

Revised March 4, 2011



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
Department of Theatre, Film & Creative Writing  
[www.creativewriting.ubc.ca](http://www.creativewriting.ubc.ca)

## Optional-Residency M.F.A. in Creative Writing *Quick Application Guide*

### Note

This quick guide is intended to provide the bare-bones essentials for application and much explanatory information has been removed. If you are unsure about any of the requirements in this guide, the larger handbook will likely answer your questions. Download it here:

[http://www.creativewriting.ubc.ca/documents/optres\\_guidelines11.pdf](http://www.creativewriting.ubc.ca/documents/optres_guidelines11.pdf)

### Process

***Before 9AM PST, September 11, 2011:***

1. Send your portfolio (work in English only) by **email** to the Creative Writing Program.
2. Apply online to Graduate Studies: <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/apply/online/index.asp>
3. Request 3 letters of reference, either electronic through the Graduate Studies application, or to be sent by postal mail to Andrew Gray.
4. Order original copies of ALL undergraduate transcripts to us. Transcripts must come from issuing institution, not the student, and should be ordered by September 11<sup>th</sup> (it is okay if they arrive after this date).

Our faculty selects the successful applicants through a competitive reading process. Approximately 25% of applicants are successful and forwarded to UBC for formal admission. Results are sent to all applicants by email by mid-December, 2011. Students accepted by UBC are enrolled for the May 2012 program start date and may take the summer residency in July (optional). Most workshops start in September 2012.

## Details

### ***Email Your Portfolio***

Send email **attachments only** to [optres.mfa@ubc.ca](mailto:optres.mfa@ubc.ca), **NOT** as text in the body of an email.

### **File Specifications**

Microsoft Word format or Rich Text Format only. Screenwriting may also be sent as PDF (Adobe Acrobat) files. Page numbers required on all manuscript files.

### **File Naming**

Name your file attachments with your last name. For example, Jules Verne's application in three genres would be structured and named as follows: verne\_letter.doc, verne\_poetry.doc, verne\_fiction.doc, verne\_screen.doc.

### **Cover Letter**

Include a brief cover letter with your full contact information including address, phone and email. The letter should also include a brief description of your educational/publication background and/or life experiences relevant to your writing and the program. **Please state the primary genre** you have been working in to assist our faculty in evaluating your portfolio.

### **Table of Contents**

Include a Table of Contents for the writing portfolio with the genre of each piece indicated beside its title. Your main genre should be at the top of the list.

### **Page Requirements**

Your portfolio **must** include either 2 or 3 different genres. The page requirement for each genre submitted should be followed as closely as is reasonable **without exceeding it. Do not** use non-standard fonts, font sizes or page margins. 12 point Times New Roman is preferable. You cannot send work in genres we do not teach (such as Lyric & Libretto).

**Poetry:** Up to 20 pages. Poetry is generally single-spaced but no particular format is required.

**Fiction:** Up to 20 pages. Double-spaced. Novel outline optional. Short fiction, novel and novella are all part of one genre, fiction.

**Screenplay:** The first 20 pages of a screenplay as well as a two page outline for the same screenplay. Sample scripts (also called show scripts) from pre-existing television series as well as **adaptations of any kind** (including adapting your own work) are **not** acceptable -- the writing, development of characters, etc., must be original.

**Stage Play:** 30 pages - excerpt from a full-length play, or one or more one-act plays.

**Non-Fiction:** Creative Nonfiction: double-spaced. Up to 20 pages of creative nonfiction -- which includes, but is not limited to, autobiography, literary journalism, commentary (op-ed), personal essays, travel writing, popular history, and any other form of nonfiction written in a clearly identifiable,

personal voice. The following forms do NOT qualify: academic essays or criticism, standard newspaper reporting, press releases, corporate reports, scientific papers or copywriting. Journal/diary entries or online postings such as blogs are acceptable, but will be judged by the same standards of literary excellence as all other forms of creative nonfiction. If you do not have a sufficient number of pages of acceptable creative nonfiction available, up to 10 pages of fiction may be submitted as a substitute. (If you are also submitting a fiction manuscript in the fiction category, do not submit the same material as your creative nonfiction substitute.)

**Children's Literature:** Double-spaced. 20 pages of text (no illustrations).

**Translation:** Double-spaced where applicable. 20 pages of translated work in any genre **into English**. Do not send original work in the foreign language from which the translation was taken.

### ***Apply Online***

Apply here: <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/apply/online/index.asp>

Current fee is CDN \$90 for Canadian applicants. International applicants pay CDN \$150.

This fee is set by UBC Graduate Studies. Form not available for applications until **July 2011**.

### ***TOEFL Testing?***

See the Graduate Studies website for more information if you think this may apply to you:

<http://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/application-admission/english-proficiency-requirements>

### ***Transcripts & Letters Of Reference***

**Two** official transcript from each post-secondary institution attended. Official transcripts must be mailed to Andrew Gray **directly** from the issuing institution. **Transcripts issued to the student are not acceptable**. Detailed information about transcript requirements can be found at <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/apply/how/documents.asp>.

Reference Letters: electronic or paper. Follow the guidelines here:

<http://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/application-admission/letters-reference>. The form which may be used for application to Creative Writing is the standard Graduate Student Reference Form.

### ***Applying to both UBC Programs***

If you are applying to **both** the onsite and the optional-residency MFA programs, you only need to send **one** set of transcripts and letters of reference and apply to Graduate Studies online **once**. However, you will need to send an email application portfolio to **both** email addresses for each individual application date and also mention clearly in your application that you are applying to both programs.

You are not required to send the same portfolio to each program. Each application will be read separately by faculty in the program to which you are applying.

## Optional-Residency MFA Application Checklist

- Cover letter and literary CV (if applicable). Note the main genre you work in and include a note about your educational history if relevant.
- Writing samples consisting of a minimum of two different genres and a maximum of three. Pages numbered, and table of contents included. Note: long & short fiction are considered only one genre--Fiction.
- Complete portfolio sent as email attachments in Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format to optres.mfa@ubc.ca in the following format: one file containing the cover letter, literary CV (if applicable) and the table of contents, then one file for each genre of the writing samples.
- Application to Graduate Studies: <http://www.grad.ubc.ca/apply/online/index.asp>
- 3 letters of reference, either electronic through the Graduate Studies application, or sent by postal mail to Andrew Gray.
- TOEFL (if applicable), sent directly from the institution to the Creative Writing Office, attention Andrew Gray. One original test score is required.
- Arrange to have 2 official transcripts sent from each post-secondary institution attended. Transcripts should be ordered by September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

**Portfolio Deadline: September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011 (before 9AM PST)**  
**Transcript Deadline: Ordered on or before September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2011.**

### Send TOEFL Scores, Letters of Reference & Transcripts To:

Andrew Gray, Coordinator  
 Optional-Residency MFA  
 UBC Creative Writing Program  
 Buchanan Room E462  
 1866 Main Mall \*  
 Vancouver, BC  
 V6T 1Z1  
 CANADA  
 FAX: 604-648-8848

\*Couriers should be told to deliver to the East Mall side of the building.

**The address must be written exactly as stated above.** Your material will not be automatically sent to the Creative Writing office if received in another UBC office.

**Questions?** Contact Optional-Residency Coordinator Andrew Gray.

**Telephone:** (604) 822-2469 **Email:** optres.mfa@ubc.ca

**Website:** [www.creativewriting.ubc.ca](http://www.creativewriting.ubc.ca)

**Email is the primary means of communication for this program. All applicants will be informed by email when their application has been received. Applicants will be notified by email of the results of the competition. No letters will be sent by postal mail.**