

# UNLV

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

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## Program Review Self-Study

Program Reviewed: MFA Creative Writing and Ph.D. Doctor of Philosophy in English - Creative Dissertation

Degrees: MFA in Creative Writing, Ph.D.

Program Director: Claudia Keelan

Chair of English Department: Gary Totten

Dean: Chris Heavey

Date of Report: 2016-17

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Please provide Faculty CVs as a single electronic file (PDF preferred) or on a thumb drive *for the external reviewers*.
2. **Please complete the program review self-study using this template.**
3. If this review is covering several degree levels, please be sure to address *each level* in your responses to the questions.
4. Contacts for questions:
  - Chair of the Faculty Senate Program Review Committee found here: <http://faculty.senate.unlv.edu/committees/program-review> or the Chair of the Graduate College Program Review Committee found here: <http://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/program-review-committee>
  - Gail Griffin in the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs: Gail Griffin, [gail.griffin@unlv.edu](mailto:gail.griffin@unlv.edu), 702-895-

## I. Program Description

### A. College/Department/Program

1. College or School: Liberal Arts
2. Unit: English Web address: <http://www.unlv.edu/english>
3. Program(s) being reviewed: <http://www.unlv.edu/degree/mfa-creative-writing>  
<http://www.unlv.edu/degree/phd-creative-writing-creative-dissertation>
  - a. Degrees and their abbreviations:  
Master of Fine Arts Degree in Creative Writing (MFA) and Ph.D. Doctor of Philosophy in English - Creative Dissertation

### B. Primary individual completing this worksheet

1. Name: Claudia Keelan
2. Title: Director of the Creative Writing Programs
3. Date of self-study: 2016-2017
4. Campus Phone: (702) 895-3333
5. Mail Stop: 5011
6. E-mail: [Claudia.keelan@unlv.edu](mailto:Claudia.keelan@unlv.edu)
7. Fax Number: (702) 895-4801

### C. Other faculty involved in writing this report: N/A

### D. Please provide as Appendix 1 the most recent catalog description(s) of the program(s): Appendix 1:

- E. [http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poid=4154](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poid=4154)
- F. <https://www.unlv.edu/degree/phd-creative-writing-creative-dissertation>

1. Is the description correct? If not, what needs to be changed? No it is not correct. We have submitted a program change form through the graduate college portal to request the changes as follows:

### Explanation of Proposed Changes to the Graduate Catalog

The MFA International in Creative Writing has partnered with the Peace Corps for 20 years, sending young writers abroad to work with the Peace Corps, while they are working on their MFA degrees: [http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154#subplan2requirementspeacecorpst](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154#subplan2requirementspeacecorpst) rack. In Fall 2016, the Peace Corps retired all of the Master's International programs nationally. Therefore, Subplan 2, Peace Corps Track must be deleted from the graduate college catalog.

Additionally, we are adding a Literary Non-Fiction track to the MFA program in Creative Writing. The Literary Non-Fiction track will follow the same course requirements already established for the Poetry and Fiction tracks. Therefore, the plan description in the graduate college catalog needs to be revised to reflect these changes: [http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154)

Currently the plan describes the program as following: “Admitted 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.”

The plan must be revised now to read: “Admitted students follow a three-year program that includes literature, writing workshop and forms courses, time abroad, completion of a fiction manuscript, literary nonfiction, poetry or cross-genre manuscript, a literary translation, and a critical essay.”

In the Course requirements section, English 705

[http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154#tt9573](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154#tt9573) is presently described in the graduate college catalog as: “English 705: Creative Writing Course – Credits: 12. Complete 9 credits in the chosen genre of concentration (either poetry or fiction) and 3 credits in another genre.”

We want to change the name as follows: “Creative Writing Workshop—Credits: 12. Complete 9 credits of Creative Writing Workshop in chosen genre of concentration: fiction, literary nonfiction or poetry, and 3 credits in another genre.”

English 729 [http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154#tt2222](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poiid=4154#tt2222)

is presently described in the graduate college as: “English 729: Forms of Fiction or Poetry. Credits 3. Close reading and literary analysis. Topics and reading lists vary from semester to semester. Notes: May be repeated to a maximum of nine credits.”

