



Program Annual Reflection 2022-23 Academic Year

Program Name: Creative Writing

The creative writing program empowers student voices during their academic experience and beyond. By teaching the courses in a workshop setting, students develop their skills of leadership, listening, and writing through consistent feedback and interactive dialogue. Students read and write extensively in the core courses; assigned readings represent cultural and genre diversity. We encourage student involvement in our university arts journal, *Haute Dish*, to further learn the editorial process as well as adapt to a clear understanding of writing styles including documentation for academic assignments. Graduates of the program find work in editing, publishing, web design, freelance writing, etc. Several of our students go on to pursue a liberal arts graduate degree. Our students tell us our program is deeply impactful in terms of developing a writer's life committed to the arts.

Academic Year: 22-23

Section I: Institutional Data: Please comment on the data from Institutional Effectiveness and Research. (Please limit responses to 200 words for each item)

a. CRITERION 4: Number of majors: 48 Increase Decrease **x(by three)** Static

Is this number an increase, decrease, or static compared to previous year? Click or tap here to enter text.

Optional comments: I am wondering when this data was last updated. I believe we have new majors for the fall not included.

b. Retention of Majors and Pre-Majors or Graduate Students: Retention data provided by Institutional Effectiveness and Research

What trends do you see with this data comparing to previous years? **Our students are taking longer to finish their degree**

c. Number of graduates: 11 **X** Increase Decrease Static: **we tend to graduate on average 10 students per year.**

Is this number an increase, decrease, or static compared to previous year? Click or tap here to enter text.

Optional comments: Click or tap here to enter text.

d. CRITERION 4: Number of credit hours enrolled: _____ Increase
Decrease Static

Is this number an increase, decrease, or static compared to previous year? Click or tap here to enter text.

Optional comments: **interesting note: creative writing is not listed as a major for credit hours. I cannot obtain the information on RF/CF hours as well.**

e. CRITERION 2: Number of credit hours taught by: RF_____ CF_____ Increase
Decrease Static. **NA**

Percentage of total credits hours taught by RF_____ CF_____ Increase Decrease
Static

Optional comments: **data is not available. CW is not listed.**

f. CRITERION 5: Costs vs. Revenues: Program costs and revenue from tuition and fee data provided by Institutional Effectiveness and Research. **NOTE: This data is not available as of 7/25/23**

What trends are evident compared to previous years? Are there particular expenses impacting the cost vs. revenue data that need to be explained?

Affiliated two-year colleges are reporting an increase in a demand for asynchronous courses in creative writing. Popularity in the following genres has also been reported:

A. speculative fiction (sci fi, horror and fantasy)

B. the graphic novel

C. increased interest among students in GLBTQ2+ related courses and materials.

Section II: Please reflect on the 2022-23 academic year in the following questions. Please limit each response to 300 words.

a. What are the greatest successes for your program during the 2022-23 academic year? Click or tap here to enter text.

We have several successes that we are proud to announce:

1. Graduating creative writing major, Tim Knight, won the prestigious Carothers Writing Award in 2023. Additionally, a creative writing student was one of two honorable mentions for that university-wide award, which saw applicants from many different colleges and majors.

2. Student literary publication: *Haute Dish* (is published bi-annually, and has a student editorial staff of 12-16 students per semester, and receives well over 100 submissions annually). Editorial positions were filled, reflecting high student interest and engagement.

3. *Get Lit* (a group of writers to include alumni and current students who meet once a month for three hours on zoom for advanced workshopping) continues to meet regularly; alumni and current Creative Writing majors enjoy the sense of community this group creates on campus, which is difficult to do on a commuter-campus without dormitories or sports teams.

