CREATIVE WRITING (BA)

Director: Professor Janet M. McNally

Introduction

In keeping with the university's Jesuit mission to educate the whole person, the English Department strives to nurture intellectual and spiritual growth through the study of literature and the practice of writing. The department fosters academic excellence through a diverse and rigorous curriculum that serves all students at Canisius.

The department's creative writing major is structured to help students develop their writing skills, as they gain broad exposure to literature in a variety of periods, genres, and modes. In English 294 students explore the fundamental skills of fiction and poetry writing. They learn to read as writers, and become acquainted with the workshop method, which involves close reading and critiques of student manuscripts. In courses numbered 300 and above, they have the opportunity to gain more in-depth practice of a particular genre. Finally, in the senior creative writing capstone students will learn to do all the things working writers do: prepare, submit, and present work consistent with professional standards; understand and articulate how their work fits into larger literary traditions; and read in the manner of professional writers, attentive to textual choices and strategies and their effects on readers.

Major Experiences

The Canisius University Contemporary Writers Series brings nationally known writers to meet with Canisius students and to discuss their craft in an informal setting. The Quadrangle is the Canisius journal of literary and visual arts. Students may publish their own pieces or work as editors gaining real-world publishing skills. Internships with local literary publishers and arts organizations provide our students the opportunity to participate in the vibrant Buffalo literary scene and to acquire professional experience as writers, teachers, editors, and administrators.

Qualifications

Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in their major and a 2.0 overall average to graduate with a degree in creative writing. Students must earn at least a grade of B in ENG 294 in order to enroll in advanced workshops.

Advisement

All students should have an advisor in the major and should contact the department directly to have an advisor assigned if they do not already have one. Meetings with academic advisors are required prior to students receiving their PIN for course registration each semester. All majors should work closely with their advisor in discussing career expectations, choosing their major electives, developing their entire academic program and planning their co-curricular or supplemental academic experiences.

Double Majors

Students who wish to expand their educational opportunities may decide to declare a double major. This decision may be based on career goals, planned graduate studies, and/or other student interests. Before a student declares a double major, it is important to meet with the appropriate academic departments for advisement. In order to declare a double major, the student must complete the Major/Minor Declaration form. This form will be submitted electronically and reviewed and approved by each department chairperson as well as the appropriate associate dean.

Per university policy, each additional major requires a minimum of 15 credits that do not apply to the student's first or subsequent major. Some double major combinations can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in other cases, additional coursework may be required. Please note that students will only receive **one** degree unless completing the dual degree (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/) requirement, including at least 150 undergraduate credit hours, regardless of the number of majors they complete. Both (all) majors appear on a student's transcript.

Minors in Other Disciplines

Minors provide students the opportunity to pursue additional interests but generally do not require as many courses as a major. Minors generally range from five to eight required courses. To receive a minor, the student must complete at least 9 credit hours of coursework distinct from their other credentials (i.e., majors, other minors). The complete list of minors is available on the Canisius website (https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/undergraduate/?type%5B%5D=17) and in the catalog (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/minors/) and provides links to each minor. Some majors and minors can be completed within the minimum 120 credit hour degree requirement, but in some cases additional coursework may be required. Students must complete the appropriate minor request form.

Curriculum

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All undergraduate students must complete either the Canisius Core Curriculum (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/core-curriculum/) or the All-College Honors Curriculum (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/curricular-information/all-college-honors-program/). Many schools refer to their college-wide undergraduate requirements as "general education" requirements. We believe that the core curriculum and the honors curriculum are more than a series of required classes; they provide the basis for a Jesuit education both with content and with required knowledge and skills attributes that are central to our mission.

Free Electives

Students may graduate with a bachelor's degree with more but not less than 120 credit hours. Free electives are courses in addition to the Canisius Core Curriculum or All-College Honors Curriculum and major requirements sufficient to reach the minimum number of credits required for graduation. The number of credits required to complete a bachelor's degree may vary depending on the student's major(s) and minor(s).

