

## AWP's Ninth Tweet Chat: #MFAChat

November 2 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

Today at 2 p.m. ET, use **#MFAchat** to join the discussion about writing programs.



**#MFAchat**  
everything you wanted  
to know about  
writing programs

Tuesday, November 3, 2015  
from 2:00 - 3:00 p.m.



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

Welcome to AWP's 9th Twitter chat! Today we'll be discussing writing programs. [#MFAchat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

With us today is Director of Membership, Diane Zinna, [@DianeZinna](#). [#MFAchat](#)





[AWP @awpwriter](#)

Also from the Membership department is Membership Associate Kenny Lakes, [@usyboroda](#).  
[#MFAchat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

And from the Publications department, we are joined by Jason Gray, [@jasonmgray](#). [#MFAchat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

We are also joined by many writing programs across the world & a recent MFA graduate, Elizabeth Deanna Morris Lakes, [@exclamate](#). [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

About me: I have an MFA in poetry from [@Mason MFA](#). I currently work at [#FINRA](#) as a test development editor. Yes, I got a real job! [#MFAChat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

How do you choose a program that's right for you? Find out now! [#MFAchat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

To ask a question at any time and to follow the discussion, use hashtag [#MFAchat](#).



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Welcome! I'm Diane Zinna, AWP's Membership Director, and I'll be your host for the next hour as we discuss MFA programs. [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Like many of the staff here at AWP (breathlessly standing by to answer your questions), I attended an MFA Program. [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

We also invited directors of many different creative writing programs to join us today to share their perspectives. [#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

Over two years, I ended up applying to 30 different MA and MFA programs in poetry. I got into 6, but I only got into 1 fully funded [#MFAChat](#)



### [The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

See our Guide for Applicants for ideas on writing samples, statements of purpose, recommendations, etc. [#MFAChat](#) <http://tinyurl.com/ozbsbtx>



### [IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

The Institute of American Indian Arts' low residency MFA is unique. Check out our faculty here: <http://www.iaia.edu/MFA> [#MFAchat](#)



[Marie-Helene Bertino @mhbertino](#)

I teach here alongside some of the most brilliant minds I know. Check it out and apply, ye MFA seekers!



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

Are you considering an MFA? I'll be participating in [@awpwriter](#)'s [#MFAchat](#) today at 1 pm CST. Ask me anything about Iowa.



[red starbucks cup @helenholmes](#)

[@jennasauers](#) [@awpwriter](#) do you feel Iowa's been essential to your development as a writer? would I miss NYC too much to get stuff done?



**Jenna Sauers** [@jennasauers](#)

[@helenbholmes](#) "essential" is hard to define, but I have developed during my MFA in ways I wouldn't have had I remained a freelancer [#MFAchat](#)



**Jenna Sauers** [@jennasauers](#)

[@helenbholmes](#) missing NYC is tough though. It is a HUGE change and I vastly underestimated how disruptive the adjustment would be [#MFAchat](#)



**red starbucks cup** [@helenbholmes](#)

[@jennasauers](#) could you tell me about what's been hardest for you besides the writing? [#MFAchat](#)



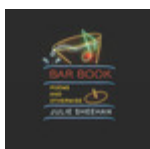
**Jenna Sauers** [@jennasauers](#)

[@helenbholmes](#) but I am much happier now. In grad school I also have amazing shit I never had before as a freelancer, like health insurance 🙌



**Joshua Bohnsack** [@josiahbohnsack](#)

What are some points I should consider and avoid using on my SOP? [#MFAchat](#)



**Julie Sheehan** [@thebarbook](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) avoid opening with "ever since I can remember I wanted to write." So has everyone else.



[Carla Caglioti @SouthMFA](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) [@thebarbook](#) We [@southampwriters](#) recommend to be yourself -- which is very difficult to do. You're looking for the right fit



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) I just tweeted a link to our Guide for Applicants. I wrote it with our program in mind, but also for anyone MFA applicant:

<http://www.muw.edu/images/colleges/as/llp/MFAGuideForApplicants.pdf>



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

Any advice for writing a good Statement of Purpose essay? [#MFAChat](#)



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@awpwriter](#) be specific and honest. spill your guts & let it all hang out. it's your time to put it all out on the table. be brave. [#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@awpwriter](#) Here's what NOT to put in: "I've been literally writing since I came out of the womb." Focus on what you're doing now! [#MFAchat](#)



[Alyse Bensele @leaseandleaves](#)

[@awpwriter](#) Know the programs you're applying to and truthfully discuss your goals-- explain how you're well-matched for each other! [#MFAchat](#)



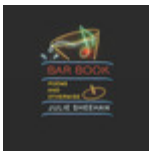
[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@awpwriter](#) I always tell students asking for advice about SOP--straightforward and honest is best. Smart alecky, not so much.



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

Consider your personal statement a writing sample. Get specific and real. Don't say you've always been a reader or a writer! [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@dan\\_hoyt](#) we now ask applicants to describe their current reading interests. [#MFAchat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

[@thebarbook](#) Great idea. [#MFAchat](#) and no Chuck Palahniuk!



[Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA](#)

In the personal statement we look for serious readers and as well as serious writers. Be specific. Let us know why you want this. [#MFAchat](#)



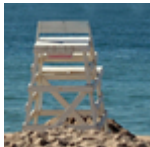
### [The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

Mississippi University for Women has a new MFA that is flexible, affordable, professional and personal. [#MFACHat](#) [http://www.muw.edu/mfacreativewriting ...](http://www.muw.edu/mfacreativewriting...)



### [The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

Mississippi University for Women has been coed since 1984. Our MFA is open to all. [#MFACHat](#) [http://www.muw.edu/disclosures/non-discrimination ...](http://www.muw.edu/disclosures/non-discrimination...)



### [SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: no tracking by genre. The bad news: bring your own artistic focus. [#MFACHat](#)



### [David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

Hello [#MFACHat](#) If anyone has a question about the MFA at [@WUSTL](#) feel free to ask. Our website is currently down, tho...bummer.





[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

[#MFAchat](#) is on! So, first thing: Yes, we hold our residencies at a spa. This is our campus:  
[http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/palm-springs-rancho-las-palmas ...](http://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/palm-springs-rancho-las-palmas)



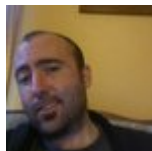
[UCR Palm Desert @UCRPalmDesert](#)

See why students love our MFA program! [#MFAchat](#)



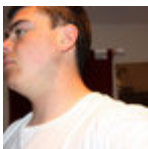
[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@UCRPDLRMFA](#) Wait...what? This is amazing! [#MFAChat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

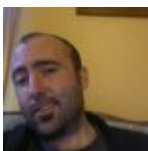
I suggest that undergrads consider applying to an MA program or two along with MFA programs. [#MFAchat](#)



[Stephen J Furlong @BeenASon24](#)

Stephen J Furlong Retweeted Daniel A. Hoyt

I applied to four of five MAs and am currently in an MA program now. Having those as options really helped. [#MFAchat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

I'm not just saying that because I direct the creative writing program at [#KState](#)'s MA program. [#MFAchat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

I recommend Kansas State (of course, the University of Missouri (where I got my MA two decades ago), and Mississippi State. [#MFAchat](#)



[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: we're in the Hamptons. The bad news: they don't let you sleep on the beach. [#MFAChat](#)



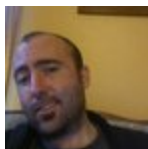
[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Let's get started! Alumni and current students, what made you ultimately choose the program you attended? [#MFAChat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[.@DianeZinna](#) I did my MFA at [@umsl](#) - I wanted to live in a city and be in the Midwest [#MFAchat](#)



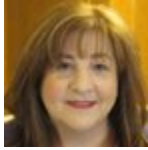
[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

[.@mpnye @DianeZinna @umsl](#) UMSL has a great magazine and faculty. Good city too: Just ignore those Cardinals fans.



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@dan\\_hoyt @DianeZinna @umsl](#) Spend \$ on MLB app for your favorite team! \$20 a year! [#unpaidendorsement](#)



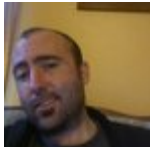
**Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo**

**@DianeZinna** I chose my program almost entirely on faculty. Also, on location (low res), reputation, strength in my track. **#MFAchat**



**Jason Gray @jasonmgray**

I'll start with this: "Don't go in debt to be a poet." Best advice I ever received about grad school. **#MFAchat**



**Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\_hoyt**

Here's some general advice and words of caution that we give to students applying to grad school in CW. <http://k-statecreativewriting.tumblr.com/post/33706859670/on-applying-to-mfa-programs...> **#MFAchat**



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

1/4 Joining us: University of California Riverside's Low-Res Program, St Mary's College of California, Stony Brook Southampton **#MFAChat**



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

2/4 Western State Colorado University, Virginia Tech, Sierra Nevada College, Rosemont College, Kansas State, Converse College...**#MFAChat**



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

3/4 The Institute of American Indian Arts, Mississippi University for Women, Washington University in St. Louis... [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

4/4...and Cardiff Metropolitan University in the UK. Whew! That is a lot. But there are hundreds. How to start? [#MFAChat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

Also excited to let everyone know, if you don't that [@WUSTL\\_English](#) MFA now has a CNF track, starting its second year in Fall 2016 [#MFAchat](#)



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

I teach in all online, all CNF program [@Bay\\_Path](#) U. Happy to answer any Qs. Graduate of Stonecoast low res program (U So Maine). [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

I applied to 13 schools while finishing my BA in creative writing from [@SUWriters](#). I got into 13 schools, all unfunded. I waited. [#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

It was an important and good decision. I got out of school with minimal debt, & teaching and editing experience. [#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

Unless you have an inheritance, live at home, work full time, or some combination thereof, do NOT go to grad school unfunded [#MFAChat](#)



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

I am Kenny Lakes, Membership Associate [@awpwriter](#) I did not attend an MFA program, but am happy to point out the resources we have [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Our Guide to Writing Programs lists over 950 creative writing programs  
<http://bit.ly/1FTizy7> [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

We recently renovated the Guide to make it a better resource for prospective students  
[#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Clicking on the school's name will bring you to their full listing, where you can learn more about the program [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

You can sort the Guide by different regions or by a specific state [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna](#) [@DianeZinna](#)

We have about 50 low-res and online-only programs listed [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna](#) [@DianeZinna](#)

You can also narrow your search by genre and type of degree. We don't just list MFA programs, but all undergrad and grad degrees. [#MFAChat](#)



[UsyBoroda](#) [@usyboroda](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Here is what that looks like on our site! [#MFAChat](#)

1. Location ?

Midwest OR Any State

2. Program Type ?

- ☒ Residential  
☐ Low Residency  
☐ Online



[Diane Zinna](#) [@DianeZinna](#)

When looking at the list of programs, you can easily see what degrees are offered and what genres are covered. [#MFAChat](#)



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) So many genres to choose from! [#MFACHat](#)

### 3. Genre

- ☐ Fiction
 ☒ Poetry
 ☐ Creative Nonfiction
 ☒ Literary Translation
- ☐ Professional Writing (technical writing, PR, etc.)
 ☐ Criticism & Theory
- ☐ Writing for Children
 ☐ Screenwriting
 ☐ Playwriting
- ☐ Popular/Genre Fiction

### 4. Level of Study

All Graduate Degrees



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

You can also see a list of faculty that teaches at the school as well as where the program is located [#MFACHat](#)



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Some faculty members' names will link to their AWP bio [#MFACHat](#)

NOW DISPLAYING 1 - 2 OF 2 RESULTS:			
Writing Program Name	Location	Genres	Degrees
 <b>George Mason University</b> Faculty: Jennifer Atkinson, Sally Keith, Eric Pankey, Susan Tichy, Courtney Brkic, Alan Cheuse, Stephen Goodwin, Heion Habila, Susan Richards Shreve, Beverly Lowry, Kyoko Mori	VA, US	Fiction, Poetry, Creative Nonfiction	MFA, BA, MINOR
 <b>Susquehanna University</b> Faculty: Gary Fincke, Tom Bailey, Karla Kelsey, Glen Retief, Catherine Dent, Sias Zobel	PA, US		BA



**[VT Creative Writing @VirginiaTechCW](#)**

**[#MFAChat](#)** VirginiaTech: small 3 yr program + diverse student body + vibrant college town in bucolic setting + campus looks like Hogwarts



**[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)**

I tweeted a link to our Guide for Applicants—that's my advice. What other programs have advice like this? **[#MFAChat](#)**

**[http://www.muw.edu/images/colleges/as/llp/MFAGuideForApplicants.pdf ...](http://www.muw.edu/images/colleges/as/llp/MFAGuideForApplicants.pdf)**



**[Frances Cannon @honeyhog](#)**

Where but in Iowa City can a writing grad student spend 10 weeks with so many international scholars? **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)**

I direct the MFA in creative nonfiction at Bay Path. The first fully online MFA in CNF. Ask me anything! **[#MFAchat](#)**



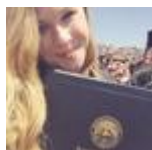
**[English@CardiffMet @English CMet](#)**

Check out our graduate Creative Writing program here:

**[http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/education/courses/Pages/Creative-Writing---MA.aspx ...](http://www.cardiffmet.ac.uk/education/courses/Pages/Creative-Writing---MA.aspx)**

**[#MFAchat](#)**





[Megan Arthur @meaganearthur](#)

Program directors & panel members, what are common mistakes/general turn offs that you often find in writing samples? [#MFAchat @awpwriter](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

[@meaganearthur @awpwriter](#) And typos and cliches within the first sentence -- we want originality and attention to detail [#MFAChat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

[@meaganearthur @awpwriter](#) Your entrance essays don't need to be the worst lifetime movie of your life! Tell us something good! [#MFAchat](#)



[Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA](#)

[@meaganearthur @awpwriter](#) Biggest mistake is when the guidelines aren't followed. If uncertain, be sure to ask. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@meaganearthur @awpwriter #mfachat](#) Just send your best writing and make it as perfect as you can. Write with passion. Be yourself.



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@meaganearthur](#) [@awpwriter](#) Obvious ones: spelling/grammar errors, less obvious, poor poem or story structure,, sending too much. [#MFAChat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Broadly, I tell prospective writers 1. Fully funded programs only 2. Three years rather than two 3. work on a [#litmag](#) [#MFAchat](#)



[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#)

This is so spot on. Conveniently, the [#NonfictionWritingProgram @uiowa](#) gives you the chance to do all 3+ [#MFAchat](#)



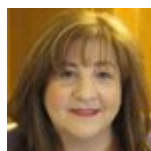
[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@mpnye](#) Although if you're mid-career, a part-time program could be the way to go. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@thebarbook](#) Definitely, though I wonder, in that situation, if community programs like [@GrubWriters](#) are then better than a program.



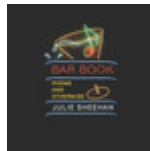
[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@thebarbook](#) [@mpnye](#) Indeed. PT, online, low res - all good choices if you can't move, have a family, are in midlife. That was me. [#MFAchat](#)



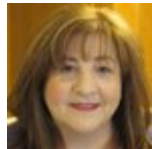
[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@LisaRomeo](#) [@thebarbook](#) Low-res, though, can be shockingly expensive.



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@mpnye](#) [@LisaRomeo](#) State schools to the rescue! [#MFAchat](#)



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@mpnye](#) [@thebarbook](#) Yep. Choose where to apply wisely. I just crossed out the low res ones I knew I couldn't pay off in 2 years. [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@mpnye](#) And part-timers generally don't get funding. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Very true, and people should know this [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@thebarbook](#) [@mpnye](#) [#mfachat](#) We have partial scholarships for part-time at 6 hours, which is also required for federal loans.



[Lydia Pudzianowski @DoritosHangover](#)

Yes, yes, and yes. I took loans out and really wish someone had emphatically told me not to. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jon Chaiim McConnell @JonMcConn](#)

[@mpnye](#) Still don't really conceive of what my massive debt means for my life 3 years later, so I don't even know how dumb I am yet [#MFAchat](#)



[Jon Chaiim McConnell @JonMcConn](#)

[@mpnye](#) that is, it's an amount of money so large that it's not worth worrying about day to day [#MFAchat](#)



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@JonMcConn](#) [@mpnye](#) Same boat for me now, due to undergrad alone! My student loan debt gets bigger daily, no matter how much I pay into it.



### [The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

Affordable: The W offers low in-state tuition & waives non-resident fees for all graduate students. [#MFACHat](#) [http://www.muw.edu/as/llp/english/graduate/mfacwcosts ...](http://www.muw.edu/as/llp/english/graduate/mfacwcosts...)



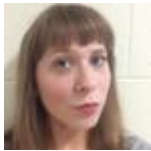
### [Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA](#)

[@converseMFA](#) is a low res MFA that provides partial scholarships, opportunities of TA spots & other options <http://www.converse.edu/mfa> [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

QUESTION: What are the factors you'd rank highly when considering creative writing programs? [#MFACHat](#)



[Alyse Bense @leaseandleaves](#) 2h2 hours ago

[@DianeZinna](#) FUNDING, faculty, coursework options, lit journal, reading series, location, camaraderie, professionalization. [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@leaseandleaves](#) YES! Funding has got to be #1!



### [SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) faculty #1; curriculum #2. visit campus if you can. connect w alums & current students [#MFACHat](#)



[Jasmine Evans @JasmineKEvans](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) [@awpwriter](#) faculty, location, professional development, scholarships, and to a lesser extent alumni involvement [#MFAChat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Who you'd like to work with, location, funding, aesthetics of the program. But getting too hung up on any of those can limit you



[Jason Gray @jasonmgray](#)

What opportunities are available? Teaching? Lit mag? Reading series? Chance to study second genre? [#MFAchat](#)



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@jasonmgray](#) [@smcmfa](#) offers a 3rd yr in a second genre. i  
([@CandaceErosDiaz](#)) am an alumna w a dual concentration in CNF & fiction.  
[#MFAChat](#)



[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

UCDavis [#MFAchat](#): it's funded, it's got Yiyun Li, Pam Houston and Lucy Corin, and it's got SF commuters. Not a [#frenemy](#) environment. Apply.



