Creative Writing MFA Advising Guidelines (March 2015 update)*

A minimum of 42 hours must be taken to complete the MFA, of which at least 27 hours must be in courses numbered 5500 or above. **MFA students are strongly encouraged to sign up for 5000-level classes** whenever possible and only sign up for 400-level classes when necessary and allowable according to our guidelines (“27 hours of the 42 credit total must be in courses numbered 5500,” as stated in the MFA Program of Study). This means graduate students can take a **maximum of 15 credit hours at the 400-level**, a policy set by SGS. At least 33 hours must be completed at UMKC.

**One workshop course and at least one literature course per semester** are recommended, though students have taken as many as three courses per semester. Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in a writing workshop in their primary field of study during their first semester in the program.

**Students must complete at least 12 hours (four classes) of writing workshops in their primary genre of study.** Writing workshop courses include 432, 435, 436, 437, 475, 5532, 5535, 5536, 5537, 5550K, 5555, 5575. Other courses that can count for writing workshop credit include nonfiction courses such as 401 and 402, 5501, and 5502; internship courses such as 448, 449A, 449B; Comm Studies 454 and 5554 (Screenwriting); and Theatre 437 and 438 (Playwriting). These courses may be repeated for credit.

**In addition to 12 hours of workshop courses in their primary genre of study, students must complete 6 hours of writing workshops (2 classes) to satisfy the interdisciplinary component.** Students choose at least two craft, workshop, or production courses outside their core genre in English, Theatre, or Communication Studies. Students may take their two interdisciplinary workshops in the same genre, or choose two different genres.

**12 hours of literature courses** are required. 15 hours are recommended.

Students are encouraged to work with as many faculty as possible, but **can take the same class up to three times with approval of the Graduate Director and their advisor.**

With approval by the Advisor and course instructor, **classes at the 300 and 400 levels** from Theater, Communications Studies, and Foreign Language literature courses can be applied toward the MFA. In order for a 300- or 400-level course to be accepted for graduate credit, students will be expected to do supplementary work (additional reading, projects, papers, etc.). Also, students must take the course for graduate credit and complete it with a grade of B- (2.7) or better. Check with the course instructor for the proper course number to register for graduate credit.
**5598A Thesis Portfolio** is a required 3-hour writing course generally taken **twice** during a student’s final year (6 credits in total). In consultation with the faculty, the student will choose a thesis committee comprised of three members: a thesis director from the MFA faculty, and two other faculty members approved by the thesis director and selected from the MFA faculty, the faculties of the Departments of English, Communication Studies, or Theatre, or the faculty of another institution. At least one member of the committee must be from the Department of English. All committee members must officially have Graduate Faculty status. Students should form their committees prior to registering for 5598A. An MFA packet, including the Thesis Committee form, is available in the English Department office.

**5519 Teaching English** is required for all GTAs and counts as a literature course. This course can serve as an elective for non-GTAs.

**5500 Introduction to Graduate Study** is not required, but can count as a literature course.

**Foreign Language Requirement**: By the time of graduation from the MFA program, students must have completed one year (two university semesters) of a single foreign language. Alternatively, the foreign language requirement may be satisfied by scoring a "C" on the final exam of the first-year, second-semester course in a foreign language. Previous undergraduate coursework may be used to satisfy this requirement. Foreign language credit hours cannot be counted to satisfy the 42-hour degree requirement, unless taken at the graduate level.

*These guidelines are subject to change.*

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