

Graduate Studies Programs

Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children

About the Program

Recognizing the number of adults concerned with sharing a rich literary heritage with young people and dedicated to more effectively eliciting refined responses to literature, the Center for the Study of Children's Literature at Simmons College offers a Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children. This program has a strong theoretical underpinning and engages students in a rigorous and disciplined academic study of children's literature. To develop a critical vocabulary essential for appraising text and illustration, students apply a high level of scholarly analysis to children's literature ranging from folklore and mythology to contemporary realistic fiction and nonfiction.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the MFA program requires a baccalaureate degree preferably with a major in English and American and/or comparative literature from an accredited institution. However, the program is also open to students with majors in elementary or secondary education, fine arts, or social sciences who have done substantial work in English. The application should include official transcripts of all degree work, two letters of recommendation, and, for international students, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Applicants must submit a writing portfolio not to exceed 20 pages as well as a statement of purpose that reflects on their writing process. This statement should address the applicant's goals as a writer, his/her publishing history and/or any works in progress. An interview, though not required, is strongly recommended.

The Simmons Difference

For more than 100 years, Simmons has put the needs of our students first. Through an education that combines intellectual leadership with professional preparation, we help students lead meaningful lives and build successful careers for the 21st Century. The College's commitment can be seen in our state-of-the-art facilities for teaching, learning, living, and working at Simmons, as well as through our exceptional faculty and staff. Simmons College is located in the heart of Boston, a world-class city renowned for unlimited educational, career, and social opportunities. All programs provide a challenging educational experience in which every student develops an informed, critical, and committed voice, and learns to be a leader and collaborative member of the professional community. Simmons College was named a "Best College" in its category in the 2010 US News & World Report. Simmons was also included in the 2010 Princeton Review "Best 351 Colleges," and was named among the "Best in New England" in the first-ever edition of Princeton Review's Best Northeastern Colleges.

"I was enthralled to be at a place where picturebooks, young adult books, fairy tales, novels in verse, Victorian children's books, and a wide scope of fantasy and science fiction were our primary texts. Literary theories from archetypal criticism to deconstruction were both tools and subjects. No children's literature or literary criticism was off limits to our most rigorous examination."

REBECCA RABINOWITZ '02GS
M.A., CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Degree Requirements

Thirty-two credits are required for the MFA degree. The program consists of four academic courses and four writing courses. The final requirement is a two-course sequence in which the student works closely with a mentor to develop a manuscript from conception to submission.

Coursework

Four Required Academic Courses

CHL 401 Criticism of Literature for Children
CHL 403 The Picturebook

One history of children's literature elective selected from*:

CHL 411 Victorian Children's Literature
CHL 423 19th Century American Children's Literature
CHL 421 History of Children's Book Publishing
CHL 425 Folk and Fairy Tales

One genre-based course selected from*:

CHL 404 Poetry for Young Readers
CHL 413 Contemporary Realistic Fiction for Young Adults
CHL 414 Fantasy and Science Fiction
CHL 426 Nonfiction

Four Required Writing Courses:

CHL 430 Writing for Children I
CHL 431 Writing for Children II
CHL 441 Mentorship I
CHL 442 Mentorship II

Contact Us

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Dual Degree in Children's Literature and Writing for Children

The College offers a dual degree program that combines the Master of Arts in Children's Literature with the Master of Fine Arts in Writing for Children. This 56 credit program requires the following 14 courses:

CHL 401 Criticism of Literature for Children
CHL 403 The Picturebook
CHL 411 Victorian Children's Literature
CHL 414 Fantasy and Science Fiction
CHL 421 History of Children's Book Publishing
CHL 430 Writing for Children I
CHL 431 Writing for Children II
CHL 441 Mentorship I
CHL 442 Mentorship II

One history of children's literature elective selected from*:

CHL 411 Victorian Children's Literature
CHL 423 19th Century American Children's Literature
CHL 421 History of Children's Book Publishing
CHL 425 Folk and Fairy Tales

Four additional electives

**This coursework is subject to change and varies by semester.
Full course descriptions and a list of current electives for each semester is available at
www.simmons.edu/gradstudies/programs/childrens-literature/courses.php*

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