[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: Meg Wolitzer, Roger Rosenblatt, Billy Collins, Patty Marx. The bad news: premature laugh lines. [#MFAChat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Worry 99.9% about your writing sample, and the other .1% about GRE and statement of purpose [#MFAchat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

I'd tweak [@mpnye](#)'s numbers a little: 90 writing sample, 9.9 SOP, and .1 GRE! [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#) 6m6 minutes ago

QUESTION: What would matter more to you? Location or faculty? [#MFAChat](#)



[Ana @write2recite](#) 20m20 minutes ago

Faculty is important when looking into MFA programs. Because a quality education counts more than location. [#MFAChat](#) [@DianeZinna](#)



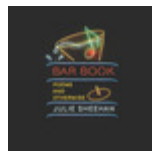
**[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)**

Faculty, faculty, faculty. By far the most important: <http://bit.ly/liB1zBy> [#mfachat](#)



**[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)**

And when I say "faculty," I mean both distinguished writers and gifted, dedicated teachers. Happy to say we have both. [#mfachat](#)



**[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)**

I think the community of students matters in an MFA program. A lot.  
[#MFAchat](#)



**[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)**

[@thebarbook](#) Completely agree. I had that. Want my students to have the same. As director, I make sure faculty foster that community [#mfachat](#)



**[Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA](#)**

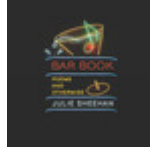
[@DianeZinna](#) Depends on the individual, but I think faculty is very important.  
[#MFAchat](#)



**[EDML @exclamate](#)**

I never looked at schools based on who taught there. Amazing writers can be really bad teachers. (No offense, amazing writers.) [#MFAChat](#)





[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

Oh, wow, but when you get both...[#MFACHat](#)



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@exclamate](#) very true. good then to speak w faculty & ask about their teaching philosophy/experience. don't be afraid to dig in [#MFACHat](#)



[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

[@exclamate](#) true! Can be awesome, ex.: [@pam houston](#). I believe in going somewhere where you can relate on big stuff your work gets at



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@chelseahbryan @pam houston](#) Yes! It's good to get a feel for the faculty as a whole, not just yr fav writer.



[EDML @exclamate](#)

Or, maybe your dream writer will end up being so busy you'll never see them! My point: going for one person is risky. [#MFACHat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@exclamate](#) Yes, and sometimes the greatest writers are not the greatest teachers. [#MFACHat](#)



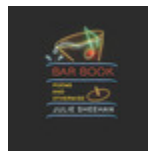
[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@DianeZinna @exclamate](#) And just because you haven't heard of a writer on faculty, doesn't mean they aren't a great writer/teacher [#MFAchat](#)



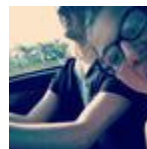
[Lydia Pudzianowski @DoritosHangover](#)

[@d\\_schuman @DianeZinna @exclamate](#) The big names will likely be swamped and unable to work with you as closely as you'd like. [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

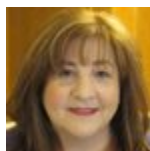
[@DoritosHangover @d\\_schuman @DianeZinna @exclamate](#) Not so! Not so! They don't have to teach, after all. [#MFAchat](#)



[Lydia](#)

[Pudzianowski @DoritosHangover](#)

[@thebarbook @d\\_schuman @DianeZinna @exclamate](#) True, but they often have a ton of their own deadlines to meet. Not always!



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@DoritosHangover @d\\_schuman @DianeZinna @exclamate](#) Exactly. ask if those marquee names do more than an occasional lecture. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@d schuman @DianeZinna @exclamate](#) This is so true. Too much emphasis on what teachers have pub and not enough on who've they helped get pub



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@d schuman @DianeZinna](#) Jennifer Atkinson is my motherpoet/beacon/role model now. I had never heard of her before!



[Aaron Burch @Aaron\\_Burch](#)

[@exclamate](#) or maybe, once you get in, or while you're there, they get a job somewhere else!



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@Aaron\\_Burch](#) We just had Alan Cheuse die at GMU (RIP.) Faculty changes for so many reasons.



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

What you need to know: We're looking for writers who want to publish their books and make their movies/tv shows. Not hobbyists. [#MFAchat](#)



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@mpnye](#) Are there fully-funded programs that are good fits for non-traditional (i.e. really fucking old) students? [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@rayjshea](#) [@awpwriter](#) [@mpnye](#) So many of my peers were "really fucking old." The MFA isn't like getting a BA degree later in life at all.



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@exclamate](#) [@rayjshea](#) [@awpwriter](#) Feel like I'm missing a step or two here.



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@mpnye](#) [@exclamate](#) [@awpwriter](#) I always hear low-res is often a better fit for older writers, & it sounds appealing. But low-res = no funding



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@rayjshea](#) [@exclamate](#) [@awpwriter](#) Right. When you see the prices, you'll have some serious sticker shock, good as the programs are.



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@mpnye @exclamate @awpwriter](#) My tattoos are creeping up into that range \$\$-wise. Will an MFA make me look good with my shirt off? ;)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@rayjshea @mpnye @awpwriter](#) Low-res is great if you have other obligations/own a house or don't want to move/ have a job, etc.



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@exclamate @mpnye @awpwriter](#) Yeah. Have a great job, and cities I want to live in don't necessarily have MFA programs I like.



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@exclamate @mpnye @awpwriter](#) Plus I like the one-on-one mentorship aspect. Just trying to decide if \$30-40K is worth it.



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@exclamate @mpnye @awpwriter](#) Plus I like the one-on-one mentorship aspect. Just trying to decide if \$30-40K is worth it.



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@rayjshea @mpnye @awpwriter](#) Do you want a new writing support group? Do you feel like you've exhausted your current resources? If so, it is.



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@rayjshea](#) Hard to say w/o knowing you better. Community matters, such as small town vs. big city, and so forth.



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@rayjshea](#) [@exclamate](#) [@awpwriter](#) In short, I'd say No. A library card and daily writing will do you much better.



[Ray Shea @rayjshea](#)

[@mpnye](#) [@exclamate](#) [@awpwriter](#) Brother Mouzone agrees.



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

We offer courses in food&travel writing, writing the personal profile, women's spiritual stories, health&wellness writing, more [#mfachat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

And MFA programs are still really hard on writers of color. Look for diversity among the students and faculty. [#MFAchat](#)



[Tola Rotimi @Teri\\_choco](#)

Cant stress this enough. [#MFAchat](#)



[Amy Arce @HippieFresa](#)

[@mpnye](#) what about Latinos? [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@HippieFresa](#) peep [@LowRezMFA](#) and similar programs.



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@mpnye](#) White faculty and students are the minority at the Institute of American Indian Arts' MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@mpnye](#) Which makes for some interesting discussions.



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@LowRezMFA](#) I'd love to hear more about this.



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@mpnye](#) A lot to say in 140 characters, but there will be essays for sure. Follow the action here: <https://vimeo.com/138799424>



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Worth watching, [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Yes!



[Erika Dreifus @erikadreifus](#)

[@DianeZinna @mpnye](#) And bear in mind that diversity goes beyond skin color.  
[#MFAchat](#)



[English@CardiffMet @English CMet](#)

[@erikadreifus @DianeZinna @mpnye](#) age, culture and life experience  
all important too



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@erikadreifus @mpnye](#) Absolutely. I would want to see diversity in  
types of writing produced, age, experience, publishing avenues  
[#MFAChat](#)



[English@CardiffMet @English CMet](#)

We offer competitive fees for a WRITING program in one of the UK's capital cities [#MFAchat](#)





[Online Writing Lab @stedwardsOWL](#)

An [#MFAchat](#) is happening right now, English majors [@SEUhumanities](#) [@SEUCareer](#)



[Jane Friedman @JaneFriedman](#)

Wondering about MFA programs—whether to go or which to choose? Check out conversation right now at [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@Pam Houston](#) talked about the importance of program location in her article for us: <http://tinyurl.com/nnqvjkb>. [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@Pam Houston](#) said, "...it is worth trying to set yourself up to succeed, whatever that means to you." [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@Pam Houston](#): "Will you write more if you are happy, lonely, isolated, across the country from your parents..." [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

2/2 [@pam houston](#): "...in a foreign country, car-less, able to make ends meet, or abjectly poor?" [#MFAChat](#)



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

What I personally wish I had considered: #12 of **@Pam Houston**'s piece: <http://tinyurl.com/nnqvjkb>. This rang very true for me. **#MFAChat**



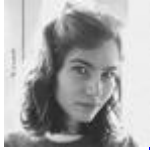
**The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW**

Personal: small online classes using discussions and a/v chat, plus face-to-face residencies. **#MFAChat**



**The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW**

Flexible & Affordable: Part-time students encouraged. Most are taking 6-9 hours/semester and finish in 2-4 years. **#MFAChat**



**[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)**

I would advise against going into debt for an M.F.A. I actually got into Iowa in 2012 but didn't get funding. I deferred admission. [#MFAchat](#)



**[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)**

We really like it when applicants come and visit residency for a day -- it's good to meet you and it's good for you to meet us [#MFAchat](#)



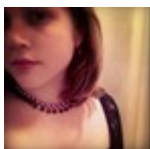
**[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#) 3m3 minutes ago**

I'm a 1st year Nonfiction MFAer [@uiowa](#). Can't stress enough the close faculty relationships, vibrant lit community, and FUNDS here [#MFAchat](#)



**[SBShampton MFAWriter @SouthampWriters](#)**

The good news: The Southampton Review is a world-class lit mag. The bad news: our students roll up their sleeves to help publish it [#MFAChat](#)



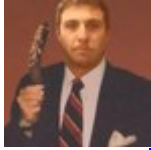
**[Jessica Smith @looktouch](#)**

[@awpwriter](#) I went to SUNY Buffalo b/c Creeley, Howe, Bernstein were there (late 90s). No MFA program -- best decision I ever made [#MFAchat](#)



**[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)**

I reapplied for aid the next year, which I got. Waiting that extra year significantly softened the financial blow of grad school. [#MFAchat](#)



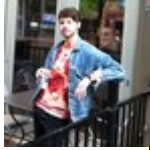
[Max Rubin @SoupRubin](#)

Check out the many fine pubs on our alumni book shelf at Iowa. Is that the new memoir by [@LucasWMann](#) ?Yes! [#MFAchat](#)



[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#)

It's so great to see you in our sun-lit lounge [@uiowa](#), [@SoupRubin](#)! Did I mention we get buddies? This guy is mine!



[Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack](#)

What are the usual sources of funding? [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnve](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) A handful of full fellowships, but usually from TA or other dept work.



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) 1. Teaching assistantship, 2. Administrative work (lit mag, office, etc.), 3. Fellowships/scholarships, 4. Loans.



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) Avoid the loans at all costs. The first three (1) are things you can put on a resume/CV and (2) don't ruin your credit.



[colette arrand @gh0stplanet](#)

[@silas\\_hansen](#) [@josiahbohnsack](#) This is sound. My MFA didn't pay a bunch so I had to take loans anyhow 🙄



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

I made this mistake on undergrad. [@EmersonCollege](#) was a great experience but cost me dearly. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) scholarships/aid offered by the program (free \$\$) & teaching assistantships or research assistantships (p/t work for \$\$)



[Stephen J Furlong @BeenASon24](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) It really depends on the program and variances of fellowships. As [@silas\\_hansen](#) mentioned, lit mag work is great [#MFAChat](#)



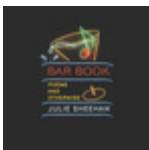
[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) [#MFAchat](#) Graduate assistantships, scholarships, and student loans (keep low). Also employers and private scholarships.



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

A small class size isn't always optimal. I was 1 of 5 in my year, but the only female & with all male teachers. [#MFAChat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Ouch! [#MFAchat](#)



[Erika Dreifus @erikadreifus](#)

This & other worthy nuggets if you're considering an MFA program in [#creativewriting](#), via [#MFAchat](#) happening now.



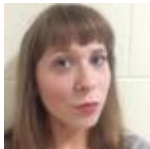
**Erika Dreifus @erikadreifus**

**@DianeZinna** Not to mention damage even 1 not-so-constructive participant can do in a workshop of 4, esp if fac don't intervene. **#MFAChat**



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

**@erikadreifus** Yes, I learned a lot, but it took me a while to remember who I was after I graduated. **#MFAChat**



**Alyse Bensel @leaseandleaves**

Not quite sure about KU? Lawrence is a completely different town from what you may expect. Many reading series + active journals. **#MFAchat**



**Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA**

**@ConverseMFA** faculty are excellent writers & teach regularly. If you apply to work with a specific writer, you will have opportunity **#MFAchat**



**Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter**

**@ConverseMFA** I love the low-res model...I've seen students make amazing leaps with focused attention. **#MFAchat**





**[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)**

The good news: our campus in Manhattan. The bad news: finding a seat at your new favorite writing cafe **[#MFAChat](#)**



**[English@CardiffMet @English CMet](#)**

We also offer flexible part time tuition, in the home of Dr Who! **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)**

Flexible: Cross-genre and mixed genre writing is encouraged in classes such as Writing for New Media. **[#MFAChat](#)** [http://www.muw.edu/as/llp/english/graduate/mfa-creative-writing-courses ...](http://www.muw.edu/as/llp/english/graduate/mfa-creative-writing-courses...)



**[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)**

Your fellow grad students are a tremendous influence ... but you can't research your future cohort like you can research faculty **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[New School Writing @NewSchoolWrites](#)**

In 2014, 36 of our alumni and 11 faculty members published full-length collections. See for yourself: <http://newschoolwriting.org/bookshelf/> **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[EDML @exclamate](#)**

Want to teach post-MFA? Make sure you can get teaching experience. Also understand now that this is a v. difficult goal to achieve. **[#MFAChat](#)**





[Nat'l Endow f/t Arts Verified account @NEAarts](#)

Are you in an MFA writing program or thinking of applying for one? Check out the [#MFAchat](#) going on now hosted by [@awpwriter](#).



[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#)

[.@CityOfIowaCity](#) is a [@UNESCO](#) City of Lit & a community of writers, for writers. The NWP [@uiowa](#) opens doors locally & globally. [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Our faculty write books, write TV shows, write movies & win awards. They're also super nice, which is good. [#MFAchat](#) <http://palmdesertmfa.ucr.edu/faculty/>



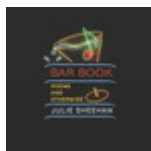
[Meagan Arthur @meaganearthur](#)

What are the most important factors when considering which applicants get funding? [#MFAchat](#) [@awpwriter](#)



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@meaganearthur](#) [@awpwriter](#) the quality of the manuscript #1 [#MFAChat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@meaganearthur](#) [@awpwriter](#) Writing sample, writing sample, Statement of Purpose, writing sample, letters of rec. [#MFAchat](#)



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

Getting an MFA was the best thing I ever did, but it's not the right choice for everyone. What do you want out of it? [#MFAchat](#)



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

If you can't answer that question yet, it's worth waiting until you can. It's rare to go straight from undergrad. [#MFAchat](#)



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

An MFA is NOT going to: (1) guarantee you publications, (2) guarantee you a teaching job, (3) guarantee you a job of any kind. [#MFAchat](#)



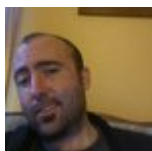
[colette arrand @gh0stplanet](#)

[@silas\\_hansen](#) I wish I could take back my scant MFA publication record, ha.



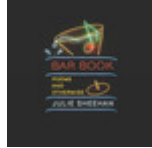
[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

What an MFA \*will\* give you: (1) 2-3 years to focus on your writing and (2) classmates and pros to read your work. [#MFAchat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

Yep, [@silas\\_hansen](#) is right on. I wish more applicants would slow down, take a year or two off, think about what they really want. [#MFAchat](#)



**[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)**

Totally agree. Doesn't hurt to have something to say. **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)**

My MFA regret...that I went right out of undergrad. **[#MFAchat](#)**  
**[@ConverseMFA](#)**



**[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)**

For the record, I did do my MFA straight from undergrad & it worked out--but it's also fine to wait a few years. It depends on YOU. **[#MFAchat](#)**



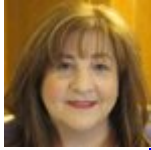
**[JohnCabot University @JohnCabotRome](#)**

We're offering 4 graduate-level CW courses this summer. Trust us, the Eternal City is good inspiration! **<http://ow.ly/UcDef>** **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)**

Professional: Our program has the annual Eudora Welty Writers' Symposium with a dozen Southern writers. **[#MFAChat](#)** **<http://www.muw.edu/welty>**



**[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)**

Many high school teachers who want to pursue MFA, school district might (help) fund, esp if choosing public institution in state, **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)**

**[@LisaRomeo](#)** **[#MFAChat](#)** Yes, and check out lo-rez kid lit program at SUNY school **[http://www.stonybrook.edu/southampton/mfa/childrens\\_lit/index.html](http://www.stonybrook.edu/southampton/mfa/childrens_lit/index.html)** ...



