MFA in Creative Writing

The MFA in Creative Writing is a low-residency 49-credit degree program. Courses are taken online during the regular academic year, and 16 credit hours of the Summer Writing Program (spread out over two or three summers) are completed at Naropa University’s Boulder campus. The curriculum balances online writing workshops and literature seminars. Technical support is provided. Students are part of a community from all over the country as well as overseas.

Low-residency students typically enroll for 6 credit hours per semester to realize their degree in three years or less and to qualify for financial aid. If students do receive financial aid, they must enroll for 9 credit hours during one academic semester over the course of their degree.

The MFA program in Creative Writing offers courses and workshops in poetry and prose, and each student writes an MFA thesis in the genre of his or her choice.

Degree Requirements

MFA in Creative Writing

Summer Writing Program: 16 credits

Two four-week summer semesters (or some combination totaling 16 credits) are completed at Naropa’s Boulder campus.

WRI651–654 Summer Writing Program I (8)
WRI751–754 Summer Writing Program II (8)

SUBTOTAL 16

Writing Workshops: 9 credits

Writing workshops require regular submissions of original work for critique and editing. Courses include reading and online discussion of modes of composition. Workshop participation encourages student peer critique and develops editing skills and an informed vocabulary.

- WRI625/625e Creative Reading and Writing: Dramatic Measures (3)
- WRI637e Practice of Fiction: Characterization/ Monologue (3)
- WRI639e Practice of Poetry: Great Companions (3)
- WRI641e Practice of Fiction: Sculpting Prose (3)
- WRI667e Creative Reading and Writing: Inspired by Inspiration (3)
- WRI668e Practice of Fiction: Toward Accumulating a Larger Text (3)
- WRI699e Creative Reading and Writing: Collaborations, Crossings, and Collisions (3)
- WRI688e Literature Seminar: Kerouac’s Road (3)
- WRI785e Practice of Fiction: Building Blocks (3)
- WRI790e Creative Reading and Writing: Investigative Poetics (3)
- WRI792e Book Matters: An Introduction to Publishing (3)
- WRI793/793e Special Topics: Writing Workshop (3)

SUBTOTAL 9

Literature Courses: 9 credits

Literature seminars focus on the works of particular authors, literary history, and culture, as well as contemporary trends in literary theory. They are titled Literature Seminar, Creative Reading and Writing, and Trends in Contemporary Literature. All literature courses require critical papers in standard academic format.

- WRI600e Literature Seminar: Midnight Angels (3)
- WRI634e Literature Seminar: One’s Own Language (3)
- WRI667e Creative Reading and Writing: Inspired by Inspiration (3)
- WRI677/677e Poetics Seminar: Critical Theory (3)
- WRI688e Literature Seminar: Kerouac’s Road (3)
- WRI736/736e Trends in Contemporary Literature: Introduction to Feminist Theory (3)
- WRI788e Creative Reading and Writing: The Art of Nonfiction (3)
- WRI790e Creative Reading and Writing: Investigative Poetics (3)
- WRI793/793e Special Topics: Writing Workshop (3)
- WRI796e Special Topics: Poetics Seminar (3)
- WRI797e Special Topics: Professional Development (3)

SUBTOTAL 9

MFA Thesis: 6 credits

In their last semester, MFA students submit an MFA thesis which includes creative and critical components. Additional information about the MFA thesis is available in the JKS office.

- WRI880/880e MFA Thesis (6)

SUBTOTAL 6

Elective Requirement: 6 credits

Students can choose from the array of online courses offered by other programs at Naropa University. For those students who can attend class at Naropa, we also offer the following weekend electives, each for 1 credit. These classes can include in-resident undergraduate and graduate students and low-residency graduate students.

- WRI705 Professional Development: Small Press Publishing (3)
WRI789W Fall Writing Practicum (1)
WRI791W Spring Writing Practicum (1)
WRI794W Writing Practicum with Anne Waldman (1)
WRI795W Writing Practicum with Allen Ginsberg Visiting Fellow (1)

SUBTOTAL 6

Contemplative Requirement: 3 credits
WRI680e Mind Moving (3)

SUBTOTAL 3

TOTAL CREDITS 49

Course Listings

WRI600E
Literature Seminar: Midnight Angels (3)
This course covers the history of the Beat Generation with special emphasis on the writings the writers this phenomenal era produced. Students use as models Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso, William Burroughs, Neal Cassady, Peter Orlovsky, Diane Di Prima, John Wieners, Amiri Baraka, Joanne Kyger, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Lew Welch, Lenore Kandel, Philip Whalen, Bob Kaufman, Michael McClure, Gary Snyder, and others. Students come to understand the provocative nature and durability of Beat literature. They write poems and short fiction, complete reading assignments, participate in discussions, write in-class assignments, and critique other students' work.

WRI602
Professional Development: Letterpress Printing: Well Dressed Word (3)
This course introduces students to letterpress printing using the facilities in the Harry Smith Print Shop. Students are instructed in basic techniques as well as in the proper use of materials. Students also learn about basic design principles and the history and aesthetics of fine printing. Course requirements include working on a letterpress-printed project, weekly readings and some written assignments, and participation in group critiques and tasks. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI382. Materials fee.

WRI603
Professional Development: Letterpress Printing: First Impressions (3)
As writers, the practice of setting movable type and printing texts by hand is an invaluable esthetic and practical resource. This class explores letterpress printing from the writer's point of view, bringing literary considerations to those of typography, bookmaking, visual design and layout. As writers/printers, students investigate the letterpress possibilities for poetry and fiction through the production of broadsides, postcards and a limited-edition chapbook. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WR1383. Materials fee.

WRI607W
Professional Development: Teaching Practicum: Designing a Writing Workshop (2)
This professional training practicum instructs writing students in the skills necessary for conceiving, organizing and teaching writing workshops on two levels: public schools and colleges. The course covers the goals and methods of creating a syllabus and course description, recognition and evaluation of student writing abilities, and relating the writing workshop to existing curriculum. Techniques for working within school systems is stressed, along with how to stay happy and productive as a writer. Students design and submit two syllabi. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI387W.

