MA IN CREATIVE WRITING

Thesis Requirements
To satisfy the Masters of Arts in Creative Writing thesis requirement:

Students, graduating with a Master of Arts in Creative Writing, will produce and present a full-length text and support materials that demonstrate the mastery of requisite standards, processes, and procedures for bringing that project into its appropriate public venue. The diploma will also specify which area of study the student pursued and include the following options: Poetry, fiction, screenwriting, playwriting, creative nonfiction, documentary film, and publishing.

The Writer’s Life
Acknowledging and understanding the spiritual, psychological, physical, discipline, habits, and support mechanisms required for continued sustenance for the writing life.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the strengths and weaknesses of and discriminate between the archetypal models of writerly lives as they build a writing life plan of their own design.
2. Articulate the strengths and address the weaknesses of the work of their peers, as well as their own work and their writing process.
3. Articulate the ways in which the student will be able to create and sustain the writing life (the writing life plan).

Craft and Technique
Demonstrating the mastery of one’s major area of study through the practice of writing in various forms including the demonstrable and the proven ability to critique one’s own work and that of others honestly and vigorously.

Most creative writing programs spend most or all of their assigned time in workshops and in one-on-one critiques that emphasize this area of study. The Wilkes program also spends a great deal of time on studying how a text “works,” whether it be a classic model, students’ work, or a peer’s draft. This study asks students to dissect texts and break them down into their basic elements. To become a better writer, students must learn how to objectively analyze and critique a wide range of texts in their areas of study.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Describe the breadth and depth of knowledge of the historical context and tradition of the range of forms, conventions, and styles within their selected major and minor areas.
2. Demonstrate competency in the technology of their major genre area.
3. Demonstrate mastery of the industry specific formatting and presentation of creative work by genre.

Art Delivery Method
Studying the multiple and appropriate pathways in which one’s creative work becomes public, including knowing the research methods, business practices, and genre-specific conventions that writers need to obtain notice of and appreciation for their work.

This program strand addresses the business, economic, and genre-specific opportunities for your work. Faculty panels from each genre will introduce this idea to students in the first residency. As students move through the program, the faculty and their mentors will work with students to understand both the business practices and the appropriate pathway for their work.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

1. Understand the legal and ethical standards and the practical issues of their profession, and demonstrate that knowledge through the residencies and portfolio work of the program.
2. Speak and write to people in professional venues of their area in a confident manner.
3. Be able to articulate, both in writing and orally, their own creative work, using genre-specific tools.

Capstone Requirements
The Master of Arts in Creative Writing Capstone is where students have a chance to demonstrate their full mastery of their major area that meet all of the student learning outcomes listed above. All Master of Arts creative projects, no matter which track, will be given an evaluation by an outside reader who is an industry expert, someone who is an editor, agent, publisher, producer, or director. A unique quality of the Wilkes M.A. is how that work comes together in the final capstone. All capstones, no matter which area the graduate selects, must have both a written and spoken component and must also meet specified graduation criteria. The order for the final thesis and some samples are included in other lessons in this section of CW 520. ALL THESES MUST BE PRESENTED IN STANDARD INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC FORMATS PER GENRE.

The following are the area specific requirements for the Master of Arts in Creative Writing capstone:

**Poetry**
During the final residency (CW 525R) poets will present a formal reading from their finished poetry chapbook or poetry collection. The formal reading will be limited to ten minutes followed by a Q & A from faculty, mentors, and other students. Some or all work must be recited.)

THESIS/Support materials will include:

- THESIS (24-50 pages, chapbook; 50+ pages., collection)
- A query letter (1-2 pages)
- Writing Self-Analysis Essay, including Writing Life Plan
- Artist's statement (1 page.)
- Final annotated bibliography of all readings leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.

**Fiction**
During the final residency (CW 525), fiction writers will present a formal reading from their finished manuscript, which will be either a novel or short story collection. The formal reading will be limited to ten minutes, followed by a Q & A from faculty, mentors, and other students.

THESIS/Support materials will include:

- THESIS- (Novella, novel, or short story collection- 120 page minimum)
- A query letter (1-2 pages)
- Writing Self-Analysis Essay, including Writing Life Plan
- Jacket blurb (bio) (1 page.)
- Final annotated bibliography of all readings leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.