**[EDML @exclamate](#)**

Otherwise, figure out a way to diversify your experience. I got internships that taught me copy editing, proposal writing, and more **[#MFAChat](#)**



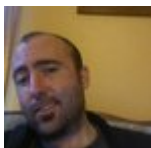
**[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)**

If there is any chance you want to teach in academia, apply to **[@uiowa](#)** - having the Writers Workshop on your CV opens a LOT of doors **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[English@CardiffMet @English\\_CMet](#)**

If you want to ask a student who has studied with us about our program then **[@Durre Shahwar](#)** is happy to help **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)**

I got my PhD at KU: Lawrence is a terrific college town: great live music, good restaurants, super-popular adult kickball. [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

We like genre writing! Because, you see, we live in the 21st century, and that's what people actually read. What an idea. [#MFAchat](#)



[Adam Lee Price @Pawriter80](#)

Putting the finishing touches on my application! Get ready [@Columbia](#) 'cause here I come! [#MFAchat](#) [#screenwriting](#) [#horrorFilm](#) [@JamesGunn](#)



[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

At [#UVic](#), we have a grad course in teaching creative writing for MFA students. WRIT509: Instructional SKills Preparation. [#MFAChat](#)



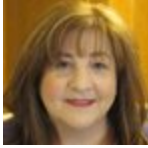
[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

Flexible: In our low-residency MFA, residencies are separate classes. You take 4 that fit your schedule. [#MFAChat](#) <http://www.muw.edu/mfacreativewriting> ...



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Creative writing faculty, what is the most important advice you would give to a prospective student who wants to apply? [#MFAChat](#)



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Be sure you want to LEARN. Be teachable. Be more interested in developing craft than getting affirmation, impressing. [#MFAchat](#)



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Strong sample. Think low-res v. res. Research faculty and READ THEIR WORK (sounds obv, but not!). Research location. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@dianezinna](#) [#mfachat](#) [#bestadvice](#) Know why you want an MFA and where you want to be when finished. Know why you want to do it with us.



[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Identify a potential supervisor that suits your project; submit best portfolio — the first line/page must grab. [#MFAChat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@dianezinna](#) [#mfachat](#) [#bestadvice](#) Also, know how you'll pay for it without excessive debt. Work your way through or get aid. Have a plan.



[Alyse Bensele @leaseandleaves](#)

Attend a fully funded program! Usually with that funding comes teaching experience, which is essential for the academic market. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

Professional: We want to graduate professional writers who are skilled at their craft and able to work in writing related fields [#MFAChat](#)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

If you are interested in applying to MFA programs, or deciding whether or not that's right for you: [#MFAchat](#).



[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

Have heard great things from multiple sources about IAIA. Any [#MFAchat](#) takers on IAIA thoughts? [#diversity](#) [#race](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

It's behind their paywall, but [@poetswritersinc](#) published a good essay by Steve Almond about reading submissions for programs [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

If you can visit the school before you go, oh do it! Chat up current students. See how the pros interact with them. Visit a class! [#MFAChat](#)



[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: Amazing writers visit campus for Writer's Speak Wednesdays. The bad news: what to do the other six days of the week [#MFAChat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Program director [@todgoldberg](#) talks about genre writing and why MFA programs are scared of it [#MFAchat](#) : <http://palmdesertmfa.ucr.edu/blog/wanted-the-greatest-criminal-minds-of-our-time/> ...



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

More advice: if you're applying straight from undergrad & want to maximize time, consider funded MA programs to prep for MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

It's a different degree--not terminal--but gives you time to hone your craft, experiment with different kinds of writing, read, &c. [#MFAchat](#)



[Silas Hansen @silas\\_hansen](#)

Funded MAs also usually require/include more lit classes, rhet comp, etc. than MFAs--helps you succeed in those classes during MFA. [#MFAchat](#)





**Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\_hoyt**

For example, two of our recent MA grads, went on to strong MFAs, and entered PhD programs just this year. [#MFAchat](#)



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

If you can, talk to students who attend a program! Check out our Campus Visit Video Series <http://bit.ly/1RKTK89> [#MFAChat](#)



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

In these videos, students discuss life at their creative writing programs. <http://bit.ly/1RKTK89> [#MFAChat](#)



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

There are videos featuring residential and low-residency programs, as well as an immersive semester program [#MFAChat](#)



**Jason Gray @jasonmgray**

[.@awpwriter](#) Don't be afraid to ask current students questions about life in the program. [#MFAchat](#)



**[Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA](#)**

Be sure to talk to current students and graduates of a program. Also, ask to speak to various faculty. **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Rhonda BrowningWhite @RBrowningWhite](#)**

I vetted programs for two years before applying **[@ConverseMFA](#)**, and I couldn't have made a better choice! **[#MFAchat](#)**



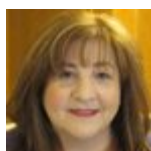
**[Gabrielle Freeman @TheLadyRandom](#)**

Completing the **[#mfa](#)** through **[@ConverseMFA](#)** was the best thing I've ever done for myself. Ask away! **[#mfachat](#)**



**[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)**

**[#mfachat](#)** Yes, always ask to speak to students in the program & recent grads before deciding.



**[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)**

**[@lesliepwriter @TheLadyRandom @ConverseMFA](#)** Yes, yes, yes. Talk to current students & alumni & faculty, by PHONE if possible. **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)**

And see if you can hang out and even stay with them when you visit--get to know the place [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@d\\_schuman](#) [@awpwriter](#) [@SouthampWriters](#) does a visiting day for admitted students. Very helpful for them to make a good choice. [#MFAchat](#)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Application tips from us: Writing sample is most important. Statement of purpose is also a writing sample. [#MFAchat](#) (1/3)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Ref letters with knowledge, specifics>letters from famous writers you met once. Most letters glow; we do look for red flags. [#MFAchat](#) (2/3)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Don't care tons about grades, but our dept. cares some. Don't care about GRE scores (can waive low ones), but must have them. [#MFAchat](#) (3/3)



[Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack](#)

How effective is interfolio? As in ease for me and my references. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnve](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) It's an awesome service: kudos to any program that uses it.



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) Super easy! We actually transitioned away from dossier svcs because they were leaders in the market--for a reason. [#AWPChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

WHEN did you decide that you wanted to attend an MFA program? [#MFAChat](#)



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) i ([@CandaceErosDiaz](#)) made other ppl's dreams come true instead of mine for 10 yrs after UG. i couldn't w8 any longer [#MFAChat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnve](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) As an undergrad. But I also decided I wanted to be out of school for three years before I attended. [#MFAchat](#)



**Emily Lundgren @emslun**

I'm a 1st yr [@NEOMFA](#)'er - cannot stress how welcoming the wrkshp environment is! My research for a constructive wrkshp checked out. [#MFAchat](#)



**The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW**

Flexible: Our program combines workshops with forms and literature classes. You do not have to specify a genre when you apply. [#MFAChat](#)



**EDML @exclamate**

Also keep in mind your resources. My stipend went a lot less far in NOVA than my friends' similar stipends did in AZ. [#MFAChat](#)



**Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\_hoyt**

I think my best advice is just listen to [@silas\\_hansen](#)! [#mfachat](#)



**Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife**

If I were applying now I'd talk to more students who came from the program to get specifics abt their experiences. [#MFAChat](#)



**Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife**

As well as what the residency focus covers/where it focuses, i.e. Craft v lit review etc [#MFAChat](#)



[Blake Kimzey @BlakeKimzey](#)

Get an MFA to become a better writer (all that time!) not so you can be an adjunct after you graduate. Focus on your writing. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

“[@BlakeKimzey](#): Get an MFA to become a better writer " Yes, but also to become a more professional writer and develop job skills. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Have an outlet that has nothing to do with writing. You'll become emotionally and mentally exhausted during the program. [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

Consider location! At GMU, my peers were spread out. I have friends on smaller campuses that are physically closer to their peers. [#MFAChat](#)



[Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife](#)

Specifically the amount and quality of interaction between residencies (for low red) and amy and quality of feedback on writing [#MFAChat](#)



**Michael Nye @mpnye**

I'm biased, but I working on a [#litmag](#) was one of the most beneficial things about my MFA program. [#MFAchat](#)



**Carla Spataro @cjspataro**

[@mpnye](#) [#MFAchat](#) this is so helpful for students. Let's them see how submissions really work and why work doesn't get published.



**Jeannette Ronson @jeannetteronson**

Working on [@PYJournal](#) - my MFA's literary magazine - has opened up new doors for me. Work in yours! [#MFAchat](#)



**David Schuman @d\_schuman**

Don't think your sample needs to be perfect/publishable, just representative of your voice. Faculty want writers they can teach [#MFAchat](#)



**Alyse Bensel @leaseandleaves**

It's important to figure out YOUR priorities before applying to MFA programs. Then see which programs best match your interests. [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Writing genre fiction and getting rejected? It's probably because of this [#MFAchat](#):

What is it about genre fiction — not just mystery or crime, but also sci-fi & fantasy or horror — that gets people in academia up in arms?

Well, I think there's a perception that it isn't important. And if it's not important, why would you teach it? And if it's popular, it can't be *good*. When people say these things — and if you go to an academic conference, for instance, there's always a panel about why genre fiction is important and then, invariably, someone raises their hand and says there hasn't been a decent work of mystery fiction since Poe died, that no one will ever be a better detective than Sherlock Holmes and that JK Rowling has ruined the world, and other like-minded nonsense — my first thought is that they are deeply disconnected from what people actually read. And so I think in some ways that's the challenge creative writing programs have — making it safe for people to write the most serious literary fiction and, if they want, the best story of a vampire hit man from space who solves crimes from the back of his dragon. People can write whatever they want to write and in this program, we're going to help them write it really well. That's not specifically true for a great many creative writing programs and in that way I think it's just an institutional bias based out of fear — they don't know how to teach fantasy fiction, they're not going to admit a student who writes it. It's silly to me. You don't know how to teach it? Hire someone who does.



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

What are your thoughts on a two-year vs. three-year MFA? [#MFAChat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@usyboroda](#) I thought, back then, I'd want a quick return to "real life" so I chose two. But I'm still here! Depends on funding, family, etc.



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@usyboroda](#) KENNY, I'm SO GLAD YOU ASKED.





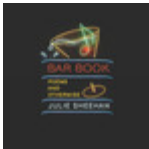
[EDML @exclamate](#)

I had some friends at 2-year programs who wished they had more time. But 2 years might be enough for you! [#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

GMU is a 3-year program, and I definitely appreciated the time. I spent my whole third year writing a MS. [#MFAChat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

Time is on your side. Take it! [#MFAchat](#)



[Jason Gray @jasonmgray](#)

Jason Gray Retweeted UsyBoroda

When I was at Ohio St, at the start, three years seemed long, at the end, not long enough. Take the time. [#MFAchat](#)



[Katie Schmid @kt\\_schmid](#)

Really know your goals: the studio degree is VERY different than an MFA that functions as a lit degree with a creative thesis [#MFAchat](#)



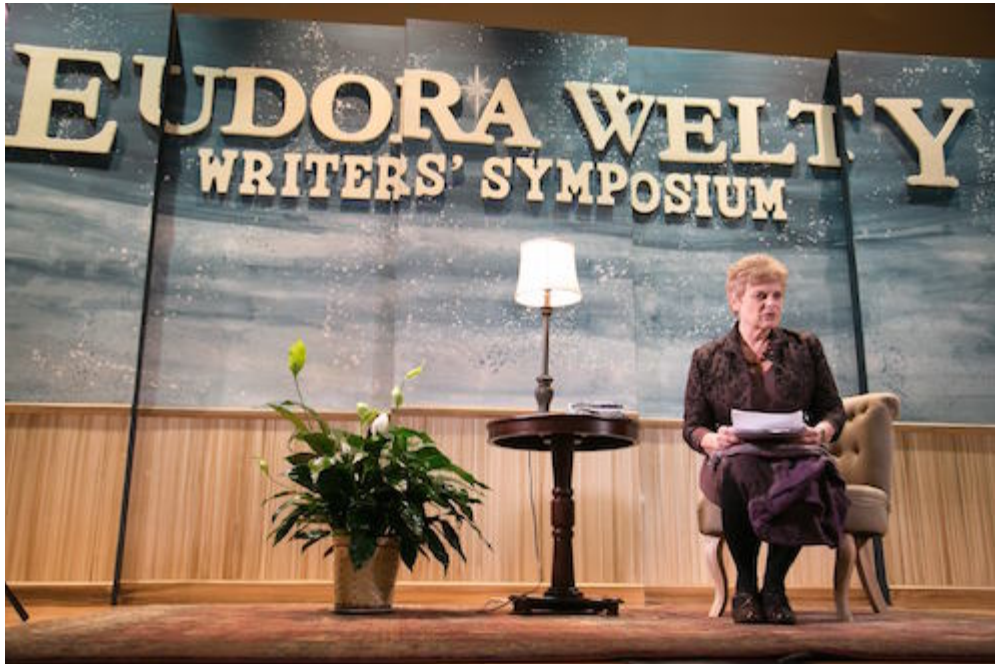
[Writer's Cramp @WritersCramp1](#)

While you figure out your MFA plans, take a look at [@LitReactor](#) and its classes. Affordable, targeted writing help. [#MFAchat](#)



[Tammie Rice @tlrice2](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) And an established literary event - The Welty Symposium [#MFAChat](#)  
[#TheW](#) [#lowresmfa](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

I used the old [@awpwriter](#) Guide to Writing Programs to look for places. I hear it's improved since 2010/2011. ;) [#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

I looked at every program in the states I was willing to live in, looked at funding & other resources, and went from there. [#MFAChat](#)



[Katie Schmid @kt\\_schmid](#)

inquire about support/job opportunities during the summer. it's NOT WORTH taking out loans to support yourself. [#MFAchat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@kt\\_schmid](#) MFA at [@WUSTL](#) has provided summer funding between first and second years. Other programs may as well and you can ask [#MFAchat](#)



[Nick Mamatas @NMamatas](#)

NB: lots of MFA programs aren't very competitive. If all your classmates are Great! Writers! maybe you're not a good reader. [#MFAchat](#)



[Meagan Arthur @meaganeearthur](#)

If you are participating in [#MFAchat](#) and are representing a fully funded program, give a shout! [@awpwriter](#)



[VT Creative Writing @VirginiaTechCW](#)

[@meaganeearthur](#) [@awpwriter](#) VT is fully funded! 16k per year for all students!



[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: we're a family. The bad news: you can never leave. Even after you graduate.  
[#MFAChat](#)



[Long Day Press @longdaypress](#)

A lot of great advice is coming from [@awpwriter](#)'s [#MFAchat](#) discussion.



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@Rosemont MFA #MFAchat](#) Our program is designed for adults who want to go part time but are also very serious about their work.



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Also: \*sometimes\* high grades and/or high GRE scores allow us to locate additional funding for you, on top of our regular package. [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

We asked [@JaneFriedman](#) what BFA programs could be doing to prepare students for MFA life and after. [#MFAChat](#) <http://tinyurl.com/lk2nql9>



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

1/2 [@janeFriedman](#): [They should help] students better understand the economics of the writing life... [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

2/2 [@JaneFriedman](#): ...and how authors or artists do manage to put together a full-time living from doing what they love. [#MFAChat](#)



[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

[#MFAchat](#) thought: don't go into an MA or MFA until you have a project that interests you so much you are not afraid to write the whole thing



[Lydia Pudzianowski @DoritosHangover](#)

[@chelseahbryan](#) This is excellent advice. [#MFAchat](#)



[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

[@DoritosHangover](#) thank you! Given as question since, maybe, sometimes one can see no other way forward in life but MFA!



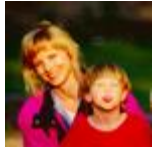
[Lydia Pudzianowski @DoritosHangover](#)

[@chelseahbryan](#) A good point. Going into an MFA with a book idea vs. without is a "Good for you, not for me" thing (thank you, Amy Poehler).



[Lydia Pudzianowski @DoritosHangover](#)

[@chelseahbryan](#) Essentially, do what you need to do. [#MFAchat](#)



[Tammie Rice @tlrice2](#)

[@chelseahbryan](#) Perfect advice! [#MFAChat](#) [@TheW](#) [MFACW](#) [#TheW](#) [#lowresmfa](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

We give our students a competitive advantage in the real world -- everyone who graduates is read by top agents/publishers/studios [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Not some of the students. Not a couple select people. No, all of our students get read by the agents/publishers/studios. [#MFAchat](#)



[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

LT [#MFAchat](#) program as exploration V program as acceleration. Or is that an MFA v NYC question? \*wink\*



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@chelseahbryan](#) An ideal program might allow both sorts of students to flourish [#MFAchat](#)





[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

[@d\\_schuman](#) 2nd that: one may switch from one mode to the other mid-program. Stylistic, artistic emotional risks:

Pam Houston

I feel that it is my job as workshop leader to create and I want students feel free to take stylistic, artistic, and emotional risks.

In this class we will investigate some of the essential components of fiction including (but not limited to) image, metaphor, form, structure, character, scene, beginnings, endings, narrative arc. We will encourage and critique what I believe to be the central mechanism of fiction: the way the emotional stakes of the story onto its physical landscape, the way we dive into the bottomless pot of metaphor soup that is our lived and experienced world and pull out what we need. We will be aiming for layered stories that is working at least two ways at once, stories in which the language is not simply a flat bed trailer in which the writer hauls the content of the story. It occasionally rises into what Steve Almond calls the lyric register.

Each student will be expected to turn in three new pieces of fiction over the course of the semester (either stories or novel chapters), and a final approximately 50 pages of workshoped and polished fiction.



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[#mfachat @awpwriter](#) I tell undergrads, before an MFA program, try summer/weekend workshops and develop as a writer. MFA when you're ready.



[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

Do other MFA programs have a teaching training component & emphasis? I'd like to swap course notes & thoughts. Pros/cons. [#MFAChat](#) [#UVic](#)



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@LeachWriter](#) we do. you can find out a bit more here: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa-in-creative-writing/prospective-students/funding/teaching-fellowships> ... [#MFACHat](#)



[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

[@smcmfa](#) Thanks!



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

[@LeachWriter](#) We do. Emphasis on teaching outside of academia. Students do internships in prisons, shelters, senior centers, hospitals [#mfachat](#)



[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

[@baypathmfaCNF](#) That sounds like great community engagement. [#mfachat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@baypathmfaCNF](#) [@LeachWriter](#) [@Rosemont MFA](#) we offer Workshopping the Workshop pedagogy class on running workshops in and out of academe. [#MFACHat](#)



[Steph Vanderslice @wordamour](#)

[@LeachWriter](#) ours [@ARWritersMFA](#) does.