We want to add literary nonfiction to the title, and change the description as follows: “English 729: Forms of Fiction, Literary Nonfiction or Poetry—Credits: 9. Complete 9 credits in Forms of Fiction, Literary Nonfiction or Poetry, 6 credits in chosen genre of concentration and 3 credits in another genre. The Forms courses are the study of genre from the writer’s perspective.”

In addition to adding Literary Nonfiction as an option to the MFA program in Creative Writing, we are also adding Literary Nonfiction as a genre option in the Doctor of Philosophy-Creative Writing. Additionally, the title page for the Doctor of Philosophy-Creative Writing <https://www.unlv.edu/degree/phd-creative-writing-creative-dissertation> currently reads: “The English Department in conjunction with the International Institute of Modern Letters offers a program leading to the degree Doctor of Philosophy 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 coursework in English and Creative Writing, a Qualifying Examination, and a Creative Dissertation, typically a collection of original poems or short stories, or a novel.”

First, the name of the degree is wrong. The degree is Doctor of Philosophy-English with a Creative Dissertation. We have not partnered with the International Institute of Modern Letters for ten years, and have been affiliates of the Black Mountain Institute during that time; therefore, the description needs to be amended as follows:

“The English Department in affiliation with the Black Mountain Institute offers a program leading to the degree Doctor of Philosophy—English with a Creative Dissertation. This program centers on the study of English and American Literature leading to a creative dissertation in Fiction, Literary Non-Fiction, Poetry or a cross-genre manuscripts. Writers who have earned the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation at UNLV have gone on to teach at universities nationally and internationally, and have also entered careers in writing, editing, and publishing. In addition to coursework in Literature and Writing, candidates pursuing the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation take a Qualifying Examination.”

The description needs to be amended as follows:

**Content missing**

## II. Centrality to Mission

### A. Department/Program Mission

What is the program’s mission statement (or the department’s if the program does not have one)?

<https://www.unlv.edu/english/academic-programs/mfa-creative-writing>

The Creative Writing International programs at UNLV were designed to appeal to students who see themselves and their writing within a world context. Our commitment to world literature provides a unique experience that differs from many traditional creative writing programs. The program’s international emphasis stems from the belief that the best writing is done by individuals who know that literature is something created from more than self-expression. To that end, we seek students whose work strives to create dialogue between private imagination and public concern.

### B. Department/Program Mission Alignment:

Briefly describe how this program is aligned to the mission of the University as described in the most recent mission statement, UNLV Mission <http://www.unlv.edu/about/mission>, and how it supports achievement of the institution’s mission: 2017 will mark the 20th year that the MFA International has been graduating students with the MFA degree. It will mark the 12th year we have been graduating student with the Doctor of Philosophy-Creative Dissertation degree. We have the highest success rate in graduating students in the College of Liberal Arts, and our programs have consistently been ranked in the top 50 Creative Writing programs in the country. Our students have won national awards including the PEN award in translation, the Rona Jaffe award for promising young women writers, the O’Henry award in short fiction, etc. while publishing books with important presses across the country including Barrow Street, Ecco Press, Fence Books, Grove, New Issues, University of Colorado Press, W.W. Norton, Zephyr and elsewhere. We have thus been systematic in helping UNLV to achieve top-tier status, in that every book published by one of our students began at UNLV, and is a measure of by which the university may evaluate of the success of our

research and creative activities. In addition, students in the MFA and Ph.D. programs in Creative Writing at UNLV have gone on to secure teaching positions in universities across the nation including the University of Colorado, University of Chicago, California College of the Arts, University of New Mexico and Sam Houston University, to name several. Other graduates have taken their degrees to work in the writing, editing and publishing industries, and so have been placed in preferred employment. Each year, 10 students are poised to receive their MFA degrees, while 2 receive the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation. Dozens of our MFA students have gone on to pursue the Ph.D. in English or with Creative Dissertation. With the graduation of 2 Ph.D. students per year for 20 years, we have moved UNLV toward Carnegie Classification **please explain-UNLV has a Carnegie classification**. Our program has also always made recruitment efforts toward diverse student populations and has had success in this regard as well. **How?**

### **C. Core Themes**

Briefly describe how this program supports UNLV's Core Themes (the core themes can be found at <http://www.unlv.edu/about/mission>):

The following is a list of books published by graduates of the MFA and Ph.D. programs in Creative Writing, all of which were begun at UNLV:

Erica Anzalone, *Samasara*, Noemi Press, 2014. Poetry.

