prerequisite: Drama 227 Introduction to Playwriting. Same as Drama 473 Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM

Writing Center Courses
Visit http://courses.wustl.edu to view semester offerings for L59 CWP.

L59 CWP 100 College Writing 1
This course teaches writing as a way of thinking and learning. Throughout the semester, students explore writing as a creative and intellectual process. They learn how to brainstorm, explore and structure ideas on a page; share their writing and learn how to give and take constructive criticism; and learn how to revise their work, both for issues related to the paper's larger idea and for issues related to grammar and style. By regularly working their way through the writing process, students develop the habits and skills that make advanced study possible: paying close attention to the words and ideas of others; forming and responding to arguments of others; and refining a lucid style of prose that meets the expectations of the audience and occasion. This course is taught in small sections of 12 students or fewer. Credit 3 units.

L59 CWP 1001 Fundamentals of Academic Writing
A preparatory course required of some students before they take CWP 100 College Writing 1 (placement to be determined by the department). Particular attention is paid to reading comprehension, critical thinking, organization of ideas and grammar. In some cases, students may be required to enroll in a one-credit tutorial along with this course. Credit 3 units. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H

L59 CWP 200 Writing Tutorial
A tutorial in writing; may be taken for credit in one of two cases: (1) Students may be required to enroll in the tutorial for concentrated practice in writing fundamentals under the guidance of a tutor in addition to taking CWP 100 College Writing 1. In these cases, satisfying the first-year writing requirement means receiving a satisfactory grade in CWP 100 and receiving a passing grade in the tutorial. Students enroll in CWP 200 for 1 credit hour. Tutorials taken concurrently with CWP 100 must be taken pass/fail. (2) Students may be required to take the tutorial for 3 credit hours after taking CWP 100 in order to satisfy the first-year writing requirement. In this case, the tutorial is taken for credit. Direct all questions to Writing 1 office: 314/935-4899. Credit variable, maximum 3 units.

L59 CWP 201 Writing Workshop
An intensive workshop focusing on selected topics related to writing. Topics chosen by the department/instructor. Must be taken for credit. See course and section descriptions in online course listings for details about workshop emphases. Credit 1 unit. A&S: LA A&S IQ: HUM EN: H