

Student Handbook

**Low-Residency Program
Master of Fine Arts
Department of Creative Writing & Literary Arts
University of Alaska Anchorage**

July 2009

Please note that this handbook is subject to revision. This is a guide, not a contract, and certain situations may require further review and or discussion with your advisor.

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UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA ANCHORAGE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the University of Alaska Anchorage is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement, and creative expression.

Located in Anchorage and on community campuses in southcentral Alaska, UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities, and its diverse peoples.

The University of Alaska Anchorage is an open access university with academic programs leading to occupational endorsements; undergraduate and graduate certificates; and associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees in a rich, diverse, and inclusive environment.

*Approved by the University of Alaska Board of Regents
September 19, 2007*

The Low-Residency MFA Program in Creative Writing at UAA

Welcome to the Low-Residency Master of Fine Arts Program in Creative Writing and Literary Arts at the University of Alaska Anchorage. You've embarked on an exciting and challenging apprenticeship.

This is a professional degree program that will provide you with opportunities to develop your writing and develop yourself as a writer. The practicum offers you possibilities for exploring your interests in related professional areas such as teaching, publishing, editing, and community service in the arts.

This student handbook contains much of the information you'll need to navigate the program. However, you also should consult the Graduate School Student Guidelines Handbook (see Appendix) of the UAA Catalog for further important information.

Please note that this handbook is currently under revision. This is a guide, not a contract, and certain situations may require further review and or discussion with your advisor.

Program mission

- To attract students from Alaska and beyond, of demonstrated ability or clear potential, who are willing to assume responsibility for directing their own development as writers and learners.
- To create a broader faculty of writers who are also strong teachers committed to mentoring students at a distance and participating fully in the residency sessions.
- To take advantage of Alaska's unique setting and community to include innovative opportunities for cross-disciplinary study and fieldwork.
- To retain CWLA's basic curriculum from its former traditional delivery model within a flexible, demanding framework with renewed commitment to academic rigor and freedom.

Program goals

- To graduate writers capable of producing publishable creative work in their chosen genres.
- To prepare students for a serious writing life and/or literary opportunities in a variety of fields.
- To offer a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural curriculum taught by an established faculty and a rotating guest faculty of writers, scientists, artists, humanities scholars, and musicians.
- To create a collaborative community of new and experienced writers from Alaska and elsewhere.
- To continue UAA's policy of inviting public participation at selected readings,

presentations, and educational opportunities generated through the program's offerings.

Student outcomes

- Students will develop and demonstrate a thorough understanding of historical context, traditions, and contemporary issues in form and theory by situating the content of their own work within their genre. (Assessment will be based on the quality and extent of the annotated bibliography, the quality and originality of the craft essay component of the thesis, and the presentation and discussion of their work during the thesis colloquium.)
- Students will develop and demonstrate their skills in craft by producing a substantial body of original creative work and by articulating the craft elements in their genre. (Assessment will be based on the quality and scope of the creative component of the thesis, the accompanying discussion in the craft essay, and the presentation and discussion of their work during the thesis colloquium.)
- Students will develop and demonstrate skills necessary for professional employment in literary fields such as writing and editing by planning, organizing, and presenting works or projects of literary and public value. (Assessment will be based on the design and execution of a practicum project.)

THE PROGRAM: ACADEMIC STRUCTURE AND OVERVIEW

Unlike various summer writing programs, conferences, and free-standing workshops, a Master of Fine Arts Program grants a “terminal” graduate degree, the equivalent, for artists, of a Ph.D., qualifying the holder to teach at the college level. The student’s creative writing is equated with the academic “research” of traditional graduate degree programs.

Our program has evolved from a traditional on-campus model, more than a decade old when we adapted it to the low residency model, in order that serious writers with demanding lives could pursue their studies from home.

The MFA is a 45-degree credit program that culminates in a book-length creative work accompanied by a thesis essay and an annotated bibliography. The degree is awarded based on successful completion of the following components:

- Coursework (45 credits, including 10 credits of thesis work)
- The thesis, which includes:
 - Creative work (100 to 200 pages for fiction or literary nonfiction, and 48 to 64 pages of poetry)
 - Thesis essay (25-40 pages)
 - Annotated bibliography (between 40 and 70 books)
- Thesis colloquium.