4. *Words on Fire, a Spoken Word and Global Poetry* collaboration, drew much praise from enthusiastic audience members who attended this theatre/creative writing department collaborative student performance.
5. Ed Bok Lee, resident faculty, presented an accepted paper entitled *"Beyond BTS and Squid Game: Korean Contemporary Poetry in Translation"* at the annual AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) in 2023 in Seattle. Lee was also a recipient of a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship in Creative Writing (\$10,000).
6. Suzanne Nielsen, resident faculty, launched a book reading with student participation at Metro State for her latest poetry collection, *Face Up*, spring '23.
7. A packed Student Salon student poetry reading collaboration with Fine Arts/Studio Arts in spring '23.
8. Creative Writing resident and community faculty were featured readers at several local/national events.

What are the continuing initiatives related to the program health and sustainability criteria and the results of those initiatives.

Our new initiatives are impacted by recent research we've conducted with our two-year creative writing affiliate programs indicating that increasing the modality of choice for creative writing courses is essential for success. This includes an increase in asynchronous courses, and an increase in genre-specific courses to include speculative fiction and the graphic novel.

Another new and continuing initiative includes offering a Topics in Writing course: Travel Writing, in summer, '22. This summer it was cancelled due to low enrollment.

A BIPOC Creative Writing Student Group to be formed this year by resident faculty member, Ed Bok Lee, to determine specific needs this demographic of CW students have, so that we can better serve and grow this historically underrepresented population.

New course developments are underway.

New fall editorial staff for Haute Dish are being recruited.

Participation in a Sidewalk Poetry Project in WRIT 300 offers our students an opportunity to share the fruits of their classwork within their communities.

Global Poetry and increased collaborations between creative writing and theater on Spoken Word shows, to increase program visibility and showcase student talents.

Initiatives related to mission alignment and reputation and their results:

Creative writing has engaged in literary arts collaborations with local literary arts organizations such as Rain Taxi and The Loft Literary Center in the recent past, and looks forward to continuing these collaborations. This has resulted in increased program visibility and thus prospective student interest in our program. This is in direct alignment with the creative writing programs' anti-racism mission of serving first generation college students, making partnerships within the community, and our commitment to engagement and greater diversity goals. Our resident faculty member, Ed Bok Lee, presented a paper at a national convention this year to further increase visibility and support our mission at the nation's largest and most respected conference for creative writers and instructors of creative writing.

- i. Initiatives related to the strength of the program structure and foundation and results (might include faculty search results, % of courses taught by RF and CF, curriculum innovation, accreditation, feedback on the program by employers or experts, etc

It is essential that we grow our program by adding a full-time hire for Fall, 2024. There is a high demand for genre-specific courses, as we stated earlier, and we feel strongly that to stay on the cutting edge of a creative writing program, we need to stay current with course demand. We can do that, and remain a leader in the Twin Cities creative writing world. Our program brings in notable guests such as Michael Kleber-Diggs, Sarah Cooper, Al Franken, among others, for career and professional connections. Lastly, we have added one new community faculty member for creative writing. Her first course with us was this past summer, '23.

- ii. Initiatives related to the outcomes and achievements of the program and results (might include student outcomes like graduation/licensure/certification, faculty scholarship, student satisfaction with courses, grant revenue, etc.

Aside from the initiatives mentioned above, the following are a sampling of student comments from our recent majors and graduates:

What I am taking away from the creative writing program that steadies my craft, is the art of it. The art of creative writing has allowed me to utilize my creativity with confidence, boldness, and awareness that I am a successful writer who can write just about anything if I put my mind to it. Most importantly, if I keep my fingers typing, my pen moving, and just keep on writing, I'll master the art of creative writing."

"I enjoyed the assignments, both the free writes and critiques, because they encouraged me to write and to think about my own and other peoples' writing. Also because the papers assigned put me out of my comfort zone. I enjoyed the workshops and discussions because they got me thinking about other peers' writing."

"I feel like I have the tools to write interesting fiction pieces of any length now, where before I had rather indifferent confidence."

This class has shown me many things, but most important to respect others view and my own work.

