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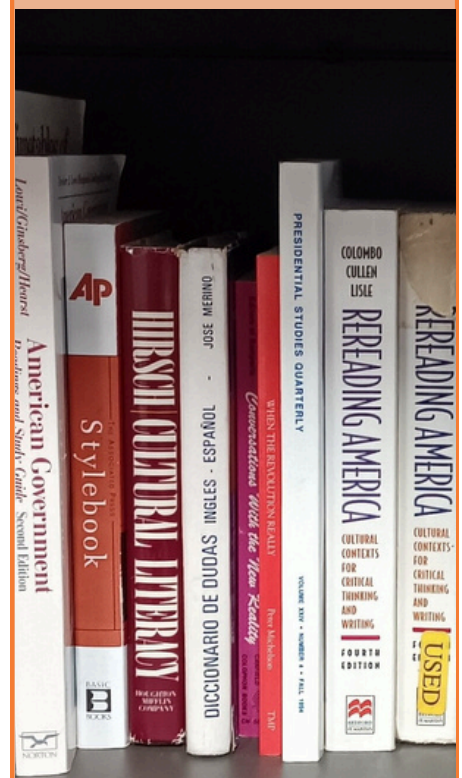
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# Happy Summer Semester!

Now that Winter semester is out of the way, we can all take a second to relax... and maybe work on those poems or stories we've been putting off. Semesters can get hectic, so if you've been wanting to participate in the submission opportunities available in fall and winter semesters, now is the perfect time to write something. Those pesky deadlines tend to creep up on people.

The Writing Center is here to help you accomplish your writing goals. We are open over the spring and summer May 6th-August 21st, Monday-Thursday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. We welcome creative writing appointments.

Keep reading for tips and tricks from the *Scrap Paper* team!



# Do You Want to Step Into a Writing Community? Try the Following!

By Jacqueline Burant

## Join a Writing Group

Writing groups can provide opportunities for dedicated writing time, sharing work, receiving feedback and more. It can be a nice first step for those wanting to get more involved in the writing community and find a support system of like-minded individuals. Here are two Flint writing groups to consider:

- **Writers' Circle:** Is the Writing Center's own writing group, hosted each Wednesday virtually and in-person from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Visit the Writing Center's [Creative Writing Hub](#) for more information.
- **Flint Area Writers:** They meet at the Flint Public Library every two weeks. Visit their [website](#) for meeting schedules and other details.

Also, consider looking into online writing communities. Check out Kay Sheffield's piece on page 5 to learn about online opportunities to connect with writers and share your work.

## Attend Events

Attending events like a class, workshop, conference, author event, or an open mic can help you meet other like-minded writers. It can be daunting to put yourself out there, but doing so can help you grow as a writer and get involved in the writing community. These activities also keep you writing and help you gain the support from other participating writers.

One such activity is National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo). Writers everywhere set goals to complete, many of them striving toward a 50,000-word draft while others create more personalized goals. Many of the the Writers' Circle members participate in NaNoWriMo. They enjoy how the activity and their fellow participants motivate them to be more productive with their writing.

Look for upcoming events in your area! The Marian E. Wright Writing Center's [Creative Writing Hub](#) is a good place to check for events on campus.

## Share Your Work

If you want to be known for your writing someday, you *do* have to let others see it! Sharing your work in low-stakes capacities, like with friends or writing groups, can be a nice way to start getting comfortable with the process. You could also try:

- **Self-publishing online:** Kay discusses this on pages 5-6.
- **Making appointments with the Writing Center:** You'll receive helpful one-on-one feedback to improve your skills and you can geek out about your work with one of our peer tutors (who are, more often than not, creative writers themselves!)
- **Open mics or similar events:** Local bookstore Totem Books, for example, hosts a monthly open mic for writers, artists, comics, and more. It is run by UM-Flint alum Frankie McIntosh. The U of M Hopwood Program also hosts a yearly open mic in the fall for undergraduates; you can learn more about them on the [Creative Writing Hub](#).

## Submit Your Work

Do you have a finished piece? Submit it! Gain recognition for your writing to open up future opportunities for success; it's never too early to start. There are thousands of options to explore, including writing contests, literary magazines, and much more. While some acceptances may lead to payment and others won't, the experience will help you improve your credibility as a writer. Try sites like [NewPages](#) and [Poets & Writers](#) to find upcoming calls for submissions and other writing resources.

Want to submit to a literary magazine? Consider tutor Amanda Seney's tips on submissions:

- If you're thinking about submitting to a magazine or journal, try reading some back issues (often available online) to see if your work matches their vibe. You'll save yourself a lot of time and rejections if you don't send your alien-horror-doomsday short story to publications that specialize in kittens and cupcakes.
- Cover letters for creative writing submissions are a thing—who knew? If you're submitting to a publication that requires one, and you're not sure where to start, [Gotham Writers](#) and [Jane Friedman's blog](#) have some great tips!

It's important to meet submission guidelines. Your piece could be automatically rejected, no matter how good it is. For example, some publications are open to submissions year-round, while others have specific open submission periods and deadlines. For formatting, [Modern Manuscript Format](#) is a common requirement. You should also consider word count and file type guidelines to ensure you meet length requirements and that your document is accessible.

If you want to submit locally, consider the publications below:

- **Qua**: UM-Flint’s literary and fine arts magazine. They publish in fall and winter semesters.
- **Gothic Funk Press**: a Flint publication run by Connor Coyne
- **PentaCat Press**: a digital journal created by UM-Flint students

Also consider participating in university-run writing contests:

- **Spooktacular and Love Stinks Writing Contests**: Both are run by the Writing Center and open to students faculty, and staff. They are held in October and February, respectively.
- **The UM-Flint Poetry Award**: This contest is run in the winter semester by English faculty members, Jacob Blumner and Dave Larsen. Current students can submit two poems of any theme.
- **The Hopwood Writing Contests**: See details below.