The program is organized around two basic elements: **summer residencies (Workshops)** and **mentorships** (Form and Theory courses). These, together with the thesis, form the academic structure of the M.F.A. and exist to provide the student with the knowledge of what a literary genre is, where it comes from, and what options within it the student writer encounters when he or she writes in it.

“Craft” refers to the use of the artist’s tools – paint and brushes, canvas and paper – to create an expression of some “form” under the influence of, or in dissent with, some “theory.” Our job as faculty is to help the student make explicit what is implicit in the very action of writing. Over the course of study, each student will become conscious of his or her aesthetic choices as taking place in a context of other choices. From basic concerns to more advanced ones, the thesis essay provides a place for students to show their mastery of some facet of the writing process in context. Our program provides a setting and curriculum that allows writers of diverse ages and levels of experience to both write and reflect upon that writing.

Summer Residency: For 12 days each summer, students and faculty gather on the University of Alaska Anchorage campus for an intensive period of workshops, manuscript critiques, seminars, panels, lectures, and readings. We also make field trips to investigate the intersections between art, literature, science, and the natural world. The residency is part of the ten week Summer Semester. The balance of which is conducted by core faculty in each genre, on-line. Over the course of their studies, students attend three residencies for credit and attend a fourth to present a colloquium.

The course designation for the residency is **CWLA 652/662/672 Graduate Writer's Workshop**.

The Mentorship: Each year, a student writer is paired with a faculty writer for a focused study of literature and writing craft. Together, students and mentors develop a reading list and a semester study plan. During the fall and spring semesters, students regularly submit their creative work and reading responses, and mentors answer with detailed comments that guide and challenge the student writer. The course designation for this work is **CWLA 690 Studies in Form and Theory**. In the student's third year, the course designation will be **CWLA 699 Thesis**.

COURSE OF STUDY

In general, students will follow this annual schedule of courses:

First year

Summer Semester: The Graduate Writer's Workshop (5 credits) (CWLA 652/662/672)

Fall Semester: Studies in Form & Theory (5 credits) (CWLA 690)

Spring Semester: Studies in Form & Theory (5 credits) (CWLA 690)

Second year

Summer Semester: The Graduate Writer's Workshop (5 credits) (CWLA 652/662/672)

Fall Semester: Studies in Form & Theory (5 credits) (CWLA 690)

Spring Semester: Literary Practicum (5 credits) (CWLA 695)

Third year

Summer Semester: The Graduate Writer's Workshop (5 credits) (CWLA 652/662/672)

Fall Semester: Thesis (5 credits) (CWLA 699)

Spring Semester: Thesis (5 credits) (CWLA 699)

Final Residency: Thesis defense and colloquium (no credit required)

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Assignment of Mentors:

The summer residency is the time during which students get to know faculty, their genres and work, and to know more fully their own goals for the upcoming semester. Meeting with faculty over meals, for instance, is a chance to ask them about how they might work with you on your goals. Discussing the developing "study plan" with

other students also helps to refine and direct it. With this in mind, students are asked to list their first three choices for the next year's mentor, as well as their draft plan. Assignments are made by the director and academic board, who strive to pair students with their top choices. Students and mentors will meet at least twice and ideally three times, before the end of the residency to formalize the study plan, discuss bibliography, and generally provide a base from which to proceed. Students and mentors will agree on the method of exchange (postal service, e-mail, Blackboard, audio comments, etc.).

Semester Study Plan:

Both Fall and Spring semesters follow the university calendar and cover fifteen weeks each. Each semester's syllabus is created by the student and faculty advisor, in the form of the study plan. Monthly exchanges of work between student and faculty are the norm.

The Course: CWLA 690 designates a graduate seminar on "Form and Theory." This course is the staple of graduate study and is taught in all three genres and with various subtitles. In this first semester of graduate study, students can expect to consider their *genre* – poetry, fiction, non-fiction – as a literary construct, separate from other genres. Students will produce their own creative work in that genre, of course, and will read examples of writing that the advisor and the student agree are relevant to the student's development. This is the semester in which the ability to answer the questions, "What is (for instance) fiction and why do you write it instead of non-fiction?" will be founded.

