

WRITING, MFA

The MFA in writing is a two-year program of focused instruction for creative writers who are committed to a literary career. The program comprises four 16-week distance writing seminars and five 10-day, conference-style Nebraska residency sessions. The seminars and residencies are integrated to help those who need to hone their writing and critical thinking in order to participate competitively in the wider domain of contemporary American letters. In a two-year course of study, the student earns 60 credit hours toward a Masters of Fine Arts degree in one of six genres: fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, young adult, playwriting, or screenwriting.

Program Related Information

Program Contact

Kevin Clouter, Program Coordinator
221 Weber Fine Arts Building (WFAB)
402.554.5987
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Program Website (<http://www.unomaha.edu/unmfaw/>)

Other Program Related Information

- The MFA in writing is low-residency.
- Upon acceptance, a \$500 non-refundable deposit is required to hold the student's place in the program. This deposit is applied toward the first residency's meals and lodging fee.

Admissions

General Application Requirements and Admission Criteria (<http://catalog.unomaha.edu/graduate/admission/>)

Application Deadlines

- Spring 2026: November 1
- Fall 2026: June 1

Other Requirements

- **English Language Proficiency:** Applicants are required to have a command of oral and written English. Those who do not hold a baccalaureate or other advanced degree from the United States **OR** a baccalaureate or other advanced degree from a predetermined country on the waiver list (<https://www.unomaha.edu/office-of-graduate-studies/admissions/entrance-exams.php>) must meet the minimum language proficiency score requirement in order to be considered for admission.
 - Internet-based TOEFL: 80, IELTS: 6.5, PTE: 53, Duolingo: 110
- **Statement of Purpose:** A one- to two-page single-spaced self-assessment of your background in writing, reasons for wanting to enter the MFA program, and your goals as a writer.
 - For **fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and young adult** include any other experience you have in the wider community of literature (e.g. organizing or participating in workshops, attending conferences, working for literary magazines, etc.).
 - For **playwriting and screenwriting**, include any specific experience as it pertains to screenwriting or to full-length plays, one-act plays, and ten-minute plays, as well as any experience in other areas of film or theatre.
- **Writing Sample:** A manuscript representing your best work in the genre track (fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, young adult, playwriting, or screenwriting) for which you are applying.
 - 15 pages of poetry
 - 15-20 pages of playwriting

- 30 pages of screenwriting
- 30-40 pages of fiction, creative nonfiction, or young adult
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Two letters of recommendation from persons who can attest to your ability to complete a course of graduate study, the ability to work independently, and/or the quality of your prior literary achievements.

NOTE: Your statement of purpose and your writing sample must be submitted in your online application in .pdf format. Manuscripts should be in 12-point typeface with 1" margins. Prose should be double-spaced; poetry may be single-spaced. Playwriting submissions should follow standard playwriting format; screenwriting submissions should follow standard screenwriting format. Material in genres other than the one in which you are applying will not be read. For specific information, as well as current residency dates for the program, please consult the program website (<https://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-communication-fine-arts-and-media/writers-workshop/mfa-program/>).

Degree Requirements

Pathway 1 Traditional MFA in Writing

Currently enrolled and new students are automatically enrolled in this pathway, unless otherwise approved.

Pathway 2 Partial Substitution of Credit Hours Already Earned

Students who have successfully completed graduate-level coursework at UNO or any accredited institution can reduce costs by requesting that up to 18 hours of previously earned credit be applied to the UNO MFA in Writing degree. Subject to individual approval.

Pathway 3 Partial Substitution of Credit Hours Earned Through Additional Coursework

Students have the option to enroll in a limited number of approved courses offered online or on any University of Nebraska campus and have those credits substituted for required MFA degree credit hours. Approval must be obtained from the program coordinator BEFORE enrolling.

Required Residency Session

Code	Title	Credits
MFAW 8700	RESIDENCY SESSION	3

Register for one 3-hour session per semester (4 semesters)

Residencies are conference-style sessions (10 days) consisting of workshops of student writing, craft and theory classes, individual conferences with mentoring faculty, and readings.

Writing Options (choose one)

Seminars

Seminars are semester-long (16 weeks) supervised distance studies in writing, during which the student corresponds regularly with a faculty mentor on the work that was proposed during the preceding residency session. At least four times a semester, the student must submit creative and critical writing to the faculty mentor. The mentor will respond with revisions, suggestions for further readings, and discussion. Students must register for one 12-hour seminar session per semester for four semesters.

Code	Title	Credits
Fiction		
MFAW 8830	FICTION SEMINAR	12
Non-Fiction		
MFAW 8840	NONFICTION SEMINAR	12

Playwriting

MFAW 8850	PLAYWRITING AND SCREENWRITING SEMINAR	12
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Poetry

MFAW 8820	POETRY SEMINAR	12
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Exit Requirements

MFAW 8710	GRADUATING RESIDENCY SESSION	0
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Total Credit Hours: 60