[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

[@wordamour](#) [@ARWritersMFA](#) Thanks! Will follow up....



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@LeachWriter](#) [@Rosemont\\_MFA](#) offers a Rhet/Comp pedog class and we do a 1 day conf on how to get adjunct work, write a CV, etc. [#MFAchat](#)



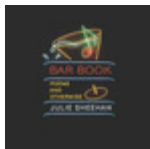
[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@LeachWriter](#) [@Rosemont\\_MFA](#) we also bring in 1st year writing dir who do hiring so students know what to expect. Our alums work all over!



[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

[@cjspataro](#) [@Rosemont\\_MFA](#) Thanks! I like the conference idea....



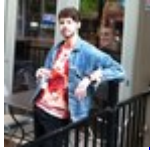
[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

Yep, Stony Brook Southampton has grueling teaching practicum. I know b/c I teach it. [#MFAchat](#)



[kimWICKedwitch @kimannjosouth](#)

Anyone interested in applying to a CW PhD program post MFA[/MA] this year, let me know! I love mine. [#MFAchat](#)



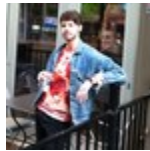
[Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack](#)

I was considering an MPhil degree from European programs. Is this degree much less prestigious than an MFA? [#MFAchat](#)



[John O'Donoghue @JOD45](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) Although publication is still seen as being a good equivalent to MFA, MA, MPhil, PhD.... /3



[Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack](#)

[@JOD45](#) I really like the programs and faculty at Trinity and Cork, but I didn't know how they translated on the American Market.



[John O'Donoghue @JOD45](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) Me neither - but I should think there'd be Irish-friendly Am universities - round Boston, Chicago, New York? - which would -



[John O'Donoghue @JOD45](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) MPhils are - you probably know - one down from DPhils or PhDs. TCD (Dublin) run a program, as do other unis. A good degree/1



[John O'Donoghue @JOD45](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) ... rate TCD in particular? Check out also Limerick - Joe O'Connor is running the MA there and he is tip top.



[John O'Donoghue @JOD45](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) I think Europeans might look down slightly on the MFA. The MA and PhD are often the terminal degrees that matter... /2



[Steph Vanderslice @wordamour](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) Just different. Message me what programs you're considering, some are quite helpful esp if you're interested in publishing.



[EDML @exclamate](#)

If you have a partner coming with you, the location can also dictate their ability to get a job.  
[#MFAChat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

I was lucky that my husband ([@usyboroda](#)) ended up getting a job at [@awpwriter](#)!  
[#fulldisclosure](#) [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

1/2: [@LauraKasischke](#): "I couldn't have become a writer if I hadn't studied with X, met X...been encouraged by \_\_\_." [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

2/2: [@LauraKasischke](#): “The blanks, I’m sure, could be filled with anything as long as they do not remain blank.” [#MFAChat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

At K-State, almost all of our MA students get funding, teaching experience, and teaching training, along with health insurance. [#MFAchat](#)



[Nick Mamatas @NMamatas](#)

Rather than denouncing genre fiction (SF, crime etc.) instructors should just acknowledge they're not competent to teach it. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@NMamatas](#) [#MFAchat](#) Profs need to be open to all genres. Not my business to tell you what to be passionate about, just help you write better.



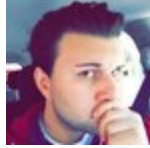
[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@nmamatas](#) re: genre fiction [#mfachat](#) We've had some good discussions in our new program about genre writing. We're open if also literary.



[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

[@NMamatas](#) I think I really lucked out here. My program was one of few with lots of experimental and genre/"genre bending" teachers [#MFAchat](#)



[SpookySamhainSpectre @jlikesbooks](#)

[@TheLincoln](#) which one did you attend, by the by?



[Nick Mamatas @NMamatas](#)

[@jlikesbooks @TheLincoln](#) Yes, which did you attend? I bet that's the info people following [#MFAchat](#) would like to know.



[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

[.@NMamatas @jlikesbooks](#) Columbia. At time, we had Kelly Link, Ben Marcus, Victor LaValle, etc. Still leaned "lit fic", but was very open



[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

[@NMamatas @jlikesbooks](#) And glancing at the current faculty, it's still that way.



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@NMamatas](#) AWP's Mentorship Program, Writer to Writer:  
<http://tinyurl.com/pjtprt> [#MFAChat](#)



[davidbishop](#) [@davidbishop](#)

On the Creative Writing MA [@EdinburghNapier](#) in Scotland we specialise in genre fiction, [@NMamatas](#) - SF, fantasy, mystery, horror [#MFAchat](#)



**Daniel A. Hoyt** [@dan\\_hoyt](#)

Or get with the program and the reading public, [@NMamatas](#). I read a lot more literary genre work because of students' interest. [#MFAchat](#)



**Nick Mamatas** [@NMamatas](#)

[@dan\\_hoyt](#) Yeah, get competent. But it can take a while—a few cohorts can march through a program by the time teachers are up to speed.



**Elissa Field** [@elissafeld](#)

[@dan\\_hoyt](#) [@awpwriter](#) [@NMamatas](#) successful 21st c fiction is often crossover btwn lit & genre. Any programs better for this? [#MFAchat](#)



**Nick Mamatas** [@NMamatas](#)

[@elissafeld](#) [@dan\\_hoyt](#) [@awpwriter](#) Always check the faculty. Them that does, may teach.



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@elissafield](#) [@dan\\_hoyt](#) [@awpwriter](#) [@NMamatas](#) Well, [@ConverseMFA](#) has a new YA track. And this is why I recommend reading faculty books.



[TP @thranduilion](#)

Liking this [#MFAchat](#) trajectories so far. Keep them coming, people!



[SBS Hampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: visiting professors of poetry like Mark Doty, Martin Espada, Matthea Harvey. The bad news: letting go. [#MFAChat](#)



[UCR Low Res MFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

An important thing when considering a low residency: is there a day where there's all you can eat ice cream? We have that. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[#MFAchat](#) We're getting requests from international students. Would love to hear from other low-res programs about visa regulations.



[Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA](#)

Work w/faculty, agents, book & journal editors, visiting writers. Plus internships, TA spots. Our low res focuses on professional writer [#MFAchat](#)



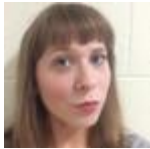
[David Leach @LeachWriter](#)

How much does institutional location shape MFA experience? [#UVic](#) is in Fine Arts Faculty vs. English Dept/Humanities Faculty. [#MFAChat](#)



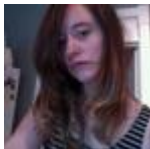
[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@LeachWriter](#) A little esoteric for applicants, but this matters. [#MFAChat](#)



[Alyse Bensel @leaseandleaves](#)

Creative writing PhDs are very different beasts from MFAs. It's best to get an MFA first. You'll be far more prepared. [#MFAchat](#)



[Katie Schmid @kt\\_schmid](#)

the MFA makes u look like a strange bird outside of academia. think abt how u can spin yr skills to future non-academic employers [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

[@kt\\_schmid](#) This is super important. We try to teach a bit of life skills, too -- so that people know how to get a real job, too. [#MFAChat](#)





[gigantic sequins @GIGANTICsequins](#)

We are following along with the [#MFAchat](#) right now! How many GS eds have an MFA? 3! 2 w/ MAs.



[SBS Hampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: fiction faculty Ursula Hegi, Susan Scarf Merrell, Melissa Bank. The bad news: a surfeit of attention. [#MFAChat](#)



[New School Writing @NewSchoolWrites](#)

Our courses meet on weeknights from 8:00-10:00pm, with optional weekend courses. We train working writers. [#MFAchat](#)



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[#MFAchat](#) is making my heart ache with its loveliness & my own sense of longing to do an MFA in writing. You're all wonderful.



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@JenniferMWolff](#) I can tell that you will excel wherever you land with such an open attitude!



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@lesliepwriter](#) Thank you! 🙄 Not sure an MFA is in the cards due to finances/location, but it's still my dream. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff #mfachat](#) Try part time low-res. Location less relevant, though it helps if travel costs are low. (We're in MS). Low tuition.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) Thank you! I've definitely looked into such options, but undergrad debt & chronic illness have limited my options. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff](#) I understand. Best of luck to you! Also consider non-degree options like workshops and conferences. Many have scholarships.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) Definitely! I've only recently reignited my original passion for the craft, so am exploring furtively at this point. Thank you!



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) Had resigned myself to a life of professional & tech writing (& very successful/pleasant career), but I want to do more. 😊



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff](#) Nothing wrong with professional and tech writing, but it's great to combine with your passion for literature.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) Absolutely. I love my career & that it opened so many doors for me, & can now freelance. Now I want to stoke the creative fire!



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff](#) Our program can be done part-time with as few as 3 hours per semester (takes 6 years). Look for one that fits your needs.



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff](#) Or look for a writing community outside of academia if you don't need the degree. There are other ways to be a writer.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) I'll definitely explore your program more. At this point, 6yrs is nothing to finish, ha. & Agree completely w/other communities!



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff](#) Yes, and if you find something nearer to home, you should go for it. I've discussed our program because it's what I know.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) Your input has been very helpful, and much appreciated. Not everyone takes the time to give such thoughtful advice.



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@jennifermwolff](#) Thanks. I try... Did you see our Guide for Applicants?

<http://www.muw.edu/images/colleges/as/llp/MFAGuideForApplicants.pdf> ... I put it together using some blog posts.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) Brilliant! Thank you! You & [#MFAchat](#) have done so much for me today. A bounty of wonderful resources.



[Emily Lundgren @emslun](#)

Also [@NEOMFA](#) (especially the YSU gateway with [@Cbarzak](#)) has shown to be a welcoming space for sci-fi/fantasy/genre writers! [#MFAchat](#)



[Annie Frazier @BijouAnnie](#)

Low Res is a great option for those who can't relocate. Loving [@spalding\\_mfa](#) to bits so far! [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

“[@BijouAnnie](#): Low Res is a great option for those who can't relocate.” [#MFAchat](#) I advise if you can relocate, do; if not, the low-res.



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

[@TheW\\_MFACW](#) [@BijouAnnie](#) Low- and no-res an excellent option if you can't relocate. We are online with a summer intensive in Ireland. [#mfachat](#)



[Tammie Rice @tlrice2](#)

[@baypathmfaCNF](#) [@TheW\\_MFACW](#) [@BijouAnnie](#) Can I do this and Rome?! [#MFAChat](#) [#TheW](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@tlrice2](#) [@baypathmfacnf](#) [@bijouannie](#) Are you asking me? We accept 6 hours of transfer credit. Let's look into it, if you want to.



**Tammie Rice @tlrice2**

**@TheW MFACW @baypathmfaCNF @BijouAnnie** You know me - it's the experience not the credit that I care about! Now, where to find the money...



**Brittany Borghi @brittany\_borghi**

Fun fact: for .5 time teaching appointment **@uiowa** we get paid ~\$18K for 10 months, == ~\$1800 a month. How does yr funding compare? **#MFAchat**



**TP @thranduilion**

**@brittany\_borghi @uiowa** roughly similar to how it is here at UMD.



**Brittany Borghi @brittany\_borghi**

**@thranduilion** Interesting! I did my BA **@merrillcollege**, and loved UMD. Cost of living is roughly 14% higher in College Park, tho **#MFAchat**



**Brittany Borghi @brittany\_borghi**

**@thranduilion** (For reference: <http://www.bestplaces.net/cost-of-living/iowa-city-ia/college-park-md/18000> ...) **#MFAchat**



[TP @thranduilion](#)

[@brittany\\_borghi](#) why, yes. The rent in CP is nuts, and it's even crazier when you commute from DC like I do. Probs the only downfall. ):



[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#)

[@thranduilion](#) Blergh. DC is fun, though. How do you like CP? How's the program? [#MFAchat](#)



[TP @thranduilion](#)

[@brittany\\_borghi](#) and there's always reading here, there, & everywhere, even one tailored for students



[TP @thranduilion](#)

[@brittany\\_borghi](#) yep, the city is fun. It's just the rent that is not. The MFA life's great here, supportive profs & quirky classmates & all



[Merrill College @UMD @merrillcollege](#)

[@brittany\\_borghi @thranduilion](#) Great to count you as a [@merrillcollege](#) grad, Brittany!



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Other important questions about low res MFAs: Do you have to share a bathroom? Are the beds gross? What's the situation with ticks? [#MFAchat](#)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@UCRPDLRMFA](#) And ticks.



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

[@LowRezMFA](#) See? We don't even know how to spell ticks, that's how few we get.



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@UCRPDLRMFA](#) If you spell it, they will come.



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

To answer: No! You're staying at a resort! No! You're staying at a resort! No! You need to worry about sunburn. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

The whole "go to an M.F.A. program only when you have a book you want to write" thing has never made much sense to me either. [#MFAchat](#)





[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

1. The book I would've started when I began my M.F.A. is very different (read: worse) than the one I'm writing now. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

2. If you already have a book idea, why not...just...write...it? [#MFAchat](#)



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@jennasauers](#) A good teacher/program will shortcut you through the learning process, will teach what you don't know you don't know. [#MFAchat](#)



[Matt Matros @Matt\\_Matros](#)

[@jennasauers](#) [@awpwriter](#) MFAs are much more about craft than about generating ideas. But of course anyone who wants to write a book should!



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

3. Imagining you need to have a ride-or-die, capital-I Idea in order to deserve a shot at an M.F.A. may mean you never even apply. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

4. You'll learn in ways you can't foresee. My work got better when I started trusting that process. And letting myself fuck up, too [#MFAchat](#)



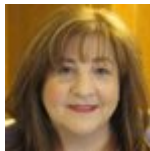
[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)

[@jennasauers](#) I don't think most people do, yet I frequ. encountered this advice. Maybe "go only if" advice should not be so black&white.



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

[@chelseahbryan](#) this — "go only ifs" are nonsense. Except where funding is concerned. That's the one "go only if" I whole-heartedly believe.



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@jennasauers](#) Esp if (as happens), once in program, your book idea evaporates; you find other form, genre, project more compelling. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnve](#)

[@jennasauers](#) I've actually heard this argument more and more lately. It's an interesting response to what the programs are for.



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@jennasauers](#) Like saying learn to play the guitar only when you have a song to write.  
[#MFAchat](#)



[Johannes Hoffmann @Jo Hoff](#)

[@jennasauers](#) that's right only study architecture if you know what building you want to design, makes no sense



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

THIS. I didn't figure out what kind of writer I wanted to be (/was) until halfway through my MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[Dahlia Seroussi @DahliaSeroussi](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) TOTALLY. Went into my MFA with one vision, came out with another. Grateful for change, growth, and possibility. [#MFAchat](#)



[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

What happened to that MFA ranking based on graduate placement in BASS/Pushcart/etc.?

[#MFAchat](#)



[Brandi Wells @brandimwells](#)

shout out to Alabama (tuscaloosa) where i got my mfa and was funded four years. [#MFAchat](#)



[TP @thranduilion](#)

Most likely will do a third year here. I applied to work with a writer I look up to, not just to graduate with another degree. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[#mfachat](#) One of our New Media projects was a GeoPoem started on Google Maps and written on Twitter. [http://kendalldunkelberg.com/2015/10/16/a-geopoem-project-in-columbus-ms/ ...](http://kendalldunkelberg.com/2015/10/16/a-geopoem-project-in-columbus-ms/)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

Often students stay on in STL a few years after the MFA. Think about if the place you're going might be a place you might stay [#MFAchat](#)



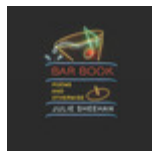
[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

AWP's annual conference is a great place to learn more about creative writing programs! [#MFAChat](#)



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

There are several panels at our [#AWP16](#) that discuss MFA programs [#MFAChat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@usyboroda](#) Patricia McCormick, [@SouthampWriters](#) faculty doing panel on innovations in kid lit at [#AWP](#). [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@usyboroda](#) [@SouthampWriters](#) Also check out current student [@AHBonenberger](#) on war memoir at [#AWP](#) [#MFAchat](#)



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

“The Meaning of Every(MFA)thing: Program Directors Tell All”  
<http://bit.ly/1Sk6JyA> [#MFAChat](#) [#AWP16](#)

## R282. The Meaning of Every(MFA)thing: Program Directors Tell All

Room 410, LA Convention Center, Meeting Room Level  
Thursday, March 31, 2016  
4:30 pm to 5:45 pm

Directors of five renowned MFA programs talk frankly about all aspects of the application process, from how to narrow the field for your applications and when and why to embark on an MFA to how to prepare the most effective and successful application—including a discussion of writing samples and personal statements—and how to choose from among the programs to which you've been admitted and how to navigate waiting lists. We'll talk about variations among programs and answer all your questions.



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

“Full-Residency, Low-Residency, Online: The MFA Student and Faculty Experience”  
<http://bit.ly/1Q6WYEM> [#MFACHat](#)

## F275. Full-Residency, Low-Residency, Online: The MFA Student and Faculty Experience

Room 403 B, LA Convention Center, Meeting Room Level  
Friday, April 1, 2016  
4:30 pm to 5:45 pm

Current and former MFA faculty and students from Pacific University, Vermont College, University of Illinois-Urbana, Northwestern University, Warren Wilson College, University of New Orleans, Southern Illinois University, and Regis University discuss the different aspects of the full-residency, low-residency, and online MFA programs that they have been a part of. How these various models are organized, and how coursework and thesis advising are conducted, among other topics, are addressed in detail.