A meaningful title and descriptive subtitle help to shape the semester at a distance. Writing clearly about what you'd like to know and do by the end of the semester (that you don't and can't at the start) is a good way to proceed. Spelling out how you will go about accomplishing these goals is important, too. Don't fear stating the obvious, as the obvious fades over time and distance. The Semester Plan also lists the dates of agreed-upon mailings and as much bibliography as you have been able to assemble so far, which should be at least half of the total. All readings for the first mailing *must* be included. Beyond those, students and advisors are free to revise the bibliography as necessary, providing it continues to meet the academic goals set out in the plan. The plan itself is the only document to which student and faculty advisor can refer as a guide to the semester's work. It should be as complete, thorough, and clear as possible.

Conceiving, and writing up, a good semester plan is a central purpose of the entire residency. Participating in workshops, attending lectures and readings, and taking part in several brief, focused consultations with potential faculty mentors and other students should supply the student with ideas, language, and suggested readings for the upcoming semester plan. Once assigned to a mentor, at least three such meetings to iron out potential problems, gather more input for success, and test the plan with other students, will help students leave the residency knowing how to proceed and confident of success.

Mailings

Monthly mailings begin with a cover, or process, letter in which the student shares his

or her experience as a learner over the preceding mailing period. This is the place to say what is going well in your work and what is not, what you need help with and what you'd rather wrangle with alone, what about your mentor's teaching is useful and what is not. This process letter frees up the rest of the student's work to be about the subject rather than about the process of doing it for credit. The mentor responds to both the letter and the work, in his or her own letter. At its best, this exchange can stand on its own, apart from its makers, and be read as a teaching document, a writerly apprenticeship and mentorship, something for which there is a long and distinguished history.

The work itself includes new creative writing and any revisions of formerly submitted pieces plus "annotations" on reading. The equivalent of three books per mailing is the norm, with each annotation a length of three to five pages. An academic work week of fifteen to twenty hours should be enough for a student to sustain his or her commitment to pursuit of the degree.

For each mailing, poets should submit about 5-7 pages of new poems plus revisions. Fiction and nonfiction writers should send somewhere between 25-35 pages of work per mailing, or a total of 100-150 pages per semester. Students should expect to work between 15-20 hours per week minimum on their creative and academic work. Mentors will respond to student mailings within two weeks.

First-year students will submit eight separate mailings of creative work and reading responses to their mentors (four mailings each semester).

Second-year students will submit five separate mailings of creative work and reading responses to their mentors during the semester in which they have registered for CWLA 690 Studies in Form & Theory. (The other semester, second-year students will register for CWLA 695 Literary Practicum and work with the program director.)

Third-year students will complete their craft essay during the fall semester. The number of mailings and deadlines will be negotiated between the student and mentor. During the spring semester, students will complete their creative, book-length manuscript. They will submit any new work and revisions of the entire manuscript on a schedule to be determined with the third-year mentor.

"Annotations" or "Reading Responses"

In general, a useful annotation will summarize enough about the piece to convey its content, will apply some evaluative lens, and will relate its reading (or viewing) to the student's ongoing development as a writer. Quotes are useful and sometimes necessary.

Tone is informal, as if, say, the student were telling another student about this piece, its point, accomplishment, utility for writing studies. The connection with the student's own process (or particular project) infuses the annotation with whatever vitality it will have and also draws the parameters of ambition for the annotation. In other words, the

student is (reading and) writing for him or herself, not for *The New York Times Review of Books*.

Defining new terms, or terms new to the student, is often a helpful part of this exercise. Writing “to teach someone coming behind you” is often a better strategy than writing “to prove you read the book,” and is useful as annotations collect toward becoming the substance of a thesis essay.

Three to five pages (1000-1500 words) is a good length in response to a book; two to three pages (700-1000 words) to an essay, and one page, (350 words) for poem-length readings.

Student Self-Evaluation: At the end of each semester, students will submit a memo to the mentor describing that term’s work. This 3-5 page memo should include reflections upon what they learned and the work they completed. Students should include specific insights into their own work and process, and discuss what study they’ll undertake next. Students will also submit a copy of this informal document to their advisors.

