

CRWT 2301.005 Introduction to Creative Writing Spring 2022

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Spring 2022

Tuesday 4:00-6:45

JO 4.502

Office hours: Mondays 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

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“Your thorns are the best part of you.”

—Marianne Moore

“Poetry is just the shadow of the dog . . . The dog is elsewhere, and constantly on the move.”

—Charles Wright

Welcome to CRWT 2301: Introduction to Creative Writing. This class is a workshop with the following goals: for you to read with a desire to understand how stories and poems are made, write and share your own creative work, respond to the work of others, and engage in the task of revision.

Together we will read stories and poems and explore the elements of craft therein. Writing is self-discovery. Writing is a way to understand the world. My hope for you is that you develop your talent and find new ways of thinking.

When you leave this class, you will have a portfolio of your creative work consisting of one short story (2,000-5,000 words) and three poems.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

- Develop analytical and critical thinking skills through reading.
- Become familiar with the craft techniques of short fiction and poetry.
- Discover, develop, refine your writing voice.
- Create a portfolio of original creative work and engage in the process of revision.
- Cultivate a deeper understanding and appreciation of prose and poetry.

Required Reading:

The Making of a Story: A Norton Guide to Creative Writing, Alice LaPlante, ISBN
978-0-393-33708-2

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

Recommended Reading (optional):

Perrine's Sound and Sense (Arp and Johnson)

A Writer's Reference (Hacker)

NTC's Dictionary of Literary Terms (Morner and Rausch)

Grading:

Short story: 20%

Poem one: 7.5%

Poem two: 7.5%

Poem three: 7.5%

Workshop: 16.25% (written responses and discussion)

Final portfolio: 16.25%

Homework: 12.5%

Class participation and attendance: 12.5%

If you complete your work on time, follow instructions, and participate enthusiastically, your grades will reflect your dedication.

All homework must be turned in on time. Work not submitted within 72 hours of the due date will receive a zero. I can't accept late work after 72 hours unless there are extenuating circumstances and be advised your work will lose points for lateness.

The following is to provide you guidance for how this course will be graded:

A range: Student completes all work on time and attends all classes. Student participates enthusiastically in class.

B range: Student completes most work on time and attends most classes. Student participates less often.

C range: Student rarely participates and may often arrive late and unprepared to focus.

D range: Student completes only some work, misses classes, and rarely participates.

F range: Student did not complete enough of the course work to pass the class.

I will provide you with a grading rubric for your final revised creative work. **Late work will result in an automatic deduction of 10% and work not submitted within three days (72 hours) will result in a zero for the assignment.** Turn it in! Save your grade!

Overview:

Each class will begin with a Poem of the Day, or POTD. This will introduce you to the ritual and practice of reading poetry (in other words, making poetry part of your daily life).

You will read, read, read, and write, write, write in class and outside class. You will present your creative work in workshop on assigned days, once for fiction, once for poetry. A crucial component of the creative writing workshop is providing feedback on your peers' work. I will provide you with a handout for how to compose your comments and participate in workshop. Be prepared to turn in written critiques of your classmates' work.

Workshop presents an opportunity for you to compliment, comment, or question, but always with care and consideration. This includes suggestions, sometimes posing questions to the author, and providing valuable feedback for those elements or situations in a piece that might be stronger or clearer. You are expected to have read all the creative work submitted by your classmates and come to class prepared to discuss their work. You will revise the short story and poems in your portfolio and your final revisions are due May 10th by 11:59 pm in eLearning.

Additionally, you will have in-class and outside-class writing assignments throughout the semester. These are creative kick-starter exercises. Sharing your writing with the class will better prepare you for workshop.

Workshop guidelines:

Workshop is likely a new experience for you, but you will be ready. Remember, kindness and openness are essential, and both will take you far in this class.

You will sign up for workshop spots: once for fiction, once for poetry. Here's what you'll do in workshop:

- 1) Write an original story or poem. Turn it in the Thursday before workshop: your work is due in eLearning by 11:59 pm and you must also share your workshop piece in Teams in either the Fiction or the Poetry Workshop channel. So far so good!
- 2) Everyone reads the stories and poems assigned for workshop, and we do this

before class meets. If you are NOT presenting in workshop, you must write a workshop response for each piece presented (refer to the handout available in eLearning). These responses are due in eLearning by 4:00. Read carefully and make notes. Each week I will select one member from the other teams to lead/kickoff workshop discussions. In other words, everyone participates actively in workshop. You will receive a workshop participation grade and a grade for your written responses.

To recap: you will submit your creative work by 11:59 pm on the Thursday preceding your workshop. Failure to submit your work on time will significantly affect your grade. After 72 hours you will receive a zero.

All your written work should be double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt font, with one-inch margins. Be sure to include the title of the piece and the author's name, your name, and the date.