**Plays**
Playwrights will work through the pre-residency with an assigned director to cast and to prepare the play for a formal staged reading that will be held during the CW 525 capstone or off-campus at a designated theatre. Experienced actors, appropriate to the work, will be utilized. Playwrights will...
MA in Creative Writing

be prepared to answer questions about their work and processes, following the staged reading.

THESIS/Support materials will include:

- THESIS-(Full-length play, collected one-acts, or performance piece 80+ pages)
- A query letter (1-2 pages.)
- Playwright's bio (1 page.)
- Writing Self-Analysis Essay, including Writing Life Plan
- Play synopsis (1-2 pages.)
- Final annotated bibliography of all readings leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.

Screenplays

Screenwriters will work with their writer mentors in the pre-residency to prepare their script for a table reading during their final residency (CW 525R). Readers will include actors, cohort members, and other available readers. Screenwriters must be prepared to present a "pitch" to a film producer, agent, or director before the reading and to answer process questions, following the table reading.

THESIS/Support materials will include:

- THESIS-(Full-length screenplay, collected feature shorts, 80+ pages.)
- The "pitch"
- A query letter (1-2 pages.)
- Writing Self-Analysis Essay, including Writing Life Plan
- Screenplay treatment (2-4 pages.)
- Final annotated bibliography of all readings leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.

Creative Nonfiction

During the final residency (CW 525R), creative nonfiction writers will present a formal reading from their completed full-length manuscript, which will be either a memoir or essay collection. The formal reading will be limited to ten minutes, followed a Q & A from faculty, mentors, and other students.

THESIS/Support materials will include:

- THESIS-(Full-length manuscript or collection of short works)
- A query letter (1-2 pages.)
- Writing Self-Analysis Essay, including Writing Life Plan
- Back flap copy (bio) (1 page.)
- Final annotated bibliography of all readings leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.

Publishing

During the final residency (CW 525R), students in the publishing track will present their new e-zine, small press, journal as if they are actually launching this new company. These students will make a formal presentation to a panel of publishers, editors, and agents. Additionally, they will create materials that will be included in a M.A. book fair.

THESIS/Support materials will include:

- The first novel, journal, e-copy (minimum) to be launched by the student's new company
- The portfolio of work leading to the student's decisions:
  - Interviews, logs, transcriptions
  - Marketing materials for launch
  - Self-analysis essay, including the Writing Life Plan
- Final annotated bibliography of all readings, interviews leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.

Documentary Film

During the final residency (CW 525R), students in the documentary film track will present their new documentary film as if they are actually launching this film at a festival. Additionally, they will create materials that will be included in a M.A. film festival.

- Short documentary film (30 minutes maximum) DVD copy
- The portfolio of work leading to the student's decisions:
  - Interviews, logs, transcriptions
  - Marketing materials for launch
  - Self-analysis essay, including the Writing Life Plan
  - Final annotated bibliography of all readings, interviews leading to the thesis project, from CW 512-520.
## Degree Requirements | 30 credits (minimum)

### First Residency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW 501R</td>
<td>The Professional Writer / Residency Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Project Semester: Students select any two of the following foundation courses. Each of these courses will be delivered online by faculty from each genre in the Project semesters.

Students who expect to enter the publishing track may select from any of the five foundations courses; students entering the documentary film track should register for CW 504—screenwriting and one other area of study.

### Second Residency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW 502</td>
<td>Writing Fiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 503</td>
<td>Writing Poetry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 504</td>
<td>Writing Screenplays</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 505</td>
<td>Writing Plays</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 506</td>
<td>Writing Creative Nonfiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 6

### Third Residency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW 510R</td>
<td>Planning the Writing Life</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this residency students will select which track they are pursuing and be assigned a writer or editor or filmmaker mentor

Second Project Semester: Students will be registered in the courses listed below by area of study in both CW 512, 514:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW 512F</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Fiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 512P</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Poetry</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 512S</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Screenwriting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 512L</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Playwriting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 512N</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Nonfiction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 512U</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Publishing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 512D</td>
<td>Genre and Context in Making Documentary Films</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 6