Mentor Evaluations: Each semester the mentor will complete a brief narrative evaluation describing the student’s progress and identifying strengths and weaknesses as well as recommendations for future study.

Summer Semester: The Graduate Writer’s Workshop (CWLA 652/662/672, depending upon genre) is a ten-week summer course conducted on line (using UAA’s Blackboard Academic Suite) that awards five graduate credits. This course includes the on-campus, twelve day **residency**. All students register for the ten-week workshop course in their genre, at the start of summer semester. The CWLA office notifies students of registration deadlines as well as the schedule for the start of the workshop online. The department’s core faculty conduct this course to prepare students for the summer residency by assigning various readings and writing exercises. Preparing one’s own poems for the residency workshops – in person – is also part of this course.

Use the **Class Attendance Report** in the Appendix to track your participation and turn in the completed report to Program Coordinator at the final session on Thursday morning.

The Second Year: CWLA 690 and The Practicum CWLA 695

During the second year, students are expected to work more independently, both in their Form and Theory (CWLA 690) work and in their Practicum (CWLA 695).

The Practicum, CWLA 695, provides students with opportunities for professional development in writing, publishing, teaching by focusing on literary projects of their own devising or by collaborating with publishing, educational, or literary communities. The student is responsible for planning, organizing and submitting projects to program director.

The time to enroll in the practicum is the spring semester of the second year. You will be working with your mentor (Form and Theory 690) in both fall and spring semesters, however you will only sign up for 690 in the fall—even though the work continues into the spring semester. The ideal for the second year 690 is 5 mailings spread out over two semesters. At the end of fall semester you will receive a DF “grade.” A DF differs from an Incomplete in that it refers to work that *by design* could not be completed within the semester: “credit is withheld without academic penalty until the course requirements are met.” The remainder of your 690 work must be completed during the spring semester when you are technically signed up for the practicum. If your contracted 690 work is not completed during the spring, your DF will revert to an Incomplete (I) or a No Pass (NP). There may be reason to reverse the registration order: CWLA 690 in the spring and the Practicum CWLA 695 in the fall—pursue this option in consultation with the director and your mentor.

The parameters for the practicum are wide. Practicum credit will be awarded for participation in some literary events associated with the program, such as the Kachemak Bay Writers Conference and the Post Residency Wilderness Experience. Other practicum’s projects may take up all five credits for a single project. Whatever the project, the total time commitment remains the same: 225 hours of work (the standard for a 5 credit graduate course).

Documenting the practicum experience. The initiating document is a proposal, in narrative form, that is approved by the director. Once the project is approved, the student will need to submit documentation from a third party, or progress reports (depending on the nature of the project) to the director. When the practicum is completed, the student will write a summarizing narrative in which the whole experience is a) described, b) evaluated in terms of goals and outcomes, and c) connected to the student’s writing life.

THESIS PROCESS

The coursework and summer residencies are designed to support progress toward the real purpose of the program, which is producing a book-length creative manuscript of publishable quality, and demonstrating, in the thesis essay, an understanding of craft that situates the work within the genre. Although students will focus on thesis in their third year, every class builds toward the final manuscript. The thesis project includes these components:

- Creative work (100 to 200 pages for fiction or literary nonfiction, and 48 to 64 pages of poetry)
- Thesis Essay (25 to 40 (20-30) pages)
- Annotated bibliography (between 40 and 70 books).

Thesis Proposal/Thesis Committee:

At the beginning of the third year (that is: during or shortly after the third residency)

students will submit a thesis project proposal to their committees. Committees will be comprised of: a) a genre advisor who is a core faculty member and serves as chair; b) the student's third year mentor; and c) a third person, faculty member the means of whose membership is yet to be determined. The proposal will describe, in as much detail as possible, the focus of the essay and the general scope of the creative work. This ought to involve quite a bit of planning between advisor and student. The proposal is meant to be a "road map" to help students refine their ideas rather than a contract. The proposal should have a title and subtitle, an abstract, and a bibliography of relevant resources likely to be included. Although the essay may change over the course of the semester, a clear plan at the outset will enable the student to proceed with more confidence.

Creative work:

The creative work should represent the student's best writing. It does not need to include everything written during the program. At its best, it should present a cohesive, unified body of work that aspires toward being a book. Most students will want to continue working on their creative projects after graduation in pursuit of publication, but the final thesis presented to the student's committee should be as polished and complete as possible.

