



FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY GRADUATE PROGRAMS



MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing is a full-time two-year low-residency program of study leading to the master's degree in genres of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and scriptwriting/playwriting. Within these genres, students also have the option to pursue concentrations in publishing/editing, spiritual writing, or literary health and healing. With a highly qualified and supportive faculty, a program that is both rigorous and adaptable, a setting that is inspirational, and a nurturing writing community, Fairfield helps writers of all ages and backgrounds develop their ability.

Students spend the program's nine-day residencies at Ender's Island, situated on eleven acres off the coast of Connecticut. The island location assures the peace and quiet that provides the introspection needed to write, as well as the feeling of community that helps many writers grow in their craft. Residencies are also available in Galway and Florence.

During their four residencies, students take workshops, seminars, and lectures designed to provide both a rigorous theoretical basis for writing as well as a practical, hands-on experience. They are joined by editors from prestigious New York trade houses and representatives from literary agencies who meet individually with students and lead panel discussions about the nuts and bolts of getting published. Between residencies, students work independently by mail and e-mail with a faculty mentor on a curriculum designed in conjunction with the mentor, which includes regular reading and writing assignments.

Local students have the opportunity to gain valuable experience and tuition remission through TA appointments with a literary journal, the MFA program office, the English Department, and the University Writing Center. Our new Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) option offers highly qualified students the opportunity to receive up to one full semester credit for the work they have already written or published. Students receiving the PLA can finish the MFA in three semesters instead of four.

COURSE OF STUDY

Students earn 60 course credits by completing four nine-day residencies and doing one-on-one work with a mentor for the semester. The first two five-month independent study semesters involve creative writing as well as reading and critical analysis. In their third semester, students create a critical thesis, which can take the form of a critical paper or a semester-long experiential learning opportunity, such as teaching writing, working as an intern in a publishing house, or doing work in a nonacademic setting such as teaching creative writing in a prison, nursing home, or group home. In their fourth semester, students work on a creative thesis, which can be a work of poetry, fiction, or non-fiction of significant length. Students should be able to set aside 25 hours a week to complete program requirements.

Academic advising is initially provided by the Program Director. During the residency, students meet faculty in workshops, seminars, and panels, and one-on-one interviews, and then choose a faculty mentor with whom they jointly develop a study plan for the next five months.

GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Sonya Huber

Phone: 203-254-4000, ext. 2788

E-mail: shuber@fairfield.edu

Sonya Huber serves as the program director for students in the MFA in Creative Writing program and is the appropriate person to contact with questions, or to learn more.

Sonya Huber is also an associate professor of creative writing at Fairfield University. She is the author of three books of creative nonfiction, *Opa Nobody* (2008) and *Cover Me: A Health Insurance Memoir* (2010), and the essay collection *Pain Woman Takes Your Keys: Essays on Pain and Imagination* (forthcoming in 2017). Her other books include *The Evolution of Hillary Rodham Clinton* (2016) and a textbook, *The Backwards Research Guide for Writers* (2011), and an e-book, *Two Eyes are Never Enough*, available through SheBooks. Her work has been published in *The New York Times*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Brevity*, *Fourth Genre*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Washington Post Magazine*, and other outlets. She received the 2013 Creative Nonfiction Award from *Terrain* and her work appears in *True Stories*, *Well Told: From the First 20 Years of Creative Nonfiction*; her essays were named notable in *Best American Essays* in 2014 and 2015. She teaches at Fairfield University and directs Fairfield's Low-Residency MFA Program.

Guest faculty have included **Mark Doty, Carlos Eire, Mary Karr, Wally Lamb, Rick Moody, Jayne Anne Phillips, Philip Schultz, Dani Shapiro, Anita Shreve, Charles Simic, and Sue William Silverman.**

For a complete faculty listing, see www.fairfield.edu/mfafaculty.