Chris Arigo, *In the Archives*, Omnidawn Press, 2005. Poetry

David Armstrong, *Going Anywhere*, Leapfrog Press, 2014. Short Stories.

Maile Chapman, *Your Presence is Requested at Suvanto*. Greywolf Press, 2010. Novel.

Olivia Clare, *The 26 Hour Day*, New Issues Press, 2016. Poetry

*Disasters of the First World*, Grove Atlantic, forthcoming 2017. Short Stories.

Jamison Crabtree, *Grief Rel(ament)*, Washington Works Prize, 2015. Poetry.

Peter Golub, *Anatomical Theater*, a translation of Russian poet Andrei Sen-Sekov's Poetry, Zephyr Press, 2011.

Dan Jofeson, *That's Not a Feeling*, Soho Press, 2012. Novel

Josh Kryah, *Glean*, Nightboat Books, 2007. Poetry.

Andy Nicholson, *A Lamp Brighter than Firefox*. Colorado State University Press, 2014. Poetry.

Alissa Nutting, *Tampa*, Ecco Press, 2014. Novel.

Mani Rao, *The Bhagavad Gita*, a translation. Autumn Hill Press, 2010.

Sasha Steensen, *A Magic Book*, Fence Books, 2004. Poetry

Adam Strauss, *For Days*, Blaze Vox, 2012. Poetry.

Matt Shears, *Where a Road Has Been*, Blaze Vox, 2010. Poetry.

*Dear Everybody*, Brooklyn Arts Press, 2016. Poetry.

Vu Tran, *Dragonfish*, W.W. Norton, 2014. Novel.

Heather Winterer, *The Two Standards*, Colorado State University Press, 2010. Poetry.

The sheer number of publications surely shows how the program supports UNLV core themes, Particularly Core theme 1 &2.

### **Excellence**

List and briefly describe five highlights or areas of excellence of the program:

MFA program:

1. Students study Literature and complete a translation, in addition to the Writing Workshops and Forms Courses traditional to CW programs nationally. They are thus poised to enter Ph.D. programs if they wish.
2. Student involvement with *Interim* and *Witness*, the literary magazines of the English Department and Black Mountain Institute, provide practical experience they may use to enter the world of publishing.
3. Our international emphasis, which requires students to travel abroad as part of their coursework, provides students with an international experience not available in other programs.
4. Our students' work with the Black Mountain Institute and the Director of Creative Writing, which involves writing grants to local and national arts funding sources has resulted in the formation of *Neon Lit*, *Alumni Reading Series* and the Emerging Writers' Series. They are thus poised to enter careers in non-profit and arts organizations.
5. All students entering the MFA program at UNLV receive a graduate assistantship, which gives them experience teaching for three years. As a result, they are prepared to teach at the college and university level.

Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation

1. All Ph.D. with Creative Dissertations are admitted as BMI fellows, which comes with the largest stipend in the nation for graduate study. Each BMI fellowship comes with the provision that the first year will be spent learning the goals, missions, and operations of the institute. The generous nature of the stipend gives students ample time to work closely on their writing and courses, relieved from teaching in the first year, while they are learning about the operations of the institute.
2. In the second through third years of the program, BMI fellows teach a variety of courses in Composition, World Literature, and Creative Writing, providing varied experience in the classroom, which makes them broadly competitive in the field of higher education.
3. As BMI supports a variety of programs that feature writers and publishers from around the world, BMI fellows receive one on one exposure to some of the most prominent authors and publishing houses in the country.
4. BMI fellows mentor the MFA students in editorial roles in the production of *Witness* and *Interim*. This prepares them to enter graduate programs across the country as editors and Assistant Professors.
5. Because the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation requires 48 hours past the MFA degree, students who have received this degree often possess a secondary expertise in other areas of Literature and Creative Writing such as Poetics, Modernism or Literary Studies.

### III. External Demand for Program

#### A. Stakeholders

1. Who are the main local and regional stakeholders of your educational programs, i.e., employers and entities benefiting from these programs, hiring the graduates, or admitting them to graduate and/or professional programs?

There are regional stakeholders or employers or entities employing our graduates, at CSN, UNLV and on local papers. A few are Andrew Kiraly, editor of "The Desert Companion"; Kevin Capp -- head website writer and digital-content writer for "Top Rank" boxing; and Caleb Brooks (worked in advertising industry for several years and is now a psychologist in practice here); John Ziebell, who chaired the English Department at CSN. A large number of MFA graduates also teach as adjuncts at UNLV, and two are Faculty-in-Residence and our own Maile Chapman is on the faculty of the Creative Writing Programs.

