

Creative Writing Annual Assessment Report AY 16-17

Summary

A Fall 2016 survey of past and current Foundations in Creative Writing students shows that, as a whole, students believe the course is a strong introduction to the Creating Writing major. The survey illustrates that the course is fulfilling one of its primary goals of exposing students to writing outside of their initially chosen genre, though the number of students inspired to enroll in future courses outside of their genre could improve. Furthermore, it is encouraging that past and present students indicated that the course caused them to switch their majors into Creative Writing from other disciplines.

I. Major Degree Programs

Creative Writing BA
-Fiction
-Nonfiction
-Poetry

Cultural Studies BA
Interdisciplinary Documentary BA
Fiction BFA

II. Degree Programs and Learning Outcomes Assessed AY16-17

Foundations in Creative Writing course, taken by students in Fiction BFA and Creative Writing BA (all concentrations)

III. Assessment

Method

In Fall 2016, students in Foundations in Creative Writing took a survey of 15 multiple choice questions and a space for open-ended feedback. Questions related to how much students believed the course improved their writing and changed their approach to genre and the writing process. 27 students completed the survey.

Also in Fall 2016, former Foundations in Creative Writing students participated in a survey of nine multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question about how the course prepared them for other courses and their major in Creative Writing. 15 students completed the survey. See Appendix A for the full response data.

Results

Students, particularly those currently enrolled in the course, viewed the course as having a positive impact on their writing and their interest in various genres. The highest area of satisfaction for all students was the course helping them to generate new work.

In each area, former students rated the course less highly than current students, with the lowest area for former students being the impact Foundations had on leading them to take courses outside of their concentration.

Regarding particular elements of writing, students believe that Foundations had the greatest impact on their ability to use imagery and setting/place and the lowest impact on their ability to use dialogue.