WRI614
Prose Workshop: Memoir/Anti-Memoir (3)
In this course we will read contemporary memoir: memoir as method of traveling between representations of the self, autobiography that veers from confessionalism, documents that take as their subject the complications of the body (an I) negotiating with a history, or family (you are). In our own writing, we will try to write an I that is both a conversation with assigned texts and a method to dissolve the assumptions about the making of a self on paper. Open to MFA, CW&P students only, others by permission of the department.

WRI617
Poetics Seminar: Writers in Community (3)
Writers in Community is designed as cohort class for entering MFA graduate students. This course engages several aspects of being a writer, from the page to performance, from innovative poetic concerns to professional development. Several working writers will be invited to give in-class lectures and/or lead workshops. We also explore contemplative gestures and writing processes. By the course's end, students will have completed a context presentation, a prospectus proposing a project of their own, a creative portfolio based on the course's focus of study, and a short professional dossier with career goals.

WRI618
Practice of Poetry: Migrant Metaphors (3)
The page as territory, and the problem of entry/re-entry. In this class, we invent a language to speak about passage: how will we cross, into the world we've yet to write? How does a line embody the kind of travel that's not certain? What really happens at a border site, and how can we translate that "event" to the activity of writing? What will you carry with you, writing? This is an effort both transparent (decaying photographs) and solid (objects confiscated in airports): the work of transit. Central to this work: the poetry workshop, augmented by poetics discussions and the occasional
experiment. Open to graduate Creative Writing and Poetics students only.

WRI620
Practice of Poetry: Composition and Critique (3)
This class focuses on the participants' own poems, their intentions and realizations, triumphs, disappointments, and creative mistakes. It also attempts to examine and clarify the traditions of which these poems partake, and we read texts pertinent to such an investigation. On the Level Everyday, by Ted Berrigan and Caws & Causeries: Around Poetry and Poets, by Anselm Hollo are recommended. Highly recommended is the anthology Postmodern American Poetry, edited by Paul Hoover. Open to CW&P students only.

WRI623
Creative Reading and Writing: Writing with Shakespeare (3)
In this reading and writing course, students will read a selection of the plays of William Shakespeare while keeping an ongoing dialogic writing project going throughout the semester. This project can take any number of possible forms and styles, and can pick up on infinite clues, character facets, and dramatic-linguistic stimuli as it grows. Plays include Antony and Cleopatra, MacBeth, Pericles, Twelfth Night, King Lear, and Cymbeline. Poems include "Venus and Adonis," "The Phoenix and the Turtle," and a selection of sonnets. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI625
Multigenre Workshop: Adaptations (3)
We focus on works of prose, both fiction and nonfiction, published and original. From these texts, we determine what can be skillfully dramatized and what should remain as language. We ask: where should dialogue begin, how can it be maintained or made most effective, and when should it be concluded? We identify and become well-acquainted with the elements and demands that go into dramatic writing and how it differs from narrative prose.

WRI625E
Creative Reading and Writing: Dramatic Measures (3)
For prose writers who want to achieve familiarity with dramatic structure, and for dramatists looking to infuse more lyricism into their work. The course explores the singular demands of dramatic writing: determining the form in which a story can be most effectively presented. Revealing character through action and the dynamics of dialogue, as well as what constitutes a scene. There are five weeks devoted to writing for the stage and ten weeks on writing for the screen. At the end of the course, each writer possesses a much stronger command of their craft. Open to CW&P students only.

WRI629
Multigenre Workshop: Translation (3)
This is a workshop based on the idea that "translation" equals "transformation." How do the choices we make in vocabulary, style, conceptual approach, when we write anything at all, "translate our thoughts into words," affect the result? How do we know that the literature in translation is an accurate reflection of the original? Can translated literature ever reach the aesthetic and emotional immediacy of texts we are able to read in their original (or "our") language? These are some of the questions we examine while also attempting to create our own translations. Open to CW&P students only.

WRI633
Poetics Seminar: Tracks Along the Left Coast (3)
West Coast writings, particularly those of California, of the twentieth century. A look at Pacific Rim culture, its unique geographical situation, Native American background and the mix of Hispanic, Asian, Anglo and African American settlers. Then to focus on three distinct but overlapping literary scenes: San Francisco Renaissance, West Coast Beat and Language poetry. Bay Area arts hold a distinct flavor-jazz, rock, Zen, Gnosticism, letterpress printing, camp and collage. Readings include Indian song, haiku by Japanese American internees of WW II detention camps and writers de Angulo, Snyder, Scalapino, Helen Adam, Duncan, Hejinian, Mackey. Each student writes three papers and makes one classroom presentation. Open to MFA CW&P students only.

WRI634E
Literature Seminar: One's Own Language (3)
We work with the basic elements of language: sound, vowels and consonants, letters, syllables, words and etymologies, symbols, translation, rhyme and meter. We explore issues such as how to locate the self in the poetry of one's adult life. Through a structured journey, we navigate from A through Z of One's Own Language. Elements such as dialogue, harmony and myth are included. Also rhetoric, speech and voice. We call upon the collective wisdom of the canon of world poetry. Open to MFA Creative Writing (low-residency) students only.

WRI637E
Practice of Fiction: Characterization and Monologue (3)
The speaking voice and the telling moment are the basis for the writing students do in this online class. We work on creating and presenting characters, using the monologue format. Improvisation and exercises are directed toward arriving at text. We read or watch performances on videotape by writers/performers who excel at creating characters on paper. The focus throughout is to move from the voice onto the page. Ultimately, the principle focus is the creation of characters who prove their reality by telling their own story or revealing their true essence through speech.

WRI639E
Practice of Poetry: Great Companions (3)
The focus of this workshop is poetic lineage, imitation and influence. We look at specific examples (Allen Ginsberg and William Blake, Frank O'Hara, Bernadette Mayer, etc.), as a starting point for discussions. Our goal for the semester
is to focus on student poetry as much as possible. We also introduce the ideas of lineage and influence in poetry, and trace lineages in one's own work, and give students an opportunity to present their own work to the class for discussion. Another objective is to make use of electronic sources as a way of keeping up with current trends in poetry. Open to MFA Creative Writing (low-residency) students only.