2. What are specific stakeholder needs for graduates?

Graduates from the MFA program must publish books in order to be viable in a national literary and academic, i.e. university market. Many MFA students choose to enter Ph.D. programs after graduating in order to have more time to publish books and to have continued access to university teaching. Other graduates take part-time positions in universities and supplement their incomes with writing and editing jobs, as well as with other jobs not related to their course of study, such as waitressing and working in offices. Several graduates of the MFA program write for the New York Times, and many others have taken jobs overseas teaching English in other countries.

Graduates from the Ph.D.-English with a Creative Dissertation have for the most part secured jobs as Assistant Professors in universities around they country. The Ph.D.-Creative Dissertation coupled with publication are the primary “stakeholder needs” for graduates of this program.

## **B. Needs for Graduates and Future Plans**

1. What are the anticipated needs for program graduates over the next 3-5 years? Please cite sources of Information.

Statics suggest that academic jobs are narrowing for fiction and poetry positions, but opening for literary nonfiction: [http://learn.org/articles/Creative\\_Writer\\_Salary\\_and\\_Career\\_FAQs.html](http://learn.org/articles/Creative_Writer_Salary_and_Career_FAQs.html)

While we have a strong record in assisting graduates secure academic positions, we haven't kept as close of record of students working in other venues of employment. This is an area I believe should be addressed through the graduate college's tracking efforts.

As we are in the process of hiring a specialist in literary nonfiction, we will grow from 36 MFA and Ph.D~Creative Dissertation candidates in a three year cycle to 48.

2. What changes to the program will those require?

The addition of 6 students per year in the literary nonfiction track has meant that we have processed a program change request through the graduate college. We have already acquired the additional graduate assistantships to offer to these students when the time comes. I'm not quite sure if our department's space in **define before using abbreviation RLL** is sufficient to accommodate them, but we will be reconfiguring the space soon to accommodate the additional students.

## **C. Success of Graduates**

1. What steps does the department take to facilitate the success of graduates (e.g., internships, career fairs, employment talks, etc.)?

At the department level, we annually counsel students on negotiating the academic job market, offering instruction on CV building and cover letters. Throughout their time in the program, we stress the importance of varied teaching experience and publication as sure ways to be competitive.

Discuss the placements of recent graduates:

The following students have secured academic jobs in English departments and Creative Writing programs around the country. They are largely Ph.D.'s, except where otherwise noted:

Erica Anzalone, Lecturer, Emerson College. (2012)  
David Armstrong, Assistant Professor, Gonzaga University. (2014)  
Maile Chapman, Assistant Professor, UNLV. (2009)  
Olivia Clare, Assistant Professor, Sam Houston University. (2015)  
Forrest Cole, English teacher, Abu Dabi University. (2004)  
Josh Kryah, Assistant Professor, Illinois State University, Evanston. (2007)  
Andy Nicholson, Faculty-in-Residence, UNLV.(2011)  
Alissa Nutting, Visiting Assistant Professor, Grinnell College. (2011)  
Sasha Steensen, Associate Professor, Colorado State University. (MFA, 2000)  
Matt Shears, Adjunct Assistant Professor, California College of the Arts. (2008)  
Vu Tran, Assistant Professor, University of Chicago. (2008)  
Andrew Wessels, English Teacher, Koc University, Istanbul. (MFA, 2012)  
Jackson Wills, Lecturer, Loyola College. (2013)  
Heather Winterer, Associate Professor, New Mexico State University. (2009)

2. If the department or program does not have placement information on graduates, what is the plan to implement gathering that information?

While we have an annual assessment of graduates teaching across the nation in higher ed., we do not yet have in place an annual survey of students working in other venues. We will work on creating a survey of recent graduates who are working in other professions.

1. Do placements match stakeholder needs as identified above in A of this section?

Yes.

2. If not, please explain.

3. Does the program assess whether the graduates are meeting employer's needs?

We have not assessed this. As progress towards tenure is generally the norm in our profession, it would be helpful if we created a method of tracking our graduate's progression towards tenure.