Helped Generate New Work

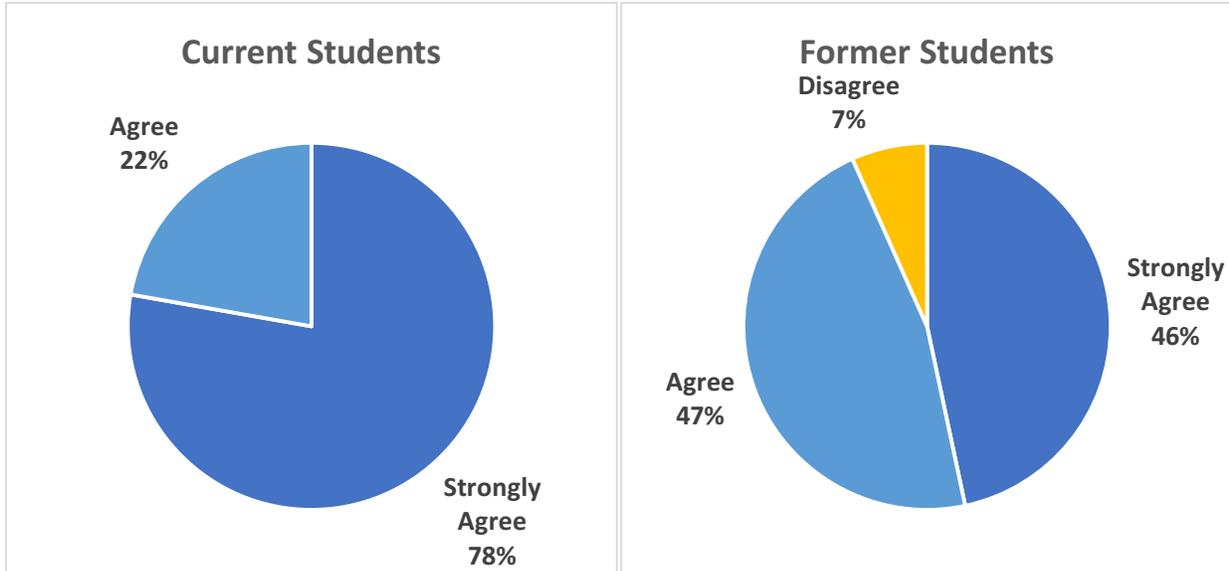


Figure 1

Better Understanding of Writer's Process

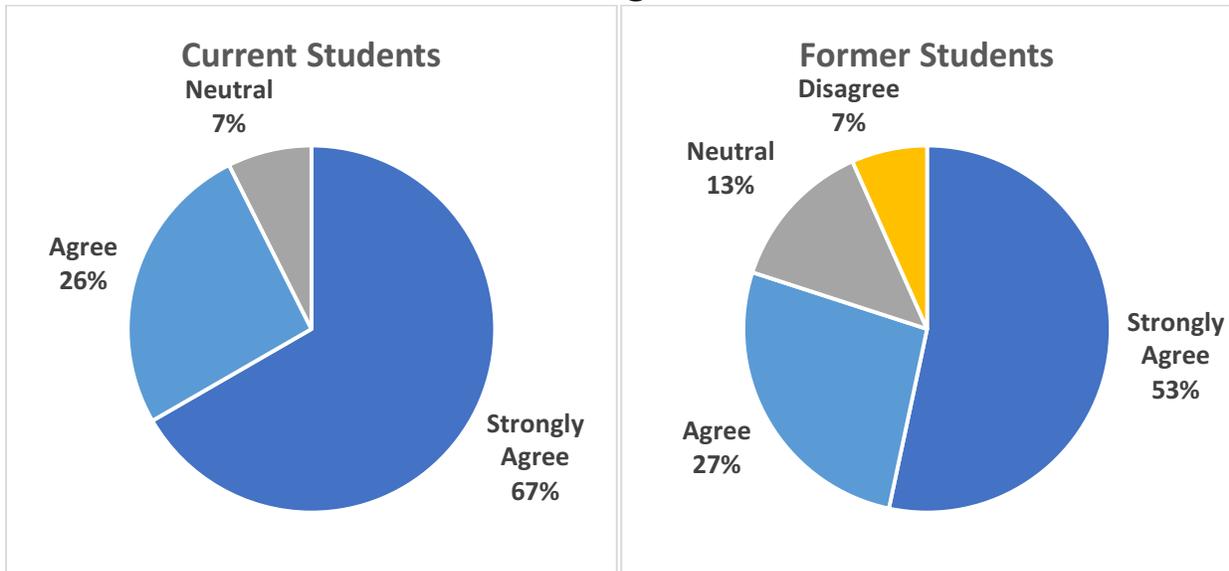


Figure 2

Informed Writing Outside of Original Genre

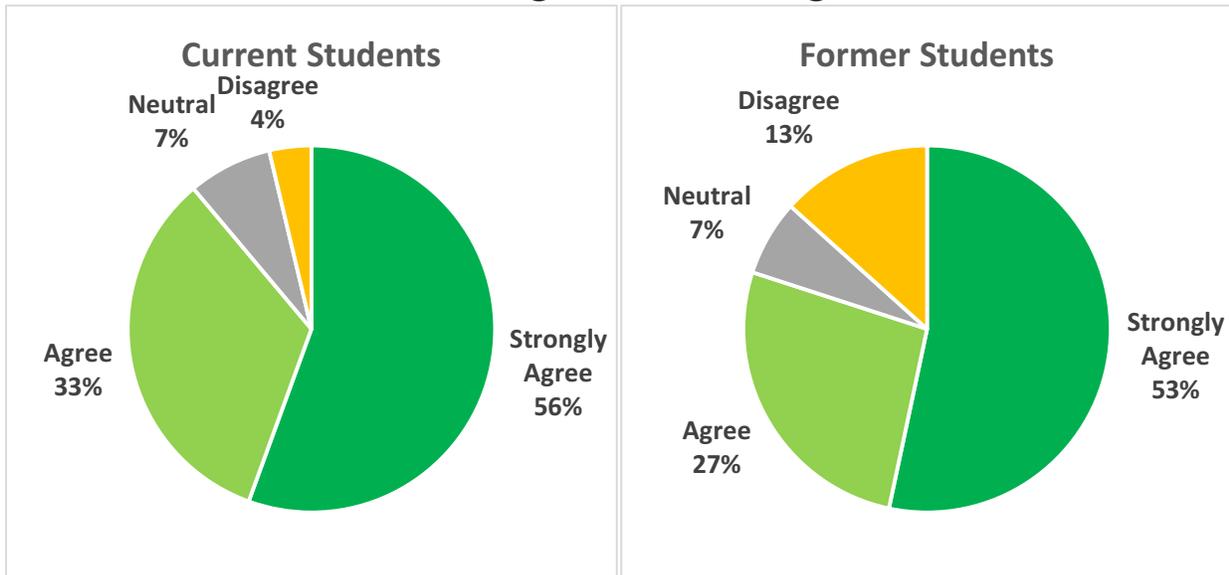


Figure 3

Explore Connections and Differences Among Genres

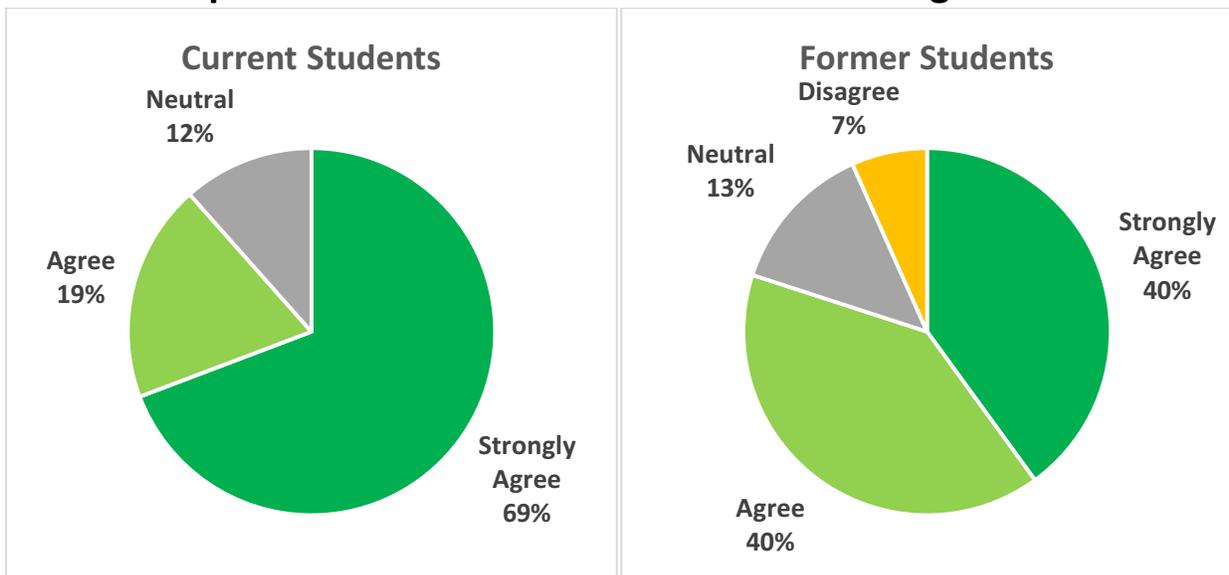


Figure 4

Led to Consider Course Outside Concentration

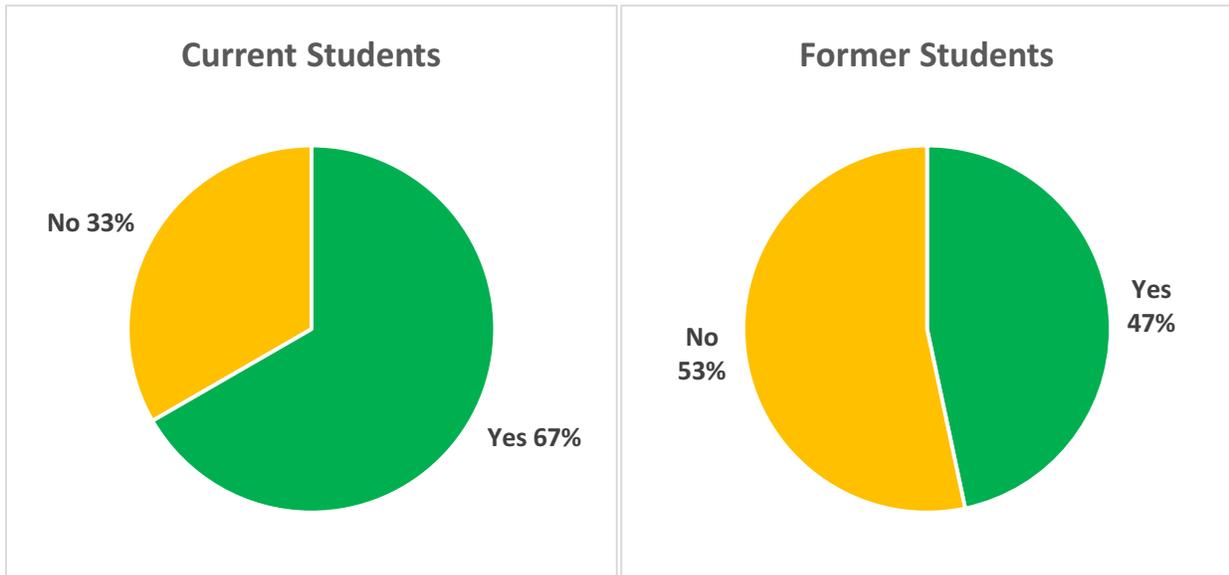


Figure 5

Simultaneously Taking Beginning Workshop

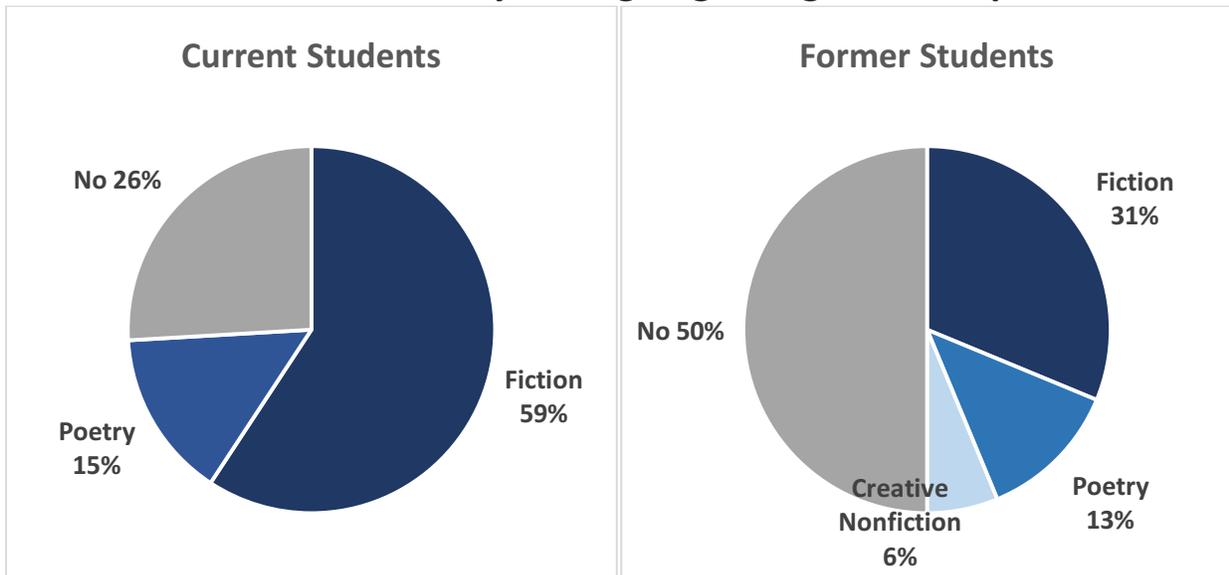


Figure 6

Helpfulness of Foundations for Concurrent Workshop

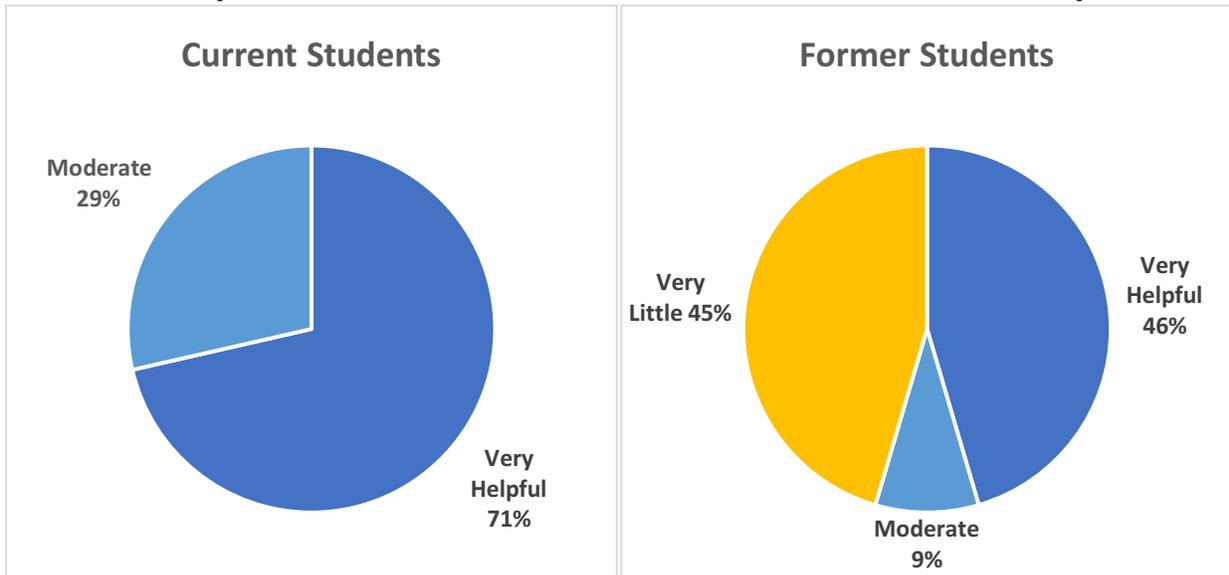