WRI640
Poetics Seminar: Women Writers (3)
An examination of the works of women writers who write what poet Lyn Hejinian calls "open texts," that is, prose, poetry, creative nonfiction, and hybrid works that are open to the world and to the reader, invite participation, foreground process, resist reduction, and examine authority. We look at these works in their own right as well as in relation to the literary movements of the time. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI641E
Practice of Fiction: Sculpting Prose (3)
This course explores the demands of narrative writing. We examine the overall structure of the work we create, focusing on beginnings, endings and effective development. Sculpting Prose functions as an online workshop. Work is generated, assessed and revised with the goal of realizing material that has been honed to its most effective degree. The paramount focus is on the writing itself. Open to MFA Creative Writing low-residency students only.

WRI647
Poetic's Seminar: Kerouac's Road (3)
We examine selected primary texts of Kerouac's narrative canon (what he called the Vanity of Duluoz), as well as his first novel and primary critical and personal biographies and oral history. His letters and journals are also included. Through these varied filters we come to a better understanding of his compositional techniques, spiritual, and emotional make-up and, ultimately, Kerouac's place in the context of his time and in the gallery of American letters. We probe beyond the myth of the namesake of the Kerouac School, until he reveals himself through his multidimensional life and work. Cross-listed as WRI1347.

WRI649
Literature Seminar: Classic Modernism (3)
In this survey course, we read and discuss many of the great innovations in literary style and composition in prose and verse in the period between 1910 and 1930. Writers include Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, Jean Toomer, T. S. Eliot, William Carlos Williams, James Joyce, Langston Hughes and Marianne Moore. The final third of the term is spent on a close reading of Joyce's Ulysses. Accompanying the primary texts are essays by the above authors and others on specific features of modernist poetry and narrative. Requirements include response papers and a substantial final paper on some aspect(s) of Ulysses.

WRI650
Literature Seminar: Midnight Angels (3)
Students study the history of the Beat Generation with special attention to the writings of Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso, William Burroughs, Diane di Prima, Amiri Baraka, Joanne Kyger, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Bob Dylan, Anne Waldman, Philip Whalen, Alan Watts, Michael McClure, Gary Snyder and others. The class thoroughly investigates the provocative essence and force of Beat Literature. Students write their own visions in the multiple forms of these singular and enduring writers. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI350.

WRI652
Poetics Seminar: The Archive (3)
The course delves into the infamous Naropa University Archive and all its rich offerings as a starting point for conversation about 20th- and 21st-century writing and what it means to archive: socially, culturally, and artistically. We develop an intensive listening and writing practice around the archive, examining critical and creative texts that penetrate and revitalize past recordings. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI660
Practice of Poetry: (3)
Section A: Practice of Poetry: Nature Poetry for the 21st Century. Natural history, Endangered Species Act, eco-poetics, bioregionalism. "The death of nature," "the end of wilderness." These should produce poetry in step with the premises of projective verse, field poetics, chance operation, dreamwork, chaos theory-the postmodern discoveries-right? Then why does most nature poetry look so straight, fusty, and antiquarian? We meet in a workshop situation and see how poetry might respond to current thought about metabolism, food chains, and the intertwined structures of human and animal psyches. Thirty thousand years ago the artists of Chauvet cave made a cultural breakthrough by responding to the megafauna of Eurasia. What now? Open to MFA, CW&P students only. Others by permission of the department. Section B: Practice of Poetry: The Prose Poem In this workshop we read and write prose poems. The prose poem is defined by its length of a quarter page to two pages, its absence of line breaks, and the poetic qualities of its prose, including the use of scenic imagery, narrative disruption, and compressed, irregularly rhythmic syntax. The narrative of a prose poem is often compared to that in dreams, involving sudden shifts of development and evocative tonal and atmospheric shading. Authors include Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Max Jacob, Gertrude Stein, Bernadette Mayer, Rosemarie Waldrop, Lisa Jarnot, Michael Friedman, and others. Open to CW&P students only.
WRI662
Creative Reading and Writing: Happy Days (3)
An exploration of themes regarding social class and the criminal justice system in American culture. The course demonstrates how social issues and identities are powerful tools for artists and writers in the creation of art, poetry, and fiction. With openness and candor, the course readings deal with historical social and cultural diversity and issues of oppression through American writing. The course examines how writers artistically recognize, signal, and represent peer group formations and organizations, and allows students to explore these themes in their own writing.

WRI664
Practice of Poetry: (3)
A writing workshop. Participants keep daily entries of thoughts, experimental writing, observation, conversation, readings, dreams and study. Readings in an array of chronicles: Japanese writers including Basho, Sei Shonagon and Masaoka Shiki; contemporary Americans who have published poetic journals: Joanne Kyger, Hannah Weiner, Lorine Niedecker, Gary Snyder and others. Questions: What makes a journal shapely? How have others composed cross-genre work on the edge of poetry, essay, fiction and autobiography? What does it mean to write with Time as the key element? Is revision of journal entries a crime or a necessity? Students submit an edited final project of twenty pages, with an introduction. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI667E
Creative Reading & Writing: Inspired by Inspiration (3)
The focus of this class is to write using the study of the work of five international and five American women poets. The poets included come from extremely divergent situations and geographies and work in styles substantially different from one another. We look at each poet's bio and discuss how it is reflected in their poetics as a starting point to understanding the poet's work. The students study the poems and consider how they can expand their own work by using the genre and direction of the poet upon whom we are focused. Open to MFA Creative Writing (low residency) students only.

WRI668E
Practice of Fiction: Toward Accumulating a Larger Text (3)
The focus of this class is on accruing, through episodes and exercises, the first draft of a larger text, a novel or novella. The work begins in this class and moves through outlines and specifics toward the first draft of a book length manuscript. Note: We will not be working with novels you may already have in progress. It is essential that everyone in the class be working simultaneously with the same specific underlying principles. Required books will be on the syllabus and announced at the first class.

