

Submissions open Sept. 1 - Dec. 1, 2026

Adaptation

A new project from Midwest Writing Center & Galvin Fine Arts Center

ABOUT THE PROJECT:

St. Ambrose University College of Arts and Sciences, Galvin Fine Arts, and the Midwest Writing Center (MWC) are partnering on a series of events and a publication around the theme of “Adaptation.”

For this project, we are looking for submissions of poetry (30 lines max.) and flash prose (fiction or nonfiction, 500 words max.). Submissions open September 15, and close on December 1. MWC will select the strongest works (approx. 20–30) for publication in an anthology, to be published by MWC Press in April 2026. All contributors to the anthology will receive \$100 to their work in addition to two copies of the anthology, and the opportunity to record their work for a podcast. Selections will be announced in early January 2026.

All contributors will have the opportunity to read their work during the “Speak Your Peace” event at Galvin Fine Arts on Friday, January 30, 2026 where they will have a chance to win up to \$500 in a contest decided by audience members. Contributors will have the opportunity to record their works for a podcast prior to the event. The event will be recorded live.

The anthology will be published in April 2025 and contributors will be invited to read at a release event at Galvin Fine Arts.

ABOUT THE THEME: ADAPTATION

(from St. Ambrose University)

Adaptation (n):

1. Something that is adapted; specifically, a composition rewritten into a new form
2. A process of change to become better suited to new conditions

Whether we are adapting an artistic work to a new medium (like adapting fiction into film, poetry into theatre, or a well-known children’s book into a musical) or adapting to change, whether personal, social, or environmental, adaptation is essential to [everyone] as we “become who we are meant to be.” When we reimagine artistic works and familiar texts, how do we become better storytellers and invite new perspectives on our shared human experiences?

This year of exploring adaptations and our own adaptive natures will invite us to ask ourselves: What stays the same, and what must evolve in order to remain meaningful? What beliefs or habits must we let go of in order to transform ourselves and the world around us for good?

(from Midwest Writing Center)

While a natural, and often a necessary, feature of existing in the world, it’s also important to consider when adaptation is being forced upon us, to make the truth appear false, to make wrong seem not only right but inevitable, to make the unnatural seem organic. When are we adapting out of need versus being compelled to adapt to suit the desire of others? Consider when power invokes this natural process to consolidate more power or to erase or obliterate resistance to its demands. How do we know the difference between a cover story for authoritarian pressure and healthy, positive change?



◀◀◀ *Scan for complete guidelines*



WRITE MORE LIGHT INTO YOUR LIFE
MIDWEST WRITING CENTER

galvin
Fine Arts Center

Adaptation

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

DEADLINE: DECEMBER 1, 2025

TIMELINE OF EVENTS & PUBLICATION

- September 15, 2025: Submissions Open
- December 1, 2025: Submissions Close
- Early January 2026: Anthology selections and contributors announced
- January 30, 2026: Speak Your Peace event at Galvin Fine Arts, 6pm — anthology contributors record works for podcast and participate in live audience-juried reading
- April 2026 (date TBA): Anthology release reading — contributors read their works at launch party

PRIZES FOR *SPEAK YOUR PEACE* EVENT – JANUARY 31, 2026 at GALVIN FINE ARTS

- First Place: \$500
- Second Place: \$150
- Third Place: \$75
- Fourth and Fifth Place: \$50
- Plus other gifts, surprises, etc.

OTHER INFORMATION

- Please note that approx. 20% of all selected works will come from current St. Ambrose University students.
- All writers will be notified of the results in early January 2026.

SUBMISSION DETAILS & INSTRUCTIONS

- Please submit only one work per writer. No multiple submissions.
- There is no cost/fee to submit.
- Writers must currently reside in Clinton, Muscatine, or Scott Counties in Iowa, or in Henry, Mercer, or Rock Island Counties in Illinois to be considered.
- Any works found to be cruel, inflammatory, and/or derogatory by the editors will not be considered.
- Any works partially and/or entirely generated by large language models/AI systems will be not be considered.
- Poetry: 30 lines max. Prose (fiction/nonfiction/hybrid): 500 words max.
- Manuscripts must be typed.
- No previously published works will be accepted.
- Submissions should be original works written to address the theme of “adaptation.” Works that do not clearly address the theme will not be considered.
- No illustrations may be included.
- Submissions with more than one author will not be accepted.
- Translations will be accepted only if submitted with documented permission of the author, who must also meet the residency requirement.
- In the body of the email, please include full name (with preferred pronouns), contact info (current address, phone, email, socials), and a brief bio written in the third person (50 words max.)

A COMPLETE SUBMISSION SHOULD INCLUDE:

- All submissions must be sent to MWC at midwestwritingcenter@gmail.com with the subject line “Adaptation Submission.” No hard copy submissions will be accepted.
- In the body of the email, please include full name (with preferred pronouns), contact info (current address, phone, email, socials), and a brief bio written in the third person (50 words max).
- Work should be attached to the email; accepted file types: .docx, .doc. For works that have specific formatting, please include a .pdf version of the file. Do not send work pasted in the body of the email.



◀◀◀ *Scan for complete guidelines*



WRITE MORE LIGHT INTO YOUR LIFE
MIDWEST WRITING CENTER

galvin
Fine Arts Center