4. If not, what will the program do to get this assessment in place and by what date?<sup>1</sup>

We will meet with the Assessment Office to get suggestions as to how to track this by fall of 2017.

5. Additional Comments

None?

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<sup>1</sup> If the program has no employer expectations information, there must be a plan to put such a program in place and it has to be stated.  
(3/16)

## IV. Program Resources

### A. Faculty Time

#### 1. Faculty and GA Resources

	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
Number of Full Time Faculty	5	5	4	4
Number of State-Supported GA lines	36	36	36	36
Number of PTIs	0	0	0	0
Number of FIRS & Visiting	0	0	0	0

	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
Percent of Classes Taught by Full Time Faculty	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percent of Classes Taught by Number of State-Supported GA lines	0	0	0	0
Percent of Classes Taught by Number of PTIs	0	0	0	0
Percent of Classes Taught by Number of FIRS & Visiting	0	0	0	0

	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016
Student Credit Hours Taught by Full Time Faculty	54	54	54	54
Student Credit Hours Taught by Number of State-Supported GA lines	0	0	0	0
Student Credit Hours Taught by Number of PTIs	0	0	0	0
Student Credit Hours Taught by Number of FIRS & Visiting	0	0	0	0

2. For other non-major courses – e.g., upper division for the college or university, estimate the unit’s resources allocated to them:

#### **General Education**

1. If your program or unit offers General Education courses, please estimate what proportion of the unit’s resources are allocated to this area: N/A

2. Does the combined load from A and B affect your unit’s ability to offer courses for its major?  
If so, please describe: N/A

**B. Budget**

1. Please fill in the table with three years of financial expenditures to be used to respond to questions 2 and 3 below.

Budget category	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16
State Operating (2101)	\$ 72,518.68	\$ 73,790.41	\$ 65,390.27
Total tuition and Student Fees	\$ 4,163.52 (including insurance per year) \$1917.38 (w/out health insurance per year) Fees fluctuate slightly each year	\$ 4,163.52 (including insurance per year) \$1917.38 (w/out health insurance per year) \$	\$ 4,163.52 (including insurance per year) \$1917.38 (w/out health insurance per year) \$
Indirect Cost Recovery	\$	\$	\$
Self-supporting	\$	\$	\$
Total Allocations	\$	\$	\$
Number of Graduate Assistantships (including GAs on grants)	12	12	12

2. Are these resources sufficient to meet the degree program’s instructional and scholarship needs? The GA in the MFA went up from 13k to 16 k in 2015, which has helped. The students usually take other work in the summer and live frugally.

**What about the department’s needs?**

3. If not, approximately what line items and amounts would be needed?

**C. Other Funding and Resources**

1. Is funding from other sources sufficient to assist the program in achieving its outcomes? Other sources to be considered include: differential tuition, grants and contracts, endowment income, and one-time gifts for student scholarships, other one-time gifts.

The Beverly Rogers Foundation donated 30 million dollars to the Black Mountain Institute in 2014, which resulted in the Black Mountain Institute being renamed The Carol Harter and Beverly Rogers Black Mountain Institute (for expedience, I refer to the institute as BMI throughout). Part of this endowment was slotted to start a new Literary Nonfiction track in the Creative Writing Programs at UNLV. The literary nonfiction track will mirror the fiction and poetry tracks, i.e. we will admit 6 students in literary nonfiction per year, 5 to the MFA in literary nonfiction and 1 to the Ph.D.- Creative Dissertation who will join the fiction and poetry BMI fellows. The six students admitted to the MFA will receive the same stipend as the students in fiction and poetry, which is \$16k per year in the form of a graduate assistantship. Whereas the fiction and poetry GA’s are funded through the College of Liberal Arts, the literary nonfiction GA’s will be partially funded by the money endowed by Beverly Rogers.

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The additional Ph.D. in literary nonfiction will receive the BMI fellowship, which is \$26.5K for three years. All students who are admitted to the program receive in state tuition and health insurance through the university. Additionally, BMI regularly gives 3k per year to MFA students to travel abroad, as is required in the coursework towards the MFA degree.

2. If not, which funding streams could most reasonably be increased to help the program attain its outcomes?

Our GAships are consistent with the nation.

3. Has any new donor revenue been generated since the last program review?

In the 2002-2003 program review, the Creative Writing program was in partnership with the International Institute of Modern Letters, which is no longer the case. We have now been affiliates of the Black Mountain Institute since 2006, which help financially in the ways I outlined in number 1 of this section.