WRI669E
Creative Reading & Writing: Collaborations, Crossing, and Collisions (3)
What happens when you open up your work to another mind, or two or three? We explore possibilities for collaborations between writer and writer, visual artist, musician, dancer, filmmaker, set-designer; the possibilities are endless. Through examining collaborations by contemporary writers, we explore collaboration theory and practice in order to apply it to our own work. In addition to exploring various forms of collaboration with classmates, each student embarks on a project in their home community. With a member of the community, the student engages in a collaboration of his or her choice, culminating in a public and class presentation during the final two weeks of the semester. Open to MFA Creative Writing (low residency) students only.

WRI670
Practice of Poetry: Word for Word, Line by Line (3)
While this workshop focuses on the participants' own poems, it also attempts to examine and clarify the traditions of which these poems partake, and to that end we read texts by practicing poets who have written about their work and the work of others in useful ways. These include "All This Everyday" by Ted Berrigan, "Other Traditions" by John Ashbery and selections from the critical writings of William Carlos Williams, Robert Creeley, Charles Bernstein and others. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI671
Prose Workshop: Narrative Practices (3)
In this workshop, we read contemporary writers whose work subverts narrative practices of different kinds. We examine a progression of works that engage creative process on a continuum from the sentence to the event, as models and prompts for our own narratives. What happens to prose writing when we engage narrative theory? What kinds of actions might be foregrounded, complicated, or transformed? How do we write something new?

WRI672
Professional Development: Book Arts (3)
In this course students learn the basic and intermediate skills of book arts by creating a series of blank journals utilizing a variety of binding techniques. After these skills are explained and mastered, students create 5 major projects: a linoleum block book, a hand-painted book, a book as map, a book sculpture, and a text-off-the-page installation. Additional assignments include writing a manifesto, a critical essay on an aspect of book arts (an artist, a technique, an aesthetic, etc), a review, and an artist's statement. The final exam will take place in a gallery setting where students will present their work from the semester. Materials fee.
WRI675
Creative Reading and Writing (3)
In this class, we make enquiries into the ways that we hold, process and capture memory—neurologically, physically and/or as technologies that happen outside of the body. We also look at models of memory in which memory has failed, biologically and culturally. How do we recover memory? How do we generate memory within a community? Developing our questions, we write documents that engage them. What is a document? The class alternates between readings, research projects and workshops.

WRI677
Poetics Seminar: Critical Theory (3)
The class aims at developing our understanding of basic issues in contemporary literary theory. Readings are taken from continental philosophy, anthropology, linguistics, literary criticism, psychoanalytic theory, and gender and ethnic studies. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI 455.

WRI680E
Mind Moving (3)
Mind Moving explores contemplative practices in prose and poetry. Journals, experimental verbal collages, montages, and works with multiple points of view are investigated, as is the compassionate characterization used by prose writers. The Buddhist appropriations and assimilations of 20th century experimental writers are primary; the course also covers relevant Buddhist and cultural history connected to these writers. Critical responses and artistic portfolio will be required. Guided meditation is provided. This course fulfills the contemplative requirement. Open to MFA Creative Writing low-residency students only.

WRI688E
Literature Seminar Kerouac's Road (3)
In this class, we examine selected primary texts of Kerouac's narrative canon (what he called the Vanity of Duluoz), as well as his first novel and primary critical and personal biographies and oral history. His letters and journals are also included. Through these varied filters we come to a better understanding of his compositional techniques, spiritual, and emotional make-up and, ultimately, Kerouac's place in the context of his time and in the gallery of American letters. We probe beyond the myth of the namesake of the Kerouac School, until he reveals himself through his multidimensional life and work.

WRI699
Independent Study: Writing (0.5)
This course offering is an opportunity for students to engage in in-depth, concentrated study with a particular faculty member for a semester. The design of study and coursework are decided upon by the student and faculty member.

WRI700
Professional Development: Writing Pedagogy Seminar (3)
This class prepares students for working with writers in the college setting, both one-on-one and in the classroom. A range of teaching models (including expressive, collaborative, critical, contemplative, and feminist philosophies) are investigated and practical methods for working with writers are developed. Strategies for engaging with the writing process, providing feedback on student work, and developing lesson plans are explored. Students construct a foundation for their own pedagogical approaches, based firmly in the theories they value. Open to all graduate students interested in teaching writing.

WRI703
Professional Development: Creative Writing Pedagogy Seminar (3)
Pedagogy: the art of teaching. This course is designed to meet you where you are as a graduate student and prepare you for working with creative writers in the college setting. We investigate a range of teaching models and develop practical methods for working with creative writers. We also explore strategies for engaging with the creative process, facilitating contemplative gestures, providing feedback on student work, fostering a writing community, and developing lesson plans. Finally, you construct a syllabus for an introductory college-level creative writing course.

WRI705
Professional Development: Small Press Publishing (3)
The course serves as an introduction to various facets of the small press, including its history and practical concerns around submissions and editing. This is an experiential class, in which students learn by doing. Through hands-on study, students will learn what a small press is as well as its role in forging community, promoting diversity and experimentation, and innovating publishing practices. Working individually and collaboratively, students will curate, design, distribute, and market one issue of Bombay Gin, as well as hone their individual professional development by developing submissions and cover/query letters. Cross-listed as WRI326.

