

## **Honors Theses in Creative Writing**

There is no guarantee of approval for creative theses; they are not automatic for every honors student who has a concentration in creative writing. Creative writing professors will accept as thesis students only those they believe best qualify for thesis work.

Likely candidates for acceptance as thesis students will most often have passed Portfolio Review and taken at least one advanced (400-level) course in the thesis genre. Students with no academic experience in creative writing are unlikely to find acceptance.

The creative writing faculty are unlikely to chair a committee unless they have already worked with that student in a classroom situation.

## **Creative Writing Thesis Requirements**

- Thesis prep workshop offered by [BHC](#)
- The prospectus: The prospectus is worked out and written early in the student's first thesis semester. The advisor and the student will confer about the selection of the second reader. Professors will likely require that the student read some texts in their genre of choice. The writing in either poetry or fiction will also begin during ENG 492, and will be completed during the second thesis semester, ENG 493.
- Fiction: Professors will expect the student to write and revise between 30-50 pages of prose. The length of the project will be agreed upon between the student and the committee chair according to the individual context.
- Poetry: Professors will expect the student to write and revise 14-21 pages of poetry. The length of the project will be agreed upon between the student and the committee chair according to the individual context.
- Attendance: All students are expected to attend at least one poetry reading or one fiction reading.
- The Defense: All students will present an excerpt of their work in a formal reading, approximately 6-8 poems or 5-10 pages of fiction. The presentation is followed by a discussion with the committee on specific aspects of the thesis concerning both conception and execution.

## **Thesis FAQ:**

*Are there best practices for honors projects?*

Great writers are necessarily great readers: we hope that any creative thesis will follow plentiful reading in relevant contemporary literature and will include continued reading throughout the writing experience. Great writers are also hard-working writers. We expect an honors student not only to advance a thesis to completion, but demonstrate growth as a writer.

*What advantages are conferred by a creative writing thesis?*

When a creative project is complete, the student will have a body of work large enough to serve as a work sample in a graduate school application. He or she will also have tested

the waters of writing outside the classroom, which is quite different from the workshop environment (and more closely resembles the general experience of a writer's life...). The creative writing thesis both cultivates a student's independence and also enables a close working relationship with the faculty mentor.

*Can I do a group project?*

Writers band together—this has been true forever!—to start publishing ventures, to collaborate (with each other, with visual artists, with composers, with engineers), or to reach out into the larger community (in service of the art, in service of the community itself...). ASU CW welcomes projects in which this kind of collegial and/or interdisciplinary vision brings students together and enlarges our experience of the literary arts.

*What internships are available to BHC students?*

**Hayden's Ferry Review:** Interns for [HFR](#) get a behind-the-scenes look at how an internationally-distributed literary magazine is run. Responsibilities include reading and voting on submissions, writing features for the blog, assisting in social media, handling subscriptions, organizing fundraisers and more. Contact: [hfr@asu.edu](mailto:hfr@asu.edu)

**Superstition Review:** [s\[r\]](#) is a national online literary magazine produced by undergraduate students at ASU. The mission of SR is to promote contemporary art and literature by providing a free, easy-to-navigate, high quality online publication that features work by established and emerging artists and authors from all over the world. We publish two issues a year with art, fiction, interviews, nonfiction, and poetry. Students will be exposed to all parts of magazine management such as production deadlines, corresponding with authors, choosing and formatting work for publication, conducting interviews, event planning, curating blog content, social media management, advertising, and other detailed steps of the publication process. During this internship students have the opportunity to become proficient in many technologies that are required in today's job market. To learn more, email founding editor Patricia Murphy at [pcm@asu.edu](mailto:pcm@asu.edu).

## **Honors Contract Requirements**

All creative writing courses *\*may\** accommodate honors contracts, and all creative writing faculty work regularly and enthusiastically with honors students. We ask that you approach your professor early in the term to discuss whether a project is possible and what form it might take, and to establish a work schedule, plan, and deadlines.

Honors contracts may be for 1-8 hours of instruction, as determined by the professor in consultation with the student. In poetry, the writing usually involves no more than three pages of new poems in response to outside readings and/or a short paper responding critically to a selection of poems decided upon by student and professor. In fiction, the

writing usually involves a single short story and/or a short paper responding critically to a selection of fiction decided upon by student and professor.

For additional information, please contact Faculty Honors Advisor Associate Professor Sally Ball ([sally.ball@asu.edu](mailto:sally.ball@asu.edu)).