

Prize Day Writing Competitions 2026

The English Department invites Union **students** to enter the writing competitions listed below.

The deadline for submissions is **4 pm. on Monday, March 16, 2026.**

All entries must be typed. All writing must be original and written without involving AI. All must be double-spaced except for poetry, which can be single-spaced. You can enter any competitions for which you are eligible, but you cannot submit multiple entries for the same competition, or all of your entries for that competition will be disqualified.

The Allen Essay Prize: Awarded to a **Senior** in **any major** for the best **nonfiction essay**. Submissions may be a thesis chapter, a term paper, or any other piece of nonfiction. It is not necessary that submissions be originally written in the senior year, but all work should be revised. Length: 5 to 25 pages.

The William H. Bloom Poetry Prize: Awarded to a student in **any major** and year for the **best poem or collection** of up to ten pages of poetry. All poems should be included in a single entry. Length: up to 10 pages.

The Edward Everett Hale, Jr. Prize: Awarded to a **Sophomore or Junior** in **any major** for the **best essay**. This does not have to be an academic paper, but it must be nonfiction. Length: 5 to 25 pages.

The Van Orden Prize: Awarded to any **First-Year Student** in **any major** for the **best essay**. Students are particularly encouraged to submit essays written for the First-Year Inquiry; all work should be revised. This does not have to be an academic paper, but it must be nonfiction. Length: 5 to 25 pages.

The Yudis Prize: Awarded to a student in **any major** and class year for the best work of **fiction**. Length: up to 15 pages.

How to submit your entry:

Choose a pen-name/pseudonym and make sure that no other identifying info appears in your paper. Save the paper in .pdf or .docx and, using your Union email address, email it to Ms. Debbie Catharine: catharid@union.edu. Ms. Catharine will keep your identity hidden from the judges. **In the subject line, write “submission for the [fill in the name] prize.”**

The deadline is 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2026.

Winners will be announced on Prize Day.

Questions? Email Professor Anastasia Pease peasea@union.edu