Figure 7

Impacts and Informs Current Workshop

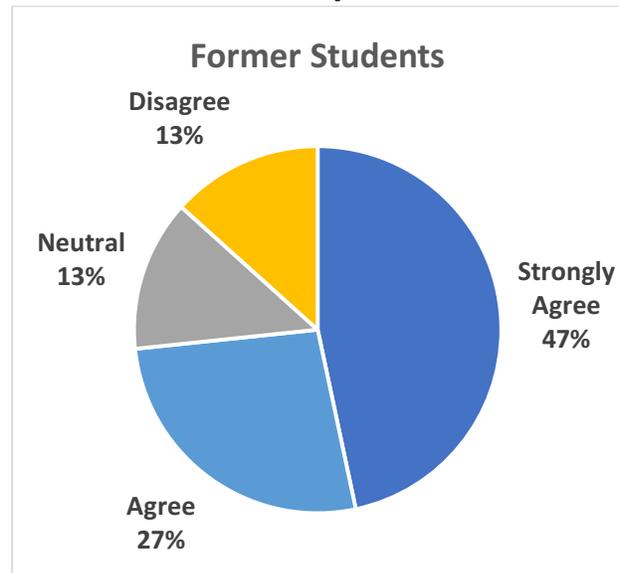


Figure 8

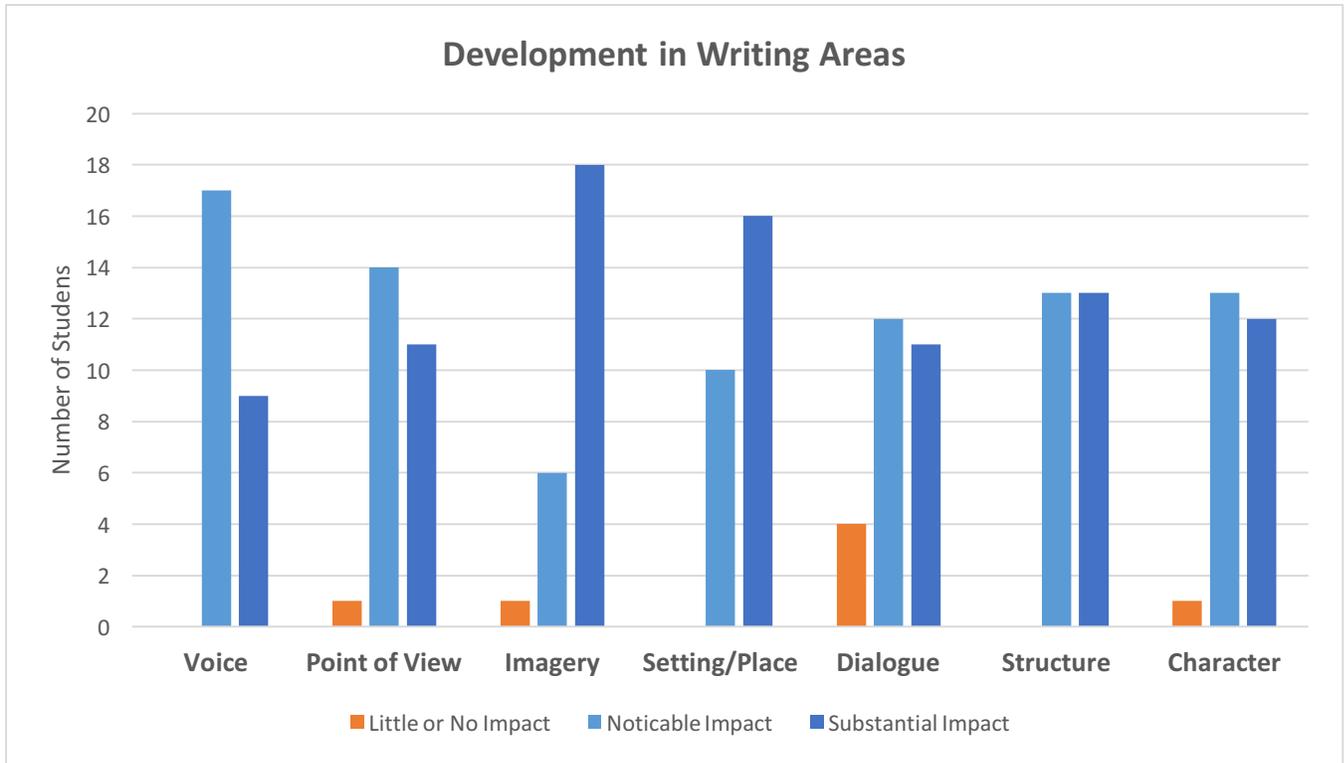


Figure 9

Notable and Recurring Comments from Current Students

- I grew as a writer, as well as explored other forms of writing that I now enjoy
- I felt like my drive to tell a story has been resparked after taking this course
- Foundations has broadened my awareness of other genres of writing, and it has enabled my skill set in my primary genre to assist me writing within genres newer to me
- I've become very interested in writing creative nonfiction as well as poetry, even though I'm a Fiction Writing major.