### Fourth Residency

Master of Arts in Creative Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW 516R</td>
<td>Final Project/Thesis Plan Residency Course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third Project Semester: FINAL WRITING TERM—STUDENTS SELECT COURSE BY AREA OF STUDY (6 credit courses):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 F</td>
<td>Final Project / Fiction Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 P</td>
<td>Final Project / Poetry Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 S</td>
<td>Final Project / Screenwriting Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 L</td>
<td>Final Project / Playwriting Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 N</td>
<td>Final Project / Nonfiction Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 U</td>
<td>Final Project / Publishing Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CW 520 D</td>
<td>Final Project / Documentary Film Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits: 6

### Optional CW 530

Continuous registration (one - six credits) optional course used to complete capstone coursework.
**CW. CREATIVE WRITING**

**CW-616R. WRITING IN EDUCATION/PUBLISHING**  
**Credits:** 3- Residency Course  
Students will be required to make a formal paper presentation during this residency to complete CW 612. Students will complete work generated by team-taught modules to prepare them for either a teaching or publishing internship. They will meet with peers, mentoring faculty and create and deliver mini-lesson plans for proposed courses or a study plan in publishing. Such work must be drawn upon the best practices of the pedagogy of teaching creative writing or working in publishing in a variety of settings. Students will continue to sharpen their own oral and writing skills as they build an acceptable syllabus, course materials/internship goals for an internship and sample lessons/work plan by week's end. By week's end, students will have an internship experience and internship supervisor assigned to them.

**Pre-Requisites**  
[[CW-612]]

**CW-502. WRITING FICTION**  
**Credits:** 3  
This is an intermediate course in writing fiction. Students will study, explore, and practice the process, form, and discipline of writing fiction. Students will write and analyze a variety of short fiction samples that demonstrates their understanding of basic fiction elements, point of view, and narrative style.

**CW-503. WRITING POETRY**  
**Credits:** 3  
This is an intermediate course in writing poetry. Students will study, explore, and practice the process, form, and discipline of writing poetry. Students will write and analyze a variety of poems that demonstrate their understanding of basic poetic elements, diverse forms, and poetic style.

**CW-504. WRITING SCREENPLAYS**  
**Credits:** 3  
This is an intermediate course in writing screenplays. Students will study, explore, and practice the process, form, and discipline of writing screenplays. Students will write and analyze a variety of scenes that demonstrate your understanding of basic film design, diverse forms, and cinematic styles.

**CW-505. WRITING PLAYS**  
**Credits:** 3  
An intermediate level course in writing plays. Students will explore, study and practice the process, forms, and discipline of writing all forms of stage plays. Students will write and analyze a variety of scenes and short plays that demonstrate their understanding of the basic stage elements, theatrical conversations, and dramatic forms.

**CW-506. WRITING CREATIVE NON-FICTION**  
**Credits:** 3  
This is an intermediate level course in writing creative nonfiction. Students will explore, study and practice the process, forms, and discipline of writing all forms of creative nonfiction. Students will write and analyze a variety of short creative nonfiction samples that demonstrate their understanding of basic narrative elements, point of view, factual research, and narrative prose styles.

**CW-512. GENRE AND CONTEXT**  
**Credits:** 3

**CW 512F. Genre and Context in Fiction**  
Students will read, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon fiction reading list with a mentor writer. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned text and complete an annotated bibliography (of the reading list approved by the writer mentor).

**CW 512P. Genre and Context in Poetry**  
Students will read, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon poetry reading list with a mentor writer. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned text and complete an annotated bibliography (of the reading list approved by the writer mentor).

**CW 512S. Genre and Context in Screenwriting**  
Students will read and view, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon film reading list with a mentor writer. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned text and complete an annotated bibliography (of the reading list approved by the writer mentor).

**CW 512L. Genre and Context in Playwriting**  
Students will read and view, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon playwriting reading list with a mentor writer. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned text and complete an annotated bibliography (of the reading list approved by the writer mentor).

**CW 512N. Genre and Context in Nonfiction.**  
Students will read, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon nonfiction reading list with a mentor writer. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned text and complete an annotated bibliography (of the reading list approved by the writer mentor).

**CW 512U. Genre and Context in Publishing.**  
Students will research, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon publishing house list with a mentor editor/publisher. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned company and complete an annotated bibliography (of the list approved by the writer mentor).

