

## **THESIS REQUIREMENTS:**

The capstone experience of the MFA degree in creative writing is the writing of a thesis. The thesis is to be a book-length manuscript (at least 50 pages of poetry; 150 pages of fiction or non-fiction prose; a full-length play; or the equivalent in translation from another language) of high artistic quality in the area of the student's concentration. Six hours of thesis credit are required. Normally students will enroll for three thesis hours during the last two semesters of study.

### **The Committee:**

Students are responsible for forming a thesis committee and should begin seeking a chair during the semester before the first thesis hours are taken. The committee will consist of three NEOMFA faculty: a thesis director and two additional faculty members, from at least two consortial universities. In special cases, the student may add a graduate faculty member from one of the consortial universities to the committee to provide a needed area of expertise. In forming committees, students may seek advice from their campus coordinator who also serves as the faculty advisor for NEOMFA students. The campus coordinator must approve the final committee.

### **Submitting the Thesis:**

The guidelines for submitting the final copy of a thesis differ slightly at each consortial university. Students should consult with their campus coordinators and the graduate office of the department. Normally, students will need to file appropriate forms for the intent to graduate in the semester before they expect to complete the degree. The thesis must be completed and in the hands of the committee no later than eight weeks before commencement. All four universities require that two copies of the thesis be submitted to the appropriate graduate office. The policies regarding electronic submission differ however, and students should consult with their departments well in advance. In addition, NEOMFA students are required to submit one paper copy and one electronic copy of the final thesis to the NEOMFA director's office no later than one week before commencement.

### **The Thesis Defense:**

The thesis defense for students in the NEOMFA will consist of: (1) a meeting with all members of the thesis committee, and (2) a separate public reading of the work with other graduating students. The thesis defense meeting will be a question and answer session that is directed primarily toward the thesis, but may contain other topics with which the student would be expected to be familiar at the completion of the MFA degree. The committee director will schedule the defense meeting, which must take place at least two weeks prior to commencement. All members of the thesis committee are required to attend the thesis defense meeting, and the NEOMFA director must be kept informed of the time and the place that the group will meet. When the thesis defense meeting is completed, the members of the committee will notify the NEOMFA director and submit the appropriate completion form to the gateway institution. **Specific processes leading to completion and filing of the thesis and graduation deadlines differ across the four universities. It is the student's responsibility to work with the gateway university graduate office to assure that all the necessary paperwork is completed.**

**NEOMFA students will also participate in a public reading from their thesis manuscripts. This reading will be coordinated and advertised through the office of the NEOMFA director and will showcase the work of multiple students in several genres from multiple gateways. Faculty, students and administrators of the NEOMFA consortium universities will be invited to attend as will selected members of the community and graduating students' family and friends.**