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

Our annual conference is also an opportunity to meet faculty, students, and alumni from schools you are interested in. [#MFACHat](#)



[Amy Stuart @AmyfStuart](#)

The [@ubccrwr](#) optional residency MFA produces a huge # of published writers. Distinguished faculty, rigorous courses [@UBC](#) [@awpwriter](#) [#MFAchat](#)



**Annie Frazier @BijouAnnie**

VISIT before applying. Ask students as many detailed questions as possible. Talk to faculty (but, you know, be cool about it). [#MFAchat](#)



**SMC MFA Program @smcmfa**

we recently partnered w [@kearnystreet](#) & [@writehedgebrook](#) to offer new community sponsored scholarships [#MFAChat](#) [@awpwriter](#)



**SMC MFA Program @smcmfa**

[@kearnystreet](#) [@writehedgebrook](#) [@awpwriter](#) more details here:  
[http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa-in-creative-writing/prospective-students/funding/scholarships-0 ...](http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa-in-creative-writing/prospective-students/funding/scholarships-0...) [#MFAChat](#)



**Silas Hansen @silas\_hansen**

I have lots of thoughts re: [#MFAchat](#). When deciding btwn offers, look for relatively equal funding among students--positive community.



**Silas Hansen @silas\_hansen**

You want readers/classmates who will be supportive of your accomplishments--not ones who see you as competition for better funding. [#MFAchat](#)





[Holly Vanderhaar @HollyVanderhaar](#)

[@silas hansen](#) CO-SIGNED. It makes a huge difference in morale when you're not fighting over basic funding. [#MFAchat](#)



[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#) 3m3 minutes ago

Brittany Borghi Retweeted Iowa Admissions

PLUS, LOOK AT IT. [#beauty](#) [#midwestisbest](#) [#IowaBrag](#) [#midwest](#) [#MFAchat](#) [#nonficnov](#) [@awpwriter](#) [@uiowa](#) [@UIowaCLAS](#)



**Iowa Admissions** [@IowaAdmissions](#)

Hope everyone is enjoying this perfect fall day in downtown Iowa City! 🍁☀️





**David Leach @LeachWriter**

Are there [#MFA](#) programs that teach / integrate digital impact on creative writing, interactive writing, hyperlit, etc.? [#MFAChat](#)



**The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW**

[@leachwriter](#) Yes. Ours has a class. Rochester Institute of Technology is proposing one focused on digital lit. I've heard of others.



**Tammie Rice @tlrice2**

[@LeachWriter](#) I am doing that this semester in Writing for New Media!

[@TheW MFACW](#) [#TheW](#) [#lowresmfa](#) [#MFAChat](#)



**Alyse Bense @leaseandleaves**

Having a supportive community is essential for graduate creative writing programs. See what the community is like before you apply. [#MFAchat](#)



**Matthew MacFarland @me\_macfarland**

Do not take on debt to get an MFA. Do not take on debt to get an MFA. Do not take on debt to get an MFA. Sideways-8. [#MFAchat](#)



[Matt Matros @Matt\\_Matros](#)

I did, but then I started playing more poker... [#MFAchat](#)



[Writer's Cramp @WritersCramp1](#)

And [@LitReactor](#) has writer/instructors/professionals you can't find at any school, plus peer reviews that trump the avg. MFA class [#MFAchat](#)



[Peter Kispert @PeterKispert](#)

I know a LOT of writers who openly regret going for their MFA. A lot. [#mfachat](#)



[Elissa Field @elissafield](#)

[@PeterKispert](#) Peter, why? Time lost? Cost? Corrupted focus? Not the outcome they wanted? I'm curious. [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@elissafield](#) [@PeterKispert](#) A few of my friends went straight from a BA in CW to an MFA. They're a little burnt out. It's amazing but tiring



[Elissa Field @elissafield](#)

[@exclamate](#) There's something to be said for getting out and living/writing on your own between bach & masters. Find ur next need.  
[#MFAchat](#)



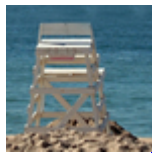
[Steph Vanderslice @wordamour](#)

[@elissafeld](#) [@exclamate](#) Agree, even though I didn't and it worked out for me. That was 25 years ago though. If I had it to do over though-



[Elissa Field @elissafeld](#)

[@wordamour](#) [@exclamate](#) All diff right? I wasn't ready ideawise to write strt fr BA. Found voice, pract'd novel, more ready for MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: fine-tune your work during our summer conference in the Hamptons. The bad news: you can't stay all summer [#MFAChat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpny](#)

Consider cost of living. \$\$\$ is a huge stress already w/o worrying about being a grad student.  
[#MFAchat](#)



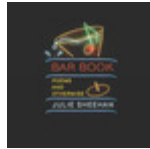
[EDML @exclamate](#)

Talk to students about what it's like at their program. Do they actually have time to write? Do they feel supported? [#MFAChat](#)



**[EDML @exclamate](#)**

I've heard more than one story about writers who end up feeling like they're just by themselves writing. Not the MFA-goal, I'd say. [#MFACHat](#)



**[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)**

[@exclamate](#) This makes me very sad. Nooooooooo! [#MFAchat](#)



**[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)**

[@exclamate](#) and also, what is life like on campus, in town. Is there a scene beyond the university. Reading series off campus? [#MFAchat](#)



**[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)**

[@d\\_schuman](#) [@exclamate](#) [@awpwriter](#) speaking of reading series-ours is on fire this yr to celebrate our 20th: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/mfa-in-creative-writing/creative-writing-reading-series> ... [#MFACHat](#)



**[Peter Kispert @PeterKispert](#)**

Guess where else you can find talented peers to help you w your writing? Online. [#mfachat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

The big thing: get an MFA because you NEED it, not because you want it. You have to need the instruction, need the transformation. [#MFAchat](#)



[JohnCabot University @JohnCabotRome](#)

If your MFA program accepts transfer credit, try studying abroad in Rome, grad-style.  
<http://ow.ly/UcHGI> [#MFAChat](#)



[Tammie Rice @tlrice2](#)

[@JohnCabotRome](#) I can be back there in about 16 hours! [#MFAChat](#)  
[@TheW\\_MFACW](#) [#TheW](#)



[Alyse Bensel @leaseandleaves](#)

Does the program you're applying to let MFA/MA students teach more than comp? Because they should. [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Call and talk to the program director. See if you like them. It's important. That's the person whose philosophy guides the program. [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Pro-tip: don't call the program director at home, however, if you find their # online. Just, you know, from experience. [#MFAchat](#)



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

[@UCRPDLRMFA](#) Excellent advice. DO call the program director & ask about his/her teaching philosophy. Most are very happy to share it. [#mfachat](#)



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

My biggest concern when applying was finding instructors that were receptive to the kind of writing I like. Research your pros. [#MFAchat](#)



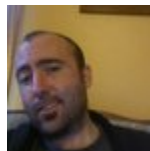
[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

I'd actually talk to them on the phone, if possible, [@ChrisRAlonso](#). [#MFAchat](#)



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@dan\\_hoyt](#) Definitely! My current instructor actually called me. I'm with the program I'm in now. Took a little while, but I'm here.



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

[@ChrisRAlonso](#) That's great, Chris. Hope it's a good fit!



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@dan\\_hoyt](#) Thank you! I appreciate the well wishes



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

I'm very happy where I'm at now. I'm happy that my instructor and colleagues are supportive and encouraging and as dorky as me.

[#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

A graduate program is only the beginning, not the end all and be all, of a writing life. When it's over you'll ask "Now what?" [#MFAchat](#)



[Jeannette Ronson @jeannetteronson](#)

[#MFAchat](#) The MFA program is only the beginning. You can be totally changed from it IF you put the work into writing.



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

“[@mpnye](#): A graduate program is only the beginning” [#MFAchat](#) It should be the launchpad for a writing life (or booster rocket), not the end.



[Steph Vanderslice @wordamour](#)

Answered by [@FairfieldUMFA](#) book of the same name. [@mpnye](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Noted! [@wordamour](#) [@FairfieldUMFA](#) [#MFAchat](#)

[http://www.fairfield.edu/academics/schoolscollegescenters/collegeofartssciences/graduateprograms/mfaincreativewriting/lifeafterthemfa/ ...](http://www.fairfield.edu/academics/schoolscollegescenters/collegeofartssciences/graduateprograms/mfaincreativewriting/lifeafterthemfa/)



[New School Writing @NewSchoolWrites](#)

MFA Dir. [@LuisRJaramillo](#) + faculty [@easyreeder](#) teach the Writing & Publishing Lab, training students on emerging digital media. [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

Once at the MFA, immerse yourself in the writing community. Go to readings! Work for your MFA's lit mag! Don't be apathetic! [#MFAChat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@exclamate](#) [#MFAchat](#) excellent advice! To be a part of the community you have to engage--it won't come to you! Network! [@Rosemont MFA](#)



[JohnCabot University @JohnCabotRome](#)

Our visiting CW grad students this summer will get to work with our Writer in Residence, Susan Minot. [#MFAChat](#)





## [The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[#mfachat](#) What do you love most about your MFA? For me, the answer is our students: already doing great work & their interactions are great.



[Karrie Higgins @karriehiggins](#)

If you have a disability, be aware of accessibility issues & ableism in MFA programs. It's a rampant problem. [#MFAchat](#)



[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

Here's some [#MFAchat](#) real talk: don't underestimate the value of location, especially NYC. I'll get flack for that, but it's true.



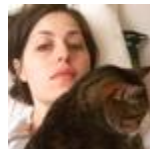
[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

[.@TheLincoln](#) and not (just) because of "connections," but also being immersed in a writing community outside of the MFA bubble. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jaime Green @jaimealyse](#)

Agreed. It's a big trade-off against a funded program, but it can be worth it. [#MFAchat](#)



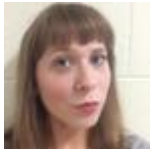
[Jaime Green @jaimealyse](#)

[@TheLincoln](#) on the other hand, an intense program can give you barely time to breathe, let alone get out to readings & events [#MFAchat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@jaimealyse @TheLincoln](#) True, true [#MFAchat](#)



[Alyse Bense @leaseandleaves](#)

Sometimes it can be difficult to find programs (esp. MFAs) that allow hybrid/cross-genre work. Reach out to faculty and ask! [#MFAchat](#)



[Alyse Bense @leaseandleaves](#)

[.@leaseandleaves](#) So glad to hear other programs allow hybrid work! At [#KU](#) it is definitely permitted, for both the MFA and PhD. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[“@leaseandleaves](#): Sometimes it can be difficult to find programs that allow hybrid/cross-genre work.” [#MFAChat](#) We allow cross/mixed theses.



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@leaseandleaves @awpwriter](#) true. i ([@CandaceErosDiaz](#)) am a cross-genre writer & found a safe, nurturing place [@smcmfa](#). [#MFAChat](#)



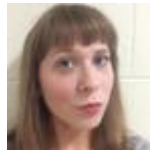
[davidbishop @davidbishop](#)

[@leaseandleaves](#) hybrid work shouldn't just be permitted, it should be encouraged! [#MFAchat](#)



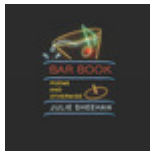
[English@CardiffMet](#) [@English\\_CMet](#)

[@davidbishop](#) [@leaseandleaves](#) yay! We are just starting a Centre for New and Experimental Writing that will totally encourage it [#MFAchat](#)



[Alyse Bense](#) [@leaseandleaves](#)

[@davidbishop](#) Oh, it is! We have faculty who engage in hybrid forms, and the program offers a mixed forms workshop! [#MFAchat](#) [#KU](#)



[Julie Sheehan](#) [@thebarbook](#)

[@leaseandleaves](#) same at [@SBSouthampton](#) [#MFAchat](#)



[David Schuman](#) [@d\\_schuman](#)

I also tend to think, the big coastal cities are tough--so much going on, distractions, etc. Not to disparage! Just a thought [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna](#) [@DianeZinna](#)

On faculty/fellow students: 1/2 [@powell\\_DA](#) says to think of the [MFA] years as barrel years..." [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna](#) [@DianeZinna](#)

2/2 [@powell\\_DA](#): "...Whatever poets have stained the inside of the barrels will influence whatever else is to come." [#MFAChat](#) [#Winreference](#)!



[Amy Stuart @AmyfStuart](#)

I began [@ubccrwr](#) MFA w a small portfolio & graduated w 2 published stories, a novel draft, an agent & a great community [#MFAchat](#) [@awpwriter](#)



[Lucas Mann @LucasWMann](#)

[#MFAchat](#) If you can get funding, then go. If you can get funding for three years somewhere, take the extra year. Try to be nice to yourself.



[Adam Clay @adam\\_clay](#)

My MFA program was ideal because of the students there--profs were great, but the community of students really made the difference. [#MFAchat](#)



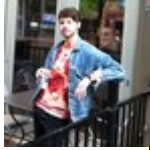
[Adam Clay @adam\\_clay](#)

I say reach out to current students to find out about experiences in terms of community, post-workshop gatherings, etc. [@awpwriter](#) [#MFAchat](#)



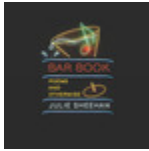
[davidbishop @davidbishop](#)

Creative MA [@EdinburghNapier](#) in UK building partnerships with like-minded US MFA programs toward student/credit swaps [#MFAchat](#)



**Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack**

I had a 3.0 GPA in undergrad, but feel it's not a great representation of my work. Is there hope for me? [#MFAchat](#)



**Julie Sheehan @thebarbook**

[@josiahbohnsack](#) Yes. GPA is not a great indicator of your talent as a writer. Your writing sample, however, is. [#MFAchat](#)



**William L. Domme @Atypeofwriter**

[@thebarbook](#) [@awpwriter](#) [@josiahbohnsack](#) So do I need a BA or can I just submit past work in the application?



**Steph Vanderslice @wordamour**

[@thebarbook](#) [@josiahbohnsack](#) Although if your GPA is poor in writing courses, that is usually a red flag.



**Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack**

[@wordamour](#) [@thebarbook](#) good to know. It was math that brought me down. It always is.



[Alyse Bense @leaseandleaves](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) What truly matters when applying to MFA programs is the writing sample. It is THE MOST important thing. [#MFAchat](#)



[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

If your writing sample shows real promise, I wouldn't worry about a 3.0.

[@josiahbohnsack](#) [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@josiahbohnsack](#) [#mfachat](#) Yes! Our limit is 3.0, but we have provisionally admitted students with lower. Writing and work post-BA help.



[EDML @exclamate](#)

If it all works out, you'll end up a MASTER of the FINE ARTS. (Disclosure: cats can't get MFAs.) [#MFAChat](#)



[Paige Sullivan @BPaigeSullivan](#)

I def agree that seeking out funding, a teaching position, and chances to work on publications are what make an MFA worthwhile. [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@SouthamptonRevi](#) [@SouthampWriters](#) we offer lit mag & opportunity to teach undergrad cr wrting [@stonybrook](#) [#MFAchat](#)



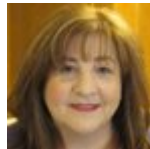
[Danielle Lazarin @d\\_lazarin](#)

Some good advice coming through [#MFAchat](#). Cosign on fully-funded programs, not straight after undergrad, & life beyond the MFA.



[Danielle Lazarin @d\\_lazarin](#)

Other things to know: you may not want to teach after. Name recognition of faculty is irrelevant. Good teachers may be new to you. [#mfachat](#)



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@d\\_lazarin](#) When researching faculty, some names were new. I talked to them, read their work, asked students & alum about them [#MFAchat](#)



[Danielle Lazarin @d\\_lazarin](#)

[@LisaRomeo](#) Yes, talking to students & alum is key. I learned that some faculty whose work I adored weren't accessible to students.





**Heather Steadham @hbsteadham**

(1) Location may be important, but your commitment to furthering your craft is paramount. [#MFAchat](#)



**Heather Steadham @hbsteadham**

(2) In today's virtual world, you're only limited by your own efforts (or lack thereof). [#MFAchat](#)



**EDML @exclamate**

You will likely not be making \$100ks post-MFA. It's the rewards of active discussion, care, and community that you'll reap. [#MFAChat](#)



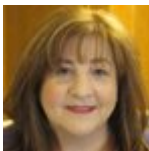
**EDML @exclamate**

I now have dear friends in these states: Washington, Arizona, New Mexico, New Jersey, California, Utah, Minnesota, & even Alaska! [#MFAChat](#)



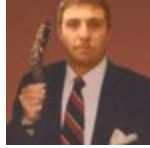
**Max Rubin @SoupRubin**

Beyond funding, faculty, and programming, I've benefitted from being in a community of writers unparalleled anywhere in the country [#MFAchat](#)



**Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo**

[@SoupRubin](#) Right. Your MFA classmates (and to some degree, faculty) form the bedrock of your post-MFA [#writing](#) community. [#MFAchat](#)



[Max Rubin @SoupRubin](#)

[@LisaRomeo](#) definitely. Can't imagine a stronger group of readers.



[Bryan Bliss @brainbliss](#)

If you're looking for a great MFA program, may I suggest Seattle Pacific. I can't even explain the difference it made to my writing [#MFAchat](#)



[Doug Paul Case @dougpaulcase](#)

Literally the only reasons you need an MFA are time and to have teaching credentials should your book do well enough for a TT job. [#mfachat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@dougpaulcase](#) Reason for MFA: not teaching creds, but writing creds. Time to write; Also learn the profession & careers other than teaching.



