

Writing and Humanistic Studies

Effective writing is crucial not only in creative expression, but also in scientific and technical fields as well as in the social sciences and humanities. Capturing our ideas and exploring their implications in a persuasive manner requires instruction and practice.

Writing at MIT

The Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies at MIT offers instruction in three areas: creative writing, science writing, and digital media studies. Beginning and advanced classes are offered in each area. Some advanced subjects use writing to explore humanistic and scientific issues in a broad cultural context. Students may major in any of the three areas and may choose three degree options for a career-oriented approach to writing and related fields such as science journalism, digital media, and information design.

Undergraduate Program

The Program offers full majors, joint majors, minors, and concentrations. Students who major in writing must complete seven electives in writing, two in literature, and three electives in the humanities, arts, and social sciences (HASS) fields. They also write a thesis and take the full complement of General Institute Requirements. Students who choose a joint major with engineering or science complete seven electives in writing. They also take six courses in an engineering or science field, write a thesis, and must meet the General Institute Requirements. Students who minor in writing must complete six electives, and students who concentrate in writing must complete a sequence of four writing subjects.

Extracurricular Opportunities

In addition to the organized curriculum, there are many extracurricular opportunities for students interested in writing. These include student publications such as *The Tech*, the student newspaper; and *Rune*, the literary magazine. MIT's Writing and Communication Center also sponsors the MIT Writers Group, composed of students, staff, and faculty members who meet weekly

to share their own creative writing. MIT's location in the Boston area gives students easy access to the dozens of magazines, newspapers, and tabloids published in the city.

MIT recognizes excellent writers among its students by offering several prizes for writing including the Ellen King Prize for Freshman Writing, the DeWitt Wallace Prize for Science Writing for the Public, and the Boit Manuscript Prize. For more information visit <http://writing.mit.edu/initiatives/writing-prizes/ilona-karmel>.

The Writing and Communication Center

The Writing and Communication Center is a place for students to receive help in preparing class papers and oral presentations or in meeting the Communication Requirement. It is also the place where graduate students, alums, and faculty members go to develop thesis and book proposals and to prepare articles for publication. The center teaches techniques for developing ideas, organizing papers, and fine-tuning style. The Writing Center is staffed by professional writing consultants who work individually with students either by appointment (made online) or on a drop-in basis. All the consultants are published writers with advanced degrees and college classroom teaching experience. This is a free service for the entire MIT community. Further information about the Writing and Communication Center can be found at <http://writing.mit.edu/wcc>.

The Writing Across the Curriculum Group and The Communication Requirement

MIT established the Communication Requirement to make the development of effective writing and speaking abilities an integral part of undergraduate education at the Institute. It ensures that all students receive substantial instruction and practice in general expository writing, speaking, and in the common forms of discourse in their professional field. The Program's Writing Across the Curriculum group collaborates with

MIT faculty and departments all across the Institute to support this instruction in writing and speaking.

Contact Information

Further information may be obtained by contacting:
The Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies, MIT
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Phone: (617) 253-7894
More information is also available on the web at
<http://writing.mit.edu>.

The MIT Course Catalog contains further information on the Institute, including all graduate and undergraduate courses and programs. For details on ordering the course catalogue, please visit the MIT Press Bookstore website at
<http://web.mit.edu/bookstore/www/bulletin.html>.

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