Creative Writing
M.F.A.
Program Handbook

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About the Program

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing is a selective program that admits approximately five applicants in fiction and five in poetry each academic year. It offers an intense and focused opportunity for students to further their commitment to writing as the center of their professional life. Through a combination of mentoring by accomplished faculty in a series of creative writing workshops, courses focused on the study of literature offered through the English M.A. program, and electives that include the practice of literary editing and the teaching of creative writing, students will have the guidance to develop and shape their work to the extent of their talent. After three years in the program, they will be prepared to sustain their commitment to contemporary literature as writers, readers, editors, and teachers.

During their first two years, students enroll in one creative writing workshop and one other class each semester, either a required literature course or an elective. In the third year, students work one-on-one with their thesis advisor, enrolling in CW699 and one other required or elective course each semester.

Faculty

John Fulton, M.F.A. University of Michigan—Fiction

John Fulton’s newest story collection is The Animal Girl (Louisiana State University Press). He is the author of Retribution, which won the 2001 Southern Review Short Fiction Award for the best first collection of short stories. His novel, More Than Enough, was a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers selection and a finalist for the Midland Society of Authors Award. His work has appeared in Zoetrope, Oxford American, and The Southern Review. His short story “Hunters” won a 2006 Pushcart Prize.

Jill McDonough, M.F.A. Boston University—Poetry

The winner of three Pushcart prizes, Jill McDonough's books of poems include Habeas Corpus (Salt, 2008), Oh, James! (Seven Kitchens, 2012), and Where You Live (Salt, 2012). The recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fine Arts Work Center, the New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, and Stanford’s Stegner program, she taught incarcerated college students through Boston University’s Prison Education Program for thirteen years. Her work has appeared in Poetry, Slate, The Nation, The Threepenny Review, and Best American Poetry.

Askold Melnychuk, M.A. Boston University—Fiction

Askold Melnychuk’s ninth book is The House of Widows (Graywolf Press). His second novel, Ambassador of the Dead, was a Los Angeles Times Best Book for 2002. His first, What Is Told, was a New York Times Notable book. He has also published a novella
about Rimbaud titled *Blind Angel*. He edited three volumes of the Graywolf *Take Three Poetry* series, as well as books on the poet and activist Daniel Berrigan and Boston artist Gerry Bergstein. He was also co-editor of *From Three Worlds*, the first American anthology of contemporary Ukrainian literature, from which he has translated extensively. He has received a three-year fellowship in fiction from the Lila Wallace Foundation and the McGinnis Prize from the *Southwest Review*, as well as numerous grants from the NEA for editing *Agni Review*, which he founded in 1972. He has published poetry and prose in *The New York Times, The Nation, The Boston Globe, Ploughshares, Poetry, American Poetry Review*, and elsewhere.

**Joyce Peseroff, M.F.A. University of California, Irvine—Poetry**

Joyce Peseroff’s four books of poems are *The Hardness Scale, A Dog in the Lifeboat, Mortal Education, and Eastern Mountain Time*. She has been coordinating editor, managing editor, and associate poetry editor of *Ploughshares*, and edited *The Ploughshares Poetry Reader, Robert Bly: When Sleepers Awake, and Simply Lasting: Writers on Jane Kenyon*. She is the winner of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Massachusetts Artists Foundation, and of a Pushcart Prize. Her poems and reviews have appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly, Agni, Ploughshares, Southern Review, New York Times Book Review, The Women’s Review of Books*, and the online journal *Slate*.

**Lloyd Schwartz, Ph.D. Harvard University—Poetry**

Lloyd Schwartz won the 1994 Pulitzer Prize for criticism. His three books of poems are *These People, Goodnight, Gracie, and Cairo Traffic*. His poems, essays and translations have appeared in *The New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly, The New Republic, Paris Review, and Best American Poetry*. Editor of *Elizabeth Bishop and Her Art*, he is an internationally recognized authority on Bishop’s poetry. *Elizabeth Bishop: Poems, Prose & Letters*, a new edition of her work he prepared for the Library of America, was published in 2008. He is a regular contributor to NPR’s Fresh Air.

**Admissions**

**Requirements**

1. Bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution, with a 3.0 GPA overall and in the student’s major.
2. Three substantive and detailed letters of recommendation, at least two from former teachers familiar with the applicant’s most recent academic and/or creative work.
3. A 3-5 page personal statement focusing on the role of the candidate’s reading life in his or her development as a writer.
4. A writing sample of 10 manuscript pages of poetry or 20 manuscript pages of fiction.
5. GREs are encouraged but not required.
The Graduate Studies Bulletin and application materials may be obtained from the Office of Enrollment Services (617) 287-6000, or online at www.umb.edu. Completed applications are returned to the Graduate Admissions Office (617) 287-6400. Both offices are located at the Campus Center, 100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA 02125. In addition, send a DUPLICATE copy of your writing sample and personal statement to: MFA Program in Creative Writing, English Department, UMass Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA 02125.