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@dougpaulcase](#) Reason for MFA: not teaching creds, but writing creds. Learn the profession & careers other than teaching. [#MFAChat](#)



[Long Day Press @longdaypress](#)

How important are previous publications when applying? Does it help to declare your publications (if you're not just bragging)? [#MFAchat](#)



[Adam Clay @adam\\_clay](#)

Working with pros who write poems/prose completely different from your current style is ideal. An MFA is a chance to experiment [#mfachat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Let's do some pimping, shall we? Who is the only member of congress with an MFA in Creative Writing? [@RepMarkTakano!](#) [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

1/2: I often hear people say they want to attend an MFA program to have that “built-in” community for the rest of their lives... [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

2/2: Finding a lifelong writing community is difficult. Attending an MFA program won't guarantee that. [#MFAChat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) but can definitely help [#MFAchat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

Advice on deciding how many programs to apply to--how bad do you want to go and how bad do you want to go NOW. A lot = more apps [#MFAchat](#)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Location matters, but not always in the ways you think, and places are often not what you expect if you haven't spent time there. [#MFAchat](#)



[Dahlia Seroussi @DahliaSeroussi](#)

Agreed; Corvallis didn't seem "exciting" at first, making it the perfect place to write 4 me. Also nature. [#MFAchat](#)



[Yen Ha @yhaduong](#)

[@lesliepwriter](#) [@awpwriter](#) I asked NYU MFA in Paris. For privacy would not put me in touch w/ students or grads. That's not normal? [#mfachat](#)



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@yhaduong](#) [@awpwriter](#) Honestly, I'd be leery. Our dir asks students if they are willing to talk to prospective students.



[Yen Ha @yhaduong](#)

[@lesliepwriter @awpwriter](#) Yes. I want to talk to ppl about actual experience, not party line. They said for privacy reasons they couldn't.



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@yhaduong @awpwriter](#) Ugh. Red flag. I hope you have some other programs you're excited about!



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@yhaduong @lesliepwriter @awpwriter](#) they must have a reason why. ask. seems odd tho, yes. [#MFACHat](#)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Usually recommend applicants apply to a range of programs, not just in terms of tiers but also in program size, other factors. [#MFACHat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

[#MFACHat](#) oooh \*rubs hands together\*



[EDML @exclamate](#)

Have any specific questions for me? I have opinions. Feel free to ask! [#MFACHat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

More: “Why the Hell Wouldja Choose an MFA Program Anyways?” [@Powell DA](#)  
<http://bit.ly/1P6s682> [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

1/2: “Rankings don’t matter if you feel the school’s a good fit.”— [@elizmccracken](#)  
<http://bit.ly/20oyWJX> [#MFAChat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

2/2: “Rankings matter even less if you feel it’s a bad one.”— [@elizmccracken](#)  
<http://bit.ly/20oyWJX> [#MFAChat](#)



[Adam Clay @adam\\_clay](#)

a 3 or 4 year program is best for writers just getting their footing, IMO. My first year went by fast. Years 2-3 = wrote a ton [#MFAchat](#)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) You will compile these tweets into a single coherent document? I'm impressed. I'd rather register grasshoppers to vote. [#MFAchat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

[@LowRezMFA](#) [@DianeZinna](#) Already up to 120 pages of tweets!



**Diane Zinna @DianeZinna**

**@LowRezMFA** Our poor Webmaster: This is going to be terrible to archive, but I love seeing directors and admins answering questions! **#MFAChat**



**davidbishop @davidbishop**

**#MFAchat** programs should volunteer opportunities for applicants to Skype chat with current students and/or graduates - it's a big commit!



**Nandini Balial @nandelabra**

**#MFAchat** Should I apply to a program? Is it worth the student loan? Does it make you a happier person?



**Converse College MFA @ConverseMFA**

**@nandelabra** I can say I'm glad I did. It was the best choice I ever made, and not because of jobs, but what I learned/experienced **#MFAchat**



**Gabrielle Freeman @TheLadyRandom**

**@ConverseMFA @nandelabra** I fell in love with poetry all over again. Loans are hefty, but, for me, totally worth it. Love my Converse family.



[Nandini Balial @nandelabra](#)

[@TheLadyRandom](#) [@ConverseMFA](#) I already owe six figures in loans. But apparently there are programs with funding?



[Nandini Balial @nandelabra](#)

[@ConverseMFA](#) I think I'd only do it if it helped me get a job. It's paramount, for me anyway.



[Michalle @Senneteer](#)

[@nandelabra](#) omg only go if you get funding/apply to programs with funding



[Nandini Balial @nandelabra](#)

[@Senneteer](#) Yeah. And I don't know if those exist. I also didn't like college, so I'm thinking it's maybe not the best fit for me.



[Michalle @Senneteer](#)

[@nandelabra](#) I am very pro mfa we can email about it you want more info



[Michalle @Senneteer](#)

[@nandelabra](#) lots of those exist!





[Karen Backstein @KarenatashaB](#)

[@nandelabra](#) For writing?



[Brak Lesnar @Moose Bigelow](#)

[@nandelabra](#) There was a big hubbub in [@strangerslog](#) about this.  
[http://www.thestranger.com/books/features/2015/02/27/21792750/things-i-can-say-about-mfa-writing-programs-now-that-i-no-longer-teach-in-one ...](http://www.thestranger.com/books/features/2015/02/27/21792750/things-i-can-say-about-mfa-writing-programs-now-that-i-no-longer-teach-in-one...)



[EverywhereAllTheTime @bani amor](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) literally all white faces in [#MFAchat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

[@bani amor](#) \*dives in\*



[SMC MFA Program @smcmfa](#)

[@bani amor](#) [@MorganJerkins](#) POC here representing [@smcmfa](#), also an alumna of the program :) [#MFAChat](#) [#workingondiversity](#)



[P.E. Garcia @AvantGarcia](#)

MFA programs are really [#cool](#) and [#fun](#). [#MFAChat](#) [#predominatelywhite](#)



[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)

Our MFA student-edited lit mag is [@YemasseeJournal](#). Series: The Open Book, Fall Literary Festival, Shark's Parlor. Also town stuff. [#MFAchat](#)



[SBShampton MFA Writer @SouthampWriters](#)

The good news: Lou Ann Walker, Neal Gabler, and Roger Rosenblatt teach nonfiction. The bad news: those keen eyes on your work [#MFAchat](#)



[Nicole Byrne @nicolebyrnepoet](#)

Your first semester is going to be a nightmare. Hang in there [#MFAchat](#)



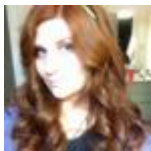
[Adam Clay @adam\\_clay](#)

and embrace your time in a grad program. you'll never have as much time in your life to write and read as you do during an MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@adam\\_clay](#) [#MFAchat](#) [@Rosemont MFA](#) So true. I also tell students to push themselves outside their comfort zone. Safest place to try is GS



[Heather Steadham @hbsteadham](#)

Take advantage of EVERY opportunity available to you. Pick up visiting writers at the airport. No job too small. [#MFAchat](#)



[Danielle Lizarin @d\\_lizarin](#)

Last one on [#MFAchat](#), for prose folks: I'd be drawn by a program that makes room to teach the novel. Not done enough.



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

If you're a POC, there may be a moment when your white colleagues will not understand your characters. [#MFAchat](#)



[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

This needs to change. [#MFAchat](#)



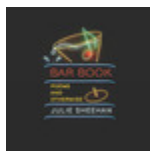
[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

Take it all in stride. But at the same time, defend your work. Don't shy away from discomfort. It's useful for everyone. [#MFAchat](#)



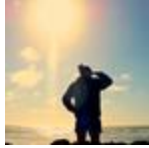
[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

I was the only black person in my incoming class and I was scared. I thought I was just a token. Don't be like me. [#MFAchat](#)



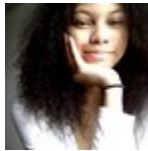
[Julie Sheehan @thebarbook](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) Oh, traumatic! I'm pushing for the day when we all recognize the individuality of the imagination. [#MFAchat](#)



[Lauren Wolf @WriteBoldly](#)

[@MorganJerkins @awpwriter](#) Critiques and workshops are better with diverse classrooms! Thanks for encouraging others to be brave.



[Renee C. @jademoonsun](#)

[@MorganJerkins @awpwriter](#) what do you mean? Don't be scared? Don't accept tokenism?



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

In + out of workshop, make sure you work on finding YOUR voice. You're not a ventriloquist. Your colleagues will be able to tell. [#MFAchat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

I spent my first year trying to sound like a old white man. My most praised work came from me sounding like me. Imagine that. [#MFAchat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

Reach out to people. I emailed Junot Díaz for advice and a day later, he responded to me with this: Find your community. [#MFAchat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

Don't be ashamed if you've never read Didion or Munro. I came from a background of Russian and Japanese lit. You'll be just fine. [#MFAchat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

If you're a POC, don't be afraid to write in dialect. Force your white colleagues to read it. It needs to stay. [#MFAchat](#)



[Naomi Hirahara @gasagasagirl](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) I've been told by readers outside my community that I was being disrespectful by using dialect. Forget that!



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

If a colleague is writing a character who shares your racial identity and something bothers you, speak up. [#MFAchat](#)



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) Thank you for this whole thread. I'm the only Hispanic in my program right now. Got some comments about some Spanish words.



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) Other than that, my favorite colleagues are supportive and ask questions and have been very welcoming.



[Naomi Hirahara @gasagasagirl](#)

[@ChrisRAlonso](#) [@MorganJerkins](#) How do words become mainstream? One way is usage, so I say use them!



[EverywhereAllTheTime @bani\\_amor](#)

[@ChrisRAlonso](#) [@MorganJerkins](#) can I ask what they said?



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@bani\\_amor](#) [@MorganJerkins](#) asked if it was necessary since the story is written in English but set historically in a Spn speaking country



[EverywhereAllTheTime @bani\\_amor](#)

[@ChrisRAlonso](#) [@MorganJerkins](#) that's super basic. Just wow.



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@bani\\_amor](#) I kinda expected that. I'm going to keep the Spanish. Ain't nobody else who can roll these Rs like I can



[EverywhereAllTheTime @bani\\_amor](#)

[@ChrisRAlonso](#) dude, I've been told repeatedly in \*poc only spaces\* to change my Spanish words. We end doing what makes sense for the work.



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@bani amor](#) Damn! I definitely see where the Spanish doesn't fit, and I see where it does, and that's where I'll put it. You do you!



[seelight @seelight](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) Yes! And support fellow writers of color who speak up in class!



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

Do not just say a white colleague's POC character is "problematic". Lay it out clearly so that he or she can learn. [#MFAchat](#)



[Just zis guy y'know? @GRIMACHU](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) [#MFAchat](#) Despite the borderline racist tone of much of this, that's sound advice. Dismissal is just frustrating as hell.



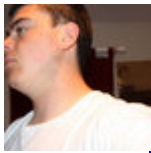
[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

POCs, gorge yourself on the works of those who look like you. The boldness will rub off on you, trust me. [#MFAchat](#)



[Morgan Jerkins @MorganJerkins](#)

Dig deep. You think you have your limits but you can go further. It feels like heart surgery but you will thank yourself later. [#MFAchat](#)



[Stephen J Furlong @BeenASon24](#)

Community is vital when it comes to MFA/MA work. While writing is a soloistic art, it thrives when dedicated people work together [#MFAChat](#)



[Rachael Warecki @RachaelLaWriter](#)

My MFA program brought me a community of like-minded writers, now some of my best friends. Wouldn't have met them otherwise. [#MFAchat](#)



[Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife](#)

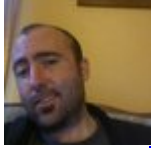
Most important thing: it's not about the MFA- it's abt the writing. [#MFAchat](#)



[Adam Clay @adam\\_clay](#)

start a magazines with yr fellow students. start a reading series. think literary citizenship. [#MFAchat](#)





[Daniel A. Hoyt @dan\\_hoyt](#)

Thanks, [@DianeZinna](#), [@awpwriter](#), and everyone who participated. Great questions and advice. [#MFAchat](#)



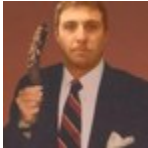
[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Don't over estimate how little it matters if you live or work in NY. [#MFAchat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

You may think you know what kind of writer you are, but understand you might come out the other side completely not that thing [#MFAchat](#)



[Max Rubin @SoupRubin](#)

[@d\\_schuman](#) and also my writing sample is NOTHING like what I've ended up pursuing in my writing



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@SoupRubin](#) And part of that is allowing a faculty member who doesn't share your aesthetic to get under your skin and challenge you [#MFAchat](#)



[\*\*Holly Vanderhaar @HollyVanderhaar\*\*](#)

1/2 Speaking as an MFA and now an MFA Prog. Coordinator: Don't go into huge debt. Funding matters. [\*\*#MFAchat\*\*](#)



[\*\*Holly Vanderhaar @HollyVanderhaar\*\*](#) 8m8 minutes ago

2/2 And the big-name faculty who drew u to the program may work with only a few students, or not teach regularly. Research ALL fac. [\*\*#MFAchat\*\*](#)



[\*\*Paige Sullivan @BPaigeSullivan\*\*](#)

I also would research - is the program studio, or studio-academic? No idea that [\*\*@gsucw\*\*](#) was studio-academic, but I love the rigor! [\*\*#MFAchat\*\*](#)



[\*\*Michael Beeman @MichaelBeeman\*\*](#)

Want to keep your day job? Consider a low-residency MFA program. [\*\*#MFAchat\*\*](#)



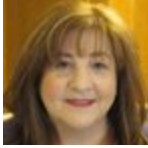
[\*\*Nick Mamatas @NMamatas\*\*](#)

Don't write stories about the person in workshop you want to have sex with. [\*\*#MFAchat\*\*](#)



[\*\*Diane Zinna @DianeZinna\*\*](#)

Let's end with this: Alumni and current students, what do you wish you knew when you were looking for programs to apply to? [\*\*#MFAChat\*\*](#)



[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Say yes to the optional and or tough stuff. Get in the DIScomfort zone. That's where good things happen to yr writing. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Nothing. Whatever missteps I made ultimately got me to a good spot, and my program, whatever its flaws, helped me do that.



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) As an alum (University of Montana) long ago, I wish I'd known how fast the two (in my case) years would pass. [#MFAchat](#)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) I was in Montana for the first time in 15 years and realized how significant, intense, and magical those years were. [#MFAchat](#)



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Easy! Wish I had known how to submit, where, and to whom. My MFA was 100% craft. I had to learn the rest on my own after. [#mfachat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

[@baypathmfaCNF](#) Mine too! They stapled-together photocopies on publishing with the title, "Trade Secrets" in my mailbox grad day. [#MFACHAT](#)



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) Oh no! Awful! That's one reason I'm so gung-ho about helping students understand publishing before they graduate. [#mfachat](#)



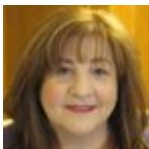
[Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohnsack](#)

Despite each program's preference, generally, does one long story or two shorter stories provide a better sample? [#MFAchat](#)



[Tasha Cotter @TashCotter](#)

I'd highly recommend taking a class in a different genre. It could be a turning point for you! [#MFAchat](#)



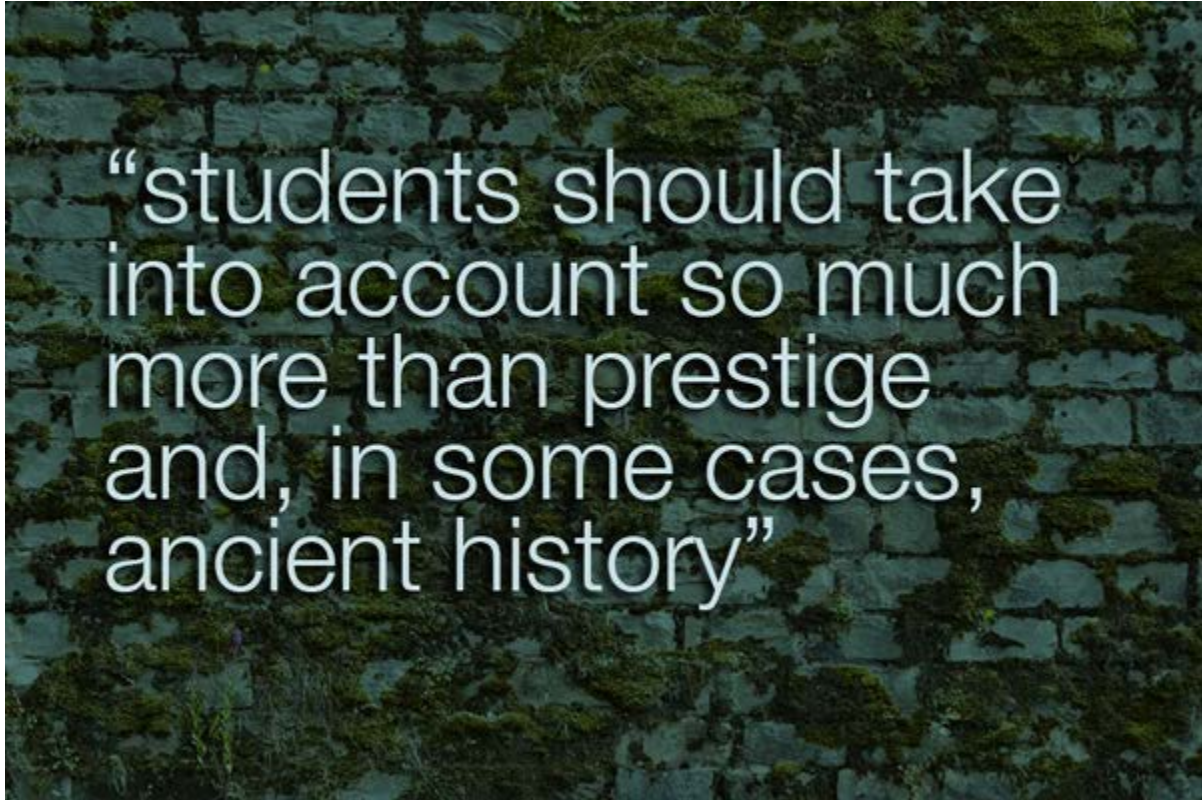
[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

Great advice. I am a CNF writer, but some of my best aha moments came in a poetry or fiction seminar. [#MFAchat](#)



[UsyBoroda @usyboroda](#)

Article by [@jpoch](#) discusses MA vs. MFA <http://bit.ly/1LMES7P> [#MFACHat](#)



[Danielle Lazarin @d\\_lazarin](#)

Okay wait, one more for [#MFACHat](#)! I clicked my way through the math section of my GRE. Single digit score. Still got into good programs.