Major Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
ENG 294	Introduction to Creative Writing	3
ENG 299	Introduction to English Studies	3
Contemporary literature: one course		3
British literature: one course		3
American literature: one course		3
ENG 490	Creative Writing Senior Capstone	3
Select three of the following:		9
ENG 342	Writing Young Adult Fiction	
ENG 388	Literary Publishing	
ENG 391	Advanced Creative Writing: Fiction	
ENG 392	Advanced Creative Writing: Poetry	

ENG 393	Advanced Creative Writing: Memoir & Nonfiction	
Additional electives: 3 literature courses approved by program director		9
Total Credits		**36**

Prerequisites for 200-level and above English courses: either FYS 101 & ENG 111 & ENG 112, or permission of the department chair. ENG 294 must be taken at Canisius by all students committing to the program. Transfer Creative Writing credit may be used as a Creative Writing Elective. ENG 294 (or permission of the instructor) is a prerequisite for ENG 391, ENG 392, ENG 393 and ENG 490. For a more detailed description of the program, faculty, facilities, academic and co-curricular opportunities please go to the Creative Writing website. (https://www.canisius.edu/academics/programs/creative-writing/)

Roadmap

Recommended Semester Schedule for Major Course Requirements

Sophomore	
Fall	**Spring**
ENG 294	Creative Writing elective
ENG 299	American Literature requirement
Junior	
Fall	**Spring**
Creative Writing elective	Creative Writing elective
British Literature requirement	Contemporary Literature requirement
Senior	
Fall	**Spring**
Literature elective	ENG 490
Literature elective	Literature elective

Learning Goals and Objectives

Learning Goal 1

Students will demonstrate the ability to produce a polished, professional-quality portfolio of creative writing and an understanding of how to submit the work for publication.

Students will:

- **Objective A:** Draft, revise, and edit a technically accomplished creative manuscript (fiction, poetry, drama, or creative nonfiction).
- **Objective B:** Research literary journals and compile a list of magazines that fit their work.
- **Objective C:** Prepare a submission to a literary magazine: compose a cover letter and prepare a manuscript that conforms to professional conventions in the field.

Learning Goal 2

Students will develop an understanding of their own influences and aesthetic values as writers and how their own work fits into larger literary traditions.

Students will:

- **Objective A:** Describe the writers, texts, and movements that influence their work.
- **Objective B:** Articulate their aesthetic values.
- **Objective C:** Outline their own artistic projects: what they aim to accomplish in their work.

Learning Goal 3

Students will demonstrate the ability to perform their work effectively in public.

Students will:

- **Objective A:** Make an appropriate selection of their own work for public performance.
- **Objective B:** Introduce themselves and their work to an audience in an engaging way and place their selections in context.
- **Objective C:** Read or recite their work clearly and expressively.

Learning Goal 4

Students will demonstrate the ability to read as writers.

Students will:

- **Objective A:** Be able to identify and explain choices professional writers make in literary texts.
- **Objective B:** Be able to describe the effects of these choices.
- **Objective C:** Be able to discuss how they may interpolate similar choices in the creation of their own work.

Minor

In addition to the major, a creative writing minor is offered: a five-course sequence that includes many of the basic requirements for creative writing majors. This minor is only available to students who are not majoring in Creative Writing. It is a five course program that provides interested students the opportunity to learn and practice the fundamentals of writing stories, poems, essays and plays.

Code	Title	Credits
ENG 294	Introduction to Creative Writing	3
Select four of the following Creative Writing Courses:		12
ENG 342	Writing Young Adult Fiction	
ENG 388	Literary Publishing	
ENG 391	Advanced Creative Writing: Fiction	
ENG 392	Advanced Creative Writing: Poetry	
ENG 393	Advanced Creative Writing: Memoir & Nonfiction	
ENG 490	Creative Writing Senior Capstone	
Total Credits		**15**

Minors are an important part of the undergraduate curriculum. If students declare a minor by sophomore year, they can usually complete it in a timely manner. Students should work with their advisor to determine if it is possible that the minor can be completed by graduation.

To receive a minor, a student must complete at least 9 credit hours of coursework distinct from their major(s) and from other minors, and students must complete more than 50% of the coursework required for the minor at Canisius. Please note that “ancillary/supporting” courses required for a major may still count as distinct courses as long as the remaining coursework still meets the 30 credit-hours required for a major. For more information about minor policies, please see the Declaring Majors and Minors (https://catalog.canisius.edu/undergraduate/academics/student-records/declaring-majors-minors/) page in the catalog.