**Deadline**
The application deadline is January 15 for matriculation the following September.

**Applications**
All application materials must be submitted directly to the Graduate Admissions Office, *not* to the Creative Writing Department. *In addition, a duplicate copy of your writing sample and personal statement should be sent to the MFA Program in Creative Writing.* We encourage prospective students to apply online at: www.umb.edu. Prospective students are able to track the application, and ensure all materials have been received. The Graduate Admissions Office handles the general application process for all programs. For specific information about the Creative Writing MFA Program, call Program Assistant directly at (617) 287-6736.

**Criteria**

1. All students must hold Bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution, with a 3.0 GPA overall and in the student’s major. Transcripts should be sent from all schools attended and should reflect any graduate, as well as undergraduate, coursework. If you have questions about whether your transcript reflects an appropriate range and level of work to support your admissions application, you may contact the MFA Program Director, who will be glad to review it with you.

2. Three **letters of recommendation** are required from people who are qualified to speak to your potential for graduate study; at least two should be from former teachers familiar with your most recent academic and/or creative work. The people you ask to recommend you should be able to comment in detail about the quality of your work, and your particular strengths and achievements in creative writing. Even if you have been out of school for several years, your former professors are still likely to be the best source of letters, particularly if you can send them copies of work for their courses or otherwise help them to remember what was outstanding about your writing. Friends or employers are less often a source of useful letters.

3. Your 3-5 page **personal statement** should focus on the role of your reading life in your development as a writer. Your essay should include a specific account of your past work and current direction, and what goals you have for graduate study in an academic institution. *A duplicate copy of this statement should be sent to the MFA Program in Creative Writing under separate cover.*
4. A **creative writing sample** of 10 manuscript pages of poetry or 20 manuscript pages of fiction is required. This is the most important element of your application, and should reflect the range and accomplishment of your work. Manuscript pages in poetry may be single spaced, with no more than one poem to a page. Manuscript pages in fiction must be double-spaced. Font should be 12 point. *A duplicate copy of the writing sample should be sent to the MFA Program in Creative Writing under separate cover.*

5. **Graduate Record Examination** scores (Verbal, Quantitative and Literature in English) are optional, but recommended. If the academic part of your application is less strong than you would like it to be, strong GRE scores may help.

**A Complete Application**
Your application will be read by the MFA faculty in the genre in which you apply, and by the Program Director. No decision can be considered until your application is complete, which means not only that all items are received but also that they are what was asked for above. If you have questions about the materials needed to complete your application, contact the MFA Program Assistant.

**Transfer Credit**
With the approval of the Program Director, the university allows graduate students to transfer up to six credits of graduate work taken elsewhere within the past seven years, completed with a grade of B or better, to the MFA. Please submit an official transcript, and a copy of the syllabus if possible, to the MFA Program Assistant. Students who have taken courses through UMB’s Continuing Education Program before matriculating in the MFA Program must also fill out a transfer credit form to transfer those credits. Please consult the program assistant to process the necessary paperwork.
Courses used to fulfill requirements for degrees already completed cannot be considered for transfer credit.

**Degree Requirements**

**Requirements**
The M.F.A. degree requires 48 credits of approved study taken over three academic years:
1. Three 6-credit M.F.A. writing workshops.
2. One 6-credit Craft Workshop in Fiction or Craft Workshop in Poetry, as appropriate to the student’s specialization.
3. Three 3-credit seminars in literature.
4. Three 3-credit electives.
5. Two 3-credit Thesis classes, culminating in a capstone M.F.A thesis of 48-64 pages of poetry, or 100-200 pages of fiction. The thesis will be written under the supervision of a thesis advisor, read by a thesis committee of at least three members, and subject to a public thesis defense.
In each of their first four semesters, MFA students enroll in one six-credit creative writing workshop appropriate to their genre and one other three-credit course, either a required literature course offered through the MFA or English M.A. Program, or an elective. In their final year, students enroll in a three-credit MFA thesis class, working under the supervision of a thesis advisor, and one three-credit requirement or elective each semester.