[Leanna J Blackwell @baypathmfaCNF](#)

[@d\\_lazarin](#) Me, too! [#mfachat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

“[@d\\_lazarin](#): [#MFAchat](#)! [Low] math .. score. Still got into good programs.” Yep. We don't require GRE. Many MFA's don't either.



[Nicole Byrne @nicolebyrnepoet](#)

There's a lot of opportunities available to you in grad school that aren't directly related to your MFA. Take advantage of those. [#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Other random thoughts: make sure you're in a program that lets you write what you want to write, not what they want to read [#MFAchat](#)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

After the tweets settle, questions for the Institute of American Indian Arts' low residency MFA can be addressed to [jdavis@iaia.edu](mailto:jdavis@iaia.edu) [#MFAchat](#)



[davidbishop @davidbishop](#)

[#MFAchat](#) working at a UK university, I'm still amazed many US universities charge people to apply! Volume/admin nightmare I know, but still.



[Paige Sullivan @BPaigeSullivan](#)

I will also say that teaching a full load and juggling your writing can be a feat -- let alone finding time to submit! [#MFAchat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[@BPaigeSullivan](#) [#MFAchat](#) Yes! [@Rosemont MFA](#) offers a class called surviving as a writer that helps students get ready for that challenge!



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Be humble going into a grad program. If you knew everything, you wouldn't need to go. [#MFAchat](#)



[Tasha Cotter @TashCotter](#)

At the [@BGWritersStudio](#) I took courses in fiction and poetry. Loved that the faculty were so encouraging & supportive. [#MFAchat](#)



[Michael Nye @mpnye](#)

Ultimately, the person responsible for your writing is you. Programs and communities help, but, face it, writing is a solitary art. [#MFAchat](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#)

[@mpnye](#) and often it's solitary and very much not art...[#MFAchat](#)





**[Heather Steadham @hbsteadham](#)**

Dedicate yourself to increasing the diversity in your program. DO WHAT IT TAKES.  
**[#MFAchat](#)** **[@AvantGarcia](#)**



**[Michael Nye @mpny](#)**

Broadly I'd say a graduate program will make you a better writer and, if you can, you should go to one. **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife](#)**

.**[@mpny](#)** for those unable to attend for whatever reason so many other ways to learn craft and grow community **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife](#)**

.**[@mpny](#)** places like Seattle's **[@HugoHouse](#)** and Boston's **[@grubstreet](#)**, great online options and conferences **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Michael Nye @mpny](#)**

**[@ABorderLife](#)** **[@HugoHouse](#)** **[@grubstreet](#)** Agreed: Sackett too, and it seems like most large cities now have communities like these.





[Shannon H. Polson @ABorderLife](#)

Sorry, should have been [@mpnye @HugoHouse @GrubWriters #MFAchat](#)



[GrubStreet @GrubWriters](#)

Thanks [@ABorderLife](#)! Our Novel & Memoir Incubators are also a good option for finishing book-length work with supportive community [#MFAchat](#)



[Lincoln Michel @TheLincoln](#)

I'd also avoid going to a program for a SINGLE teacher you love, but definitely go to program with a diverse set of great teachers [#MFAchat](#)



[Alyse Bense @leaseandleaves](#)

Research, research, research programs! Don't be afraid to reach out to faculty and students! Only apply to fully-funded programs! [#MFAchat](#)



[AWP @awpwriter](#)

So many great tweets, we can't keep up with retweeting them! [#MFAChat](#)



[Nick Mamatas @NMamatas](#)

The ego is always the enemy: writers who want their work "torn apart" are just as narcissistic as those who only want praise. [#MFAchat](#)



[G.M. Palmer @gm\\_palmer](#)

Put a novelist on your poetry thesis panel. Put a poet on your novel thesis panel. Learn from the other. [#MFAchat](#)



[Chad Rhoad @c\\_rhoad](#)

Knowing why you want a MFA program is crucial to choosing the right one for you. What do you want from your time there? [#MFAchat](#)



[Doug Paul Case @dougpaulcase](#)

OMG guys an MFA is not going to make you a writer. You are or you're not, will be or won't. [#MFAchat](#)



[Nova Ren Suma @novaren](#)

Watching [#MFAchat](#) with interest, now that I've joined the faculty of an MFA program for the first time ([@VCFA](#))! So interesting.



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

We're happy to have [#MFAchat](#) any time! Feel free to email with questions: [palmdesertmfa@ucr.edu](mailto:palmdesertmfa@ucr.edu) or just send us questions here.



[Catapult @CatapultStory](#)

Make sure to check out the lively conversation happening in [#MFAchat](#) right now



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

Thanks [@awpwriter](#) [#mfachat](#) has been intense. Now let me look back over the hashtag to see what I missed!



[Evelyn Lauer @evelynalauer](#)

I write more now with a career and two kids than I did during my MFA years. [#MFAchat](#)



[Dahlia Seroussi @DahliaSeroussi](#)

[@evelynalauer](#) this is incredibly comforting! [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

Best things about getting an M.F.A., to me: 1. Health insurance 2. Access to academic library 3. Great teachers 4. Great colleagues [#MFAchat](#)



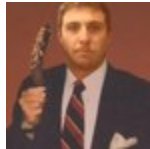
[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

Most important, of course, is workshop. I didn't move to fucking Iowa to go to cool parties. What happens in that room is it. [#MFAchat](#)



**[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)**

When you're checking out a program, visit campus. Go to workshop. Do you like what you see and hear? That's really the only thing. [#MFAchat](#)



**[Max Rubin @SoupRubin](#)**

[@jennasauers](#) are you implying that 5 cheeseburger/week at George's is not as culturally fulfilling as the entire offerings of NYC?



**[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)**

[@SoupRubin](#) why did you have to bring cheeseburgers into this



**[AWP @awpwriter](#)**

Thank you for joining us today for this [#MFAchat](#)! It's been amazing! Feel free to keep the great discussions going



**[AWP @awpwriter](#)**

Our next tweet chat will be in January. We'll chat about the [#AWP16](#) bookfair. [#MFAChat](#)



**[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)**

Thank you, everyone! That was exhausting and fun! More questions? Check out advice articles here: <http://bit.ly/114nhzN> [#MFAChat](#)



**Lilliam Rivera @lilliamr**

Will have to check out the [#MFAchat](#) hashtag. Lot's of good advice.



**Diane Josefowicz @dianegreco**

Don't neglect courses in literary translation [#mfachat](#)



**Michael Nye @mpnye**

"Do it or don't. But I got some place I gotta be" - Marlo Stanfield on MFA programs [#MFAchat](#)  
[#TheWire](#)



**davidbishop @davidbishop**

[#MFAchat](#) interested in genre-fiction MA in UK? Here's the skinny on Creative Writing  
[@EdinburghNapier](#) <http://macreativewriting.blogspot.co.uk/2015/05/updated-admissions-process-for-ma.html> ... [#shamelessplug](#)



**UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA**

And if you want [#MFAChat](#) in real life: our fall residency Dec. 4-13th. Come visit. Email [palmdesertmfa@ucr.edu](mailto:palmdesertmfa@ucr.edu) for details/schedule



**SMC MFA Program @smcmfa**

happy to answer more questions re: [@smcmfa](#) or MFA's in general @ [cd8@stmarys-ca.edu](mailto:cd8@stmarys-ca.edu).  
Thanks so much [@awpwriter](#) & [@DianeZinna](#) [#MFAChat](#)



**Scott Anderson @SMAAnderson575**

**@awpwriter** Too many young writers in MFA programs hardly/don't read much fiction. READ READ READ and then read some more **#MFAchat**



**Kate North @katetnorth**

I really enjoy teaching Novel Writing on the **@English CMet** grad program, feel free to ask any questions **#MFAchat**



**Marian Womack @beekeepermadrid**

**@Cambridge Uni** Master is low-residence & very well structured for full-time working students. I'm very happy in my 2nd year there. **#MFAchat**



**Alyse Benseal @leaseandleaves**

I'd love to chat more about **#KU** and Lawrence! We've got a lot going on in the graduate creative writing program **#MFAchat**



**Heather Steadham @hbsteadham**

When the "lit mag" you can work on in your program is the Oxford American . . . (Arkansas Writers MFA Workshop) **#MFAchat @ARWritersMFA**



**Adam Clay @adam\_clay**

if you're lucky enough to only teach CW in your MFA program, ask to teach comp for at least a semester. You'll thank me later. **#MFAchat**



[Annie Frazier @BijouAnnie](#)

Want a mentor to read 175-250 pages of your fiction per semester? Check out [@spalding\\_mfa](#).  
[#MFAchat](#)



[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

[#MFAchat](#) happy to answer any questions about [@Rosemont\\_MFA](#). Thanks to [@awpwriter](#) &  
[@DianeZinna](#)!



jen! [@JenniferMWolff](#)

[@DianeZinna](#) [@awpwriter](#) Thank you for sparking such an awesome & inspiring discussion!  
[#MFAchat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Follow some of our faculty [#MFAchat](#) folks: [@Elizabeth\\_Crane](#), [@encurtido](#),  
[@Ginafrangelo](#), [@todgoldberg](#), [@JAEssbaum](#), [@RobergeRob](#), [@davidulin](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Follow even more of our faculty and alums [#MFAchat](#) people: [@SGJ72](#), [@NatashiaDeon](#),  
[@Nicolucci1899](#), [@ShadesShadows](#), [@DeanneStillman2](#)



[David Schuman @d\\_schuman](#) 2m2 minutes ago

A whirlwind and I forgot to tag [#MFAchat](#) like a thousand times but thanks [@awpwriter](#)! And  
feel free to get in touch with any questions.



**[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)**

Because we're small, we bring in visiting writers to read and give master classes. \*Some\* are listed here: <http://tinyurl.com/pmlf4gz> **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Annie Frazier @BijouAnnie](#)**

Try to find out what the workshop atmosphere is like before applying. **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Marian Womack @beekeepermadrid](#)**

If you want to feel part of a community attend the **[@ClarionUCSD](#)** writers workshop **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)**

And for all your information **[#MFAchat](#)** folks: <http://palmdesertmfa.ucr.edu>



**[Chelsea H Bryan @chelseahbryan](#)**

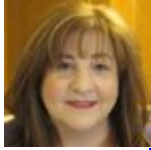
The biggest part of the experience besides teachers are peers: do go to visiting day to see if it's the right environment. **[#MFAchat](#)**



**[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)**

Thinking about an MFA or in the midst of apps? Check out **[#MFAchat](#)** hosted by **[@awpwriter](#)** for smart advice. **[#amwriting](#)**





[Lisa Romeo @LisaRomeo](#)

Online MFA [@Bay Path](#) I have far more 1:1 w/my students than I had w/faculty in my low res. Not disparaging, just program design. [#MFAchat](#)



[Rachael Warecki @RachaelLaWriter](#)

Also: went to a low-res MFA program, [@AntiochLA](#). Allowed me to work full-time while also learning & writing. [#MFAchat](#)



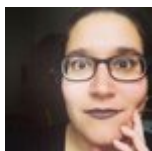
[English@CardiffMet @English CMet](#)

[@RachaelLaWriter](#) yes, lots of our low res students work [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#) 4m4 minutes ago

A few [#MFAchat](#) thoughts:



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

1.) I'm very glad I didn't go to my MFA directly out of college, but I'm also glad that I didn't wait much longer than I did. [#MFAchat](#)



[EDML @exclamate](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) Yeah, you gotta wait until you've got the burn for school again.



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

[@exclamate](#) Exactly! If I'd gone right out of college I would have been hella exhausted.



[Char Wars @cpburkejr](#)

This is fantastic advice. Be sure to check out the whole detailed thread.

[#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

2.) I had NO IDEA what sort of writer I was going in. My style happened b/c smarter writers than me sensed what I was trying to do. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

3.) Part of the reason I applied for MFAs when I did was because the economy sucked & I hated my job. I needed to Get Out. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

4.) I am really grateful that I went to a program in a city with a low cost of living. (Almost went to Austin; so glad I didn't.) [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

5.) I'm very grateful I didn't take on debt for my MFA. Everyone's needs are different, but I think I made the right choice. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

6.) There are more funded programs than you think. I could have spent \$\$\$, but I waited an extra year & applied again & I'm glad. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

7.) When you're looking at programs, don't necessarily shoot for big name faculty; fame can't predict how good a teacher is. [#MFAchat](#)



[Leah Zufall @lkz25](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) thanks for sharing Carmen Maria Machado, have a great Tuesday :) (insight by <http://commun.it>)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

8.) Good teachers don't necessarily have to write in your genre/style; they have to be smart, well-read, and open-minded. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

(This is true of fellow students, too. My best readers are themselves writers in a variety of genres, including realism.) [#MFAchat](#)



[Christopher R Alonso @ChrisRAlonso](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) I agree! Had a big workshop two weeks ago and saw how receptive and thoughtful colleagues were, esp the realists. Realest.



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

But I loved getting my MFA. I had time to write & health insurance. I found my voice. I read a ton. I met amazing people. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Oh, another thing: don't rely on "chatter" about programs. Go straight to the source. Talk to current & recent students. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Wondering about a program's competitiveness? Genre-friendliness? Ability to help you during & after your program? Ask the students [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Oh, and don't apply with samples that artificially cater to your perception of a program's tastes. Apply with your best work. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Don't be afraid to re-apply a second (or third) year! Readers change, luck changes. And in between, keep improving your writing! [#MFAchat](#)



[Char Wars @cpburkejr](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) I did exactly this and was literally multiple times more successful at round two. You get better with time.



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Also: MFAs are not about "teaching writing." They're about giving writers time, space, advice, education, resources, community. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

"Can writing be taught?" is not the right question here. It's "What could this writer do if she had the resources she needed?" [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Like, my MFA program was the right set of resources for me at the right time in my life & career & writerly arc. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Also, the MFA is just the beginning. Plenty of people get them & stop writing. It's really about what you do afterwards. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Also, there are always more talented writers than there are slots in MFA programs. (This is true of magazines & residencies, too.) [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

There isn't infinite money for every writer with potential. So apply widely, don't get discouraged, and keep reading & writing. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Make sure you know WHY you're applying for an MFA. Do you want or need what it offers? [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

For example, if you want an MFA, you should love reading. If you don't, you're in the wrong field. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

You also should have thoughts and feelings about literature as an art form--about aesthetic--however that looks. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

And... I think that's it? Whew. But I can answer questions about MFAs, if you have them. I have A Lot of Feelings, obviously. [#MFAchat](#)



[Libby @libbywebster](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) I am glad I follow you on Twitter. I am in the process of my first time applying to MFAs & love reading your thoughts! 0:)



[Dahlia Seroussi @DahliaSeroussi](#)

Getting 2/3 years to read&write is one of the best things you'll do. Don't blow it by being an asshole. [#MFAchat](#)



[Leslie Pietrzyk @lesliepwriter](#)

[@awpwriter](#) Shouldn't have stopped...[#MFAchat](#) just started trending! :)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

[@lesliepwriter](#) [@awpwriter](#) Jon Stewart was in our sights! We had him. [#MFAchat](#)



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Yes! Another dream come true for me! (The first was getting my MFA, of course!)

[#MFAChat](#)



[UCRLowResMFA @UCRPDLRMFA](#)

Write something that makes you happy. Don't be miserable doing this job. Be miserable in a cubicle. Be happy writing. [#MFAchat](#)



[GrubStreet @GrubWriters](#)

Yes! Though don't be miserable in a cubicle if you can help it [#MFAchat](#)



[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)

One thing that has surprised me about low residency programs is the intensity of the bonds between students. [#MFAchat](#)





[Rachael Warecki @RachaelLaWriter](#)

True. I have strong friendships with [@ArtsCollide](#), [@LimelightWendy](#), [@K\\_Imani](#), etc. due to [@AntiochLA](#). [#MFAchat](#)



[Ashley Perez @ArtsCollide](#)

[@RachaelLaWriter](#) [@LimelightWendy](#) [@K\\_Imani](#) [@AntiochLA](#)  
[@LowRezMFA](#) one of the best parts of the MFA experience



[Rachael Warecki @RachaelLaWriter](#)

[#MFAchat](#) Also true!



[Heather Steadham @hbsteadham](#)

Don't be afraid to apply for fellowships--if you don't get them, maybe you'll still get noticed.  
[#MFAchat](#)



[Joshua Bohnsack @josiahbohsack](#) 2m2 minutes ago

So much great advice with [#MFAchat](#). Thanks all!



[Anita Laydon Miller @AnitaLaydonMill](#)

[@jendellazanna](#) Did you notice the [#MFAchat](#) discussion?



**[South Carolina MFA @scMFA](#)**

Thanks [@awpwriter](#) for hosting [#MFAchat](#). We have to sign off now, but there's lots of info on our website: [http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/engl/mfa-program-carolina ...](http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/engl/mfa-program-carolina...)



**[Ashley Strosnider @bravenewlady](#)**

Does everyone in [#MFAchat](#) already have a MFA? Is it "a MFA" or "an MFA?" So many questions.



**[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)**

[@bravenewlady](#) [#MFAchat](#) It's an MFA. I think many using this hashtag direct programs or are in them, but it's also for those looking at them.