- This course convinced me to change my major from acting to fiction writing. I loved this class. I wish I could take it all over again

Notable and Recurring Comments from Former Students

- The class explored a lot, and I appreciated the diversity of the genres and reading material.
- Foundations in Creative Writing is an excellent, mandatory course needed to take within the writing course at Columbia College Chicago.
- I've recommended this class to others because of how phenomenal it is.
- Foundations in Creative Writing was the impetus for me to become a Fiction writing major.

Moving Forward

- Faculty should discuss their reactions to the areas that students saw their greatest and least development (Figure 9) and respond as they deem appropriate.

Appendix A: Full Data for Survey of Current Foundations Students.

Q1: Foundations in Creative Writing has helped me generate new, original work.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	77.78%	21
Agree	22.22%	6
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q2: I have developed a better understanding of a writer's process as a result of this course.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	66.67%	18
Agree	25.93%	7
No Opinion	7.41%	2
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q3: Foundations in Creative Writing has informed my writing outside my original genre of interest? (For example, as a fiction student, studying poetry and nonfiction has had a direct impact on my fiction writing.)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	55.56%	15
Agree	33.33%	9
No Opinion	7.41%	2
Disagree	3.70%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q4: Foundations in Creative Writing has helped me better explore the connections and differences between fiction, poetry, and non-fiction.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	69.23%	18
Agree	19.23%	5
No Opinion	11.54%	3
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	26