**Creative Writing Workshop Requirements (24 credits):** Each student must take either CW601 (MFA Poetry Workshop) or CW602 (MFA Fiction Workshop) three times during their first two years in the program. In addition, each student must take CW603 (Craft Workshop in Poetry) or CW604 (Craft Workshop in Fiction) once during their first two years, as appropriate to their genre.

**Literature Requirements (9 credits):** Students must take 3 three-credit graduate classes in literature over three years. The English M.A. Program offers 20-25 graduate seminars each year; 2/3 of these are literature seminars that fulfill the MFA literature requirement. Some courses offered by the Graduate Consortium in Women’s Studies may also fulfill the literature requirement, depending on course materials. The MFA program also offers classes in literature that fulfill this requirement. (see below).

**Elective Requirements (9 credits):** Students must take 3 three-credit electives to complete their degree. CW electives include Memoir (CW605), Literary Editing and Publishing (CW606), The Teaching of Creative Writing (CW614), Creative Writing Internship (CW675), Independent Study (CW696) and Special Topics in Creative Writing (CW697). Seminars in the English M.A. program, including literature classes, may also be used to fulfill this requirement. Students may elect courses offered by other graduate programs in the university and by the Graduate Consortium in Women’s Studies with the approval of the Program Director.

MFA students who wish to take undergraduate classes for graduate credit must receive permission from the instructor and the Program Director, and enroll in independent study (CW696). The exception is EN459: Seminar for Tutors, which may be taken for graduate credit, and which counts as an elective. Students may receive credit for a maximum of two independent study classes.

Students wishing to take a creative writing workshop in a genre other than the one in which they plan to write their thesis may use elective credits to do so. The English M.A. Program offers three-credit courses in Reading and Writing Poetry; Reading and Writing Fiction; Reading, Writing, and Translating Poetry; Advanced Poetry Workshop; Advanced Fiction Workshop; and Life Writing.

**MFA Thesis Requirement (6 credits):** In their third year, all students enroll in the three credit MFA Thesis class E699 each semester, culminating in a capstone MFA thesis of 48-64 pages of poetry, or 100-200 pages of fiction. The thesis is written under the supervision of a thesis advisor, read by a thesis committee of at least three members, and subject to a public thesis defense.
The MFA thesis is the focus of each student’s three years of graduate study. It represents the best work the student has produced in workshops—inform ed by the study of literature, editorial and pedagogical practices, and subjects relevant to the student’s project—mentored by faculty, directed by an advisor, and nurtured by an engaged community of writers.

Creative Writing MFA Seminars
All CW workshops are limited to 12 students. Other CW seminars are limited to 15 students.

CW 601: MFA POETRY WORKSHOP (6 credits)
The primary activity of the workshop is discussion of student work. Students also read recently published poetry; discuss what makes the work successful; how they, as writers, can learn from it; and write and discuss their own work in a responsible and constructive manner. The utmost seriousness and attentiveness is required from each student, especially when responding to fellow students’ work. Everyone will be expected to present either new work or revised work to the workshop each week.

The course focuses on the writing of poetry from two perspectives—craft and process. Through discussion of students’ work and of published poetry, the class will explore how writers develop language, imagery, and verbal music through attention to structural and other details presented in the work. Students will also discuss the more hazy area of process, with which every writer must finally struggle. Students will be encouraged to develop an awareness of what works for them and what doesn’t. Process includes discussion of themes, subject matter, patterns of development within each poem, and construction of sound through rhythm and melos. MFA students accepted in poetry are required to take CW601 three times during their first four semesters of study for a total of 18 credits.

CW 602: MFA FICTION WORKSHOP (6 credits)
The primary activity of the workshop is discussion of student work. Students also read recently published fiction, discussing what makes the work successful and how, as writers, they can learn from it, and write and discuss their own work in a responsible and constructive manner. The utmost seriousness and attentiveness from each student, especially when responding to fellow students’ work, is mandatory. Everyone will be expected to present work to the workshop at least twice during the term.

The course focuses on fiction writing from two perspectives—craft and process. In discussion of our own and published fiction, students will explore how writers construct character, voice, suspense, story, and setting. They will also discuss the more hazy area of process, with which every writer must finally struggle. Students will be encouraged to develop an awareness of what processes work for them. Students will be asked to think
about what sort of risks are important for them to take in their work and what material inspires them to take these risks. What is most compelling, important, fun, and scary to write about?

