



Program Annual Reflection: Growth Plan

As part of the review of your Program Annual Reflection by the Academic Integrity, Planning, and Quality Improvement Council, your dean, and the provost, your program is being asked to develop a growth plan. A growth plan is requested because your program is evaluated as healthy and shows the potential to grow in terms of number of majors and/or credits enrolled. The growth plan is designed to articulate the obstacles for growth, resources needed to overcome the obstacles, and to identify any other impacts of growth.

Program Name: Creative Writing

Date: 3-25-2024

The following questions are to be answered by faculty in the department:

- 1) What do you see as the greatest obstacles to and opportunities for the growth of your program? Briefly explain.

Creative Writing has experienced a number of reorgs in the past 10 years that have created obstacles for programmatic growth as we acclimated to shifting priorities for each department Creative Writing joined. Once a part of SCWA, then Fine Arts, and now Writing, Literature, and Language, we are working towards greater programmatic autonomy, which will allow us to make changes to program required courses and staffing as needed.

Other obstacles include navigating the pandemic, having uncertainty about college leadership, and uncertainty with enrollment and course cancellations. Our post-traditional students' lives include juggling obstacles such as securing childcare, coordinating connecting bus schedules, finding a way to get to class, or to find a zoomable space in a complex home environment. These can also serve as opportunities for our students if they have knowledge of student resources.

Although we provide a plethora of resources for our students, many of these resources go unused due to lack of information. For example, within the library is the writing center, ready and willing to assist students with questions and editing concerns. One way to approach this obstacle is by more informed advising.

A clear opportunity for continued growth in our program is our increased number of majors/minors coming to us. Many of our majors are also interested in a double major, or

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obtaining a minor. Some of the most common pairings have been English; Screenwriting; Theater; Professional Communication and TCID.

An opportunity for us is to revisit the course *WRIT 532: Writing About Place*. This course has been housed in TCID, however it has not been taught for several years. For years this served as an elective option for our creative writing students. During a reorg, that class moved to a new designator, however it is not active. We intend to reactivate this course, Fall, 2026 to again be an elective offering for the creative writing major. We also intend to build an editing course that satisfies the needs of creative writers.

We have obstacles to face, and we will continue to have obstacles to face over the next three years, but I do believe things like low enrollments, canceling of classes and such are not just an obstacle for faculty to solve. This is something that needs collaboration with administration so they know what it is we teach and why. This is one way to turn these obstacles into opportunities.

- 2) For each of the obstacles listed above, what resources could the university provide in the next 1-3 years that would help to overcome the obstacles? **Getting stable leadership with our new dean must assure us that our pre-requisite course, WRIT 251: Introduction of Creative Writing, will run face-to-face in spite of lower enrollment. The university can assist in helping promote new courses for our major, possibly designating funds to help us design a flyer for our program, something we've never had for our students.**

Some things the university needs to pay attention to is where do we have overlap in course offerings? I think students do better with clear course descriptions that are directly related to their majors. Specializing is for grad programs. I love the example a colleague in the History department gave of a language course working in collaboration with a history course. These collaborations can intensify the passion for our students' experiences with learning and engaging with community.

For each of the opportunities, what resources could the university provide in the next 1-3 years that would help to take advantage of the opportunities?

It would be incredible if we could develop an early childhood program that would incorporate daycare for staff and faculty. I'm so pleased that we have Food for Thought. I am hopeful and optimistic about the inclusion of Northstar Promise providing many with the opportunity to an education they never thought would happen. This is such an opportune time to reach out to the community where our university sits. The new dean could help with outreach-establishing relationships with Mninstate community colleges to direct students to our program.

3. For each of the obstacles listed above, what resources could be provided by external entities in the next 1-3 years that would help to overcome the obstacles? **Grant monies; donor monies; state monies...** For each of the opportunities, what resources could be provided by external entities in the next 1-3 years that would help to take advantage of the opportunities? **We intend to research grant funding opportunities specifically to creative writing. This is an area where I can directly improve on through research. We also have a goal of 75 majors within the next three years.**

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4. Is there anything that is currently or would limit the growth of the program, even with resources? Declining enrollments are a challenge to growth, as is transitional leadership, however our numbers in creative writing remain stable. Again, we're hopeful and optimistic about Northstar Promise. Strong support from the future dean with curricular development and changes will be necessary. We could really benefit from a half-time resident faculty in creative writing. Our community faculty is limited, and particularly with writing, many of our potential instructors have already been designated courses. Having a 12-credit limit for community faculty is one reason we need a half-time resident faculty.
5. What other departments would be impacted by growth in this program (e.g., Library, Tutoring and Testing Services, other departments that contribute to the curriculum, facilities, advising, Institutional Effectiveness and Technology)? What we need to grow our area of study is a revolving and evolving selection of courses taught as WRIT 324, Topics in Writing courses. For example, this summer, '24, we are offering a topics in writing course titled: *Writing Science Fiction and Fantasy*, that is already enrolling students. Any growth impacts would benefit the college, library, and the tutoring center. More creative writing students has the potential to combine screenwriting, English and English for Teaching, professional communication, nursing, business, TRiO, and many other departments/programs. I want to return to the library as a source of collaboration. Just today Michelle Filkins contacted me about a collaborative open mic for our *Haute Dish* spring reading. Being housed in literature and language offers us a host of collaborative avenues to branch off of. In answering this question, I am more focused on what other students in other disciplines would be impacted by growth in the creative writing program.

Developing a Three- Year Plan

With your dean and using the information discussed and provided in the above answers, develop a specific three-year plan to grow your program. The plan you will develop will be reviewed in the context of the strategic plans for the college and university and resource availability. Your plan should include:

- Specific goals for growth in the next three years.
- Planned activities and a rationale for how each will contribute to growth (e.g., partnership development, recruiting, schedule analysis, curriculum review, curriculum innovation, professional development, market analysis, accreditation, developing industry connections, etc.). Note: If you request marketing, please be specific about what support you are requesting.
- Requested resources to support the plan with a rationale for how they will contribute to growth.
- Timeline for the growth plan

Currently, CLA does not have a college level strategic plan. It is our understanding that we are entering planning for the next University strategic plan.

Still, we can articulate some goals for the Creative Writing Program to promote growth.

- **Goal One: Curriculum Development and innovation**
We see student desire in 2-credit course offerings. In fall 2025, we intend to run a 2-credit course in Spoken Word. We hope to develop 2-3 more 2- credit courses to attract students who have interest in Creative Writing, but are not sure about pursuing a minor or major.

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- **Goal Two: Curriculum Development and Career Readiness:**

We are in the process of revising out WRIT 371: Editing class to be more focused on Literary Publication. Most recently it was crosslisted with TCID 371: Editing, which was variably focused on technical communications. Our students reported dissatisfaction with this course as it is currently organized. We will revise the course description and outcomes so that Creative Writing students will be able to learn more about editing conventions for literary publication.

In addition, we plan to offer a 1-2 credit internship opportunity for students who want to edit our literary journal, *Haute Dish*

Resources to support the plan:

- Dean support with curricular development (workload credit), additions, and changes.
- Our curricular development needs require another resident faculty member. The Creative Writing program is currently sustained by 1.75 resident faculty members and 2-3 community faculty members every semester. With the program coordinator also providing significant support for the literary journal and advising, we need another resident faculty member to build the program.
- Funds for publicity to recruit students

Your growth plan should be submitted to the Provost on, or before, March 22, 2024.

Department Chair Signature:

Dean Signature:

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