Confidentiality, trust, and mutual respect are necessary for a successful workshop experience. You should write honestly and freely. However, if you feel your work contains elements that your classmates might find triggering, please include a brief explanation (1-3 sentences). Likewise, if you read material you find troubling, please know you are supported. All work should strive to be grammatically correct unless incorrect grammar is an intentional element in the work. Please do not be offensive in your remarks or in your writing. Be sensitive to the views and experiences of others. To be creative we must cultivate trust; it is essential. Belittling, racist, homophobic, or ableist work will receive a zero.

Workshops will not be recorded, nor should any member of the class share any creative material outside of class. We have a culture of respect in this class. Privacy is a serious matter and I trust you to behave accordingly, with utmost respect for not only your colleagues' work but with any private information they share with the class.

Resources:

A writers' notebook or journal for in-class writing and taking notes and a folder for your portfolio, critiques, and handouts. You must bring your textbooks to class with you. Please put your phone away during class and do not let electronic devices become a distraction. Internet access will be necessary for eLearning and when we meet remotely on Teams.

Assignment schedule: [subject to change]

WEEK ONE 1/18

Course Guidelines and Introduction to Fiction; “The Danger of a Single Story,”

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Homework as follows:

Reading: LaPlante “What is This Thing Called Creative Writing?” 23-38; “The Splendid Gift of Not Knowing” 57-61; 465-474 “Raising the Curtain”

Anne Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts” (LaPlante 574-578)

Jamaica Kincaid, “Girl” (eLearning)

Writing: Write a letter that you think your mother or father (or grandparent or aunt or mentor) would write. This letter should contain a set of rules by which to grow up and go out in the world, rules to navigate life, and rules to live by. Ideally your letter will reveal the hierarchy of values held by the letter writer. What is important to them? What do they want you to know?WEEK TWO 1/25**Setting and Voice**

Sign up for workshop slots

Homework as follows:

Reading: LaPlante “Recognizable People” 418-434; “The Shapely Story” 152-165

Joyce Carol Oates, “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?” (LaPlante, 72)

Writing: Using your in-class writing from today (“First Sentences” handout and ten sentences for ten stories) write an introductory paragraph to a short story. You must also answer the homework questions regarding “Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been.” Share your paragraph in Teams and turn in your JCO assignment in eLearning.WEEK THREE 2/1**Character**

Homework as follows:

Reading: Louise Erdrich, “The Red Convertible” (eLearning)

LaPlante “The Plot Thickens” 375-386

Writing: Work on your short story.WEEK FOUR 2/8**Plot**

Homework as follows:

Reading: LaPlante “Who’s Telling This Story, Anyway?” 258-281; “How Reliable Is This Narrator?” 318-328; “Why You Need to Show *and* Tell” 204-206**Writing:** Group A short stories due 2/10 by 11:59 pm in eLearning. Responses due 2/15. Don’t forget to post your stories in Teams.WEEK FIVE 2/15 Group A short story workshop**Narration and Point of View**

Homework as follows:

Reading: Ernest Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants” (LaPlante 356)

Isaac Babel, “Crossing the River Zbrucz” (eLearning)

LaPlante “You Talking to Me?” 341-354

Writing: Group B short stories due 2/17 by 11:59 pm in eLearning. Post your stories in Teams. Responses due 2/22.

Everyone: complete the POV writing exercise. Bring it to class with you next week.

WEEK SIX 2/22 Group B short story workshop

“Dialogue”

Homework as follows:

Reading: LaPlante “Details, Details” 107-127

Writing: Group C short stories due 2/24 by 11:59 pm in eLearning. Post your stories in Teams. Responses due 3/1.

WEEK SEVEN 3/1 Group C short story workshop

Atmosphere

How to get your work published

Homework as follows:

Reading: Flannery O’Conner, “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (eLearning)

LaPlante “Learning to Fail Better” 542-553

Writing: Choose two Creative Exercises from pages 554-555 of your textbook. Submit to eLearning by 4:00 pm 3/8.

Note: For next week, bring to class any paragraph from a newspaper, magazine, speech, essay, or advertisement. (Hint: erasure poem.)

WEEK EIGHT 3/8

Rewriting

Discussion of Hemingway and O’Conner stories

Homework as follows:

Reading: “Writing and Knowing” in *The Poet’s Companion*

Writing: Choose one assignment from “Writing and Knowing” and submit it to eLearning by 4:00 pm 3/22.

Have a great spring break!

Surprise! Extra credit: attend the **Dallas Literary Festival March 18-22** (virtual). (Please talk to me if you are interested in pursuing this extra credit assignment.)

<https://www.dallasliteraryfestival.org>

WEEK NINE 3/22

Introduction to Poetry

Homework as follows:

Reading: “Poetry of Place” in *The Poet’s Companion*

Writing: Chose one assignment from “Poetry of Place” and submit it to eLearning by 4:00 pm 3/29.