Writing is serious business, but it’s also fun. Students should come prepared with a sense of humor and a willingness to be a part of a dynamic community of writers. *MFA students accepted in fiction are required to take CW602 three times during their first four semesters of study for a total of 18 credits.*

**CW 603: MFA CRAFT WORKSHOP IN POETRY (6 credits)**

As in CW601, the primary activity of the workshop is discussion of student work. The discussion will be informed by issues of craft, and by texts selected from the history of the genre. These may focus on one or more elements, such as the study of the line, metrics, imagery, or poetic structure, at the discretion of the instructor. *MFA students accepted in poetry are required to take CW603 once during their first two years of study.*

**CW 604: MFA CRAFT WORKSHOP IN FICTION (6 credits)**

As in CW602, the primary activity of the workshop is discussion of student work. The discussion will be informed by issues of craft, and by texts selected from the history of the genre. These may focus on one or more elements, such as the uses of dialogue, the process of character development, and/or story structure, at the discretion of the instructor. *MFA students accepted in fiction are required to take CW604 once during their first two years of study.*

**CW 605: MEMOIR (3 credits)**

Writers form a singular group among memoirists. As a body of work, their memoirs offer a unique opportunity for the creative writer and student of literature to reflect on the way literature is contextualized within a life which inevitably includes all the other dramas and traumas of being. This course will examine various examples of memoir, as well as address the following questions: What responsibility does the memoirist have to facts? Are facts and truth always synonymous? What is the difference between memoir and autobiography? Why write memoir when you could compose a poem? Students will compose and workshop their own life writing during the semester.

**CW606: LITERARY EDITING AND PUBLISHING (3 credits)**

“There are only two kinds of publishers,” observed Kurt Wolff, dean of 20th century literary editors, “Those who publish what the public wants and those publish what they should want. And I aim to be one of the latter.” That, in a nutshell, sums up the
difference between a “literary” editor and a “commercial” one. This course will investigate the history and practice of literary editing, giving students the opportunity to define criteria for what literature is, and practical experience and theoretical frameworks for producing their own broadsides, anthologies, chapbooks, and/or magazines.

CW614: THE TEACHING OF CREATIVE WRITING (3 credits)

Teaching craft, stimulating students’ imagination, and instilling confidence in a student’s individual voice—this is what teachers of creative writing do. Each week, we will examine a different pedagogical question, including: What are the principal elements of poetry and fiction? How does a writing exercise elicit a response that adds to students’ understanding of what they’re doing? What’s a good sequence of exercises, and what should students read to enhance their understanding of technique? How should students share their work—in a workshop, in small groups, on an on-line bulletin board, or in another format? How should creative writing be evaluated? Students leave the course with the practical and theoretical tools necessary to construct a curriculum for their own classroom use, and an understanding of issues involved in exploring creativity.

CW620: TECHNIQUES OF FICTION (3 credits)

This is a literature course designed for fiction writers and students interested in reading both canonical works of fiction and contemporary fiction from a craft perspective. Students will explore how these authors employ the tools of narrative fiction—exposition, plot, dialogue, setting, point of view, character development, etc. In addition to considering the elements of craft, the course will explore several literary traditions—realism, minimalism, and fantastical literature—in order to understand how these traditions utilize the techniques of fiction to construct vastly different fictional worlds. Though this is not a creative writing course that makes use of a workshop, students will be asked to write both a traditional analytical essay as well as a work of fiction, a story or extended scene, in the style of one of the authors we will be discussing during the semester.

CW630: BOOK REVIEW AND LITERARY ESSAY (3 credits)

This is a literature course that will focus on two areas of nonfiction writing that many practicing poets and fiction writers engage in: writing individual book reviews, and composing literary essays on a single contemporary writer’s career, on the influence of one writer on another, or on cultural themes involving contemporary writers. Such essays provide a way to write about literature outside of the scholarly article while using critical methods common to scholars and creative writers in workshop. Along with reading a collection of texts selected by individual students, class will read and discuss examples of these forms; research markets for individual book reviews and essays; learn ways of
structuring these pieces; and write examples of each form with the goal of securing publication.

**CW675: CREATIVE WRITING INTERNSHIP (3 credits)**

This is a tutorial course for students with approved internships involving substantial writing, teaching, and/or administrative work related to creative writing in a professional setting off campus. Possible venues for internships include literary magazines and publishers, literary agents' offices, literary organizations such as PEN New England, libraries, schools, hospitals, shelters, and other educational or social service settings. Interns meet every other week with a faculty internship director to discuss work they have done at the internship, a breakdown of the steps involved in producing it, the time spent, the extent of the intern’s contribution, and an analysis of what was learned in the process. Course requirements include a journal, a bibliography of at least ten readings, an end-of-term portfolio, a summary essay, and an oral presentation to a class or student group. Students receive three credits for a minimum of sixty hours on site (an average of 4 hours per week) and 25 pages of finished writing during the term.