4. Has the unit engaged in fundraising activities to support the program over the last 5 years? No.

5. What has been the result of these fundraising activities? N/A

6. Review the space data for your department and comment on its amount and quality. These data will need to be accessed by an individual with Archibus® access.

Please see the screenshot below. We have been on the second floor of RLL for almost two years now and it has provided ample space to the faculty, staff and student population. I am a bit worried, however, that as we grow the program, increasing the student population by 6 per year, and adding three additional tenure-track faculty, that we may run out of room, as the space now just fits us all perfectly. Of course, there may be retirements, sabbatical, etc. that will offset the space issue, but I'm a bit concerned as to future space needs, as the space we now have accommodates us at capacity limit already. Gary Totten believes all will be well.



7. Is the quality and quantity of available consumable materials and supplies (e.g., office supplies or lab supplies) adequate and if not, explain why not: Yes

8. Is the quality and quantity of available technology resources, such as computers adequate and if not, explain why not: Yes

9. Is the quality and quantity of available equipment (other than computing) adequate and if not, explain why not: Yes

10. Is the quality and quantity of available library and information resources adequate and if not, explain why not: Yes

11. Staffing

a. Are available department staff resources sufficient to attain the program’s outcomes? NO!!

b. If not, what additional staff resources are needed and how would they be funded? Since the MFA International program began 20 years ago, and the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation 16 years ago, we have never had an administrative assistant to attend to the business of running the program. We’ve relied instead on students in the MFA program to act as AA’s, which is ethically problematic as the student assistant reads all the applications of incoming students and so is privy to confidential information that would otherwise be handled by professional staff. We DESPERATELY need an AA to help us, as our program grows larger. I would hope the university would see that the success of our program shows that we are deserving of additional administrative help.

7. Additional Comments

**V. Size of Program**

1. Below is headcount, course enrollment, and degrees conferred data from Decision Support.

<u>Academic Level Key</u>	
Undergraduate (UGRD):	Graduate (GRAD):
10 – Freshman	GR - Graduate
20 – Sophomore	PHD – PhD
30 – Junior	
40 – Senior	
50 – Post Bacc Undergrad	

		Headcount									
Major Description	Academic Level – Beginning of Term	Fall 2010 Prelim	Spring 2011 Prelim	Fall 2011 Prelim	Spring 2012 Prelim	Fall 2012 Prelim	Spring 2013 Prelim	Fall 2013 Prelim	Spring 2014 Prelim	Fall 2014 Prelim	Spring 2015 Prelim
Creative Writing MFA	GR	31	29	32	31	31	31	33	31	32	32

Ph.D. students in literary nonfiction will receive the BMI fellowship, which is \$26.5K for three years. All students who are admitted to the program receive in state tuition and health insurance through the university. Additionally, BMI regularly gives 3k per year to MFA students to travel abroad, as is required in the coursework towards the MFA degree.

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**Degrees Conferred**

Department Name	Degree	Academic Year - July to June	Degree Count
English	PHD	2005-06	2
English	PHD	2006-07	2
English	PHD	2007-08	2
English	PHD	2008-09	2
English	PHD	2009-10	2
English	PHD	2010-11	3
English	PHD	2011-12	2
English	PHD	2012-13	2
English	PHD	2013-14	2
English	PHD	2014-15	2
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>21</b>

Academic Year - July to June is equal to 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16

and Department Name is equal to / is in English  
 and Degree Description is equal to / is in Doctor of Philosophy  
 and Academic Plan Description is equal to / is in English  
 and PHD

2. Does your program's enrollment trend differ from national trends?

Creative Writing Programs nationally vary widely in their means and models. However, currently, most MFA programs are two-year studio program where students do not study literature or translation. Our program is three years and requires extensive academic and creative work. Many MFA programs do not fully fund their students and ours does. To that extent, our program's enrollment does differ in means and methods from national trends. **How? Higher numbers? Lower numbers?**

Most of the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation programs in the country are larger than ours and not as generously funded. We admit 2 Ph.D. students to the Ph.D. with Creative Dissertation per year, both of which receive a graduate assistantship that is supplemented by the Black Mountain Institute fellowship. To that extent, our program's enrollment does differ in means and methods from national trends. **Why not admit more students?**

3. Discuss the headcounts from the last five years, i.e., are the trends in line with projections in your unit's strategic plan? Yes.