Fairfield University

College of Arts and Sciences

MASTER OF FINE ARTS FACULTY

Rachel Basch is the author of three novels. Her most recent, *The Listener*, was released in March 2015. *The Passion of Reverend Nash* was named one of the five best novels of 2003 by *The Christian Science Monitor*. *Degrees of Love* was translated into Dutch and German and was a selection of the *Hartford Courant's* Book Club. Basch has reviewed books for *The Washington Post Book World*, and her nonfiction has appeared in *n+1*, *Parenting*, and *The Huffington Post*. In 2011 Basch received a MacDowell Colony Fellowship, and she recently won The William Van Wert Prize in fiction for the first chapter of her latest novel, *The Listener*. A dedicated teacher of creative writing for over 20 years, Basch is a contributor to *Now Write!: Fiction Writing Exercises From Today's Best Writers & Teachers*. Basch has been a Visiting Writer at Trinity College in Hartford. She currently teaches in Wesleyan University's Graduate Liberal Studies Program and leads a private master class.

Susan Muaddi Darraj teaches in the Johns Hopkins University's MA in Writing program and is the author of *The Inheritance of Exile*, which was named *ForeWord Magazine's* Book of the Year (Short Fiction). Her second book, *A Curious Land: Stories from Home*, was named winner of the Grace Paley Award for Short Fiction, the Arab American Book Award and, most recently, the American Book Award. She is a two-time recipient of an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council.

Alan Davis has published two prize-winning collections of stories, *Rumors from the Lost World* and *Alone with the Owl*. He was born in New Orleans, near the mouth of the Mississippi, and now lives in Minnesota, near the Mississippi's headwaters, where he teaches in the M.F.A. program at Minnesota State University, Moorhead, and serves as senior editor at *New Rivers Press*. Davis has received two Fulbright awards, a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship, and a Loft-McKnight Award of Distinction in Creative Prose.

Carol Ann Davis is the author of *Psalm* (2007) and *Atlas Hour* (2011), both from Tupelo Press. The recipient of a National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship in Poetry and the W. K. Rose Fellowship for the Creative Arts from Vassar College, her recent work has appeared in *Agni*, *American Poetry Review*, *Volt*, and on the *ArtBeat* website for PBS' Newshour. After serving as editor of *Crazyhorse* from 2001-2012, she began teaching writing as a member of the faculty of Fairfield University in the summer of 2012.

Shelley Evans has written teleplays for ABC, CBS, Showtime, USA Network and Lifetime Television. Her produced scripts have starred, among others, Anne Heche, Sam Shepard, Josh Brolin, James Caan, Jacqueline Bisset, Candice Bergen and Mercedes Ruehl. She has taught writing at Harvard Extension School, Boston University, New York University, and Boston College and is a member of the Writer's Guild of America.

Eugenia Kim is the author of *The Calligrapher's Daughter*, winner of the 2009 Borders Original Voices Award, and an Amazon UK #3 bestseller. This debut novel was a *Washington Post* Critic's Pick and Best Book for 2009, and a *Publishers Weekly* Starred Review and First Fiction Pick. Her short fiction and nonfiction has appeared in several anthologies, literary journals and newspapers. She was awarded the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation Creative Fellowship, Millay Colony for the Arts, 2014; and is the 2012 Eli Cantor Fellow, The Corporation of Yaddo; the 2010-2011 Stanford Calderwood Fellow, The MacDowell Colony; and a fellow at Hedgebrook and VCCA. She received her MFA from Bennington College.

Karen Osborn is the author of four novels: *Patchwork*, a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year, *Between Earth and Sky*, *The River Road*, and *Centerville*, which won the Independent Publishers Award in 2013. Her poetry has been published in numerous literary journals, anthologies, and magazines, including *The Southern Review*, *Poet Lore*, *The Seattle Review*, *The Wisconsin Review*, *The Montana Review*, *Clapboard House*, *The Hollins Critic*, and *Kansas Quarterly*. She was a finalist for the Dzanc Mid-Career Novel Award in 2012 and the Louis D. Rubin, Jr. Writer-in-Residence at Hollins University in 2013. She lives in Amherst, Massachusetts and teaches creative writing and fiction writing at Mt. Holyoke College.