**[Laura Villareal @earthandstars](#)**

Funding & diversity were concerns when applying. Luckily, I ended up at [@NewarkMFA](#) which has both. [#MFAchat](#)



**[IAIALowRez @LowRezMFA](#)**

I skipped a meeting with the Dean to be here, so I better justify my time: <http://www.iaia.edu/mfa> will take you to our faculty. [#MFAchat](#)



[Hope Jordan @hopejordannh](#)

Going to writing conferences, then back to my normal life felt like starting an MFA and stopping it after a week, year after year [#MFAchat](#)



[Blake Kimzey @BlakeKimzey](#)

An MFA is not the destination. It can be a starting point (or way station). You don't deserve anything just because you enroll. [#MFAchat](#)



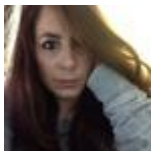
[Carla Spataro @cjspataro](#)

Just finished participating in my first twitter chat. Felt a little like being a puck in a hockey game, but really informative! [#MFAchat](#)



[James Tate Hill @JamesTateHill](#)

The [#MFA](#) is barely the beginning of your writing education, not the completion. [#MFAchat](#)



[Amanda Miska @akmiska](#)

[#MFAchat](#) just makes me feel bitter that there wasn't an active Twitter lit community in 2005 to tell me I was making a huge mistake



[Vincent Scarpa @vincentscarpa](#)

If you're on the wrong meds, your first year barely counts. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

This [#MFAchat](#) was fun. And, I hope, useful! Thanks [@awpwriter](#)



[Emma Hutson @Emma S Hutson](#)

Did my MA at [@English\\_CMet](#) - the lecturers really make a difference - interaction, support and innovation. [#MFAchat](#)



[English@CardiffMet @English\\_CMet](#)

[@Emma S Hutson](#) great to hear, so glad to provide a place for you to study before your next step onto a PhD! [#mfachat](#)



[Emma Hutson @Emma S Hutson](#)

[@English\\_CMet](#) I miss doing creative writing with you guys though!  
[#MFAchat](#)



[HumanitiesCardiffMet @English\\_CMet](#)

[@Emma S Hutson](#) the feeling is mutual!



[Durre Shahwar @Durre\\_Shahwar](#)

[@Emma S Hutson @English\\_CMet](#) Not to mention that they really know their stuff & are approachable, always make the time. [#nostalgia](#)



[Emma Hutson @Emma S Hutson](#)

[@Durre Shahwar @English CMet](#) Yep! Creative writing workshops were brilliant. Don't get quite the same experience anywhere else. [#MFAchat](#)



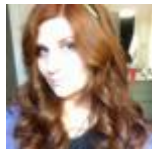
[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

I just found a wealth of interesting people to follow thanks to [#MFAchat](#). I love how the Internet makes creative connections more viable.



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

[@BeenASon24](#) Thanks to you too! Really enjoyed your input on [#MFAchat](#). 😊



[Heather Steadham @hbsteadham](#)

And, of course, SUBMIT SUBMIT SUBMIT. [#MFAchat](#)



[Jenna Sauers @jennasauers](#)

This [#MFAchat](#) was fun. And, I hope, useful! Thanks [@awpwriter](#)



[Create ॐ Shanti ∞ @CreateShanti](#)

[@akmiska](#) oh dear I just looked up the [#MFAchat](#) and confused myself all over again.



**[Ben Hoffman @benrhoffman](#)**

There are like 8 MFAs where agents will come sign you (or sign your friend, not you). You'll find an agent later when you're ready [#MFAchat](#)



**[Danielle Lazarin @d\\_lazarin](#)**

[. @benrhoffman](#) also was in a program that brought agents in but wasn't in a rush for us to sign. Was told: write book first! [#MFAchat](#)



**[Ben Hoffman @benrhoffman](#)**

[. @d\\_lazarin](#) yes, even if your program brings in agents, agent is 99% gonna say, cool, keep going, get in touch when you have a book [#MFAchat](#)



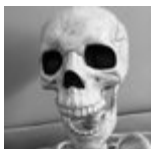
**[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)**

[#mfachat](#) Applicants do you know about the MFA Draft '16 on Facebook? I've had students who thought it helped. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/228419750615188/> ...



**[Kelly Luce @lucekel](#)**

Don't expect a program to 'make you a writer.' Do the work you need to do to identify as a writer before you apply to grad school. [#MFAchat](#)



**[Warren Buchanan @warrenbuchanan](#)**

An MFA doesn't measure talent or skill. It measures whether or not you have the drive to devote your life, your being, to writing. [#MFAchat](#)



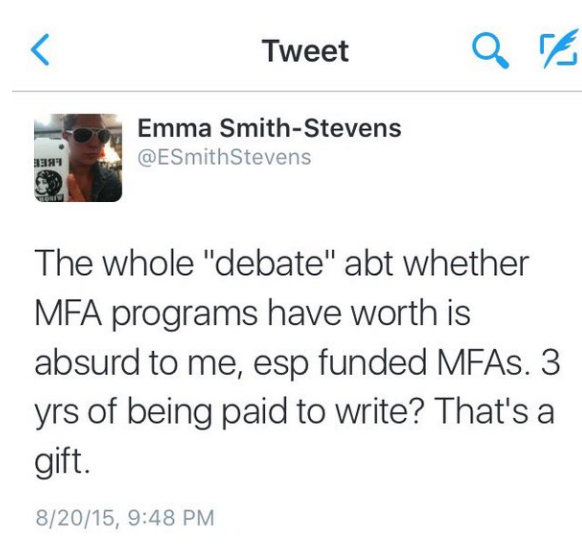
[Literary Disco @LiteraryDisco](#)

Some of you are likely MFA bound writers...Tod answered questions today during [#MFAchat](#) via [@UCRPDLRMFA](#).



[Emma Smith-Stevens @ESmithStevens](#)

[#MFAchat](#)



[Amal El-Mohtar @tithenai](#)

Check out [@carmenmmachado](#)'s TL right now for [#MFAchat](#) thoughts. A lot of fantastic, succinct advice.



[Midway Journal @MidwayJournal](#)

If you haven't, check out the [#MFAchat](#) on Twitter.



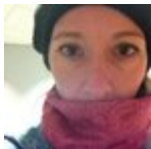
**James Tate Hill @JamesTateHill**

Most of what you learn in an [#MFA](#) & beyond is a result of your willingness to learn.  
[#MFAchat](#)



**Dan Shea @DanielShea1**

Unless it's free, don't. [#MFAchat](#)



**Kristen Leigh @Kris10ly**

[#MFAchat](#) Don't apply to [#gradschool](#) immediately after undergrad. [#Travel](#), [#Work](#), [#Fail](#) at something so you have something to write about.



**AU Creative Writing @ArcadiaCW**

We love seeing the great conversations around [#MFAchat](#). Makes us happy to be a part of this community.



**James Tate Hill @JamesTateHill**

The less you think about [#publishing](#), the more you can think about [#writing](#). [#MFAchat](#)



**David J. Rothman @Prosodisto**

[@realgaymania](#) [#MFAchat](#) I encourage students to remember that to publish is to join a community. Focus on that and it will come.





[Hunger Mountain @HungerMtn](#)

So busy reading submissions for our next print issue, we hardly noticed the new trend...What is this [#MFAchat](#) anyway?



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@hungermtn](#) [#mfachat](#) it was a tweetchat by [@awpwriter](#) to discuss MFA programs, applications, etc. Official time is over, but continuing.



[Hunger Mountain @HungerMtn Nov 3 Montpelier, VT](#)

[@TheW MFACW](#) [@awpwriter](#) Thanks! Got our noses buried in stories over here, bummed to miss this Twitter trend though!



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW MFACW](#)

[@hungermtn](#) [@awpwriter](#) Scroll back through the hashtag [#mfachat](#) and you can see the whole conversation. A few people are still using it.



[Diane Zinna @DianeZinna](#)

Also, this: [#MFAChat](#) trending!

Trends · [Change](#)

**#NationalSandwichDay**

63.9K Tweets about this trend

**Jon Stewart**

19.4K Tweets about this trend

**#ElectionDay**

54.1K Tweets about this trend

**#MFAchat**

Just started trending

**Spike Lee**

Just started trending

**#E3Now**

81.6K Tweets about this trend

**His Dark Materials**

12.8K Tweets about this trend

**Chiraq**

Just started trending

**iCampus Newspaper**

Just started trending

**Takata**

6,287 Tweets about this trend



**[David J. Rothman @Prosodisto](#)**

So i think I'm coming late to the party -- but what a great chat. [#MFAChat](#)



**[Nandini Balial @nandelabra](#)**

So this article makes me think I'm not qualified. [#MFAchat](#)  
[http://www.thestranger.com/books/features/2015/02/27/21792750/things-i-can-say-about-mfa-writing-programs-now-that-i-no-longer-teach-in-one ...](http://www.thestranger.com/books/features/2015/02/27/21792750/things-i-can-say-about-mfa-writing-programs-now-that-i-no-longer-teach-in-one...)



**[David J. Rothman @Prosodisto](#)**

[@nandelabra](#) That article created quite a firestorm. Take it with a large grain of salt. You can learn a great deal in an MFA! [#MFAchat](#)



[Andrea Gutierrez @AndreaGtrrz](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) So so true. [@chrisabani](#) said this to us in my first quarter in grad school. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Someone once said that MFAs are like pressure cookers; they speed along a writer's process faster than if they hadn't taken one. [#MFAchat](#)



[David J. Rothman @Prosodisto](#)

[@carmenmmachado](#) [#MFAchat](#) ...and it sure beats Ramen...



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

For me, that's apt. I think I could have been in my current place artistically eventually, but it would have taken 5+ more years. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

I think that's a useful metaphor. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Also, SF/F writers: Clarion & Clarion West offer similar, though not identical, benefits to an MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

Clarion can give you similar access to teachers, advice, connections, & community. But w/o the funding & time, which is important. [#MFAchat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

You can do both, either, or neither. It just depends what you want/need. I did both & it was a great combination. [#MFAchat](#)



[David J. Rothman @Prosodisto](#)

My program is at Western State Colorado University -- a low-res in the Rockies; 2-wk. July intensive. [http://www.western.edu/academics/graduate/creative-writing ...](http://www.western.edu/academics/graduate/creative-writing...) [#MFAChat](#)



[Carmen Maria Machado @carmenmmachado](#)

So yeah. Basically, write & read a ton, evaluate your wants & needs, do your research, & don't get discouraged. [#MFAchat](#)



[Stonecoast Community @StonecoastTweet](#)

[#mfachat](#) happy to answer questions about low-residency challenges and benefits



**[Christine Hennessey @TheNewChrissy](#)**

You don't need to go grad school right away! I started my [#MFA](#) program when I was 29 and was so glad I waited. [#MFAchat](#)



**[Leslie Jones @lesleslielie](#)**

I just read Harold Brodkey expound for 21 pages, mostly on oral sex... And it was awesome! (workshop assignment). [#MFAchat](#)



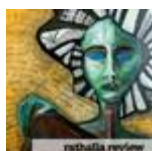
**[Steve Kistulentz @kistulentz](#)**

Advice for possible grad students: ask. Will faculty be on leave? What help can I get outside workshop? Can I visit a class? [#MFAchat](#)



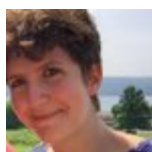
**[Steve Kistulentz @kistulentz](#)**

Also ask: is MFA the right degree? MA more flexible, perhaps a better entry into PhD study. (disclaimer: I direct an MA program!) [#MFAchat](#)



**[Rathalla Review @RathallaReview](#)**

Amazing conversations happening at [#MFAChat](#) ! Search the hashtag for insights from [@awpwriter](#) [@carmenmmachado](#) [@cjspataro](#) [@LisaRomeo](#)



**[Emily Coon @ehcoon](#)**

Check out the [#MFAchat](#) thread if you have questions/thoughts about MFAs. Moving across the country to begin mine was a good call.



**Brittany Borghi @brittany\_borghi**

What are nonfiction writers [@uiowa](#) up to rn? Some Borges, some Whitney, some snacking, etc.  
[#MFAchat](#) [@awpwriter](#)



**Leslie Jones @lesleslielie**

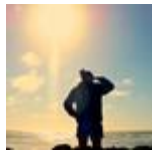
Mostly, we wear sweatpants with our concentration (poetry/fiction) stamped across the butt.  
[#mfachat](#)





[dawniewalton @dawniewalton](#)

[@MorganJerkins](#) Thank you for your insights in [#MFAChat](#). Am applying to programs this year and found your words super helpful!



[Lauren Wolf @WriteBoldly](#)

Hey [#MFAchat](#) people, Let's continue this conversation over a drink at [#AWP16](#)



[todd dillard @toddedillard](#)

how did i miss [#MFAchat](#)? I have things to say! And those things are: MFA debt is the worse. Also: Don't go straight to MFAs from undergrad.



[Forrest Anderson @OCaptainEnglish](#)

[@Mariad\\_kins](#) good convo about mfa programs happening now on twitter at this hastag: [#MFAchat](#)



[Eric Shonkwiler @eshonkwiler](#)

[#MFAchat](#) Find the biggest person in your program and beat them in a fight.



[Eric Shonkwiler @eshonkwiler](#)

Unplug your thesis chair when fully charged to ensure longer battery life. [#MFAchat](#)



[Martha Holloway @mlhollow](#)

Biggest advice for MFA seekers: Don't go for it if you don't really, truly want it. Also don't take on (more) student loan debt. [#MFAchat](#)



[Amanda Sledz @transporbation](#)

Don't enroll in any MFA program, ever, that expects you to pay for it with student loans exclusively. Don't do that to your future. [#MFAchat](#)



[Amanda Sledz @transporbation](#)

the writer you admire the most is not necessarily the best teacher. Famous writers are also humans with issues, obsessions, flaws [#MFAchat](#)



[Amanda Sledz @transporbation](#)

the best teachers see what you're trying to accomplish, and coax you towards it. You walk away still writing like you, not them. [#MFAchat](#)



[Amanda Sledz @transporbation](#)

you don't need an MFA. It is a piece of paper that many people have. What you need is to observe, to be inspired, and to dream. [#MFAchat](#)





[Samantha Lienhard @SamLienhard](#)

Looks like I missed the [#MFAchat](#), but as a genre writer, going to Seton Hill was one of the best decisions I made. [#SHUWPF](#)



[Tristian Evans @TristEv](#)

I start in January, [@SamLienhard](#). I am really excited about attending the [#SHUWPF](#) program. [#MFAchat](#)



[Laura Hunsberger @lilredradio](#)

My MFA was the launching point into a career I love that uses writing as an essential skill: radio reporter and producer. [#MFAchat](#)



[jen! @JenniferMWolff](#)

I dream of an MFA that would help me break the chains of fear that hold me back from speaking my truth. Need a community. [#MFAchat](#)



[Eileen Tomarchio @EileenTomarchio](#)

Looking back, wish I'd pursued a MFA in cw rather than pricier film directing/ screenwriting. Master of Fuzzy Aspirations? [#MFAchat](#)



[W. P. Johnson @Americantypo](#)

Being taught to write like everyone else is super pricey. Ass in seat is free and you'll probably produce more work. [#MFAchat](#)



[W. P. Johnson @Americantypo](#)

Most, but not all, end up just treating it like a social club. Writing is lonely work unfortunately. Just gotta sit down and do it. [#MFAchat](#)



[W. P. Johnson @Americantypo](#)

A thesis, for example, is a book which, if it's your 1st, will probably stink. better to write ur 1st shitty book without debt. [#MFAchat](#)



[W. P. Johnson @Americantypo](#)

There's also little chance it will lead to a teaching gig. Also, tenure track positions are an endangered species. [#MFAchat](#)



[W. P. Johnson @Americantypo](#)

In short, I've seen more mfa peeps tinker away endlessly with their terrible thesis while others grinded and eventually published [#MFAchat](#)



[W. P. Johnson @Americantypo](#)

That said if you can get a free ride, go for it [#MFAchat](#)



[Pulchritude Press @PulchPress](#)

[#MFAchat](#) Our advice (biased but human, from founders who know) is to pursue & invest in only that which assists you in doing what you love



[Brittany Borghi @brittany\\_borghi](#)

Yeah I know [#MFAchat](#) is over, but look: even one of [@uiowa](#)'s writers can fix his computer.





[Lisa Nikolidakis @lisanikol](#)

My equation: (funding) (faculty) size + teaching load = the right school(s) for you [#MFAchat](#)



[Andrew Wooldridge @AndyCWooldridge](#)

Take time away from academia after your undergrad, live life and discover yourself, and then apply for an MFA. [#MFAchat](#)



[Kenzie Allen @cerena](#)

Well just so [#MFAchat](#) knows, yes, you can write a mass marketed (not as litfic) book while in top MFA programs. [http://www.amazon.com/Every-Anxious-Wave-A-Novel/dp/1250067499 ...](http://www.amazon.com/Every-Anxious-Wave-A-Novel/dp/1250067499...)



[Anna Cabe @annablabs](#)

Golly, missed [#MFAchat](#)! All I have to say is: I am GLAD to have taken time off between undergrad and MFA.



[Anna Cabe @annablabs](#)

Taking time off gave me perspective and discipline. It made me hungry and self-starting. My work gained breadth and depth. [#MFAchat](#)



[Anna Cabe @annablabs](#)

Keep in mind I was a traditional-aged middle-class undergrad so if you're a different type of person, you might not need to. [#MFAchat](#)



[Anna Cabe @annablabs](#)

Also: I LOVE being fully funded for 3 years in a quiet town. I'm easily distracted so it's easier for me to focus. Also money. [#MFAchat](#)



[Anna Cabe @annablabs](#)

As I've told my students, being a writer depends on the practice. If you can't write before or after or without, it's meaningless. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

Many comments on debt in [#MFAchat](#) yesterday got me looking. Here's an article about loan forgiveness programs.

[http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2013/09/06/student-loan-forgiveness-options/2776545/ ...](http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2013/09/06/student-loan-forgiveness-options/2776545/...)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@thew\\_mfacw](#) One resource referenced in this article is <http://www.saltmoney.org> — you have to sign up, but it appears to be free. [#MFAchat](#)



[The W's MFA in CW @TheW\\_MFACW](#)

[@thew\\_mfacw](#) Still probably the most comprehensive place to get info on student loans is <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/> [#MFAChat](#)