Proposals for internship must include:
1. A 150 word description of the internship, including:
   - Name of organization
   - Name of immediate supervisor
   - Summary of the nature of the work proposed
   - Summary of how work will be evaluated
2. A work schedule appropriate to the internship the student has chosen.
3. A bibliography of at least 10 readings appropriate to the internship the student has chosen.
4. Signature of a faculty member who has agreed to direct the internship.

*All CW675 Internships must be approved by the M.F.A. Program Director.*

**CW696—INDEPENDENT STUDY (3 credits)**

Students wishing to study a topic related to Creative Writing not included in the list of courses available through the graduate program in English or the MFA Program in Creative Writing may develop a course of independent study under the direction of a faculty member. *This course may not substitute for any required Creative Writing Workshop.*

Course proposals for independent study must include:
1. A 150 word description of the course of study.
2. A description of a specific final project of an appropriate length. Examples include a 20-25 page analytical paper; 20-25 pages of translated prose or 10-20 pages of translated poetry, including a 5-7 page introductory essay on the process of translation; three 8-15
page essays; 20-25 pages of memoir or other creative nonfiction; 10-12 pages of a graphic novel, etc.
3. A work schedule appropriate to the project the student has chosen.
4. A bibliography of at least 10 sources appropriate to the project the student has chosen.
5. Signature of a faculty member who has agreed to direct the project.

All CW696 Independent Study classes must be approved by the MFA Program Director. CW696 may only be taken twice for a total of 6 credits.

CW697—SPECIAL TOPICS IN CREATIVE WRITING (3 credits)

Special Topics courses allow faculty in the program, including visiting writers, to introduce a subject outside the list of currently approved courses in the MFA Creative Writing Program. CW697 courses that count towards fulfilling students’ 9 credit literature requirement will be so designated in the semester course description sheet.

CW697 may be taken 3 times for a total of 9 credits.

CW698—INTERN SEMINAR FOR MFA TA2s

This is a required course for MFA student TA2s in their first semester of teaching E210-Intro to Creative Writing. Prior to the beginning of the semester, TA2s meet with the intern director to prepare a common course syllabus. During the semester, students meet with the TA2 intern director weekly to discuss issues of pedagogy and classroom management. In addition to weekly meetings, students are observed by the director three times during the semester, and meet with the director after each observation for discussion.

CW699—MFA THESIS (3 credits)

MFA students enroll in CW699 during their final two semesters in the program. Students enrolled in E699 work one-on-one with a single thesis director for the year.

CW699 must be taken twice for a total of 6 credits.

Program Policies and Procedures

Course Bulletins

Each semester the MFA program publishes a course description sheet written by faculty who will teach the upcoming workshops and seminars. Sheets are available in the program office and emailed to students. MFA students should also consult the English M.A. course description booklet, available in the M.A. program office and on the program’s website.
The university-wide course bulletin is available online at www.umb.edu. For a current listing of courses with abbreviated descriptions you can check the UMB Course Wizard.

**Registration**

For continuing MFA students, pre-registration period for the following semester falls in the last month of the current semester. Please be aware there will be a late registration fee of $50.00 for students who do not initiate their registration during their assigned "early access period." Details on registration periods, including early access period assignments, are mailed to students, usually a month before registration begins. Please visit the One Stop Office (617-287-6200) located in the Campus Center if you have not received registration information, or contact the MFA program assistant. Students must register online at www.umb.edu.

Newly admitted MFA students may register once the Graduate Studies office has received their confirmation card and deposit. Students will then receive course description materials along with registration instructions from the program assistant.

A limited number of students not matriculated in the MFA program may register for CW classes. Please contact the MFA program director for further information.

**Summer Registration**

The MFA program does not offer CW classes during the summer. However, the English M.A. program offers a variety of courses during Summer Session I and II that may count towards the Creative Writing MFA degree. Please consult the program director if you have questions about a particular class. Registration information can be obtained through the Department of Continuing Education (617-287-7900), or visit their website at: http://www.ccde.umb.edu/. Important: Courses taken through Continuing Ed are not covered under your assistantship. Student must pay full tuition.

**Advising**

During the first semester, an academic advisor in the student’s genre will be assigned to each student. Before the third year, each student will be assigned a thesis advisor who will also serve as academic advisor for that year.

