

CWRU Action Form for Majors/Minors/Programs/Sequences/Degrees

(instructions on back)

Docket # _____

College/School:

CAS

Department:

English

PROPOSED:

- major
- minor
- program
- sequence
- degree

APPROVED

AcSCEP 2-15-13
AcSCEP Excl. Comm 5-10-13
AcSCEP 10-31-13

TITLE: Minor in Creative Writing

EFFECTIVE: Spring (semester)

2014 (year)

DESCRIPTION:

Minor in Creative Writing

Required: 15 credit hours

Students will take courses in 2 genres—poetry and fiction—and will be required to have an intro/intermediate sequence in one of those genres (eg., ENGL 213 and ENGL 303). See Appendix 3 for suggested genre tracks within the minor.

Requirements:

- 15 credit hours
- 3 in creative writing courses (at least 2 of these in one genre)
- 2 literature classes
- A creative writing portfolio

For the literature requirement, a student should take two 300-level classes; at least one of these classes should match their dominant genre (see Appendix 2 for lists of potential courses). Literature courses may be in other disciplines if crosslisted with English (e.g., World Lit). Up to six credits may count toward either the English major or another minor (but not both).

Managing tracks within the minor would be handled through advising, as would avoiding violations of the 42-hour rule.

The Portfolio

We require the assembly of a creative writing portfolio as the cornerstone of a student's academic and post-academic career. It would include

- A selection of the student's best creative work at CWRU.
- A critical introduction in which the student reflects on her/his progress through the CW minor, giving a critical context to the work, citing the primary and secondary texts and creative models that were important along the way.

Is this major/minor/program/sequence/degree:

- new
- modification
- replacement

If modification or replacement please elaborate:

Does this change in major/minor/program/sequence/degree involve other departments?

Yes No

If yes, which departments?

Contact person/committee: Mary Grimm

SIGNATURES:

Department Curriculum Chair(s)/Program Directors: _____

Jim Smith

DATE
4.29.13

Department Chair: _____

Mary Con

4/29/13

College/School Curriculum Committee Chair: _____

A. Vettesse *J. Smith*

College/School Dean(s): _____

C. Robin

~~UF Curriculum Committee Chair:~~ _____

ESCUE sent 10/31/13

File copy sent to:

Registrar

Office of Undergraduate Studies/Graduate Studies

Other: _____

Revised Proposal for a Creative Writing Minor

Comments

4-29-13

We have revised our proposal in accordance with the suggestions made by the CEP and the Executive Committee.

As suggested, we have taken out not only any references to a track in Dramatic Writing, but also any mention of any focus in the minor that would accommodate Dramatic Writing, so as not to infringe on the Dramatic Writing track in the Theater Department's major. The only tracks for students now will be in Fiction and Poetry.

In regards to the following comments (as relayed to me by Cynthia Stilwell):

Further, the CSPSC was concerned that the proposal narrative made three claims that seemed incompatible:

- a) that the courses to make up the new minor were already popular and usually filled,
- b) that the point of the minor was to attract more students, and
- c) that the inauguration of the minor would require no new resources.

We revised the first page of the Program Proposal Narrative (changes are in bold). In regards to points a and b, I added bullet points to make more clear what groups of new students we were targeting. It's true that our creative writing courses are popular and enroll well; it's not only that we hope to attract more students to these courses, but that we hope to bring them into regular and structured affiliation with the English Department.

We also added language in the 3rd paragraph to address point c, discussing our new certification program for graduate students.

*Revised documents
submitted 4-29-13*

Program Proposal Narrative for Minor in Creative Writing

We feel that this new minor in creative writing will fill a need that has been felt in the English Department's offerings for a long time. One of the questions most commonly asked by prospective students who are interested in English is – “do you have a creative writing major or minor?” We've answered this question by showing students how it's possible to be an English major but specialize in creative writing courses, but more and more, we've felt that we'd like to have something more recognizable to offer these students who would prefer a more in-depth creative writing experience.

