

Creative Writing Program Thesis and Thesis Readings Instructions

Instructions for Preparing the Thesis

Your thesis will follow the College of Graduate Studies' *Capstone Experiences and Guidelines to Thesis/Alternate Plan Papers* and precedent with respect to format, and the following guidelines with respect to content:

- The proper thesis for someone in this program is a book-length collection of poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction. * After consulting with your thesis committee, you may be allowed to submit a mixed-genre collection with a strong thematic (or other) focus, a section of a novel, a screenplay, or a work for children. Acceptable minimum lengths are as follows:

Poetry: 48 pages.

Short fiction/Nonfiction: 40K words.

Novel: 50K words.

Screenplay: 90 pages.

Work for children: Varies by sub-genre, as arranged with advisor.

These minimums refer to pages of text and therefore do not include required front matter or critical introduction.

- The creative work will be preceded by a critical introduction (about 1500-3000 words long), the purpose of which will be to discuss

- the development of your personal aesthetic
- the development of the creative work itself, as its focus or variety is reflected in the thesis, and
- the relationships you see between your work and the work of other writers

- If any of your work has been previously published, you should include an acknowledgements page among the front matter in order to credit the publication. Any other professional acknowledgements may be included on this page.

- If your thesis includes translations, the original texts should be included. Any exceptions to this practice should be approved by your thesis committee.

* If your thesis will be interview-based nonfiction, you will have to submit to an IRB review prior to having your thesis proposal approved. This is an important, but generally harmless, requirement.

Instructions for the Thesis Reading

The thesis reading allows you to present a sample of your creative work to a public audience. The following should make preparations for the event go more smoothly:

- With your thesis committee, decide on a date for the reading. Try to accommodate everyone's schedule, and consult the department web site (specifically, the MFA Documents page) to see if there are any conflicting events already planned. The thesis need not be finished at time of the reading, but the work should be far enough advanced so that you could discuss it in its entirety if you had to.

- Schedule a room at least a month prior to the reading. Call the reservations number for the Student Union, 389-2223, and get a room either there or around the campus that will seat at least 25.

- About a month prior to the reading, advertise your reading in the following way:

- by sending an e-mail memo/announcement to English faculty and TA's.
- by notifying *The Reporter's* arts and entertainment editor.
- by posting flyers (about 20 will do) around the student union and Armstrong Hall. The CSU office (second floor) will take six and post them for you in the Student Union. The rest must be approved for posting at the same location, after which you can pick them up and post them in Armstrong Hall or elsewhere around campus.

- For the reading itself, plan a 30-minute program that includes selections from your work and any commentary along the way. Your thesis advisor will introduce you and moderate any question-and-answer period to follow.
- Bring your Recommendation for Awarding the Degree form with you to the reading, so that all parties can sign.
- If desired, two students may be part of a single one-hour program.