

Spalding low-residency MFA in Writing Program

Application Instructions and Checklist

The formal application consists of

- the Spalding University Application for Graduate Admission** ([access the online application](#)). In the Enrollment Information section on the first page, choose **Creative Writing - Master of Fine Arts**, and for Entry term, choose the semester you intend to begin your studies. (The GRE is not required.)

Supplemental Items (Required)

Supplemental items are submitted through the application portal, except transcripts, which are submitted as described below. Additionally, recommenders may opt to submit letters by email.

- a writing sample** in the applicant's chosen area of concentration only: prose (double-spaced), screenwriting, or playwriting (17-25 pages); poetry (single-spaced, 5 to 7 poems, maximum 10 pages); writing for children & young adults (double-spaced, 17-25 pages of middle-grade or young-adult prose or 2-3 picture book stories). The sample is typed copy (12 point, easy-to-read font such as Times New Roman), double-spaced with 1" margins, and includes page numbers. Screenwriters and playwrights use those genres' standard formatting for their materials.

Applicants put their name on a cover sheet and not on the manuscript. Identify the area of concentration on the cover sheet: fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, writing for children & young adults, screenwriting, or playwriting. The anonymous samples are read by a faculty committee.

Prospective students who wish to apply in more than one area of concentration send writing samples in each area. (Note, however, that it is not necessary to apply in a second area in order to study in that area. During their second semester, all students may take their residency and independent study, or only their residency, in a new area without having to apply in that area.)

- two personal essays:**
 - **Commentary:** Applicants write a 2- to 3-page commentary on a work they admire (by another writer, not oneself) in the area in which the prospective student is applying. The commentary should not provide a summary of the work but should instead focus on specific parts of the work that especially held the applicant's attention. How did the writer achieve the effect? The work the essay examines may be a novel, a creative nonfiction book, a short story, an essay, a pair of poems, a script of a play or a screenplay. Applicants who apply in more than one area send only one 2- to 3-page commentary on a work in any one of the areas.
 - **Personal Statement:** Applicants write a 2- to 3-page essay that summarizes their background in writing and shows their motivation to make a serious commitment to a

demanding schedule of writing, revising, and critical reading. The essay addresses their ability to work independently and to meet deadlines. Applicants also discuss their openness to receiving instruction in creative writing and willingness to learn to critique the creative writing of other students. If applicants have had publications or productions, this essay is the place to mention them, though such credits are not required (nor are they a guarantee of admission into the program). Screenwriters who have had their scripts turned into film—even a short piece—discuss that experience in this essay.

Applicants should put their name and area(s) of concentration on a cover sheet but not on the essay itself. The essays are typed copy (12 pt., easy-to-read font such as Times New Roman), double-spaced with 1" margins and include page numbers. The anonymous essays are read by a faculty committee.

- two letters of recommendation** concerning the student's ability to read literature and to write both creative and critical prose at a graduate level. Letters from former or current creative writing instructors are preferable; however, if this is not an option, applicants should ask another professor or someone who is familiar with their writing, love of writing and reading, ability to accept and give critiques, motivation to participate in the program, and/or ability to work independently and to meet deadlines. Letters may be submitted through the application portal or may be emailed to mfa@spalding.edu, using the subject line "Recommendation for [APPLICANT'S NAME]."
- institution-to-institution official transcripts from every college attended.** Electronic transcripts can be emailed to ATTN: Janet McCorkle at admissions@spalding.edu; paper transcripts should be mailed to the Admissions Office:

Spalding University—Admissions
901 S. Fourth St.
Louisville, KY 40203

- a \$30 application fee.**

[Begin the online application.](#)

Questions? Email mfa@spalding.edu or call 502-873-4400.