

Creative writing

The creative writing program at the University of Melbourne is located in the Department of English with Cultural Studies. It offers students an exciting and productive environment in which to acquire and develop essential skills in creative writing through a range of subjects. The program encourages work that combines creative and critical abilities. The focus of the program is on developing students' writing skills and publication opportunities.

The program offers a number of subjects and study areas, including prose fiction and poetry as well as drama, editing and scriptwriting, which provide opportunities for students to produce their own work under the guidance of professionally accredited practitioners who are technically expert in their specific areas. Many of them have close links with the publishing and film-production industries, and can keep you in touch with current developments. Graduates of this program have been extremely successful in seeing their work featured in a wide range of publications, and many have won awards in national competitions for their work.

Staff are dedicated to fostering a learning experience that students will value their whole lives, and they aim to help students to produce writing of a publishable standard. Undertaking a major in creative writing gives students an excellent and flexible preparation for careers in media, editing, publishing and education/teaching as well as other areas of professional writing such as journalism.

The Department also has a vibrant postgraduate community with its own journals and seminar series to which creative writing students make important and regular contributions.

Prerequisites

Students enrolling in third year creative writing subjects will normally have passed two first year English subjects.

Students enrolling in second year creative writing subjects will normally have passed 106-086 Creative Writing 1: Autofictions (*p.125*) plus at least one other first year English subject.

Requirements for a major in creative writing

Note: all students intending to complete a major in creative writing must consult the Department of English for full application and selection procedures.

A major in creative writing usually consists of nine 12.5 point subjects, totalling 112.5 points. It comprises:

- at least two first year subjects in English (25 points), one of which must be 106-086 Creative Writing 1: Autofictions (*p.125*) and;
- second/third year subjects in English (totalling 87.5 points). At least four of these subjects must be taken from the following approved creative writing subjects and must include the core subject 106-025 Creative Writing 2: Across the Genres (*p.125*). The remainder can consist of any second/third year subjects offered in the English Department.

Creative writing subjects

First year		Sem.
106-086 Creative Writing 1: Autofictions (<i>p.125</i>)		2
Second/third year		Sem.
106-025 Creative Writing 2: Across the Genres (<i>p.125</i>)	1 rep 2	2
106-026 Writing Fiction (<i>p.126</i>)		2
106-027 Writing Scripts (<i>p.126</i>)		1
106-028 Writing Poetry (<i>p.126</i>)		1
106-041 Writing in the Electronic Age (<i>p.126</i>)		N/A
106-062 Writing Non-Fictional Forms (<i>p.126</i>)		2
106-077 Poetry in the Making (<i>p.147</i>)		2
106-090 Editing (<i>p.126</i>)		N/A
106-091 Writing for Performance (<i>p.126</i>)		N/A

Quotas

All second and third year creative writing subjects are subject to quotas. Selection of students will normally be based on order of merit in 106-086 Creative Writing 1: Autofictions (*p.125*). All other students wishing to undertake second or third year creative writing subjects must consult the Department of English for application procedures.

Further Study

While there is no honours program in creative writing, students doing honours in literary studies can specialise in creative writing for their honours thesis. The Department of English also offers a number of graduate degrees at different levels in which students can study creative writing: a Graduate

Diploma in Creative Writing; the Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (English); an MA by thesis; and a PhD.

Career opportunities

In addition to developing students' own writing skills and publication opportunities, a degree with a major in creative writing is an excellent basis for careers in publishing, editing and teaching, as well as other areas of professional writing such as journalism.

For more information

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First year subject

106-086 Creative Writing 1: Autofictions

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Marion M Campbell

Contact: A 1-hour lecture and a 1.5-hour tutorial per week (*Semester 2*).

Description: This is an introductory creative writing subject offering students an appreciation of the specific craft involved in the practice of different genres and the chance to hone writing skills through workshop exercises, readings and discussion. The lectures provide students with an idea of the range of past and contemporary practices which can be usefully identified as autofictions; and specific lectures will be devoted to writing skills in given genres: poetry; short and extended fiction; scriptwriting; playwriting; and writing for performance. By the end of semester you should have developed skills in researching larger narratives (mythical, socio-cultural, historical and political) impinging on your own life stories, which will enhance your own autofictional practices.

Assessment: Class participation, and written work totalling 4000 words.

Prescribed texts:

A subject reader will be available.

R Barthes, Richard Howard (trans), *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, Hill & Wang. • F Jaeggy, *Sweet Days of Discipline*. • J Kincaid, *The Autobiography of My Mother*, Farrar, Strauss, Giroux.

Second/third year subjects

106-025 Creative Writing 2: Across the Genres

Note: Formerly available as 106-225/325 and 106-025. Students who have completed 106-225/325 or 106-025 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Marion M Campbell

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites.

Contact: 2.5 hours of seminars per week (*Semester 1, repeat 2*).

Description: This is an intensive workshop subject in which students are encouraged to develop writing skills in a variety of genres through discussion of course readings, workshop exercises and the critique of work in progress. The readings are intended to provoke discussion about writing strategies and stylistic manoeuvres and to serve as triggers for experimentation. Students should gain an appreciation of the value of the writer's notebook and are encouraged to regard it as a portable 'studio' in which to accumulate material, fragmentary observations, responses to readings and in which drafts are elaborated. From the notebook students will develop a folio of creative writing pieces across a range of genres, honing editing skills and developing an awareness of the significance of the material presentation of creative work.

