



# Creative Writing

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## Overview

The creative writing program administered by the English department offers both classroom and extracurricular writing opportunities for English majors and nonmajors alike. Interested students may enroll in classes devoted to the study and practice of creative writing, publish their poetry and prose in the student literary magazine, and interact with some of the era's great writers who visit classes and give readings on campus.

## Curriculum

Six creative writing courses are offered regularly. Introduction to Creative Writing is offered every semester and introduces students to principles and techniques across genres. Subsequent courses allow for concentrated work in Fiction Writing, Poetry Writing, Creative Nonfiction Writing, Literary Translation, and Selected Topics in Writing. Courses are open to English majors (who can fulfill up to two electives in the major) and to students in other majors.

English majors and students can also complete a minor in creative writing. The minor requires six courses. Courses such as playwriting, book making, and script analysis can be selected from other departments.

In each writing course, students turn in original work and receive extensive feedback from peers as well as from the instructor.

## Faculty

The English faculty includes two full-time instructors of creative writing. Other members of the English faculty also contribute courses in creative writing.

Every two to three years, a Distinguished Writer in Residence joins the faculty for a semester. These have included poet and essayist Diane Ackerman; poets Angela Ball, Tomáš Šalamun, and Jennifer Moxley; novelists Josephine Humphreys, Colson Whitehead, and Christine Schutt; and Honor Moore, who writes in several genres.

## Beyond the Coursework

Students interested in editing can join the staff of *The Messenger*, a campus literature and art magazine that solicits and selects from undergraduate submissions.

Endowed cash prizes are awarded for each year's best pieces of poetry and prose.

The English department sponsors campus visits by prominent writers. Recent visitors have included Paul Beatty, Amy Bloom, Jericho Brown, Gillian Conoley, Aleš Debeljak, Roxane Gay, Casey Gerald, Lauren Groff, Mohsin Hamid, Yusef Komunyakaa, Claudia Rankine, Mary Ruefle, Danez Smith, Zadie Smith, and Elizabeth Willis.

Past visitors have included Sherman Alexie, Steve Almond, Rae Armantrout, Amiri Baraka, A.S. Byatt, Peter Carey, Julie Carr, Lan Samantha Chang, John D'Agata, Lydia Davis, Mark Doty, Deborah Eisenberg, Carolyn Forché, Etgar Keret, Ben Marcus, Richard McCann, Lydia Millet, Toni Morrison, Paul Muldoon, Joyce Carol Oates, Sharon Olds, Donald Revell, George Saunders, Danzy Senna, David Shields, Charles Simic, James Tate, John Updike, Anne Waldman, Charles Wright, and Kevin Young.

Richmond students learn much from these events and activities and go on to graduate programs in creative writing, to prominent authorship, and to a range of artistic endeavors and publication outlets.

## Graduate School Acceptances

- American University
- Columbia University
- Emerson College
- George Mason University
- Hollins University
- St. Mary's College, California
- The New School
- University of Iowa
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- University of North Carolina, Wilmington
- University of Southern California
- Vermont College



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