ENGAGEMENT WITH THE DISCIPLINE

Creative writing courses at all levels and in all genres require specialized knowledge that is constantly changing, and engagement with the discipline is very important. Faculty should sustain a scholarship and publication record in keeping with the lists developed by the Department, with consideration given to differences between the Department’s List 1 and List 2 items.

Staying abreast of the current literary landscape and creative writing publications; monitoring and contributing to the ongoing discussion in the field on a range of topics; serving as editor or reader for a creative writing publication; attending and presenting at conferences; and demonstrated commitment to best practices in teaching, writing, and publishing creative writing are also all expected of faculty within the creative writing area.

REQUIREMENTS: TENURE-LINE FACULTY

Tenure-line faculty teaching creative writing courses are expected to sustain scholarly activity (primarily through creative publications, but also via conference presentations, readings, editorial work on a journal, publication of craft or pedagogy texts or articles, service to professional organizations, etc.) in the genre(s) they teach courses in.

They should also meet the SACSCOC guidelines that state “Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline or master’s degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).”

In keeping with Association of Writers and Writing Programs’ [AWP] guidelines that establish the MFA as the appropriate terminal degree for the writer who teaches in higher education, teachers of creative writing courses should hold the Masters of Fine Arts degree in a creative writing genre.

Those guidelines state, in part, that “AWP assumes that the Master of Fine Arts in creative writing or its equivalent includes at least two years of serious study; a creative thesis (book-length collection of creative work); completion of course work in form, theory, and literature, including contemporary writers; and a substantial amount of individualized writing study, with criticism and direction of the student’s writing by experienced writers through workshop, tutorial, independent project, or thesis preparation” (AWP Guidelines for Creative Writing Programs & Teachers of Creative Writing).
A Ph.D. in Creative Writing or English may stand in for the M.F.A. degree, provided that the Ph.D. coursework required a significant creative writing component (i.e., a creative writing specialization as opposed to a critical specialization and a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline). While the creative writing area recognizes the role literature coursework occupies in creative writing education, it is crucial that our faculty have training, theory, and practice primarily in creative writing, and publish original works of creative nonfiction, fiction, poetry, screenwriting, or other genres (including hybrid or multigenre work).

In determining whether a faculty member’s credentials meet the area requirements, the area will refer to the AWP guidelines that state, in part, that “AWP believes that writing program faculty, who as creative writers are best qualified to make assessments of a candidate’s work, should be given the responsibility of making professional decisions about their peers, and that their evaluations of the candidate, and their recommendations, should be given the utmost weight in the review process” (AWP Guidelines for Creative Writing Programs & Teachers of Creative Writing).

REQUIREMENTS: LECTURER FACULTY

Lecturers who wish to teach creative writing courses must demonstrate their critical engagement with the discipline by demonstrating current and ongoing engagement and publication in creative writing (see list in tenure-line section above). They should also meet the SACSCOC guidelines that state “Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master’s degree in the teaching discipline or master’s degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).”

The creative writing area recognizes that lecturers must first meet the Department’s first-year writing staffing needs. However, the area also recognizes that on occasion, it is necessary and/or desirous to staff courses such as WRIT 3130 (Creative Writing) using lecturers with area-appropriate qualifications.

Lecturer education requirements: an M.F.A or M.A. in Creative Writing, or a Ph.D. in Creative Writing or English with a significant creative writing component to coursework (as detailed above for tenure-line faculty), and creative writing publications (not merely literary analyses or articles). Previous undergraduate creative writing teaching experience is very important for teaching courses in the area.
QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING COURSES (ALL SHOULD BE MET)

at 1000 and 2000 level (in descending order of importance):
1. Advanced degree [see above for more detail]
2. Creative writing publications
3. Experience teaching creative writing

3000 to 4000 level (in descending order of importance):
1. Terminal degree [see above for more detail]
2. Substantial creative writing publications in the genre
3. Experience teaching in the genre

5000 to 7000 level (in descending order of importance):
1. Substantial creative writing publications in the genre in nationally recognized venues
2. Tenured, tenure-track, or minimum rank of assistant professor
3. Terminal degree [see creative writing policy] with specialization or significant coursework in genre being taught
4. Experience teaching in the genre
5. Approved graduate faculty status from the University

1 In general, faculty should meet all qualifications of a given level, but exemption from a qualification may be made in response to departmental needs, curriculum development, or exceptional circumstances. This exemption must receive a majority vote from tenure-line faculty in the creative writing area.