Assessment: Class participation, and written work totalling 4000 words.

Prescribed texts:

A subject reader will be available.

106-026 Writing Fiction

Note: Formerly available as 106-226/326. Students who have completed 106-226/326 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites.

Semester: Semester 2

Description: Students will develop their own fiction writing, short or longer, through the study of course materials, through class discussions, workshop sessions and submission of draft material. They will develop and draft a number of related or unrelated fictions; they will develop an understanding of the writing workshop process, as well as an understanding of the processes and choices involved in their own creative writing.

106-027 Writing Scripts

Note: Formerly available as 106-227/327. Students who have completed 106-227/327 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Kathleen Fallon

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites.

Contact: 2.5 hours of seminars per week (*Semester 1*).

Description: This subject provides students with the chance to develop their own scriptwriting; through the study of course materials, through class discussions, workshop sessions and submission of draft material. Students will develop and draft either one short film script or other relevant script (as directed) and associated treatments, and should develop an understanding of the writing workshop process as well as an understanding of processes and choices involved in their own creative writing.

Assessment: Class participation, and written work totalling 4000 words, comprising a selection of the student's own writing.

Prescribed texts: L Seger, *Making a Good Script Deal*, Dodd, Mead.

106-028 Writing Poetry

Note: Formerly available as 106-228/328. Students who have completed 106-228/328 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Chris Wallace-Crabbe

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites.

Contact: 2.5 hours of seminars per week (*Semester 1*).

Description: In this subject students have the opportunity to develop their own poetry through workshop sessions, class discussions and submission of drafts. Over the course of the semester students will work on a number of poems, in different modes and forms, specifically through taking part in the writing workshop process. Students should also develop an awareness of the way in which the material presentation of their writing is significant.

Assessment: Class participation, and written work totalling 4000 words, being a selection of the student's own writing.

Prescribed texts: J Kinsella, *Landbridge: Contemporary Australian Poetry*, Freemantle Arts Centre Press.

106-062 Writing Non-Fictional Forms

Note: Formerly available as 106-288/388. Students who have completed 106-288/388 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Marion M Campbell

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites.

Contact: 2.5 hours of seminars per week (*Semester 2*).

Description: This subject asks students to develop their own non-fiction writing, short or longer, through the study of course materials, through class discussions, workshop sessions and submission of draft material. The subject enables students to develop and draft a number of related or unrelated essays and other creative non-fictions, and to gain an understanding of the writing workshop process.

Assessment: Class participation, and a folio totalling 4000 words, comprising a selection of the student's own writing.

Prescribed texts: G Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*, Penguin. • B Chatwin, *Songlines*, Picador. • B Hill, *Sitting In*, Heinemann. • B Hill, *The Rock: Travelling to Uluru*, Allen & Unwin.

Subjects not offered in 2001

Second/third year subjects not offered in 2001

106-041 Writing in the Electronic Age

Note: Formerly available as 106-260/360. Students who have completed 106-260/360 are not eligible to enrol in this subject. Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Coordinator: Marion M Campbell

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites. Students should have completed 103-001 Computer Applications (*p.121*) or be familiar with the personal computer.

Contact: A 1-hour lecture and a 1.5-hour tutorial per week (*Not Offered*).

Description: This subject will include lectures and practical sessions on the use of electronic media, creative writing workshops, as well as an introduction to relevant theoretical approaches. Students should develop an understanding of the use of electronic media in writing and self-publishing and an understanding of theoretical and critical problems raised by the electronic media, including issues of interactivity.

Assessment: Class participation, and written work totalling 4000 words, comprising a critical essay and a folio of creative writing relevant to use in the electronic media.

Prescribed texts:

A subject reader will be available.

I Snyder, *Hypertext*, MUP.

106-090 Editing

Note: Special entry conditions apply. Students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites. Word processing skills are essential.

Semester: Not Offered

Description: Through guest lecturers from industry specialists (including reviewers, editors, graphic designers, publishers, marketing personnel as well as specialists in software, lay-out and graphics) students will gain an appreciation of the skills involved in editing, book design and production. There are three components to the subject: lectures from publishing industry specialists on topics ranging from the editing of creative and critical writing to the special problems of creative anthologies, book concepts, design and lay-out and the structural, grammatical and stylistic aspects of editing; workshop exercises and essays connected with the above; students' participation in the editorial and production collective. These will be concentrated in the production of an anthology of creative writing from the University of Melbourne; for example, editorial selection, text editing and proof-reading, conceptualising the book, book design, graphic design, lay-out and marketing.

106-091 Writing for Performance

Note: Special entry conditions apply and students must consult the Department of English.

Credit points: 12.5

HECS-band: 1

Prerequisites: Usually 25 points of first year English including completion of first year creative writing prerequisites.

Semester: Not Offered

Description: This subject is designed to give writing students, from all generic specialisations, the chance to reflect upon, experiment with, and enhance the performative potential of their writing. Through lectures on aspects of performance writing and practice, and in workshops, students will explore the range of skills involved in writing for performance and in developing effective performance practice in terms of their own work. On completion of the subject students should have encountered aspects of performance theory; demonstrated a heightened sense of the performative potential of writing; exhibited, in the writing and performance of their own texts, a range of skills and strategies for making writing an event in a performance space; gained an appreciation of contemporary performance practices.