WRI707
Poetics Seminar: Major Authors (3)
This course gives students the opportunity to comprehensively study the work of a single author or small select group in depth and detail. Students explore the historical and social moment within which the author wrote and consider the various aesthetic and theoretical concerns with which the author engages. Students read a number of major works by the author as well as critical theory on and related to the author's work.
WR710  
Practice of Poetry: Your Works (3)  
This writing workshop focuses on the participants’ own poems, their intentions and realizations, triumphs, disappointments and creative mistakes. We bear in mind John Ashbery's remark: "It's rather hard to be a good artist and also be able to explain intelligently what your art is about. In fact, the worse your art is, the easier it is to talk about it. At least, I'd like to think so." Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WR715  
Poetry Workshop: Innovative Poetry (3)  
In this course, we investigate work that transgresses, crosses borders, swerves. We examine texts that challenge our understanding of poetry and the writing process. Through a series of experiments and cross-genre collaborations, we complicate language, develop new forms, and carve out original spaces. To innovate is to be in conversation with an interrogative dynamic that opens to possibility and failure. Writing as experiments as exploration as the new word. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WR718  
Literature Seminar: The Cantos of Ezra Pound (3)  
"All times are contemporaneous in the mind." Like no other poem before or after, The Cantos has followed this thought as a beacon. The class studies what critic Hugh Kenner calls "the Pound era," including its literary movements of Imagism and Vorticism and those writers in dialogue with whom Pound developed his verse: H.D., William Carlos Williams, W. B. Yeats, and Marianne Moore. Then to ancestral presences: troubadours of Provence, lyre players of Greece, poet-exiles of Tang Dynasty China, dancers of Japanese Noh. With Homer and Dante as guides, we set sail through time and space, visiting the planet's verse traditions, the politics, the economics, reading the entire Cantos and a great deal of Pound's prose. Please bring a copy of The Cantos to the first class. Open to W&P MFA students only.

WR720  
Prose Workshop: Experimental Prose (3)  
An engagement of contemporary developments in experimental prose writing, focusing on contemporary experimental prose writing in North America since 1985, with an emphasis on nonnormative plot, style, and language elements that draw on other disciplines for their structural emphasis. This class requires students to write experimental prose works or sections of longer narratives in progress, along with completing appropriate exercises and reading assignments.

WR721  
Poetics Seminar: Postcolonial Literature (3)  
This class requires students to read and write in conversation with fiction, poetry, and critical texts that engage a postcolonial content. Thematic inquiries engage the relationship of characters and subjects to national and regional space, terrain and borderlands, as well as questions of displacement and belonging. Aesthetically, we examine what happens to language and the intactness (or not) of form in literatures that engage a continuum of voluntary and involuntary trajectories. Readings endeavor to provide a political, historical, and cultural context for each literary work through the lens of postcolonial theories of different kinds.

WR722  
Poetry Workshop: Eco-Poetics (3)  
Eco means house: our larger house has come to be the whole global ecology, in detail. Students study and write poetry and prose that directs attention to surroundings, especially "nature." In this course, we discover and invent new ways of representing nature's rich variety in language. Open to W&P MFA students only.

WR723  
Practice of Prose: Creative Nonfiction (3)  
Engages students in writing creative nonfiction, that is, nonfiction that engages craft elements from other genres to produce work on a continuum from the personal essay, travel journalism, to book reviews. Experiments, discussions and workshops engage contemporary developments in creative nonfiction, with the opportunity to work in short prose forms or to produce a sustained narrative.

WR725  
Art of the Essay (3)  
"Myself," said Montaigne, "am the groundwork of my book." An essay is a foray into such groundwork to produce personal or formal inquiries and assessments of any given topic, whether about hunting elephants, the death of a moth or about girls in Des Moines. In this course we both read and write short prose works encompassing autobiography, memoir, travel sketches and book reviews, demystifying and engaging a process that produces provocative and entertaining literature. Writers we look at may include Didion, Orwell, Baldwin and Woolf.

WR727  
Poetics Seminar: Cultural and Ethnic Literature (3)  
This course focuses on the cultural production of community and identity by engaging with a variety of literary texts from diverse geographic and national sites. By engaging literature critically and creatively, students examine how authors create and readers read through their own sets of experiences in cultural and ethnic contexts; the relations of power and knowledge, politics and aesthetics; and the utility or failure of literary theory to address cultural and ethnic struggles.

WR729  
Multigenre Workshop: Collaborative Texts (3)  
This course examines the poetics of collaborative acts: the "third mind" experiment. Writers embark on explorations...
with other writers, artists, musicians, dancers, or filmmakers. Texts that challenge the single author and cross artistic genres are explored in order to expand narrative, poetic lyric, meaning, and structure. We interrogate the third space between collaborators and question notions of "authority" in authorship. The confluence between two or more writers sparks new developments in the creative process.

**WRI730**  
Multigenre Workshop: Performance Art and Writing (3)  
This course uses performance art to generate creative texts. Our performance praxis stems from a wide variety of approaches, formal and invented, and our final goal is to put that praxis into conversation with our individual writing practices. We ask how the investigations of performance +duration, participation, witness and witnessing, movement, constraint, and temporal and spatial awareness+can invigorate our texts and lend them new insight.

**WRI731**  
Prose Workshop: The Novel (3)  
In this course, students complete the first draft of a novel. The work will be a full-length narrative of 60,000 to 100,000 words. By generating this draft over the span of a semester, students identify and embrace their writing practice, determining how they go about performing this discipline alongside the other commitments in their lives. Ideally, the work will be rewritten and polished, but the main goal is to demystify the long form narrative and to set the elements in place that will serve the writers throughout their creative lives. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

**WRI733**  
Poetics Seminar: Queer Lit (3)  
This course investigates texts that "queer." We read literature and theory that questions, complicates, deterritorializes, defines, curates, and inhabits the "genre" of queer literature. We consider, for instance, the bilingualism of gender and genre, liminal space, sexuality and textuality, the politics of syntax and sex, the body, the not-body, and more.

**WRI736**  
Trends in Contemporary Literature: Introduction to Feminist Theory (3)  
Is it possible for a woman to be? Is femininity definable? What have been the consequences of variously addressing these questions? What has been the impact of psychoanalytic theory, linguistics, critical theory and cultural studies on feminist thought? And what impact has feminist theory had in the academy, the literary arts and popular culture? The course examines these and related questions through reading and discussing a few dead white males and the works of, among others, Goldman, Beauvoir, Irigaray, Kristeva and Butler. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI436.

**WRI736E**  
Trends in Contemporary Literature: Introduction to Feminist Theory (3)  
Is it possible for a woman to be? Is femininity definable? What have been the consequences of variously addressing these questions? What has been the impact of psychoanalytic theory, linguistics, critical theory and cultural studies on feminist thought? And what impact has feminist theory had in the academy, the literary arts and popular culture? The course examines these and related questions through reading and discussing a few dead white males and the works of, among others, Goldman, Beauvoir, Irigaray, Kristeva and Butler.