Skipped 1

Q5: Are you enrolled in a beginning-level writing workshop at the same time as this Foundations in Creative Writing course?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	74.07%	20
No	25.93%	7
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q6: If yes, please mark all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Creative Nonfiction Workshop: Beginning	0.00%	0
Fiction Writing I	80.00%	16
Poetry Workshop: Beginning	20.00%	4
	Answered	20
	Skipped	7

Q7: If you are currently enrolled in a beginning-level writing workshop during the same semester as Foundations in Creative Writing, how do you rate the helpfulness of this class for your writing course?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very little help for my writing workshop	0.00%	0
Moderately helpful for my writing workshop	28.57%	6
Very helpful for my writing workshop	71.43%	15
	Answered	21
	Skipped	6

Q8: How much has your writing developed in the area of Voice?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	0.00%	0
Noticeable Development	62.96%	17
Substantial Development	33.33%	9
N/A	3.70%	1
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q9: How much has your writing developed in the area of Point of View?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	3.70%	1
Noticeable Development	51.85%	14
Substantial Development	40.74%	11
N/A	3.70%	1

Answered 27
Skipped 0

Q10: How much has your writing developed in the area of Imagery?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	3.85%	1
Noticeable Development	23.08%	6
Substantial Development	69.23%	18
N/A	3.85%	1
	Answered	26
	Skipped	1

Q11: How much has your writing developed in the area of Setting/Place?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	0.00%	0
Noticeable Development	38.46%	10
Substantial Development	61.54%	16
N/A	0.00%	0
	Answered	26
	Skipped	1

Q12: How much has your writing developed in the area of Dialogue?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	14.81%	4
Noticeable Development	44.44%	12
Substantial Development	40.74%	11
N/A	0.00%	0

Q13: How much has your writing developed in the area of Structure?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	0.00%	0
Noticeable Development	48.15%	13
Substantial Development	48.15%	13
N/A	3.70%	1
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q14: How much has your writing developed in the area of Character?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Little or No Change	3.70%	1
Noticeable Development	48.15%	13
Substantial Development	44.44%	12

N/A	3.70%	1
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q15: Has Foundations in Creative Writing led you to consider taking a writing course outside of your current major? (For example, if you're a Poetry major, would you as a result of this course consider taking a Creative Nonfiction Workshop: Beginning or Fiction Writing I course?)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	66.67%	18
No	33.33%	9
	Answered	27
	Skipped	0

Q16: Please share any additional comments about this course.

- Professor [Redacted] is great!
- i grew as a writer, as well as explored other forms of writing that i know enjoy
- awesome teacher
- I loved this class and [Redacted], my professor. I'm majoring, obviously, in Creative Writing and I felt like my drive to tell a story has been resparked after taking this course. I'm love [Redacted] as a professor and I hope I can find another class that she teachers to learn more of what she has to teach.
- I liked this course because we constantly shared our work out loud and got feedback.
- This course convinced me to change my major from acting to fiction writing. I loved this class. I wish I could take it all over again.
- Redacted] is amazing and deserves all the best. He is an amazing creative writing teacher. He deserves a raise, a Christmas bonus, and a life time supply of high-fives.
- To Whom it May Concern: My name is Alexandra Dumas and due to the honor this name represents, I have always shied away from writing, even though it is the ability I have excelled in, in the past. I entered Professor [Redacted] course with a strong sense of self defeat, no confidence in my ability and I was unfamiliar with the very sound of my voice. Without making Professor [Redacted] sound like a Guru, it is through her comments on my writing, her explanations and assignments which have taught me to utilize techniques, in which my natural voice and talent, (for lack of a better word), blended into a cohesive art form. What good is a painter without the knowledge of how paint works? I am learning how to use these techniques such as, voice, scene, character, time, place, situation, crises, dialogue and even grammar to as templates in which to pour my words, thus creating a story. I am grateful for having had the pleasure and opportunity to have been a member in her class. PS. She also exhibits a level of honesty which lends to an excellent example of personal character and integrity. Thank You, Sincerely, Alexandra Dumas