4. If not, why not?

5. If yes, please discuss the reasons: See #2

6. Additional Comments

**VI. Retention, Progression, Completion**

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**A. Major Course Offerings**

1. Are enough courses offered to meet enrollment demands? Yes.
2. How many major courses have been added or eliminated in the last 5 years? Subplan B, Peace Corps Track was eliminated this year.  
\_\_\_ Added \_\_\_x\_ Eliminated
3. Why were the actions taken? The Peace Corps retired the Masters International programs across the nation.
4. After reviewing the program, what additional actions should be taken to improve retention, progression, and completion? N/A
5. Are there any courses that students routinely have difficulty getting enrolled in, that slow progression and/or graduation? If so, please identify them: N/A
6. If last question was answered yes, what steps can be taken to reduce “bottle-necks” in these courses. Please indicate both financially based and non-financially-based solutions. N/A
7. Can any changes in sequencing of courses be made to facilitate graduations? N/A

**B. Graduation Rates**

Program graduation numbers and rates are summarized below.

Academic Plan Description	Degree	Degree Description	Academic Year - July to June	Degree Count
Creative Writing MFA	MFA	Master of Fine Arts	2003-04	5
			2004-05	7
			2005-06	4
			2006-07	9
			2007-08	12
			2008-09	6
			2009-10	11
			2010-11	5
			2011-12	11
			2012-13	10
			2013-14	9
			2014-15	10

**Program Review Self-Study**  
Academic Year 2016-17

**Six Year Graduation Rates of Full Time, New Masters, Fall 2007-Fall 2013**

			Graduated in Major		Graduated in Department		Graduated UNLV	
Cohort Major	Academic Plan	Cohort Headcount	#	%	#	%	#	%
Creative Writing	ENGMFA	10	9	90.0%	9	90.0%	9	90.0%

**Six Year Graduation Rate of Full Time, New Masters, Fall 2008-Fall 2014**

			Graduated in Major		Graduated in Department		Graduated UNLV	
Cohort Major	Academic Plan	Cohort Headcount	#	%	#	%	#	%
Creative Writing	ENGMFA	9	8	88.9%	8	88.9%	8	88.9%

**Six Year Graduation Rates of Full Time, New Masters, Fall 2009-Fall 2015**

			Graduated in Major		Graduated in Department		Graduated UNLV	
Cohort Major	Academic Plan	Cohort Headcount	#	%	#	%	#	%
Creative Writing	ENGMFA	9	6	66.7%	6	66.7%	6	66.7%

Using the data in the tables above, please answer these questions:

1. Are trends in 6-year cohort graduation close to the University's goals (UNLV's undergrad goal is 50%)? Our graduation trends exceed 50%, ranging between 90%-66.7% between Fall 2007-Fall 2013.
2. If not, what is being done to reach the goal? N/A
3. Discuss how and why the graduation rate is changing. N/A
4. Additional Comments No.

## VII. Relationship to Other Programs

1. What relationship does your program have to other programs (such as transfers, collaborations, partnerships) in the NSHE system? NONE.
2. What the relationship does this program have to other programs at UNLV (e.g., collaborations, partnerships, affiliated faculty, General Education requirements, etc.)?  
The MFA and Ph.D. programs in Creative Writing are affiliated with the Black Mountain Institute
3. Additional Comments **None?**

## VIII. Impact

1. What impact has this program had or will have in the following areas:
  - a. University  
The MFA program, in its affiliation with the Black Mountain Institute, has brought distinguished visitors to the UNLV campus for many years, including Nobel Laureates Wole Soyinka and Derek Walcott, Poet Laureate Robert Hass, MacArthur fellow Maggie Nelson, novelists Russell Banks, Jane Smiley, Mary Carr and many other luminaries. We have added considerably to the artistic and intellectual life of the UNLV campus.
  - b. Community  
Our affiliation with the Writers Block, a subsidiary of Zappos Inc., has brought literary life to Fremont Street. We annually participate in the Vegas Valley Book fair.
  - c. Field  
The International focus of our programs is unique to the field of Creative Writing.
2. What are the benefits to the institution of offering this program?  
The Creative Writing Programs and BMI efforts have made Las Vegas a literary destination.
3. Are there examples of the integration of teaching, research, & service that you would like to highlight (e.g., faculty mentoring leading to student presentations at conferences, service learning classes, community service activities involving students, or other student activities and/or achievements that you think are noteworthy)?  
My colleague Doug Unger is active in Words Without Borders, an international literary organization that is very aware of the work we do here. Along with the student curated reading series here at UNLV, our students also travel, often with us, to the annual Associated Writing Programs conference to give readings and presentations.
4. Additional Comments

