

Spectrum Program

Session 1

Course Title: Creative Writing Honors

Course Description

In this course, students learn to read, write and think like writers through the reading of different creative genres that may include fiction, poetry and short story. Writing material and inspiration are gathered from a variety of sources and activities such as writing prompts, open discussions and field trips. The elements of effective writing are learned and applied in focused writing exercises, peer group response, literary analysis and instruction in craft. Class participants develop a portfolio of their own work. This course allows students to become more astute readers of literature and to understand more clearly how a writer employs aspects of craft to creative advantage.

This class offers you and your peers an opportunity to experiment with a variety of creative genres and hone your writing skills in the hopes of helping you produce work of publishable quality. As with many English classes, we'll do a lot of reading, examining the work of successful artists to identify what skills and techniques have made them successful writers. Ultimately, the heart of this class is student work and workshopping, a system by which an author receives informed, constructive feedback from a group of readers.

Essential Questions

- As writers, how do we learn to read and respond critically and constructively to creative work, both our own and that of others?
- How can form, structure, and style be used to create powerful and effective writing?
- How do we develop voice and style as writers?

Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Be able to write creatively in a variety of genres and modes.
- Be able to critique clearly, intelligently, and supportively the work of their peers, both orally and in writing.
- Read creative texts as part of a transactional arrangement between writer and audience.
- Understand how to revise and reshape their creative products and manage their creative process.

Instructional Strategies

Creative Writing Honors emphasizes students' ability to improve their competence as creators of and respondents to texts. It further privileges students' individual questions and curiosities by placing their creative choices at the center of their work and the work of the class as a whole, and continually presents students with the problem of balancing artistic desire with audience expectations and needs.

Creative Writing Honors will use a variety of instructional strategies to assure that all students receive the instruction and information they requires to advance their understanding of creative writing. The primary instructional strategy in this course is the writers' workshop. Students will be presented with workshop guidelines to instruct them in critiquing their peers' submissions with a high level of reflection and decorum.

In whole-class workshops, the writer's work is given out to the class in advance, with each member of the class reading the piece and providing a written critique with observations and questions meant to help guide the writer's revision process. Models of effective written critiques will be provided. During workshop, the author remains

silent while the workshop leader (a student) guides the class in a group discussion of the strengths of the piece and areas for improvement.

The goal of the workshop is to provide students with a craft-specific vocabulary which they will then use to respond to the work of their peers and in turn revise and write more effective prose and poetry. The course will also use direct instruction, flexible groupings (including mini workshop groups), whole and small group discussion, and tiered assignments to differentiate instruction.

Resources and Materials

• Books

Addonizio, Kim and Dorianne Laux. *The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry*. New York: Norton, 1997, ISBN 978-0393316544.

Barry, Lynda. *What It Is*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2008. ISBN 978-1897299-35-7.

Burroway, Janet. *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft*. 3rd ed. New York: Longman, 2010. ISBN 978-0205750351.

LaPlante, Alice. *The Making of a Story: A Norton Guide to Creative Writing*. New York: Norton, 2010. ISBN 978-0393337082.

• Other Required Materials

- Course pack
- Writing tools: pen, pencil, three-ring binder with notebook paper
- Flash drive
- File folder in which to keep returned assignments and peer critiques
- 25 pictures (any situations; may be from magazines; not of an object in isolation), each in a separate envelope

• Recommended Materials

Due to the intensive writing component of the class, a laptop computer is helpful for preparing typed writing exercises and completing the final portfolio.

Student Assessment

• Pre-Assessment

Students will compose a brief creative piece on the first day to show their familiarity with creative writing concepts.

• CTD Grading Scale

A+	100-97%	A	96-93%	A-	92-90%
B+	89-87%	B	86-83%	B-	82-80%
C+	79-77%	C	76-73%	C-	72-70%
D+	69-67%	D	66-63%	D-	62-60%
F	below 60%				

• Breakdown of Final Grade

Writing is the core component of this class. However, reading and responding to published literature and the works of classmates is as important as the final portfolio. Students will be evaluated through their written

critiques and journal responses, participation (in workshop, discussion, and small group exercises), and a portfolio assessment of their work. The grade will be broken down as follows: 50% final portfolio; 25% journal responses and written critiques; 25% workshop and discussion participation. Criteria for grading will be provided in class.

• **Post-Assessment**

On the final day of class, students will submit a typed portfolio of at least three revised pieces, including a work of creative nonfiction, a story, and a poem. Final drafts are expected to demonstrate the student’s understanding of material learned during the course, incorporate suggestions from workshop feedback, and show improvement through revision.

Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	In-class Activities	Assignments/Assessments
Monday, 6/27	Introduction to Creative Writing Honors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions: Two Truths And a Lie • “How to Read Like a Writer” (handout) • Workshop guidelines: modes of responses (evaluative, justified evaluative, analytical) • How to Make Creative Writing Go “Boom” • Read sample student work and practice workshopping • Daily assignment rubric 	<p>Read: Burroway, Ch. 1 (Image), pp. 3-15; Barry, pp. [1]-66; LaPlante, “Creative Nonfiction: A Working Definition”</p> <p>Write: a scene from your life from the perspective of someone else who was there</p>
Tuesday, 6/28	Introduction to Creative Nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share scenes • Barry short-write: cars (pp. 143-147) • Barry short-write: others’ mothers (pp. 150-153) • Read and discuss sample personal essays • Confronting our boundaries • Invention exercises: brainstorm ideas for personal essay 	<p>Read: Barry, pp. 67-138; Burroway, Ch. 7 (Creative Nonfiction), pp. 237-248; Minot on creative nonfiction (handout)</p> <p>Write: Personal essay</p>
Wednesday, 6/29	Creative Nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-class writing time: work on personal essays • Peer feedback on personal essays in small groups • Barry short-write : classmates (pp. 159-162) • Barry short-write: childhood places (pp. 170-172) • Due: personal essay drafts 	<p>Read: Burroway, Ch. 3 (Character) and Ch. 8 (Fiction), pp. 79-93, 273-284</p> <p>Write: Spontaneous writing minstrelsy and journal entry</p>
Thursday, 6/30	The Short Story: Plot, Chronology, and Characterization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spontaneous writing minstrelsy journal due • Workshop personal essays • 55 Fiction • Character cards • Barry word bags 	<p>Read: Burroway, Ch. 2 (Voice) and Ch. 6 (Development and Revision) pp. 35-49, 237-248; Minot on dialogue (handout)</p> <p>Write:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55 Fiction • Peer critiques of personal essays

Date	Topic(s)	In-class Activities	Assignments/Assessments
Friday, 7/1	The Short Story: Voice and Introduction to Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: 55 Fiction • Talking up a storm: tips on writing effective dialogue • Read and discuss Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" (handout) • Read LaPlante, "On Revision" • Barry short-write: picture bags • Workshop personal essays 	<p>Read: Burroway, Ch. 4 (Setting), pp. 131-142</p> <p>Write: Character card story</p>
Monday, 7/4	The Short Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Character card story • Read and discuss selected short stories (TBA) • Workshop character card stories 	<p>Write: Dialogue assignment</p> <p>Revise: Personal essay</p>
Tuesday, 7/5	The Short Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: revised personal essay and dialogue assignment • Surrealism: Read and discuss García Márquez, "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings" • Fragmentation: Exquisite corpse exercise • Workshop character card stories 	<p>Read: Burroway, Ch. 9 (Poetry), pp. 309-325; Minot, "What Makes a Poem a Poem?" (handout)</p> <p>Write: Adapted dialogue story</p>
Wednesday, 7/6	Introduction to Poetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: adapted dialogue story • Workshop character card or adapted dialogue stories • Read and discuss selected poems (TBA) 	<p>Read: Addonizio, pp. 138-170 ("Meter, Rhyme, and Form")</p> <p>Revise: Character card story</p>
Thursday, 7/7	Formal poetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: revised character card story • Workshop adapted dialogue stories • Reading and discussion: the sonnet, villanelle, and sestina • In-class journal response on formal poetry • In-class writing time: write a formal poem based on one of Addonizio's prompts 	<p>Read: ekphrastic works (TBA)</p> <p>Write: Formal poem</p>
Friday, 7/8	Ekphrasis: Finding Inspiration in the Work of Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field Trip to the Art Institute of Chicago 	<p>Write:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete formal poem • Begin ekphrastic piece (prose or poetry)
Monday, 7/11	Poetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: formal poem • Discuss ekphrastic works (TBA). • Workshop formal poems 	<p>Read: Minot on free verse (handout)</p> <p>Write: Complete ekphrastic piece</p>
Tuesday, 7/12	Poetry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: ekphrastic piece • Workshop formal poems • Found poetry 	<p>Write: found poem</p>

Date	Topic(s)	In-class Activities	Assignments/Assessments
Wednesday, 7/13	Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Found poem • Share found poems • Workshop formal poems or ekphrastic pieces 	Revise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal poem • continue work on revisions for portfolio; use LaPlante's "Analytical Exercises" as a guide for revision
Thursday, 7/14	Revision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: revised formal poem • Final workshop (poetry or prose) • Group discussion of reading from a craft perspective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What do we expect from a poem or story, and how does a writer meet those expectations? ○ With a better understanding of the revision process, do we look for or at different things when reading poetry or prose? • Peer critiques • Revise pieces based on peer feedback 	Write: Compile selected revised pieces (at least one personal essay, one short story, and one poem) into a final portfolio with a short author's introduction
Friday, 7/15	Final Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due: Portfolio • Student readings 	

CTD Statement on Third-Party Web Sites

Instructors are required to thoroughly review any third-party web sites they intend to use in their courses for inappropriate content. However, because web content continuously changes, CTD disclaims any responsibility for any of the content contained on third-party web sites used in course materials. If you become aware of anything that may be inappropriate, please notify CTD staff immediately.