Creative writing courses are currently among the best-enrolled courses (they almost always fill up, with a number of students requesting overrides). The population of students who take these courses is relatively diverse; although any creative writing class is likely to be at least half English majors, there is also a sizable percentage who are not. Creative writing classes draw students from across the university—from computer science, engineering, physics, theater, history, anthropology, etc. **We believe that the creative writing minor will appeal to two populations of students:**

- **Prospective students, who have a strong interest in creative writing; a creative writing minor would be an inducement to enroll at CWRU for those who are interested in the humanities.**
- **Current students: those who don't want to take on the substantial demands of another major, but who would be attracted to the minor, with half the hours and the added inducement of specialization.**

Across the country, creative writing programs continue to proliferate and attract students, especially at the graduate level. (The Associated Writing Programs 2009/10 survey listed 145 MFA programs – the number has steadily climbed over the last decade).

We don't foresee any immediate costs necessary to set up the minor in creative writing. The classes that will be required for the minor are already regularly taught in the schedules of the English department's schedule. **We have three full-time faculty teaching creative writing courses (Professors Gridley, Grimm, and Umrigar). We do anticipate the necessity of offering creative writing courses more often and of needing additional sections. We expect that our new program of certification in teaching creative writing for graduate students will help to fill this need. We have this year (AY 2012/13) started a process of certification in teaching creative writing for our graduate students, managed by Director of Composition Kim Emmons and with workshops taught by the regular creative writing faculty, that will qualify them to teach the 200-level creative writing courses.**

The other additional cost (in time) is the supervision and evaluation of the portfolios: the current English creative writing faculty (Gridley, Grimm, and Umrigar) have agreed to divide this work among themselves. We hope and anticipate that funds might be found (through internal and external grants) for various programs that would support the minor – for instance, funds for speakers (beyond what the English department does now); or funds for a writers conference (we have secured grant funding for this, to take place in June, 2013). There is also a possibility of interesting collaborations with community institutions and events: e.g., the library systems (county and city); other programs granting degrees in creative writing (Cleveland State University, for example); the Anisfield Wolf Book Awards.

This proposal does not represent a change in the department priorities—rather it's a recognition of a priority we've always had.

1. The proposed program is important to the English department because it clarifies a focus and interest that already exists. By creating a structure in which the creative writing experience can take place, that experience can be guided (in terms of more successful/effective combinations and requirements). In addition, students' efforts and additional skill sets can be recognized.
2. Please see the attached table (**Appendix A**) taken from *The Director's Handbook* of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs. In 1975, 24 institutions offered a creative writing minor; in 2012, 362 institutions offer such a program. To quote from the *Handbook*: "The vast majority of the 2,400 departments of English in North America offer classes in creative writing; the departments and programs accounted for above are only those that have shaped creative writing electives. . . . Among undergraduate students, classes in creative writing are among the most popular elective classes." (Emphasis mine.)
3. As stated above, this minor is a recognition and affirmation of what already exists in an informal and elective sense. Faculty, staff, graduate students, space, university resources—all would continue to be used at the same rate and in the same way as when this selection of courses was an elective and an enrichment rather than a recognized course of study.
4. Possible collaborations with the Cleveland Institute of Art's creative writing minor might allow access to funds to develop events specifically related to creative writing.
5. Not applicable as this is a minor course of study.
6. **A. Increase the "quality of undergraduates measured by test scores."** As *The Director's Handbook* notes, "the goal for an undergraduate program is mainly to develop a well-rounded student in the liberal arts and humanities, a student who develops a general expertise in literature, in critical reading, and in persuasive writing." This "expertise" that is developed in critical reading and persuasive writing could not fail to increase the performance and abilities of undergraduates.
B. "Increased student satisfaction." *The Director's Handbook* also notes that "classes in creative writing are among the most popular and over-subscribed electives among undergraduates"—enrollment in creative writing courses at CWRU reflect this trend as well—which surely indicates a need for self-examination and self-expression. Creating an outlet for that self-expression and helping to shape it would result in student satisfaction.
C. Collaboration across disciplines. The creative writing classroom is one that invites students from many other majors who will funnel their growing expertise in other fields into their creative work thereby enriching the classroom experience.

