

# Honors College dean authors creative writing book

New book is a “how to” manual for people interested in improving their creative writing skills



June 29, 2020

SHARE THIS STORY

By day, Graeme Harper serves as the mild-mannered dean of Oakland University's Honors College. He oversees the continued growth and success of an ever-expanding lineup of some of OU's most talented students, arranges important academic conferences and community symposiums, and continually finds new ways to make learning fun.

After hours, often working by candlelight (figuratively) till the wee hours of the morning, he sets out in pursuit of one of his many passions: understanding and communicating about creative writing. That has led him to his latest project, publishing a new book called *Discovering Creative Writing*.

The book really is a “how to” manual for people interested in improving their creative writing skills. In the book, Harper explores the process of creative writing from beginning to end. He addresses structure, examines how the writing process works, covers the power that creative writing can have to embody movement and change, helps the reader find their influences and outlines how to end the story-telling journey.

“Understanding creative writing is about finding clues along the way and each writer will have a personal journey,” said Harper. “People often get frightened away from writing creatively because they get the impression only some people can do it. That’s simply not true. And, you don’t start with the end results, you start with answering the question of why you’re doing it, and you build on that.”

Harper hopes this book will assist writers in asking the right questions about their creative writing goals, help them better understand their own creative writing styles and techniques, and pull it all together to develop a set of tools for great writing. He also hopes this book will be a valuable guide and inspiration for anyone wishing to begin, continue, or improve upon their creative writing.

“I want readers to gain empowerment and knowledge and the ability to see that writing is all about discovery, and every project, be it a novel, poem or short story is an enjoyable adventure,” added Harper. “We go on that adventure together, as writers and readers, one person to another, over place and over time.”

Harper says that our need for more creative writing has “never been greater” to offset the short, social media communication methods that have become so prevalent. His hope is that people will realize that human beings are more interesting, honest, inventive and empathetic than the character limits social media can convey. He also touts creative writing as a combination of intellect and imagination and offers that this type of writing is a declaration of our humanity.

“*Discovering Creative Writing* began as a very different book,” Harper said. “Many times, I thought I’d failed. I threw away dozens upon dozens of pages. Then, I found the book’s voice and its character. After that, it wrote itself - well, almost! I did a little bit.”

Harper has published numerous books on creative writing, as well as novels under the name Brooke Biaz. He is Chair of the Creative Writing Studies Organization and edits *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*.

###