

APPENDIX J

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing at North Carolina State University

Introduction

North Carolina State University notified the Office of the President of its intent to plan a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing degree program (CIP 23.0501) on April 23, 2003. The University requests authorization to establish the degree program in January 2004.

Program Description

The proposed degree program will be a two-year studio/research program requiring a balance of writing workshops and literary scholarship. The program will rely on English Department faculty for most of the literature course offerings, and writers on the program faculty will offer form, craft, and theory courses, workshops, and thesis direction. The MFA in Creative Writing is designed to train students for a career as writers of imaginative literature, and it is increasingly becoming the requisite degree for people intending to teach creative writing in colleges and universities. The objective of the degree is to produce polished writers of fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, and drama. Graduates will have produced a publishable book-length creative work for their thesis. Elective courses from within or outside of the Department of English will offer students the opportunity to pursue an area of interest such as linguistics and translation, historical fiction, etc. The Department currently has a creative writing concentration within its MA degree program, which will be developed into the proposed MFA program.

Program Need

There is a continuing interest in creative writing in the Research Triangle area, and none of the local universities offers a fine arts master's degree to meet that demand. The Department of English receives frequent inquiries about the availability of such a program. There are increasing enrollments in fine arts programs in writing nationwide, and MFA programs are becoming the most common way for students to study with accomplished published writers. An active MFA program becomes a focal point for public engagement with literature and the fine arts. Through public readings, discussions, festivals, and meetings of writers and teachers, it broadens the cultural life of the community and state. It is anticipated that 24 full-time and 6 part-time students will be enrolled by the fourth year of the program.

Resources

New funding will come from enrollment increase funds and internal reallocations; no other state funds are requested.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing degree at North Carolina State University effective January 2004.