Adriana Páramo is a cultural anthropologist, writer and women's rights advocate. Páramo is the author of *Looking for Esperanza: The Story of a Mother, a Child Lost, and Why They Matter to Us*, winner of the 2011 Benu Press Social Justice and Equity Award in Creative Nonfiction. Páramo immersed herself in the world of undocumented women toiling in the Florida fields to explore the story of an immigrant mother who walked the desert from Mexico to the U.S. Páramo is also the author of a memoir, *My Mother's Funeral*, in which she recreates her Colombian mother's life in order to understand her own.

William B. Patrick is co-director of the MFA and his works have been published or produced in a number of genres: creative nonfiction, poetry, fiction, screenwriting, and drama. His latest book, *The Call of Nursing: Voices from the Front Lines of Health Care*, published in May of 2013, presents twenty-three occupational portraits that reveal a profession which often hides in plain sight. *Saving Troy*, published by SUNY Press in 2009, is a creative nonfiction chronicle of a year spent riding along with professional firefighters and paramedics. From that experience, Patrick also wrote a screenplay, *Fire Ground*, as well as a radio play, *Rescue*, which was commissioned by the BBC and aired on BBC 3. An earlier teleplay, *Rachel's Dinner*, starring Olympia Dukakis and Peter Gerety, was aired nationally on ABC-TV, and his third feature-length screenplay, *Brand New Me*, was optioned by Force Ten Productions of Los Angeles and used as the basis for the remake of *The Nutty Professor*. His memoir in poetry, *We Didn't Come Here for This* (1999), was published by BOA Editions, as was *These Upraised Hands* (1995), a book of narrative poems and dramatic monologues, and a novel, *Roxa: Voices of the Culver Family*, that won the 1990 Great Lakes Colleges Association New Writers Award for fiction.

Hollis Seamon is the author of a young adult novel, *Somebody Up There Hates You*, which received starred reviews from *Publishers Weekly* and *Kirkus Reviews*. *Somebody Up There Hates You* was named a Fall 2013 Indie Kids Indie Next pick, 2014 Best Book for Young Adults from the American Library Association, 2013 Best Teen Fiction from *Kirkus Reviews*, Bank Street College of Education Outstanding Book of 2013, and a Scholastic Book Clubs Selection. The novel has been published in Canada, France, Germany, Mexico, Peru, Argentina, and Spain. Seamon is also the author of a short story collection, *Corporeality*, a gold medal winner in the 2014 Independent Publishers Awards and a finalist for *Foreword Review's* 2014 book of the year. She has published a previous collection of stories, *Body Work*, and a mystery novel, *Flesh*. Her short stories have appeared in many journals, including *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Greensboro Review*, *Fiction International*, *Chicago Review*, *Nebraska Review*, *Persimmon Tree*, and *Calyx*. Her work has been anthologized in *The Strange History of Suzanne LaFleshe and Other Stories of Women* and *Fatness, A*

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Line of Cutting Women, *The Best of the Bellevue Literary Review*, *Sacred Ground*, and *Quarry: Crime Stories by New England Writers*. She is a recipient of a fiction fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts.

Dr. Michael White is a professor of English at Fairfield University and is the author of six novels: *Soul Catcher*, which was a *Booksense* and *Historical Novels Review* selection, as well as a finalist for the Connecticut Book Award, *A Brother's Blood*, which was a *New York Times Book Review* Notable Book and a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writers nominee; *The Blind Side of the Heart*, *A Dream of Wolves*, and *The Garden of Martyrs*, also a Connecticut Book Award finalist and recently made into an opera which will have its Connecticut premiere at Fairfield's Quick Center in September. His latest novel, *Beautiful Assassin*, won the 2011 Connecticut Book Award for Fiction. A collection of his short stories, *Marked Men*, was published by the University of Missouri Press. He has also published over 50 short stories in national magazines and journals, and has won the *Advocate Newspapers* Fiction Award. He was the founding editor of the yearly fiction anthology *American Fiction* as well as *Dogwood*. He is the founder of Fairfield University's MFA Creative Writing Program.

