

THESIS AND HONORS FOR ENGLISH MAJORS WITH A CONCENTRATION IN CREATIVE WRITING

I'm curious about the creative thesis. What makes me eligible to write one?

English majors with a concentration in creative writing who wish to write a creative thesis must petition the Creative Writing Committee with a thesis proposal during the spring semester of their junior year. A thesis proposal will include:

- 1) A sample of outstanding work consisting of 2 short stories or non-fiction pieces, or a 15-page excerpt from a larger work of prose fiction, non-fiction, play, or screenplay, or 5-10 poems.
- 2) A letter providing **(a) evidence of exemplary work** within the concentration and consistent progress within the major, **(b) a description of your proposed project** (including genre), and **(c) an account** of how this two-semester thesis experience might benefit you and your plans for after graduation.

All materials must be submitted to the Director of Creative Writing by the semester's major declaration date as marked in the **college's academic calendar**. The Creative Writing Committee will respond to your proposal by the beginning of advising week. This is a competitive process and, once received, submissions will be read blind (that is, without your name attached to the work). Submitting a proposal does **not** guarantee that you'll be able to undertake a creative thesis project, and all decisions by the Creative Writing Committee are **final**.

Thesis Parts I & II

Eligible students will enroll in **ENGL 491: Thesis Colloquium (Part I)** in the fall of senior year and for the **one-semester senior thesis (Part II)** the following spring.

If I am approved to write a creative thesis, how long does it need to be?

The creative writing faculty has determined the following page minimums for CW theses; note that these page minimums vary depending on the genre in which the student is writing.

- **Fiction, novella or portion of a novel:** 60 page minimum
- **Fiction, short stories:** must have at least 4 stories, 40 page minimum
- **Memoir:** 60 page minimum

- **Creative Nonfiction:** must have at least 4 essays, 40 page minimum
- **Poetry:** 35 page minimum
- **Screenplays:** 2 acts of a full-length screenplay (60-70 pages) OR 2 short screenplays (40 pages minimum)
- **Plays:** 2 one-act plays (20 pages per play minimum) OR one multi-act play (40 pages minimum)

A creative writing thesis may, based on consultation with your advisor, also include an **introduction or afterword** (1,500 words minimum) in which you consider your work in the context of the wider literary world and account for the aesthetic choices you've made as a writer.

This essay should include consideration of the work of established writers who've influenced your style and the manner in which the work you've undertaken in workshops at Trinity has led you to the shape and scope of your thesis project.

If I am approved to write a creative thesis, who will serve as my advisor, and who will evaluate my thesis?

The Director of Creative Writing will, after consulting with potential advisors, assign an advisor to each student who plans to write a creative thesis. Please *do not* approach faculty about serving as your advisor. Only the Creative Writing Committee can approve your petition to write a thesis, and only the Director of Creative Writing can assign an advisor. The director will also appoint a first and second reader/grader for each student, neither of whom will be the advisor. Together these readers will determine a final evaluation for the thesis.

I'm not eligible to write the thesis or not interested in taking on this project. What then?

Students not eligible or interested in writing a creative thesis may take a **senior seminar (ENGL 496)** in fall or spring of their senior year. This, along with the completion of the other major requirements, will complete the major.

I'm an English major and have been approved for a thesis in Creative Writing. How do I qualify for Honors in the major?

To be eligible for honors in the major, creative writing students must complete a creative **thesis** and attain an **A- (or higher) average** in the major including the thesis grade.