Master’s of Fine Arts and Ph.D. of English with Creative Dissertation Programs Handbook

Welcome
The UNLV MFA in Creative Writing program began in 1997 and in the years since has consistently been in the top 50 of such programs in the country. Admitted MFA students follow a three-year program that includes literature and writing courses, time abroad, completion of a poetry or fiction manuscript, a literary translation, and a critical essay. In addition, the MFA program at UNLV is the nation’s only creative writing program that gives credit to students who wish to spend their time abroad in the Peace Corps (http://english.unlv.edu/mfa/peace-corps). Graduates of UNLV’s MFA program have gone on to secure tenure track teaching jobs, gain admission to Ph.D. programs in creative writing, publish books, and enter the workforce as editors, writers, and arts administrators.

Since 2001, the UNLV’s Department of English has admitted students pursuing a Ph.D. in English with a Creative Dissertation. This program includes course work in creative writing, literature, a qualifying examination, and a creative dissertation in either fiction or poetry. Students usually complete this degree in three to four years. Centered on English and American literature, this Ph.D. track is designed to prepare students for careers in writing and teaching at a college or university level.

Both the MFA and PhD programs at UNLV are closely affiliated with the Black Mountain Institute (http://blackmountaininstitute.org/), which yearly brings writers from around the world to read, speak on pressing world issues, and engage in panel discussion with other writers and thinkers, as well as the substantial audience these events bring. In addition to our international emphasis, the program also features the Emerging Writers’ Series, which hosts writers just emerging on the scene, all of whom are selected by students in the MFA and PhD programs. Students admitted to the Ph.D. in English-Creative Dissertation program receive a fellowship from the Black Mountain Institute and are therefore active in the organization of the events and the editing and production of Witness Magazine. Moreover, the Creative Writing program also hosts a completely student-run reading series Neon Lit. Students also have the opportunity to work on the literary journals Witness and Interim.

For more information about the Creative Writing programs at UNLV, please see: http://english.unlv.edu/creativewriting/unlv-creative-writing-faculty.html

Claudia Keelan
Director of Creative Writing

Mission Statements

Rated by The Atlantic Monthly as one of the five best “unique/innovative” programs in the country, the MFA international at UNLV enables writers to begin recognizing themselves and their art in relation to a larger understanding of writing within a world context. The program’s commitment to world literature provides a unique MFA experience that differs from many traditional creative writing
programs. The program’s international emphasis is derived from the belief that the best writing is done by individuals who know that literature is something created from more than mere self-expression, and that great books are written by the few who know their gift is connected to the world they live in and strive to create dialogue between private imagination and public concern.

**PhD with a Creative Dissertation**
The department, in conjunction with the International Institute of Modern Letters, also offers a program leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy – English with a Creative Dissertation. This program centers on the study of English and American literature and is designed to train students for careers in the teaching of English at the college or university level, as well as for careers in writing, editing, and publishing. The program of study includes course work in English and Creative Writing, a Qualifying Examination, and a Creative Dissertation.

**Purpose**
The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or kendall.hartley@unlv.edu.

**Department Graduate Faculty**
A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the Graduate Faculty status web page.

**Program Information**
Master’s of Fine Arts – Creative Writing
Sub-Plan 1: International Focus

Master’s of Fine Arts – Creative Writing
Sub-Plan 2: Language/Composition Theory Track

Ph.D. of English
Sub-Plan 1: English Literature Track

**Contact Information**
http://english.unlv.edu/index.html

**Department Chair**
Richard Harp, FDH 616, richard.harp@unlv.edu

**Graduate Coordinator**
Donald Revell, FDH 634, donald.revell@unlv.edu

**Department Main Office**
FDH 652, unlvenglishgradprogram@unlv.edu, 702-895-3533, 702-895-4801

**Program Requirements**
Program requirements regarding admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the graduate catalog.

**Advisory Committee Guidelines**
For all programs, a student will organize a committee of at least three departmental members, one of whom is the student’s advisor. Details regarding committee guidelines can be found in the Graduate Catalog.
Degree Program Benchmarks
Master’s of Fine Arts in Creative Writing
Sub-Plan 1: International Focus

1. Complete required coursework as outlined in the Graduate Catalog.
2. Complete required study abroad of one semester or summer in non-English speaking country (six credits).
3. Complete required independent studies as outlined in the Graduate Catalog, including translation, critical essay, and the creative thesis.
4. Organize a committee of at least three departmental members, one of whom is the student’s advisor. Additionally, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed.
5. Complete creative thesis with advisors. All candidates for the M.F.A. degree are required to write a creative thesis in either poetry or fiction and to complete at least 12 credits toward the creative thesis requirement by intensive work in conference with members of the faculty. The creative thesis for the M.F.A. will be a book-length manuscript and must conform to the guidelines set forth by the Graduate College in this catalog and in its Thesis and Dissertation Manual.
7. Submit all required forms to the Graduate College & apply for graduation.