**WRI739**  
Poetry Workshop: Contemplative Poetics (3)  
Contemplative poetics affirms trust in the meaningfulness of immediate experience as basis, exploration into modes of composition as practice, and attention to elements and structures of language as medium. We work with contemplative practices that ground mind and body in active attention; invite curiosity that extends attention into investigation, and take chances in execution that brings surprise of form and insight. This course introduces exercises, methods, and procedures to open new directions in thinking, writing, and being. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

**WRI740**  
Poetics Seminar: Film Poetics (3)  
This course explores the relationship between poetry and film. By the mid-20th century, new American poets and underground filmmakers had established a vibrant fusion and artistic collaborations established and redefined links between the moving picture and the written and spoken word, resulting in an extraordinary profusion of poetry/film hybrids. We also look at film-related poetic writings and the groundbreaking advent of the poetic montage.

**WRI744**  
Multigenre Workshop: Somatic Writing (3)  
In this course, we build a piece/project centered upon somatic experiments and forms. We explore what it means to "write the body," whether we are thinking about movement, animal ethologies, the nervous system, or larger questions of embodiment. What is an embodied work of creative writing? We build a space for writing in which new forms are able to appear, inspired and evoked by body-based practices. We also examine mixed performances and readings of all kinds.

**WRI748**  
Multigenre Workshop: Activist Writing (3)  
This course explores writing that activates, that calls us to action, and that asks how writing can heal the world. We read and write texts that call and respond, that counteract, that repair and repeat. This involves some field experience, research into what calls us to action: the environment, human rights, war, political rhetoric, drone strikes, gun violence, etc.,.
as well as possible petitioning, marching, and sign-making - in short, random acts of poetic intervention.

**WRI750**
Literature Seminar: Radical Prosody (3)
Prosody is the study of verse structure through its phonic, rhythmic and semantic elements. Syllable and sound, syntax and grammar, form and meaning all interact within the weave of poetic "making." In this course we begin to see and feel the ways in which poetry written in English has gone about patterning linguistic elements and artfully drawing attention to imaginative rhythmic expression. We track the most important prosodic innovations that have revolutionized poetic form and content over the past five hundred years in British and American poetry. Requirements include response papers and a substantial final paper. Open to CW&L and CW&P students only; others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI450.

**WRI752**
Multigenre Workshop: Text and Image (3)
This interdisciplinary and multigenre writing course explores the confluence of text and image in poetry, prose, and cross-genre texts. Through exploratory reading and creative writing experiments, students investigate the ways in which images interrupt, complicate, and layer narrative as well as the reasons a writer might embrace this multimodal, multivocal form. Students produce creative manuscripts that draw on and innovate with text and image.

**WRI754**
Poetics Seminar: Lineages (3)
This course explores a tradition, or cross-section of traditions, that informs the aesthetic goals of the Jack Kerouac School. Possible focuses include New American Poetry, the New York School, Black Mountain Poetics, the Black Arts Movement, and the Beats, among others. Students consider the historical and social circumstances for a specific movement in addition to its primary theoretical or aesthetic concerns. How a particular lineage expounds on contemplative and innovative poetics will also be considered.

**WRI756**
Mind Moving (3)
Mind Moving explores contemplative practices in prose and poetry. Philip Whalen and Gary Snyder's experimental verbal collages, montages and mobiles with multiple points of view are investigated along with the compassionate characterization used by prose writers. The Buddhist appropriations and assimilations of Whalen, Kerouac and Snyder's early artistic processes are primary. Mind Moving covers relevant American Buddhist and cultural history connected to Whalen, Snyder and Kerouac's art. A critical response essay and artistic portfolio required. Guided meditation is provided. This course serves for contemplative credit. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

**WRI758**
Poetry Workshop: Documentary Poetics (3)
This course is a writing workshop focused on investigative methods and documentary materials. A diverse array of poets who base their work on significant research are explored. Each participant takes on one or more fields of research to produce a poetry manuscript. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

**WRI761**
Poetics Seminar: Contemporary Trends (3)
In this course, students focus on the current trends, patterns, and concerns of writing practices. We investigate and consider a variety of artistic practices that both inform and are informed by contemporary texts, which may include the cross-pollination of writing with other cultural and social practices, conceptualism, or the blurring of low and high art. In addition to reading contemporary texts, students trace the history of these trends to observe their dynamic evolution. The Pentagon recently released a report "asserting decisively," according to the New York Times, "that climate change poses an immediate threat to national security, with increased risks from terrorism, infectious disease, global poverty and food shortages." Of course, popular culture has for some time imagined this future, capitalizing on the paranoia of uncertainty. In this class, we will examine how innovative writers address concerns about climate change, the growing disparity between the rich and the poor, and the breakdown of infrastructure not only by imagining this future but also by problematizing the language through which we figure it. We will read poetry, prose, and criticism that approach crisis and disaster not so much in order to heighten our fear of it but to question and even decenter human presence in the performance and representation of it. While nihilism, apocalypse, and uncertainty will often enter the conversation, we will also discover how some innovative writing expresses a cautious hope that these final days might be inhabited by an "us."

**WRI762**
Creative Reading and Writing: Literature of Exile and Diaspora (3)
An opportunity to engage with fiction, poetry and critical texts regarding exile and diaspora. Readings and research provide a political, historical and cultural context for literary work covered. As writers, students create work that engage and extend the themes and aesthetics of the reading assignments.

