

**MVLA**  
**New Course Proposal Form**

New courses may be considered by the Board of Trustees for the following school year. Proposals must be submitted to the District Office by November 3, 2023. Course proposals will be considered by the Board in November. Please submit form to Teri Faught, [teri.faught@mvla.net](mailto:teri.faught@mvla.net) in Education Services.

Proposed Course Name: Creative Writing
Department: English
School Site: Los Altos High School

**1. What A-G and/or graduation requirements would this course satisfy? If the course is eligible for A-G, has the course been approved?**

The Leadership Team and LAHS site will decide if this course is desired to be approved as a F or B course. While this specific course is not yet UC A-G approved, their portal has numerous creative writing classes which have been approved for F, B, or G credit. If we have this course as a B credit, it's important to note that it will **not** replace the standard 9-12 English course (Survey, World Literature, American Literature, and 12th grade Global, Film Analysis, English Literature OR their H/AP equivalent). Instead, students would take this as a second, year-long, English course in grades 10-12. Our principal, Tracey Runeare, encouraged us to pursue this as a B or F course in terms of A-G credits, as opposed to G credit (which we are also open to).

**Updated after Leadership Team 10/17/24:** We will call this a B course for A-G proposal and it would be promoted as an English elective at LAHS on the pathways doc/course catalog.

**2. What is the rationale for this course? Include specific reference to CCSS, CA-NGSS, State and College Board Frameworks, and District goals as appropriate.**

For years students have informally talked about wanting a creative writing course at LAHS. In the [WASC Student Feedback collected in 2021](#), many students asked for more creativity in their classes and some students explicitly asked for "Creative Writing" when asked "What is a new course that you wish would be offered at LAHS?" In May 2023, we surveyed all students enrolled in LAHS English classes to gauge their interest in a variety of options for new courses, and creative writing was by far the most desired. When we surveyed English students in April 2024, 39% of the 1150 students who responded said they were interested in taking a class like this.

After discussion with teachers in the department, we decided we wanted to offer Creative Writing as a year-long elective option that students could enroll in as a second English course for students in grades 10-12. While our standard English courses may have a short assignment or poetry unit that is more creative in nature, due to CCSS and college expectations, we often focus more on literary analysis or persuasive writing. This proposed Creative Writing course would focus on creative writing and the creation of original fiction, nonfiction narratives, and poetry.

In this course students will read and discuss a variety of mentor texts to serve as inspiration for their own writing. By reading mentor texts (Penny Kittle model of independent reading and more) and participating in both guided and independent writing, students will engage authentically in the evaluation of author's craft and find models and inspiration for their own writing style. Genres of reading could include poetry, short stories, play writing and/or nonfiction narratives. Students will be keeping a writing journal, critiquing each other's work and engaging in the workshop process to develop their writing further, and completing various exercises designed to stimulate their imaginations and hone their writing skills. The teacher and students will form a community of writers and learn how to be compassionate and critically engaged readers for one another's work. The goal for the year is to nurture students' unique writing voices and become acquainted with the intersection of craft and one's voice in the creative process. By the end of the course, students would have produced a portfolio of writing, potentially published their work in a school lit magazine and/or on a class website/blog, and submitted to contests.

In particular, a creative writing course would address the following CCSS for 9-10th and 11-12th: Production and Distribution of Writing 4-6 which focus on producing clear and coherent writing with considerations to organization and style, taking into account practices of planning, revision, and editing and well as technology usage to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products. Also, writing standards 3a-e around Text Types and Purpose would be addressed in the course which cover everything from writing from a specific perspective to using narrative techniques, precise language and details, to designing stories beginning to end. And in order to foster the writing skills, we'll also be reading several short stories and works which will tap into the following standards: Key Ideas and Details 2-3, Craft and Structure 4-6, and Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10.

**3. What student population is likely to be served by this course?**

This course would be open to all students on campus in grades 10-12 and would serve anyone who is interested in learning more about creative writing. Student choice often plays an important role in student success and this course will provide opportunity to read texts of their interest and at their level allowing for more authentic engagement.

**4. What value will this course add to the educational experiences of our students?**

Students have indicated a desire for a course that is solely focused on creative writing. Creative writing is a practice in not only evaluating authors' craft and effectiveness but an exploration in one's own writing style and voice and how that manifests through intentional, creative choices. The act of going through this process has multiple benefits: it provides an outlet for student expression, encourages critical thinking, fosters self-confidence and self-discovery, and taps into the compassionate center of students who will, vulnerably and bravely, be sharing their works with each other for feedback and critique. At the end of this course, the production of a portfolio will demonstrate the growth of the individual in the development of their ideas as well as their craft as authors.

**5. Is this course part of a sequence? (exs. an introductory course that leads to another, or a college prep course that prepares students for AP offerings):**

No, this is not part of a sequence. Any student in grades 10-12 may enroll in this second English elective course.

**6. How was it determined that there is a demand for this course?**

As stated above, for years students have talked about wanting a creative writing course at LAHS. In the [WASC Student Feedback collected in 2021](#), many students asked for more creativity in their classes and some students explicitly asked for "Creative Writing" when asked "What is a new course that you wish would be offered at LAHS?" In May 2023 we surveyed all students enrolled in LAHS English classes to gauge their interest in a variety of options for new courses, and creative writing was by far the most desired. When we surveyed English students in April 2024, 39% of the 1150+ students who responded said they would be interested in taking a class like this. .

**7. How many sections of the course are anticipated for the first year it is offered? How many in years 3-5?**

We are thinking there would be 1-2 sections each year, be it the first year it is offered or several years in the future.

**8. What is the possible impact of this course on other courses and/or the master schedule?**

It depends on how the Leadership Team and site decides to offer the course in terms of A-G. If the course is offered as B or G, it will only be competing with other electives offered on campus. If the site chooses to offer it as F, it may compete with other Fine Art options.

**9. Other than section allocation, are there other budget impacts, such as for textbooks, equipment, materials, etc.?**

The budget impact would be minimal. Whole class texts will primarily be shorter "mentor" texts such as poems, essays and short stories so those would be photo-copied or distributed to students digitally. While students will be reading longer books, most of these will be individually chosen by the students from the school library or teacher classroom library. It is possible there may be some costs associated with publishing a literary magazine if we choose to go with a physical publication as opposed to digital.

**10. Is there other pertinent information not addressed in the responses above that would support the approval of this course?**

The development of Artificial Intelligence is accelerating the pace at which the acquisition of content in all curricula is becoming automated. The 21st Century skills that are likely to be in demand will be things like creativity, ingenuity, and the compelling expression of ideas. This Creative Writing class will specifically help students to develop these skills.

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*Proceed to signatures on Page 2*

Site recommendation and signature, to be completed by the Principal:

Does the proposed course have the support of the department to which it is associated?

Yes  No  Not applicable

Does the site Leadership Team or Coordinator Group support adopting the proposed course?

Yes  No  Not applicable

As the site leader, do you support presenting this proposed course to the Board for consideration?

Yes  No  Not applicable

Principal's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*District Office Use Only:*

Associate Superintendent Signature/Date \_\_\_\_\_

School Board Approval Date: \_\_\_\_\_