Students will work closely with their third-year mentor on finishing the manuscript. It's important to enter the third year with a substantial body of drafts and revisions to focus on.

Thesis essay:

By the third year, students should have ample experience in summarizing, evaluating, and relating reading to their own writing and growth as a writer. They will be able to contextualize their work in its literary genre. Sameness and difference from traditional standards of the genre can best be explored through particular issues of formal craft, which will have taken shape as the student has read and written over the previous years, such as voice, narrative structure or stance, lyric sensibility, style, character development, dialogue, content, subtext, forms, metaphor and allegory, and so forth. The essay is not a traditional work of literary criticism, but rather a writerly consideration of these aspects in published works as they relate to the student's own work. Examples will be available in CWLA, but in general these essays will be works of original reading and writing experience rather than extensive research. The essay can serve as an introduction to the student's creative work, highlighting areas of significant study and discovery that developed in the program.

Annotated bibliography:

The annotations for an annotated bibliography are short summaries of a work's main ideas along with the student's writerly evaluation of its pertinence and usefulness. The

annotated bibliography demonstrates a critical understanding of the student's focused reading throughout the program and provides other students with a valuable reference as they develop their own reading lists. Each annotation should consist of one or two paragraphs, no longer than a third of page, introduced by the book's bibliographic information formatted in MLA style. The bibliography should contain between 40 and 70 entries. These should be drawn largely but not exclusively from the student's reading list during the mentorships.

Thesis colloquium: This is an opportunity for students to demonstrate their mastery of their chosen form with other students. The colloquium is required during the fourth residency (at which the student's presence is not otherwise required—nor is he or she officially enrolled). Essentially this colloquium is derived from the student's thesis essay and presented as a class. The student may also give a brief reading from the creative work during the final residency. Students will receive more detailed guidance from advisors before the residency.

Important note: See the Graduate School's guidelines for additional thesis requirements, including writing the abstract, following MLA style, formatting, and submitting the final thesis to the dean's office and Graduate School.

PROGRAM PERSONNEL

Director: Dr. David Stevenson will direct the program from CWLA's office on the UAA campus. His role is to oversee the program's long-term planning in consultation with the Academic Board and to advocate for the program within the university and the community at large. (See description of Academic Board below.) Among his duties, he will work with the program coordinator on day-to-day operations and on organizing summer residencies.

Program Coordinator: Kathleen Tarr works in the CWLA office year-around to organize summer residencies with the director and to assist students with applications, registration, and other logistical details. She is the main public contact for information regarding the program.

Core Faculty: The core faculty of CWLA includes the year-around faculty responsible for advising students in each genre. They are: Anne Caston (poetry), Jo-Ann Mapson (fiction), Linda McCarriston (poetry), and Sherry Simpson (literary nonfiction). Core faculty may also teach as mentors in the low-residency program and may serve on the Academic Board.

Duties of Core Faculty: Core faculty are responsible for teaching the on-line workshop courses that frame the summer residency. They also act as the academic advisor for all students in their genre. Core faculty may also mentor one to two students

per year. In general, over the course of the residency, each core faculty member would lead several workshop critiques, give a reading or presentation, and offer 1-2 classes, in addition to participating in all group events, meeting with students, and meeting with other faculty as needed.

During the residency, core faculty may also:

- Lead orientation of students at residency
- Attend mentor assignment meeting with director
- Attend / chair thesis colloquia as assigned
- Be available at meals to talk with students and associate faculty.

As part of serving on the Academic Board, core faculty may also review student applications, plan the summer residency, review curricula, consult on hiring associate faculty, and perform other departmental tasks as necessary.

Associate Faculty: Associate faculty teach as mentors in the low-residency program. They participate in the summer residencies and work with one to three students each year.

Duties of Associate Faculty: Based on their work contracts, rotating associate faculty will

participate in summer residencies and mentor between one and three students per year.

In general, during the residency, associate faculty will:

- Teach two to three classes, present a morning talk, and give a reading, as agreed upon with the director
- Team-teach or lead at least two manuscript workshops during the residency
- Attend all meetings with students and core faculty as scheduled
- Attend all group dinners, lectures, and readings according to established guidelines for each residency
- Meet with students they will mentor
- Complete all evaluations as required.