The academic advisor is the faculty member to whom the student can turn for questions about courses, career plans and similar issues. Students should meet with their advisors each semester to discuss plans for the next semester, including course selection, degree progress, and ideas for their thesis. In addition, in order to provide as strong a support system as possible, all international students will be assigned a faculty mentor to aid them with various difficulties that can arise from working in a different educational, cultural, and language context.

**Grading**

Demonstrated success in graduate work is recognized by the range of grades between “A” and “B”. Students must remember that “A” and “A-” are a mark of excellence. B- is
the minimum acceptable grade to count towards the MFA. Students must maintain an average of 3.0 to continue in the program in good standing.

**Incomplete**
A grade of “Incomplete” is NOT automatically awarded when a student fails to complete a course. Incompletes are usually awarded when satisfactory work has been accomplished in the majority of the course and the student is unable to complete course requirements due to circumstances beyond her/his control. Incompletes are given at the discretion of the instructor. The student is responsible to negotiate with and receive the approval of the course instructor in order to receive a grade of Incomplete. The student and the instructor must meet, before the semester ends, to fill out an **Incomplete Contract Form**, available in the English Department office. This written agreement specifies the work to be completed and the deadline for completion. An INC automatically turns into an IF if the work is not completed within a year.

**Add/Drop and Withdrawal**
Each semester the University publishes deadlines for adding, dropping and withdrawing from a course without penalty. **Once you have registered for a course, it is your responsibility to withdraw from it if you find you cannot continue.** If you do not formally withdraw and your name is still on the class roster at the end of the semester, the university will automatically assign you a grade of “F” for the course.

**Leave of Absence/Program Fee Form**
Students who need to take a leave of absence or who will not be taking any courses for a given semester must fill out a **Leave of Absence or Program Fee Form**. This request must be approved by the MFA Program Director and by the Office of Graduate Studies. Students who lapse on their active status are liable for all fees upon their return. All students must pay $175.00 Program Fee for each semester in which they are not attending classes. You can obtain a form at the One Stop Office or contact the registrar’s office to have one mailed to you.

**Graduation**
Students in their sixth semester must complete the Degree Application Form from the One Stop Office; it can also be accessed online and downloaded. Complete side one of the form and return it, along with your degree audit (available online from the WISER system) and a check for $180.00 made out to the University of Massachusetts/Boston, to the program assistant. Check it against your own records to be sure there are no discrepancies. For those courses in which you are currently enrolled (and thus do not yet have grades), write "UNS" (unsubmitted) in pencil. The Registrar will enter grades here later. To receive the degree, you must have an average of at least 3.0. Please check with the registrar or program assistant for forms and deadlines.

**Graduate Assistantships**
Every year the Office of Graduate Studies allocates to the Program a small number of graduate assistantships. Assistantships are competitive and approximately 4-6 are
awarded to incoming students on the basis of their application. Students must maintain a GPA of A- to maintain their assistantships. A few .25 assistantships may become available to second year students as well. All applicants are considered for graduate assistantships and do not need to fill out any additional forms. Second year students may apply in May of their first year for support in the following year.

A limited number of positions open to students in all graduate programs are also posted beginning in May on the UMB website under Human Resources. All students are paid according to the Graduate Student Union contract. (Numbers base on Fall 2013)

- TA 1: .25 Teaching Assistantship requiring 4 1/2 hours per week, offering full tuition remission, remission of ¼ educational operations fees, and an annual stipend of $3977.00; or .50 Teaching Assistantship requiring 9 hours per week, offering full tuition remission, remission of ½ educational operations fees, and an annual stipend of $7954.00.
- TA 2: .50 Teaching Assistantship requiring 9 hours per week, offering full tuition remission, remission of ½ educational operations fees, and an annual stipend of $8628.00.

Administrative Assistantships:
- AA: .25 Administrative Assistantship requiring 4 1/2 hours per week, offering full tuition remission, remission of ¼ fees, and an annual stipend of $3977.00; or .50 Administrative Assistantship requiring 9 hours per week, offering full tuition remission, remission of ½ educational operations fees, and an annual stipend of $7954.00.

All assistantships carry a prorated health fee waiver.

Two types of assistantships offered by the MFA Program are:

**Teaching Assistantships**

All students wishing to prepare to teach their own classes go through the following process. CW614 may be taken before, during, or after an apprenticeship. (Note: enrollment in E459, Seminar for Tutors, is not required, but many students interested in teaching find it rewarding. It is also a helpful course if you want to find tutoring employment on campus.)