Baron Wormser is the author of nine books of poetry, the latest, *Unidentified Sighing Objects* was published in 2015, and a poetry chapbook. He is the co-author of two books about teaching poetry and the author of a memoir, a novel and a collection of short stories. He is Director of Educational Outreach at the Frost Place in Franconia, New Hampshire. He has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. He served as poet laureate of Maine from 2000 to 2005 and received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from the University of Maine at Augusta in 2005. His essay on the painter Willem de Kooning was chosen for Best American Essays 2014. His first novel, *Teach Us That Peace*, was published in 2014.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The program welcomes students of ability from all academic and professional backgrounds. Students who hold a bachelor's degree in any field from a regionally accredited college or university (or the international equivalent) are encouraged to apply.

FORMAL ADMISSION PROCESS

Applications to the graduate program are accepted on a rolling basis. Applications are reviewed by the Graduate Admission Committee. Students seeking admission must complete and submit the following online:

1. A completed application.
(Apply online at www.fairfield.edu/mfaapp.)
2. A non-refundable \$60 application fee.
3. Personal statement describing intent for studying in the program.
4. Sample portfolio (20-30 pages of fiction, non-fiction, screenwriting or 6-8 poems).
5. Official transcripts from all universities/colleges attended.
(All foreign transcripts must be evaluated by an approved evaluating service. A list of approved evaluators is available at www.fairfield.edu/eval.)

6. Two recommendations, one of which must be from a current supervisor or professor, completed online.
7. All international students whose native language is not English must demonstrate proficiency in the English language by taking either TOEFL or IELTS exams. For admission to the graduate school, a TOEFL composite score of 550 for the paper test, 213 for the computer-based test, 80 on the internet-based test or an IELTS score of 6.5 is strongly recommended. Scores must be sent directly from the Educational Testing Service (TOEFL) or www.IELTS.org. Fairfield's ETS code is 3390.
8. Submit transcripts and any other documents that cannot be uploaded to:

Fairfield University
Office of Graduate Admission
Kelley Center
1073 North Benson Road
Fairfield, CT 06824

MANDATORY IMMUNIZATIONS

Connecticut State law requires each full-time or matriculated student to provide proof of immunity or screening against measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chicken pox), meningitis and tuberculosis. Certain exemptions based on age and housing status apply. Matriculating students are defined as those enrolled in a degree seeking program. More detailed information and the required downloadable forms are available online at www.fairfield.edu/immunization. Completed forms should be submitted directly to the Student Health Center. Although this is not required to complete an application, you must provide proof of immunity/screening prior to course registration. Please consult your private health care provider to obtain the necessary immunizations. Questions may be directed to the Student Health Center: 203-254-4000 ext. 2241 or e-mail health@fairfield.edu.

TUITION/FINANCIAL AID

Academic Year 2017/2018
Tuition: \$8,250 per semester
Residency Room and Board: \$1,075 per semester

A graduate education can provide countless professional and personal rewards in the future. However, the costs associated with earning a master's degree may be challenging. Many students need to look beyond their own financial resources or the resources of their employer for assistance. There are many ways to finance a graduate education, including graduate assistantships, federal direct loan programs and our Veterans Pride Program, which are all discussed at www.fairfield.edu/gradfa.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Advisors from the Office of Financial Aid are committed to helping students find the options that best suit each of their needs. We encourage all Fairfield University graduate students to contact the Financial Aid office with any questions or to make an appointment to speak with a counselor.

FINANCIAL AID CONTACT INFORMATION

Phone: 203-254-4125
Fax: 203-254-4008
E-mail: finaid@fairfield.edu

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE OPERATIONS

Days: Monday-Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Center

MORE INFORMATION

ADMISSION QUESTIONS

Questions about the application process should be directed to the **Office of Graduate Admission**.
Phone: 203-254-4184
Fax: 203-254-4073
E-mail: gradadmis@fairfield.edu

OFFICE OPERATIONS

Days: Monday-Friday
Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Location: Aloysius P. Kelley, S.J. Center

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES WEBSITE

www.fairfield.edu/cas

CREATIVE WRITING/MFA WEBSITE

www.fairfield.edu/mfa

ONLINE CATALOG

For detailed course descriptions and other University information, please refer to our online catalog www.fairfield.edu/catalogs.