**WRI763**
Multigenre Workshop: Notes on Architecture (3)
In this class, we read works inspired by the experience and imagining of architecture: the passage, the corridor, the underground tunnel, the corner of a city perpetually turning. How does architecture inspire writers to imagine narrative and poetic structures, whether virtual or real, and how can we write/enter into the space continually opening out from the one preceding it: or not+what is it like to enter a sequence
of rooms that is already there, furnished by the previous occupant? Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI764
Creative Reading & Writing: Bad Business: Noir & Nasty (3)
Covers noir mystery and crime novels and five noir movies. The definition of a noir story is this: Average Joe or Jane Doe get in deep trouble and make all the wrong choices in a corrupt and venal society. Common fictional problems of character, scene and narration are taught along with solutions. A professional training component covers Elmore Leonard crime novels with an in-depth look at the research he conducted via a documentary Elmore Leonard Criminal Records. Writers are not expected to write in the mystery genre. Every class devotes its second half to critiques of student writing in any genre. Critical responses cover technical issues of noir. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI765E
Practice of Fiction: Flash Fiction, Make it New (3)
The spirit of the experiment has been central to American literature. In this workshop on flash fiction, we examine some unusual structures and approaches for writing short shorts. There are many techniques and approaches from poetry that can be applied to writing micro-fiction. We experiment with some of these.

WRI768
Literature Seminar: William Blake (3)
Students read a wide selection of works from Blake's vast oeuvre, including the Songs of Innocence and of Experience, The Book of Thel, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, America, Europe, The Four Zoas, and Milton. These include the "illuminated works" engraved and painted on copper plates, which are explored. Students examine Blake's visionary poetics through a variety of interpretative analytics, from deconstruction to recent feminist, Marxist and psychoanalytic theory, including Buddhist Abhidharma psychology. Weekly response papers and a final research paper are required. Open to MFA W&P students only, others by permission of the program.

WRI770
Multigenre Workshop: Cross-genre Forms (3)
This course investigates hybridity as form. We expand our definitions of crossing genres by examining various disciplines and theories-heterosis, diasporic contact zones, migratory borders, and chimeras-in order to problematize the binary of the poetry/prose dichotomy. We transgress the line, the sentence, and the narrative as well as press on the boundaries of writing-mixing and matching, cross-talking our way through. Through vertical and horizontal interrogative acts, we research and develop forms that can house our cross-genre gestures. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI771
Prose Workshop: Innovative Fiction (3)
This course is an engagement with fiction that innovates (and sometimes rejects) narrative form, character development, and point of view, as well as other traditional conventions of fiction writing. Students write, read, and present on fiction, in short and long form, marked by qualities of playfulness in language, experimentation in form and time, self-reflexivity, and the blending of high and low art. Open to W&P MFA students only.

WRI773
Creative Reading and Writing: Cross-Cultural Writing Practices (3)
This class focuses on transnational works to explore the ways in which writers who cross between the spaces of different cultures are (sometimes) also working towards transformations of deep structure in the writing. Does this happen as an action of form (how does form migrate?) or aesthetics (what kinds of complex choices are available to language when the body that speaks the language is no longer in the same place as the language itself?). How do figures in these works emerge/cross from one frame to another? These discussions develop a conversation about hybridity and transformation in your own work, which is work-shopped on alternate weeks. This class is open to any genre and authors we read include W.G. Sebald, Monica Ali and Kamau Brathwaite. Open to CW&P MFA students only.

WRI775
Multigenre Workshop: Cross-Disciplinary Writing (3)
In this course, we read texts that engage various disciplines such as film, architecture, performance, drawing, history, or science, as well as other literary texts. We consider how these genres interact and perform our own writing experiments in response. Students engage in a workshop environment, discussing required readings and other students' creative work with an eye on how these works were constructed via genre and stylistic techniques.

WRI781
Professional Development: Project Outreach (3)
This course sends students into local schools, retirement homes, shelters, at-risk youth groups, and so on, to lead creative writing sessions. A portion of the weekly class times occurs in these community settings. Field logistics, practice writing experiences, teaching techniques, and field experiences are discussed. Students act as literary activists, teaching and lending inspiration. Open to CW&L and CW&P students, also to others by permission of the program. Cross-listed as WRI381.

WRI785E
Practice of Fiction: Building Blocks (3)
During the first half of every class we concentrate on short works/passages from various authors and/or view short
video segments for assignments on specific skills: dialogue, characterization, scene work, narration, and point of view. For the second half of each class, students bring their writing for comments and/or critiques. Work by Alice Munro, Quentin Tarrantino, Lorrie Moore, David Mamet, Jhumpa Lahiri, and others used. Critique skills are taught. Written critical feedback is required from students and instructor on student writing. Goals: Get past second drafts; 35 pp. or one-third of your final manuscript. Recommended for first-semester students. Open to W&P MFA Creative Writing (low-residency) students only.

WRI788E
Creative Reading and Writing: The Art of Nonfiction (3)
Where does fact meet fiction, reportage meet poetry? In explorations that deepen our understanding of the possibilities for ourselves as nonfiction writers, we come together in workshops to write, read, and discuss memoir, travel writing, nature writing, food writing, history, diaries, criticism, and hybrid forms. We also consider how to assemble a nonfiction book proposal. Readings may include book-length and shorter works by Diana Athill, Alan Bennett, Truman Capote, Gerald Durrell, and Edmund White, as well as selections from John D'Agata's Next American Essay. Open to W&P MFA Creative Writing (low-residency) students only.

WRI789W
Fall Writing Practicum (1)
Study and analysis of selected literary and compositional issues and elements with Naropa faculty and visiting faculty. Topics may cover a wide range of subject matter and methods in writing and vary from semester to semester. These may include, but are not limited to, works of literature, forms of composition, literary history, writing practice (including prose, poetry and translation), literary criticism, as well as film and media studies. Cross-listed as WRI389W.

WRI790E
Creative Reading and Writing: Investigative Poetics (3)
Some possible investigations include whether one kind of engagement with the world is more authentic than another. What makes a poem "political," and whether a political poem is determined by one's level of engagement with the world. Some others involve writing poetry that (according to Amiel Alcalay) "pillages" from sources such as personal diaries, newspapers and official documents. Writing that wavers between overt and oblique states of mind, and between a direct commentary on reality and abstract experiences within language. Open to MFA Creative Writing students only.

WRI791W
Spring Writing Practicum (1)
Study and analysis of selected literary and compositional issues and elements with Naropa faculty and visiting faculty. Topics may cover a wide range of subject matter and methods of writing and may vary from semester to semester. These may include, but are not limited to, works of literature, forms of composition, literary history, writing practice (including prose, poetry, and translation), literary criticism, as well as film and media studies. Cross-listed as WRI391W.