1) Coursework: A course in The Teaching of Creative Writing (CW614)
2) Apprenticeship: A teaching apprenticeship with an experienced Creative Writing instructor
4) Internship (TA2): The development and teaching of your own Intro to Creative Writing class (E210) accompanied by the weekly seminar for interns CW698 (fall semester only). Both CW614 and CW698 count as elective credits.

**Administrative Assistantships**

MFA AAs may manage the online literary magazine *Breakwater*, produce the MFA newsletter, direct the Graduate Writers of Boston program, serve as administrative assistants within the English Department, work with established literary journals, and more.
All assistantships are awarded on the basis of a student's academic achievement and qualifications in relation to the needs of the program. Incoming students are automatically considered for graduate assistantships unless we are otherwise notified. International students are eligible for assistantships.

**Eligibility**
Candidates for assistantships must be newly accepted or matriculated in good academic standing. No matriculated student with any incomplete grades will be eligible. To be eligible for an assistantship, a student must be enrolled in at least 6 credits of graduate work and maintain an at least an A- average.

**Application**
All incoming students are automatically considered for AA assistantships within the MFA program. Students may apply for TA1 assistantships in each semester. TA2s must apply for assistantships through the MFA program or the University website. Decisions on awarding TA2 assistantships are made by a committee consisting of the Director of Creative Writing, The MFA Graduate Program Director, and the CW614 instructor. Assistantships outside the English Department are listed online on at: [http://umb.interviewexchange.com/jobsearchfrm.jsp](http://umb.interviewexchange.com/jobsearchfrm.jsp)

As a result of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, all new employees (assistants) are required to show any two of the following forms of identification before signing a contract: passport, driver’s license, birth certificate, social security card (for other options, check with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at 287-5700). In addition, before signing the contract you will be required to fill out State and Federal tax forms, and fill out a Personnel Department Questionnaire. Every new employee must also present negative results of a T.B. test (test available free of charge at the UMass Health Services). All of this paperwork is done in the Office of Graduate Studies and Research, Quinn Administration Building, 3rd floor.

**Tutoring**
English graduate students often work as English Tutors in the undergraduate English Department. Students interested in becoming a tutor may contact Professor Matt Davis at [matthew.davis@umb.edu](mailto:matthew.davis@umb.edu).

**Financial Aid**
The office of Financial Aid administers a number of need-based aid programs, including those involving loans, grants, scholarships, tuition waivers and employment. Sources include federal and state governments and the University itself. Service staff is available to give you advice and answer questions. You can meet with a financial aid counselor at the One Stop Office located in the upper level of the Campus Center, or contact them at 617-287-6300.

**Awards and Prizes**

**Academy of American Poets Prize**
All matriculated students are eligible to submit up to three pages of poetry for this annual prize. Rules are posted in the spring semester, with a deadline usually in March and winners announced in April.

**The MFA Dean’s Book Award**
This award is given annually to the year’s outstanding graduating student in the Creative Writing MFA Program.

**Libraries**

The Joseph P. Healey Library of UMass/Boston contains a collection of approximately 370,000 volumes and currently subscribes to more than 3,000 domestic and foreign newspapers and journals. The library also maintains a growing collection of government documents, as well as an art and music library equipped with listening carrels. Special exhibits related to books and the arts are displayed throughout the library and in the library’s art gallery, which is located on the fifth floor.

An extensive collection of bibliographical volumes are available for student use, and are of special importance for graduate students doing research work. A special reference room, located on the fifth floor, contains many concordances, language dictionaries, biographical encyclopedias, lexicons, and other resource materials. A microfilm library and a collection of indexes also aid students in research.

The Edwin Gittleman Memorial Library is the English Department’s reference and reading room. Named in memory of Professor Ed Gittleman, who passed away in July of 1996, the library houses English Department faculty publications, an Oxford English Dictionary, reference books and a computer. The Gittleman Library is available to English Department graduate and undergraduate students.

**Access to Other Libraries**

UMass/Boston is a member of the Greater Boston Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries. The members of the Consortium are: Boston College, Brandeis, Tufts Medical School, MIT, Northeastern, Tufts, UMASS/Amherst, UMASS/Worcester, and Wellesley. Any student who wishes to use the Boston University library can obtain a special admission pass from a UMASS librarian. UMASS faculty and graduate students are eligible for borrowing privileges at all libraries belonging to the Consortium, and may apply for a Consortium card at the fourth floor Reference Desk in the Healey Library.

The **Boston Public Library** makes its resources available to all residents of Massachusetts including out-of-state students who have lived in Massachusetts for at least one year. Borrower cards may be obtained at the BPL circulation desk upon presentation of identification which lists a current Massachusetts address. The library has two buildings: the Research Library on Dartmouth Street where materials can be used only on site, and the General Library on Boylston Street, from which materials may be borrowed. The BPL provides invaluable sources for students during their academic years, and after.