We have been averaging graduating on average 10 students per year, and many of our students go on to graduate studies in the field. Our students (and faculty) regularly publish work in various literary journals/publications and share their news with us throughout the years. We remain up to date with articulation agreements among our partner schools.

- iii. Initiatives related to the size of the program and results (might include articulation agreements, outreach efforts, student retention and completion, etc.

Beginning in fall '23, will be conducting four outreach events at literary arts organizations and public libraries in and beyond the Metro area in MN in effort to strategize how to recruit more students. Throughout the year our resident faculty visit local high schools, prisons, libraries, etc. There we conduct workshops and discuss our pedagogy. As stated earlier, we have robust alumni representation at our *Get Lit* monthly meetings, and many of our students inform us of their career progressions. Our articulation agreements are up to date, and we have received assurances from these faculty at other institutions that they are actively sending Creative Writing majors to Metro State because of our program's reputation.

- iv. Initiatives related to the revenue and expenses of the program and results (might include increasing class fill rates, reducing program costs through schedule management, faculty workload management,

We want to continue partnerships with other departments to offset costs, such as another theater collaboration, as well as a collaborations within our new WLL department. We offer many SDIS/FDIS options in our program due to our two-year schedule and the potential outcome of cancelled classes. Students do not want to wait a semester, and, in some case,s several semesters, to graduate, and therefore this is an option we've honored.

- v. Initiatives related to new opportunities for the program and results (might include partnerships, unique program strengths/distinctions, innovative teaching practices, collaborating with other departments to share curriculum, curriculum that is part of other programs/GELS/RIGR, etc

Our creative writing/literary arts collaborations with Rain Taxi and the Loft Literary Center, two local non-profit literary arts organizations, offer important connections and potential internship opportunities to our students. In addition, we looking forward to creating co-taught courses among lit/language/creative writing, with our new department colleagues.

- b. Were any initiatives put on hold or discontinued during the 2022-23 academic year and why **NO**

- c. What were the greatest challenges for your program during the 2022-23 academic year?

Declining enrollment everywhere throughout higher ed is a huge challenge. In addition, administrative turnover; lack of continuity in support staff and administrative leadership, as well as in professional advising. There has been massive turnover with those professional advisors, support staff, and administrators who knew our program well. NOTE: Institutional Research has not been helpful. If data specific to our program were easier to obtain, that would be a plus.

- d. Based on this reflection, what are the priorities, opportunities, initiatives for your program for the 2023-24 academic year?

Our priorities include to continue to grow our program amidst a compromised state of higher education nearly everywhere. We are committed to continue to diversify the faculty and course offerings, and particularly committed to increasing our faculty by one full-time resident faculty member during this budget surplus. As more and more students seek online instruction, we have the opportunity to grow our student numbers by attracting more than a Minnesota-based perspective of students through offering a variety of class delivery instruction. We will continue and expand on our collaborations with our colleagues to determine the best learning options for our students as technological advancements are made in the coming years.

- e. What resource needs does your program have to support the priorities, opportunities, and initiatives during the 2023-24 academic year? **Types of**

One additional full-time resident faculty, who specializes in speculative fiction, added to our program.

Section III: Assessment of Student Learning

g. Please answer each of the following questions based on your program assessment of student learning activities during the 2022-23 academic year. (Please limit responses to 250 words for each item)

i. Which Student Learning Outcomes and Learning Indicators were assessed last academic year and how were they assessed course evaluations:

Our syllabi clearly state our outcomes for each specific course. Below are examples:

Writing short creative works is a multi-genre workshop designed for creative writers who wish to work exclusively on very short pieces. Students will deepen their knowledge of the general craft of writing, expand their personal writing horizons by writing outside familiar genres, and work intensively on drafting and revising short works. The range of writing possible in the class include poems, prose poems, personal essays, sudden fiction, humor writing, short-short memoirs and creative non-fiction, and other genre-defying work.