Masters of Fine Arts in Creative Writing
Sub-Plan 2: Peace Corps Track

1. Complete required coursework, as outlined in the Graduate Catalog.
2. Apply to Peace Corps during first year in the program.
3. After completing two-years of coursework, write thesis during two-year Peace Corps assignment.
4. Organize a committee of at least three departmental members, one of whom is the student’s advisor. Additionally, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed.
5. Defend creative thesis by posted deadline.
6. Submit all required forms to the Graduate College & apply for graduation.

Ph.D. of English
Sub-Plan 1: Creative Dissertation

1. Complete required coursework as outlined in the Graduate Catalog, including demonstrating reading knowledge of one foreign language (FOL 198).
2. Organize a committee of at least three departmental members, one of whom is the student’s advisor. Additionally, a fourth member from outside the department, known as the Graduate College Representative, must be appointed.
3. Take a pass/fail qualifying examination, consisting of the following:
   a. Three, four-hour written exams in three major areas of study (usually a genre, a significant literary period, and a specialty derived from, for instance, literary theory).
   b. A ninety-minute oral defense of the student’s written exam. BOTH based on the three reading lists prepared with the supervision of the student’s advisor and committee members. Further reading list requirements are outlined in the Graduate Catalog and on the English Department’s website. If either part of the exam (written and oral) is not passed, the student is allowed ONE additional opportunity to pass the exam.
4. Write a creative dissertation worth twelve credits toward the degree. See guidelines set forth by the Graduate College in the Graduate Catalog and in its Thesis and Dissertation Manual.
5. After completing a dissertation that has been accepted by the student’s committee, he/she must successfully orally defend his/her dissertation.
6. Submit final, properly formatted hard copy to the Graduate College and the approved electronic version to ProQuest.
Submit all required forms to the Graduate College & apply for graduation.

Program Timeline
Master’s of Fine Arts – Creative Writing
Sub-Plans 1: International Focus
Of the 54 total credits required (see Graduate Catalog for the kind and number of credit hours that must be taken to complete the degree): Six full-time (from 6 credits with GA to 9 credits without) semesters or three full academic years is the average duration of the program of study for the MFA.

Sub-Plans 1: Peace Corps Track
Of the 42 total credits required (see Graduate Catalog for the kind and number of credit hours that must be taken to complete the degree): Eight full-time (from 6 credits with GA to 9 credits without) semesters or four full academic years is the average duration of the program of study for the MFA students who join the Peace Corps.

Ph.D. of English
Sub-Plan 2: Creative Dissertation
Of the 48 total credits required (see Graduate Catalog for the kind and number of credit hours that must be taken to complete the degree): Six full-time (from 6 credits with GA to 9 credits without) semesters or three full academic years is the minimum duration of the program of study for the Ph.D. Graduate College regulations stipulate a maximum. The average duration has been between three and four years.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines
UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

Annual Review Procedures
Each spring term, graduate students are required to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review survey. This survey will be sent by the Graduate College to the student’s Rebelmail account. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

Discipline Resources
The Department sponsors a number of prestigious journals, including the Ben Jonson Journal (Edinburgh University Press), Interim, a long-established and well-known literary journal, and the Far West Popular Culture Review (as well as its accompanying annual meeting in Las Vegas). Students participate in editing all these journals. In addition, the Black Mountain Institute, one of the West’s leading literary institutes, publishes the award-winning journal Witness, which our students also help to edit.

University Resources
Academic Success Center
The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association
With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office
Located in the UNLV Registrar’s Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement
ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

Office of Diversity Initiatives
The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV’s diversity mission: to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)
The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars
International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women’s Center
The Jean Nidetch Women’s Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women’s Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

UNLV Libraries
UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)
The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct
The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the UNLV Student Code of Conduct by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Office of Veteran Services
The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office
The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center
This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures
Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:
- Academic Integrity
- Activation for Military Service
- Change of Address
- FERPA/Privacy Rights
- Health Insurance - Mandatory
- Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report
- Proof of Immunization
- Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects
- Rebelmail Policy
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Computer Use Policy
- Title IX

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the Graduate Catalog:
- Academic Calendar
- Academic Policies
- Admission and Registration Information
- Degree Progression Policies & Procedures

In addition, the Graduate College website contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information
Revision Policies and/or Procedures

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| 10/20/2014 | Claudia Keelan, Creative Writing Director & assistant. |