The **John Fitzgerald Kennedy Presidential Library** is a valuable resource for students
interested in history, politics, public policy, and public opinion. Located only a few hundred yards from the UMASS Harbor Campus, the library also houses literary documents such as the Hemingway Papers, which include most of Hemingway’s original manuscripts and letters. A small staff assists students in their use of the library. In addition, the Presidential Museum is a historically important and intellectually stimulating place to visit.

**Graduate Student Assembly**

The GSA is the voice of graduate students at the UMass Boston campus, is dedicated to enhancing the academic and professional development of graduate students. This includes support for graduate research and skill development. Our intention is to reach the whole of the graduate student body with the various programs we offer. Located in the Campus Center 3rd Floor.

**Publications**

*Breakwater Review* is the MFA Program’s online journal and began publishing in Fall 2008. There is a small editorial staff of MFA students. All interested graduate students may participate in production, promotion, and editorial work.

*Watermark*, the student arts magazine, publishes fiction, essays, poetry and plays as well as artwork. It is entirely produced by UMB students, and offers students a chance to gain knowledge in the publication field. Graduate students may volunteer as editors or readers, as well as submit work for publication.

*The Mass Media* is the student newspaper. Opportunities in reporting, editing, layout and design, photography, and graphics are available for interested persons. For experienced people, paid positions may be available.

**University Services**

**Health Services**

Provides medical assistance to students who have purchased school insurance, and charges a minimal fee to other students; a small fee is also charged for laboratory work. The Health Center asks that all students have a physical before treatment, and will provide one if a student does not have a doctor. Mental Health Services provides clinical psychological services, emergency services, crisis intervention, and referral services. Located in the Quinn Administration Building 2nd floor (617-287-5660).

**Career Services**

Career Services offers career counseling and workshops in interviewing techniques, as well as job postings. Located in the Campus Center 3rd floor.

**Athletics and Recreation**
The following facilities available for students are located in the Clark Athletic Center: a gymnasium, a pool complete with 1 and 3-meter diving boards, an ice skating rink, and a weight lifting room. In 1995, the University opened The Beacon Fitness Center (McCormack Bldg. 1st floor). The outdoor facilities include an eight-lane track, eight tennis courts, a utility field, and 10 mercury sailboats.

**On Campus Employment**

Paid tutoring positions are available through the English Department, Academic Support Services, Special Services, and the Veteran's Educational Training Program, and Distance Learning. Qualified persons should contact the English Graduate Office and/or the heads of these programs. Other jobs are often available through university departments and programs. Listings are online at [http://www.umb.edu/hr](http://www.umb.edu/hr). Other job opportunities may be posted at the Student Employment Office. Located in the Campus Center 2nd floor.

**Helpful Information and Links**

**Bursars Office:**  Kelly Regas  617-287-5351

**Graduate Assistantship Contact:** Robert Bobek  617-287-5700

**Financial Aid:**
- A – F  Katie Holland 7-6329  [katie.holland@umb.edu](mailto:katie.holland@umb.edu)
- G – M  Lydia O’Garro 7-6310  [lydia.ogarro@umb.edu](mailto:lydia.ogarro@umb.edu)
- N – Z  Joyce Rey 7-6317  [joyce.rey@umb.edu](mailto:joyce.rey@umb.edu)

**MFA Website:**  [www.mfa.umb.edu](http://www.mfa.umb.edu)

Please visit our website for current news and events.

**English Department Website:**  [http://www.english.umb.edu](http://www.english.umb.edu)

**University Website:**  [http://www.umb.edu](http://www.umb.edu)

**WISER system:**  [http://wiser.umb.edu/](http://wiser.umb.edu/)
Student registration, schedule, bill information, degree audits.

**Graduate Student Assembly:**  [http://www.gsa.umb.edu](http://www.gsa.umb.edu)

**The UMB Boston Writing Project:**  [http://www.bwp.umb.edu/index.html](http://www.bwp.umb.edu/index.html)

**The Watermark:**  [http://www.watermark.umb.edu](http://www.watermark.umb.edu)

**Graduate College of Education:**  [http://www.gcoe.umb.edu](http://www.gcoe.umb.edu)

**Graduate Women’s Consortium:**  [http://www.radcliffe.edu](http://www.radcliffe.edu)

**UMass Bookstore:**  [www.efollett.com](http://www.efollett.com)