- I am actually a Game Design Major so I didn't put emphasis on literature
- Overall, Foundations of Creative Writing has broadened my awareness to other genres of writing, and it has enabled my skill set in my primary genre to assist me writing within genres newer to me.
- This course really helped me develop my voice in the classroom as well as on the page. I've learned how to better structure my stories and writings as well as learning how to better my descriptions of character and setting. I've become very interested in writing creative nonfiction as well as poetry, even though I'm a Fiction Writing major. I think that this course really does a good job of spiking interest in different writing fields for beginning writers.
- Being in Foundations as well as the Fiction 1 workshop has helped me better understand the different methods of writing, and the different fundamentals of it. Having two different teachers give their input on some of the same things gives me a better understanding of how to write, and I appreciate it.
- Taking Foundations of Creative Writing class has helped me develop more into my writing. Not only that but it has helped me to develop my own voice and to be able to expand on things that interest me in the future in what I want to write about and be able to know how in terms of dialogue, story, poetry, character etc.

Appendix B: Full Data for Survey of Former Foundations Students

Q1: Foundations in Creative Writing helped me generate new, original work.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	46.67%	7
Agree	46.67%	7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	6.67%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	15
	Skipped	0

Q2: Foundations in Creative Writing helped me develop a better understanding of a writer's process.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	53.33%	8
Agree	26.67%	4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.33%	2
Disagree	6.67%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	15
	Skipped	0

Q3: Foundations in Creative Writing informed my writing outside of my original genre. For example, as a fiction student, studying poetry and non-fiction had a direct impact on your fiction writing.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	53.33%	8
Agree	26.67%	4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	6.67%	1
Disagree	13.33%	2
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	15
	Skipped	0

Q4: Foundations in Creative Writing helped me better explore the connections and differences between fiction, poetry, and non-fiction.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	40.00%	6
Agree	40.00%	6
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.33%	2
Disagree	6.67%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
	Answered	15

Skipped

0

Q5: Were you enrolled in a beginning-level writing workshop at the same time as Foundations in Creative Writing?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	46.67%	7
No	53.33%	8
Don't Know	0.00%	0
Answered		15
Skipped		0

Q6: If yes, please mark all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Creative Nonfiction Workshop: Beginning	12.50%	1
Fiction Writing I	62.50%	5
Poetry Workshop: Beginning	25.00%	2
Answered		8
Skipped		7

Q7: If you were enrolled in a beginning-level writing workshop during the same semester as Foundations in Creative Writing, how do you rate the helpfulness of Foundations for the workshop class you were in at the time?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very little help for my writing workshop	45.45%	5
Moderately helpful for my writing workshop	9.09%	1
Very helpful for my writing workshop	45.45%	5
Answered		11
Skipped		4

Q8: Did Foundations in Creative Writing lead you to take a course outside of your current major? (For example, if you're a Poetry major, did you then take a Creative Nonfiction Workshop: Beginning of Fiction Writing I Course?)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	46.67%	7
No	53.33%	8
Answered		15
Skipped		0

Q9: Foundations in Creative Writing continues to impact and inform the work I am doing in my current workshop.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	46.67%	7
Agree	26.67%	4

Neither Agree nor Disagree	13.33%	2
Disagree	13.33%	2
Strongly Disagree	0.00%	0
Answered		15
Skipped		0

Q10: Please leave any additional comments on your experience in Foundations in Creative Writing.

- Unrelated, but I saw that email about making classes be 3 credits instead of 4, and let me just say: THANK GOD.
- I found that I had strong material outside of what genre of writing I'd usually go straight to. The class explored a lot and I appreciated the diversity of the genres and reading material.
- Professor [Redacted] is such an amazing teacher and I had her as an instructor for Foundations in Creative Writing. I was in awe struck with her knowledge of writing and Professor [Redacted] gave me very helpful feedback with many of my writing assignments that became very helpful in my Advanced Writing Poetry Workshop and for Poetics as well. Foundations in Creative Writing is an excellent, mandatory course needed to take within the writing course at Columbia College Chicago. It helped me immensely and I Thank You guys immensely.
- Foundations in Creative Writing was the impetus for me to become a Fiction writing major.
- I personally don't really think this class is really that helpful for writing major.
- I learned so much about my writing process and started to really understand what my voice sounds like. [Redacted] did an amazing job guiding us through the coursework and giving substantial feedback. When something I wrote wasn't working, she'd help me find what would work. The assignments were challenging in a good way. I've recommended this class to others because of how phenomenal it is.