## IX. Productivity

1. Please provide an indication of faculty productivity appropriate for your unit:  
Please see attached CV's of the CW faculty
2. Additional Comments

## X. Quality

### A. Admission and graduation requirements

1. Please provide program admission requirements as Appendix 2 from the current UNLV catalog:  
[http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poid=4154](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poid=4154)  
[http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=17&poid=4169](http://catalog.unlv.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poid=4169)
2. Are there any updates that need to be made to the catalog and if so, what are they?  
Yes, please see pp. 1-3 of this document.

3. How many full-time advisors are available at the college level?

~~There is an advising center but we do all of our advising in house.~~ As Director of Creative Writing, I advise all 36 of our students. **Graduate programs are advised by the director, chair, or faculty.**

## **B. Outcomes and Assessment**

1. Student Learning Outcomes and Program Assessment Plans and Reports by program concentration are listed at <http://provost.unlv.edu/Assessment/plans.html>. Please attach the most recent assessment report as Appendix 3.

2. Describe specific program changes made based on the program's evaluation of its assessment reports: In conjunction with the graduate college, we have developed a program handbook and curriculum map.

3. Has the program revised its curriculum such as changing prerequisites, adding or eliminating required or elective courses, or co-curricular experiences for the degree(s) in the last 5 years?

As stated on pp. 1-3, Subplan 2 Peace Corps Track has been eliminated. We are in the process of adding Literary Nonfiction to our program.

a. If yes, what changes were made and why?

The Peace Corps eliminated the program and Literary Nonfiction is a developing curriculum in Creative Writing.

4. Has the program revised course content or instructional approaches (pedagogy, technology) in the last 5 years?

Each of us have revised course content and instructional approaches, especially with regard to technology, in order to meet the changing demographics of our students.

a. If yes, what changes were made and why?

No program changes were made—only individual approaches.

5. Describe any other changes made in the last 5 years (for example, advising) based on assessment reports: **N/A**

6. List and describe two specific improvements in student learning outcomes and why they represent forward movement.<sup>2</sup>

Due to curriculum maps and the program handbook, students are graduating on time, which is a top-tier goal. **Our student population grows more diverse each year. Why does this represent forward movement?**

7. Additional Comments **None?**

## **XI. Conclusions, Self-Assessment**

### **A. Faculty Review of self-study**

1. On what date did the program and/or department faculty review this self-study? Feb. 2, 2017

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<sup>2</sup> This is a new question to respond to recently implemented program review enhancements by the NSHE. (3/16)

2. What were the results of the faculty review? Approved
3. What are the top 3 priorities and/or needs for the future development of the program?
  - 1.) Hiring faculty in literary nonfiction
  - 2.) Recruiting students in literary nonfiction
  - 3.) Continue to graduate on time.
4. What are the strengths of the program?

The International component, the rigor of coursework and the innovation of the students and faculty.
5. What are the challenges facing the program?

As long as we have the support of the College of Liberal Arts, the English Department and BMI, we'll have support to face any challenges that arise.
6. What recent additions, corrections, or other changes have been made to the program that reflect changes or developments in the field?

See pp. 1-3 re adding literary nonfiction to the programs.

**B. Other comments**

1. Is there anything else you would like to discuss about the program?

The NSHE also requires that any action steps identified based on the review of the program and the status of the action steps be ready for consideration at the December board meeting the year the program review is completed. You will be contacted about this after the external review has been completed.

**NEXT STEPS:**

- A. Create an executive summary of this self-study, using the template provided, that is *no more than 2 pages long*.
- B. Email the self-study and the executive summary to:
  - Chair of the Faculty Senate Program Review Committee found here: <http://facultysenate.unlv.edu/committees/program-review> or the Chair of the Graduate College Program Review Committee found here: <http://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege/program-review-committee>
  - Gail Griffin, [gail.griffin@unlv.edu](mailto:gail.griffin@unlv.edu), 702-895-0482.