7. **A. Collaboration/Partnership with Other Institutions.** The creative writing minor will foster a collaboration/partnership with the Cleveland Institute of Art's creative writing minor. There has already been an exchange of class listings, but future possibilities might involve co-sponsorship of outside readers and events, as well as a more symbiotic offering of classes each semester.
B. Culture, Creativity and Design. In addition, a creative writing minor speaks directly to one of the university's key goals as outlined in CWRU's Strategic Plan: "The ideas that inspire us as individuals and connect us as a society arise from many disciplines. We will explore the nature of innovation, generating novel approaches that reframe our world view. Activities range from the study of culture, creativity, and design to the practical exercise of skills in these areas, especially in developing solutions to major issues." Learning how to express one's self through creative writing embodies that "practical exercise of skills" and a "reframe[ing] of our world view."
8. The creative writing minor will help to support the department of English in encouraging high-achieving students to add this discipline to their other major(s). In addition, it will reflect the flexible yet rigorous nature of the university which recognizes and responds to movements and trends in the larger culture, anticipates the associated needs of the undergraduate population, and fulfills them vigorously.
9. As stated above, this minor is a recognition and affirmation of what already exists in an informal and elective sense. Departmental priorities would be unchanged as they already accommodate the demand for creative writing classes. Resources are already in place to support this sequence of classes.

See also **Appendix B**, *The Director's Handbook*.

Appendix A.

Numbers of Degree-Conferring Programs

IN CREATIVE WRITING 1975-2012

YE	A	BA/ BS	BA/ BEA	M	MF	PH	TOT
201	1	36	16	11	19	3	88
201	1	34	15	11	18	3	85
200	1	31	14	14	15	3	80
200	7	32	8	15	10	3	71
200	8	28	7	15	9	4	65
199	6	29	1	13	7	2	55
199	6	27	9	13	5	2	50
198	4	15	1	9	3	2	31
197	0	2	3	3	1	5	7

AWP's institutional membership has increased seven-fold since 1975. AWP's institutional membership includes 500 colleges and universities as well as 100 writers' conferences and centers. The numbers of degree-conferring creative writing programs are compiled from successive editions of *The AWP Official Guide to Writing Programs*, which became a free Web publication in 2007.

The table above includes member as well as non-member institutions. Most institutions offer two or more degree-conferring programs in creative writing.

The vast majority of the 2,400 departments of English in North America offer classes in creative writing; the departments and programs accounted for above are only those that have shaped creative writing electives into creative writing programs with, at least, minor tracks of study in creative writing and literature. Among undergraduate students, classes in creative writing are among the most popular elective classes.

Appendix B.

<http://www.awpwriter.org/pdf/DirectorsHandbook2012.pdf>

Appendix 1

List of creative writing courses already in the bulletin

ENGL 203	Intro to Creative Writing
ENGL 213	Intro to Fiction Writing
ENGL 214	Intro to Poetry Writing
ENGL 303	Intermediate Writing Workshop: Fiction
ENGL 304	Intermediate Writing Workshop: Poetry
ENGL 306	Intermediate Writing Workshop: Creative Nonfiction
ENGL 406	Advanced Creative Writing

Appendix 2

List of courses that can fulfill the literature requirement

ENGL 312	Chaucer
ENGL 320	Renaissance Literature
ENGL 323	Milton
ENGL 327	18 th -Century Literature
ENGL 330	Victorian Literature
ENGL 332	20 th -Century British Literature
ENGL 353	Major Writers
ENGL 356, 357, 358	American Literature
ENGL 363H	African-American Literature
ENGL 365E	Immigrant Experience
ENGL 365Q	Post-Colonial Literature
ENGL 366G	Minority Literature
ENGL 369	Children's Literature
ENGL 372	Studies in the Novel
ENGL 373	Studies in Poetry
ENGL 376	Studies in Genre

Also, any topics course with an appropriate focus.

Appendix 3

Potential Suggested Genre Tracks

Poetry Track:

ENGL 203 (Intro to Creative Writing) or 214 (Intro to Poetry Writing)

ENGL 304 (Intermediate Writing Workshop: Poetry)

ENGL 312 (Chaucer)

ENGL 373 (Studies in Poetry)

Fiction Track:

ENGL 203 (Intro to Creative Writing) or 213 (Intro to Fiction Writing)

ENGL 303 (Intermediate Writing Workshop: Fiction)

ENGL 330 (Victorian Literature)

ENGL 372 (Studies in the Novel)