WEEK TEN 3/29

Poem Walk

Homework as follows:

Reading: “Stop Making Sense: Dreams and Experiments” in *The Poets Companion*

Writing: Compose a **nature poem** using the poems we read in class as guides and/or inspired by our poetry walk on campus. All nature poems due in eLearning by 4:00 pm 4/5.

WEEK ELEVEN 4/5

Ekphrastic Poems

Homework as follows:

Writing: Write an **ekphrastic poem**. All ekphrastic poems due in eLearning by 4:00 pm 4/12.

Group A: Submit either your nature poem or ekphrastic poem to workshop by 11:59 pm 4/7. Workshops begin next week!

WEEK TWELVE 4/12 Group A poetry workshop

Metaphor

Homework as follows:

Reading: “Simile and Metaphor” in *The Poet’s Companion*

Writing: Write a **metaphor poem**. Your metaphor poem is due in eLearning by 4:00 pm 4/19.

Group B: Submit the **poem of your choice** to workshop by 11:59 pm 4/14.

WEEK THIRTEEN 4/19 Group B poetry workshop

Musicality

Homework as follows:

Reading: “The Music of the Line” and “Voice and Style” in *The Poet’s Companion*

Writing: Choose one assignment from “The Music of the Line” or “Voice and Style” and submit it to eLearning by 4:00 pm 4/26.

Group C: Submit the **poem of your choice** to workshop by 11:59 pm 4/21.

WEEK FOURTEEN 4/26 Group C poetry workshop

Revising and editing

Homework as follows:

Writing: Work on your portfolio

WEEK FIFTEEN 5/3

No class. Use this time wisely. Final writing portfolio consisting of **one story and three poems due 5/10 by 11:59 pm.**

Attendance:

Two unexcused absences are permitted in this class. The University's attendance policy requirement is that individual faculty set their course attendance requirements. Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Our class meets once a week, so more than three unexcused absences may risk a failing grade. You are asked to be on time and present at the beginning of class. Covid-related absences or sick days will, of course, be excused. If you are in quarantine, please contact me so that I can plan accordingly. You are responsible for turning in all assigned work when it is due. There will be, of course, exceptions, and in these instances, you should contact me. Please do not let absences accrue, especially without communicating with me directly.

*If you are absent on a day you are assigned to workshop it is imperative that you email me before the beginning of class.

General:

I strongly encourage you to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns, large or small, and especially if your work is late, or if you miss more than two classes. I am here to help you find your writing voice, and I want you to feel comfortable within the workshop.

It is vital that all your work is original, unpublished, and that any sources you may use are properly cited. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action. Make sure your work is your own and do not place your academic career in jeopardy, intentionally or inadvertently. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student Accessibility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

I will respond to email from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Please allow 72 hours for my reply.

Classroom Conduct Requirements Related to Public Health Measures:

UT Dallas will follow the public health and safety guidelines put forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and local public health agencies that are in effect at that time during the Spring 2022 semester to the extent allowed by state governance. Texas Governor Greg Abbott's Executive Order GA-38 prohibits us from mandating vaccines and face coverings for UT Dallas employees, students, and members of the public on campus.

However, we strongly encourage all Comets to get vaccinated and wear face coverings as recommended by the CDC. Check the [Comets United: Latest Updates webpage](#) for the latest guidance on the University's public health measures. Comets are expected to carry out [Student Safety](#) protocols in adherence to the Comet Commitment. Unvaccinated Comets will be expected to complete the [Required Daily Health Screening](#). Those students who do not comply will be referred to the Office of Community Standards and Conduct for disciplinary action under the [Student Code of Conduct UTSP5003](#).

Students who have tested positive for COVID-19 or may have been exposed should not attend class in person and should instead follow required disclosure notifications as posted on the university's website (see "[Student Safety](#)" protocols).

Verifying COVID-19 Isolations or Quarantines:

Students need to self-report COVID-19 positive results or exposures via an [online form](#) so that university campus tracers can verify, record, and take necessary campus precautions. When faculty are notified by students rather than by the Dean of Students' Office that the students are isolating or quarantining, the faculty should remind students to self-report via the form; students should not attend class until cleared by campus tracers.

Our class is a community. Please wear a mask in the classroom, quarantine if you've been exposed to Covid-19, and follow UTD guidelines.

Accessibility:

It is the policy and practice of The University of Texas at Dallas to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. However, written notification from the Office of Student Accessibility (OSA) is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow one week advance notice. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion. OSA is located in the Student Administration Building, AD 2.224. They can be reached by phone at 972-883-2098, or by email at studentaccess@utdallas.edu.

Academic Support Resources:

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students.

Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures:

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the credit/no credit or pass/fail grading option and withdrawal from class.

Please review all university policies for conduct, discipline, electronic communication, integrity, accommodation, and resources. The university's policies and procedures may be found here: <https://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

I refer you also to the Student Code of Conduct <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5003>

Comet Creed:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”