

Spalding's School of Creative and Professional Writing

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 one of the following:
 - Creative Writing - Master of Fine Arts (MFA)
 - Creative Writing – Master of Arts (MAW)
 - Professional Writing – Master of Arts (MAW)
 - Creative Writing – Graduate Certificate
 - Professional Writing – Graduate Certificate

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. 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. Length requirements:
 - 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)
 - Professional writing (double-spaced, 17-25 pages of text; graphics may be included but do not count toward the page length). The writing sample can be a research paper, grant proposal, feature article, speech, essay, op-ed, press release, or combination of these elements. Other types of writing may be accepted; inquire with the School.

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, playwriting, or professional writing. The anonymous samples are read by a faculty committee.

Prospective MFA students who wish to apply in more than one area of concentration send writing samples in each area. (Note, however, that MFA students do not need to apply in a second area in order to study in that area. During their second semester, all MFA 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, or a professional writing publication. 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 discusses why they believe Spalding's School of Creative and Professional Writing is the right place for them to pursue their graduate education. The essay should show 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 or professional writing and willingness to learn to critique the 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 critically and to write creative or professional prose as well as critical prose at a graduate level. Letters from former or current 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 schoolofwriting@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 schoolofwriting@spalding.edu or call 502-873-4400.