**CW 512D. Genre and Context in Making Documentary Films**  
Students will read and view, analyze, critique, and discuss in-depth their agreed upon documentary film reading/viewing list with a mentor filmmaker. Individually the student will write responses to each assigned text and complete an annotated bibliography (of the reading list approved by the writer mentor).
CW-514. DRAFTING PROJECT
Credits: 3
CW 514F. Drafting Project in Fiction
Students will complete a draft of a new work in fiction that may include a novel, story collection, linked story collection, or novella. All proposed projects must be approved by the writer mentor and program director.

CW 514P. Drafting Project in Poetry
Students will complete a draft of a new work in poetry that may include a chapbook, collection, or novel in verse. All proposed projects must be approved by the writer mentor and program director.

CW 514S. Drafting Project in Screenwriting
Students will complete a draft of a new work in screenwriting that may include many of various feature-length film genres. All proposed projects must be approved by the writer mentor and program director.

CW 514L. Drafting Project in Playwriting
Students will complete a draft of a new work in playwriting that may include a full-length play, an extended one-act, or a collection of one-act plays. All proposed projects must be approved by the writer mentor and program director.

CW 514N. Drafting Project in Nonfiction
Students will complete a draft of a new work in nonfiction that may include a collection of essays, memoir, biography, or another related nonfiction form. All proposed projects must be approved by the writer mentor and program director.

CW 514U. Drafting Project in Publishing
Students will complete a draft of an overall business plan, mission, goals statements, and creative strategy to build their own publishing company, journal, or other approved publishing project. All proposed projects must be approved by the mentor and program director.

CW 514D. Drafting Project in Making Documentary Films
Students will complete the research, writing, and preliminary filming for a documentary film project. All proposed projects must be approved by the mentor and program director.

CW-520. FINAL PROJECT
Credits: 6
CW 520F. Final Project/Fiction Thesis
CW 520P. Final Project/Poetry Thesis
CW 520S. Final Project/Screenwriting Thesis
CW 520L. Final Project/Playwriting Thesis
CW 520N. Final Project/Nonfiction Thesis
CW 520U. Final Project/Publishing Thesis
CW 520D. Final Project/Documentary Film Thesis
Students will revise, polish, and prepare their final M.A. project for review by an outside evaluator who will be an agent, producer, publisher, or editor, depending upon the course project. All proposed projects must be approved by the mentor and program director.

CW-530. CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION
Credits: 1-6
This course allows students to continually register where needed for further revision in preparation of their final project. Students must continually register until revisions are complete or they complete the required capstone.

CW-612. LITERARY ANALYSIS
Credits: 6
Reading, analyzing, and preparing an extensive graduate paper that demonstrates the students’ understanding of the history, tradition, various forms, and diverse styles of contemporary literature in one area of study-fiction, creative nonfiction, film, drama, or poetry. Reading list will be provided by the faculty and students’ essays’ approach must be approved by faculty mentor and the Program Director. Must follow MFA format, include an annotated bibliography, and be no less than 30 pages in length. Students present a formal 20 minute paper presentation at the subsequent residency to complete this course.

Pre-Requisites
Acceptance into the MFA program.

CW-614. REVISION TERM
Credits: 3
Students will have the opportunity to continue to work with a faculty mentor to revise their creative thesis and prepare it for publication/production OR begin a new project, built upon the strengths of the Master of Arts thesis.

CW-620. WRITING IN EDUCATION/PUBLISHING INTERNSHIP
Credits: 6
Students will be required to teach creative writing in one or several various educational venues from a series of artists-in-the-schoo1 residencies to for-credit adjunct/full-time course work OR complete an internship with a magazine, small press, or literary agency. Students will document their work through student portfolios and will be supervised by a faculty mentor. In whatever experience students select, they must demonstrate student contact hours of no less than 40 hours per term for teaching and 20 hours per week for publishing internships. Students will present a final analysis of their teaching or publishing experience in writing and orally at term’s end.

Pre-Requisites
3.5 or better GPA and completion of CW 616R

CW-630. CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION
Credits: 1-6
This course allows students to continually register where needed for further revision in preparation of their final project. Students must continually register until revisions are complete or they complete the required capstone.