Best of luck out there! You’ve got this!

## Hopwood Awards Program Writing Contests

Fall semester will be here before you know it. Why not take time now to write a killer piece for Hopwood? It’s never too early to start!

The University of Michigan’s [Hopwood Awards Program](#) hosts a variety of writing contests each year open to undergraduate and graduate students from all U of M campuses. They award significant cash prizes to winning submissions in categories such as poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama, screenplay, novel, and text/composition.

### Tip from Jacqueline Burant, a former Hopwood Award winner:

“Get feedback before you submit! I used to be too scared to show my work to anyone, and I still am, but I’ve found the support system I need in the writing center tutors. I make tutoring appointments for many of my current projects. It’s cool to see my writing from another person’s perspective, and appointments help me develop my ideas so I can successfully accomplish my goals for each piece. Appointments also keep me accountable and productive; they give me lower-stakes deadlines to get work done before appointments, and the feedback I receive helps me continue my writing momentum after each session is over. The tutors have helped me strengthen my writing more than I thought possible!”

Interested? Check out the Hopwood Program [Students’](#) page and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to learn more! Writing center tutors can also answer questions about Hopwood’s application process and help you prepare a submission.

# Creative Communities: Why Posting Creative Works Online is Beneficial to Writers

By Kay Sheffield

As someone who has gone back and forth on dreams of being a full-time fiction writer, I can say that it can be extremely intimidating to present your work to anyone, let alone to the publishing houses. It's the moment in your writing process where you become the most vulnerable, putting your brainchild on display for others to pick apart.

We've shared our own resources that can help with this process. We've discussed the benefits of presenting your work to programs like *Qua Literary Magazine* or submitting to the Hopwood Writing Contests. These organizations from the University of Michigan give opportunities to share your work and potentially get published or recognized for your talent. We've also mentioned our own Marian E. Wright Writing Center sponsored Writers' Circle. This is an online group to share creative pieces, give and receive friendly feedback on ideas, and also a source of fun writing exercises and prompts to develop good writing habits.

Even though these may be great options for some, maybe you're looking for something else. Something that feels more relaxed, where there isn't an end goal. Somewhere to just post your writing for fun and friendly feedback. Somewhere that also feels a little more anonymous than our own personal cozy Writers' Circle. Well, there are actually many options online that you could consider!

While I may have lacked the confidence to post my original story ideas for the longest time, I decided to dabble in writing Fan-Fiction for media that I enjoyed. Through this experience, I was able to hone my writing skills passively on fun short stories with very low stakes. I was able to explore storytelling methods and experiment a little with tropes and characterization types.

Finally, when it came time to post these stories, it felt less intimidating. I was writing within a supportive community that all liked the same things I did. It was a huge endorphin rush whenever I got the notification that someone liked or saved one of my works. I'd get comments from people who had read my stories telling me how much they enjoyed my portrayals of certain characters, funny choices I made for the dialogue, and even some claiming that they "ruined their sleep schedule" to finish reading my work late into the night.

Fan-Fiction might not be for everyone, but there are platforms that do welcome original works as well, like short stories and flash fiction. Archive of Our Own (AO3), to name one, has a whole section specifically dedicated to original works and has tags for original characters. This site also provides sharing options; if you don't want your work to be publicly available, you can choose to only share with verified users who follow the community and copyright guidelines.

Other options for online posting outside of Fan-Fiction sites can include creative writing forums and even public Discord channels. I've done research into these areas as well and have found some very extensive online communities that all welcome the sharing of creative works, offer constructive feedback, and, in general, provide places to share a love for creative writing. Some even have separate pages specifically for networking information, like contact information for publishers, writing agents, editors, etc.

The most extensive and successful forum I found is called Writing Forums. It has whole sets of membership guidelines to ensure the community is friendly, respectful, and helpful, and they offer many forums and sub-threads for most writing topics. The creator started the site to improve online writing forums as a whole based on his personal experience.

If Discord is more your style, there are many public Discord servers you can join that focus on creative writing, storytelling, character development, worldbuilding, and fun discussions focused on writing.

Here's a quick list of some I found with 100+ members already:

- Caryn's Creative Community (115 members)
- Coze & Prose (264 members)
- The Writer's Nook (339 members)
- The Endless Library (811 members)
- /r/WritingHub (1063 members)
- Writer's Craft (1584 members)
- A Writer's Structure (3003 members)
- WriterVana (3658 members)
- Bookdun (4505 members)

You can find and join any of these by looking them up through Discord's Search options, or find others by searching channels with tags like "creative writing" or "writing help" for example.

I hope this article inspires you to seek out a community to share your creative writing with so you too can experience the highs of posting and receiving praise for your work. Keep writing!

### CREATIVE WRITING HUB

Visit our [Creative Writing Hub](#) to stay updated on submission opportunities and learn more about our Writers' Circle!



### WRITING CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

To be critical readers and listeners who provide helpful feedback to writers and speakers.

## THE MARIAN E. WRIGHT WRITING CENTER

The Marian E. Wright Writing Center began in 1971 as a place to help students from all disciplines with academic and professional writing.

Our highly-trained tutors help students, faculty, and staff with their writing and speaking needs through in-person and online tutoring. We also support creative writers through tutoring, workshops, writing groups, contests, promotions, and more. Tutors love talking with writers about their work and publication goals. We welcome appointments for creative writing assignments, submission pieces, and personal projects. We can even provide feedback on larger pieces of writing.

[Make an appointment](#) with us today to get feedback on your work and ideas.

### MARIAN E. WRIGHT WRITING CENTER

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