Guest Faculty: *Different guest faculty will be invited to each summer residency under the Northern Renaissance Arts & Sciences Series to expand the program's cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural scope. In general, they will give a public presentation and offer a workshop or seminar for the program's students. Guest faculty will be invited from the arts, music, science, cultural, and scholarly communities in Alaska and elsewhere.*

Duties of Guest Faculty: *Two to three guest faculty will be invited to each summer residency in succession for short-term stays. They will not mentor students. Based on their contracts, guest faculty in general will:*

- Give at least one public lecture, performance, presentation, or reading
- Teach at least one seminar, workshop, or master class
- Attend group dinners, lectures and readings during their stay.

***Duties of the Academic Board:** The Academic Board consists of all core faculty and the director. The Board reviews the policies and procedures of the department as well as the curriculum. Its members may work on special projects and review student applications and associate faculty hires. In general, the academic board functions much as any departmental faculty would.*

ACADEMIC POLICIES OF THE PROGRAM

Grading and evaluation:

In this program, all assigned grading is either “Pass” or “No Pass.” The grade assigned for each semester (for all coursework except the practicum) is recommended by the faculty mentor to the genre advisor and to the director. Each mentor also completes a

narrative evaluation describing the student’s progress and quality of work. These summary comments will be used as part the student’s narrative transcript. Students will receive a copy of the faculty mentor’s comments at the end of each semester, as well as a letter from the director formally notifying them of the final grade and advancement to the next semester of study.

“Pass” indicates that the student has met the minimum course requirements, completed work in a timely manner, and has demonstrated satisfactory progress under the criteria established in the program’s goal and outcomes.

A “No Pass” is assigned if a student has not completed the minimum course requirements as established in the study plan, has repeatedly missed deadlines, has turned in creative work that is clearly not at the graduate level, and/or has ignored faculty recommendations for improvement.

A “DF” grade is *deferred*. It will be assigned when the work, by course design, is not to be completed within a given semester. Examples of this are: the 690 course in the fall of the second year, or the Thesis Hours.

An Incomplete “I” may be given by the instructor for work not completed within the semester. Incompletes must be completed before beginning work in the following semester. Students will not be allowed to continue to the next semester if their previous semester’s work has not been completed. All Incomplete grades turn to F after one year, regardless of department policy.

Leaves of absence:

This low-residency program, like others of its kind across the nation, admits graduate students who are making a commitment to their studies but who also, traditionally, hold down jobs, have families, and live at a distance from the campus. In light of this, the Program attempts to be as flexible as possible. Given the yearlong structure of our program in hiring faculty mentors, all leaves of absence must be for a period of one academic year; we cannot accommodate a semester-long leave of absence.

To apply for a leave-of-absence, you must petition the director and advisor in writing and clearly state your reasons. All petitions must be submitted in advance of the fall semester.

Academic probation: The Academic Board and the director may determine after reviewing a student's evaluations that it is in the best interest of the student to repeat a semester of CWLA 690 Forms and Theory. In the event a student has earned two consecutive "No Pass" semesters, the board and the director will place the student on academic probation, notify the student of specific issues or deficiencies, and provide a detailed explanation of what expectations the student must meet to return to graduate studies. The director and the student's advisor will work with the student to devise a plan for independent and/or remedial work the student must successfully complete before attempting to resume further studies at the graduate level.

To re-enter the program, the student must submit a petition describing the additional study. Students must also explain why they're prepared to resume graduate-level coursework. All petitions are reviewed and approved, on a case-by-case basis, by the director and the Academic Board. Academic probation will be lifted following the student's successful completion of the next full semester's course.

Records/transcripts:

This program produces two kinds of transcripts: a traditional transcript based on course grades and credits, and a narrative transcript based on 1) the faculty mentors' summary evaluations for all 690 coursework; 2) the core faculty member's summary evaluation after summer workshop courses; and 3) the director's summary evaluation of CWLA 695 Literary Practicum and 4) the genre advisor's summary evaluation of CWLA 699 coursework (thesis). Program graduates who need official transcripts can request them from the registrar's office; copies of official narrative transcripts will be available from the CWLA office.