WRI792E
Book Matters: An Introduction to Publishing (3)
This course introduces the student of writing to the world of publishing. Led by an experienced book editor, and using readings, discussions and online appearances from industry professionals, it explores different types and genres of publishing, considers the roles of literary agents, booksellers and reviewers, and provides an overview of the main publishing processes and functions: editorial, production, design, sales, marketing, publicity and rights. We also develop practical skills in copy-editing and proofreading, write submission letters, compose press releases, and plan marketing campaigns. Our aim is a deeper understanding of the culture of publishing.

WRI793E
Special Topics: Writing Workshop (3)
Study and analysis of selected literary and compositional issues and elements. Topics cover a wide range of subject matter and methods and vary from semester to semester. These may include, but not be limited to, works of literature, forms of composition, literary history, writing practice (including prose, poetry and translation), literary criticism, as well as film and media studies. Cross-listed as WRI490/WRI793e.

WRI794E
Special Topics: Writing Workshop (3)
Study and analysis of selected literary and compositional issues and elements. Topics cover a wide range of subject matter and methods and vary from semester to semester. These may include, but not be limited to, works of literature, forms of composition, literary history, writing practice (including prose, poetry and translation), literary criticism, as well as film and media studies. Cross-listed as WRI490/WRI793.

Fall 2014: The Prose Poem, or Poetic Prose. Which of us, in his ambitious moments, has not dreamed of the miracle of a poetic prose, musical, without rhyme and without rhythm, supple enough and rugged enough to adapt itself to the lyrical impulses of the soul, the undulations of the psyche, the prickings of consciousness? Baudelaire (Paris Spleen) The prose poem is a border genre that seems particularly suited to speaking a consciousness, the consciousness that the reader and writer encounter line by line, paragraph by paragraph, a natural prose lyricism composed from ordinary thought and speech. A paragraph can also be seen as a block, a visual space, a different type of border. Besides introducing you to the prose poem, this course is also designed to survey some of the theories and poems from movements in modern and contemporary off-center poetry, such as imagism, surrealism, objectivism, the New York School, Language writing, Oulipo, etc. This course is a combination of a literature course and
workshop. You will write poems in prose that interact with the ideas and theories put forth in the lectures and readings. If you are a poet, working with sentences and paragraph might change your idea about what a poem is, revealing new possible rhythms, forms, approaches and genre sliding. If you are a fiction writer, working with the prose poem may help you work on style and inventive structures for writing.

WRI794W
Writer's Practicum with Anne Waldman (1)
Study and analysis of selected literary and compositional issues and elements with Naropa faculty and visiting faculty. Topics may cover a wide range of subject matter and methods of writing and may vary from semester to semester. These may include, but are not limited to, works of literature, forms of composition, literary history, writing practice (including prose, poetry, and translation), literary criticism, as well as film and media studies. Cross-listed as WRI394W.

WRI795W
Writing Practicum with Allen Ginsberg Visiting Fellow (1)
Study and analysis of selected literary and compositional issues and elements with Naropa faculty and visiting faculty. Topics may cover a wide range of subject matter and methods of writing and may vary from semester to semester. These may include, but are not limited to, works of literature, forms of composition, literary history, writing practice (including prose, poetry, and translation), literary criticism, as well as film and media studies. Cross-listed as WRI395W.

WRI796
Special Topics: Poetics Seminar (3)
Topics explore various literature based methodologies and practices and vary from semester to semester. Course focuses may include, but are not limited to, New American Poetry, New Narrative Writing, Black Arts Movement, Women Writers, Hybrid Texts, image and text, film and media studies, as well as various other themes driven by critical analysis of literature. Cross-listed as WRI491/796e.

WRI796E
Special Topics: Poetics Seminar (3)
Topics explore various literature based methodologies and practices and vary from semester to semester. Course focuses may include, but are not limited to, New American Poetry, New Narrative Writing, Black Arts Movement, Women Writers, Hybrid Texts, image and text, film and media studies, as well as various other themes driven by critical analysis of literature. Cross-listed as WRI491/796.

WRI797
Special Topics: Professional Development (3)
Topics explore various professional development based methodologies and practices and vary from semester to semester. Course focuses may include, but are not limited to, book arts, 21st century publishing practices, project outreach, small press editing, pedagogy theory and praxis, and various other themes driven by the development of professional skills. Cross-listed with WRI492/797e.

WRI797E
Special Topics: Professional Development (3)
Topics explore various professional development based methodologies and practices and vary from semester to semester. Course focuses may include, but are not limited to, book arts, 21st century publishing practices, project outreach, small press editing, pedagogy theory and praxis, and various other themes driven by the development of professional skills. Cross-listed with WRI492/797.

WRI875
MFA Thesis Seminar (3)
In this course, MFA Creative Writing & Poetics students in their penultimate semester propose, research, write, and revise their Critical Research Paper. Class time is dedicated to one-on-one instructional support, library research, peer review, and student presentations. In addition to supporting the completion of the Critical Research Paper, the course also introduces students to the role of the writer-as-critic through exploration of critical texts, poetics journals, writers' conferences, and submission processes. Open to Creative Writing and Poetics MFA students only.

WRI880
MFA Thesis (6)
As the culminating completion requirement of the MFA degree, graduate students submit an MFA Thesis, which includes creative and critical components. Additional information about the MFA Thesis is available in the JKS office.

WRI880E
MFA Thesis (6)
As the culminating completion requirement of the MFA degree, graduate students submit an MFA Thesis, which includes creative and critical components. Additional information about the MFA Thesis is available in the JKS office.

WRI881
Extended MFA Thesis (0.5)
Graduate students wanting to apply for an additional semester to complete their MFA thesis must contact their advisor. Additional information about extending the MFA thesis is available in the JKS office.

WRI881E
Extended MFA Thesis (0.5)
Graduate students wanting to apply for an additional semester to complete their MFA thesis must contact their advisor. Additional information about extending the MFA thesis is available in the JKS office.