~ This workshop course emphasizes the union of reading and writing. Good creative writers need to understand literature from the writer's perspective. They also need a comprehensive background in the various genres of literature, and must be able to discuss, critique, and identify the basic components of imaginative writing. This course focuses on tone, style, diction and author's voice through the students' own writing and through the readings of others.

~ Application of active reading.

~ Apply techniques for identifying key concepts in academic reading and incorporate those concepts into responsive reading.

~ Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.

~ Comprehend the importance of re-reading.

~ Construct logical and coherent arguments.

~ Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.

General Student Learning Outcomes Across All CW Classes:

- Develop your writing skills to express your thoughts and feelings in an imaginative way.
- Learn the craft and art of creative writing from master writer-teachers.
- Read, draft and revise fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and children's writing.
- Nurture and hone your talent in the company of equally devoted students and teachers.
- Learn how to write creatively for multiple audiences and in multiple genres.
- Develop the ability to read critically; learn how to analyze and edit your own and others' work.
- Gain valuable experience in the world of publishing, both as writer and editor, by working on Haute Dish, Metropolitan State's award-winning online literary magazine.

In addition, we take class polls, we read and evaluate final course reports, as well as class and capstone portfolios and academic career assessments.

What are the results of those assessment activities? Provide a table or attach eLumen report(s); if possible, show results from multiple years

In the arts and creative writing, assessment is heavily qualitative. Measures of success and matters such as job placement do not apply to the anomalous discipline of creative writing in the same way as in nursing or business. However, by all qualitative accounts and polls, a need for an increase in different types of classes and genres of creative writing, as well as an increase in diversity of modalities would serve our program well. At the same time, we need to remain student-centered. Student satisfaction remains very high. We are a small program, with less than two full-time faculty members, yet we believe that all of our courses build upon one another and offer much potential for continued success and growth.

Our Creative Writing Courses and Semester Offerings:

WRIT 251 Introduction to Creative Writing. (3 credits; taught fall, spring and summer)

WRIT 300 Creative Writers, Identity and Race in the Twin Cities (4 credits; offered fall and spring; can be repeated for credit)

WRIT 324 Topics in Writing (TBA)

WRIT 352 Writing Memoir and Creative Nonfiction (4 credits; taught spring only; can be repeated for credit)

WRIT 353 Writing Short Fiction (4 credits; offered fall, spring; can be repeated for credit)

WRIT 354 Writing Poetry (4 credits; offered fall, spring; can be repeated)

WRIT 355 Writing Children's Literature (4 credits; offered every other year, spring?)

WRIT 356 Writing Humor (4 credits; offered every other year in spring; can be repeated for credit)

WRIT 357 Writers as Readers (4 credits; offered fall only; can be repeated for credit)

WRIT 358 1000 Words or Less (4 credits; offered fall only; can be repeated for credit)

WRIT 359 Boot Camp: Creative Writing for Non-Majors (This can be taken in place of 251; 4 credits; taught in spring for 6 weeks)

WRIT 371 Editing (cross listed with TCID; 4 credits, not certain if it is offered both semesters)

WRIT 481 Advanced Creative Writing (5 credits; offered in spring only; can be repeated for credit)

- ii. Describe your analysis of the results (might include trends, areas of strength, areas of weakness, etc.

We look forward greater staff/administrative continuity to increase our own efficiency and effectiveness as we move forward.

- iii. What changes will you make in the 2023-24 academic year in response to your analysis of the results (might curriculum, program learning outcomes, course learning outcomes, activities used to assess learning, etc. **We will continue to oil an already well-running machine, though more horsepower in the form of a second full-time resident faculty member with a strong background in speculative fiction would be immensely helpful.**

Please submit a curriculum map for your program that articulates the program learning outcomes and which courses in the curriculum contribute to student achievement of each outcome using the template provided.

We are a highly efficient and synergistic program. Above are our student learning outcomes, in general, and specific to one sample class. All of our creative writing courses contribute to student development and achievement within each learning outcome as detailed above.

Signed by program members below: **Suzanne Nielsen, Ed Bok Lee**