Grievances/Complaints:

We encourage students and faculty to resolve difficulties informally before progressing to a formal grievance process. The student's advisor and/or the program director are always available for discussion, consultation, or informal mediation. If these methods don't resolve the issue, students must file a formal grievance in writing with the director of the program, who will review it and *determine the next courses of action. The director is required to*

undertake any of the following steps:

- a. notify the person of the nature of the grievance/complaint against him/her;
- b. request a formal response, in writing, to the grievance/complaint;
- c. mediate between the two parties in hopes of reaching a workable outcome;
- d. take both documents (the grievance petition and the response) to the Academic Board for review if the situation is not yet resolved.

In cases of harassment (sexual or otherwise), substance abuse, and violent or threatening behavior, the grievance will be forwarded automatically to the CAS Dean's Office for resolution.

In the event that the student has a grievance with the director, the Academic Board members should first receive the complaint and, after review, the members will either recommend a resolution or may forward it to the CAS Dean's office.

Student Code of Conduct: *The M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing supports and upholds the university's policies regarding student conduct. For a comprehensive look at the Student Code of Conduct, see:*

<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/deanofstudents/StudentJudicialServices/code.cfm>

Freedom of speech is at the core of UAA's values. The M.F.A. Program in Creative Writing strives to create an inclusive, respectful campus community that promotes and embraces individual differences. We believe that diversity includes understanding and respecting differences in ideas, religion, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, disability, age, and socioeconomic status. We celebrate diversity in all of our educational and employment endeavors. Likewise, this program supports the University's efforts to make a place for diversity of thought and culture, and it supports Disability Services. To learn more about these policies and protocols, please visit the following sites:

<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/diversity/choices.cfm>

<http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/dss/information/index.cfm>

Sexual Harassment Policy:

According to University of Alaska Board of Regents policy (4.02.020b), sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors by a member of the campus community when the assailant uses, threatens to use, or implies that submission to, or rejection of such conduct will have an impact on employment or academic decisions affecting the victim.

Sexual harassment includes other verbal or physical conduct related to sex when such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's

performance at work or study by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment in which to work, live, or learn. The Office of Campus Diversity and Compliance, the Dean of Students Office, and academic dean and director's offices can provide information and referral on issues of sexual harassment.

Substance Abuse Policy:

The misuse of alcohol and other drugs, including prescription drugs, by college students inhibits educational development and results in decreased productivity,

serious health problems, and a breakdown of family structure. Repeated use of alcohol and drugs can lead to dependence. The abuse of alcohol and other drugs affects all socioeconomic groups, age levels, and the unborn. Possession, consumption, furnishing, or being perceptibly under the influence of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, controlled substances, or intoxicants, except as permitted by law, Regent's Policy, University Regulation or UAA rules and procedures, on campus property or at official activities of student organizations including while on student travel, is prohibited. State laws shall be observed at all private and public events conducted on University property. For more information, see Student Code of Conduct under Regulations.

The University and the Office of Student Affairs promotes the education of the whole student. The University is concerned about ways in which alcohol use and abuse may affect the primary academic mission of the institution, its overall atmosphere and the personal well being of the University community. The University has the duty to exercise the degree of care that a reasonable person would to ensure that private and public events are conducted in accordance with state law. Whether or not a person drinks alcoholic beverages is a personal decision, but individuals are held personally accountable for their actions.

Campus Alcohol Policy:

The primary objectives of UAA's policies and procedures on alcoholic beverages are; (a) to promote responsible behavior and attitudes among all members of the University community; (b) to educate the university community concerning the use and effects of alcoholic beverages in order to promote responsible decision-making; and (c) help individuals experiencing difficulties associated with the use of alcohol.

The Chancellor or the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs has the authority to approve events where alcoholic beverages may be served to individuals of legal age with positive identification. Approval to serve alcoholic beverages will be granted on designated premises for private University-sanctioned events for a limited period of time. The sale of alcoholic beverages at University-sanctioned events on campus is not

permissible and may not be approved by the Chancellor. Personal consumption, possession, or display of beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages is prohibited in University public places. The possession of kegs and other large quantities of alcoholic beverages will be allowed only by special permission of the Chancellor.