

Syllabus: Creative Writing

Fall 2010

Professor: Gord Sellar

Class Description:

This is a course in creative writing, covering the absolutely necessary basics in the writing process, from planning and generating ideas to the final stage of proofreading. It also will familiarize students with the standard problems faced by those attempting creative writing, including character creation and characterization, voice, style, plotting, voice, and narrative structure for prose, or issues in voice, meter, and form for those students working with poetry.

It is assumed that all students taking this course have successfully completed the required freshman level course Understanding English: Reading & Writing (or equivalent), and have adequate ability in English to begin study of this area. I will make a strong effort to alert those who seem unprepared for the course in time for them to enroll in the more basic course if necessary.

Note: it is not necessary to have completed Creative Writing I in order to take this class.

Course Content:

The content of the course will be tailored to the needs of the particular group of students. However, this course will proceed with regular (weekly) short writing assignments, as well as the production of one or two (or more, if the student wishes) major texts for peer critique. We will look at works of literature from various genres, at student work, both reading for appreciation and critical skills. Students will give both written and spoken feedback to peers, present on a chosen or assigned creative work in class, and produce a portfolio of assignments and original creative work by the end of semester.

Course Objectives:

The purpose of the course is equip students to write thoughtful, interesting, and creative texts, using English for their own self-expression. Students will, by the end of this class, have a good grasp of the skills needed for creative writing, have developed sensitivities to common problems among beginning writers, and will have of course developed their English through working in idioms, forms, and a context previously unexplored by them.

Class Activities:

Peer critique; group discussion; occasional lectures; reading of written work aloud to the class; possibly performing at a class reading or publishing work online or in a chapbook at the end of the year; and keeping a daily blog in English.

Assessment:

25% - Participation/Critique

20% - Exercises & Homework

15% - Midterm Submission

25% - Final Portfolio Submission

10% - Daily Blog (for writing experiments and reflections on writing)

5% - Department Events

Textbook:

TBA. Photocopies and online resources will be used for readings, and students must complete any assigned readings in a timely manner; failure to do so will be reflected in the student's participation grade.

My contact information:

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Class Website: <http://gordsclass.com>

Course Outline:

The following is somewhat vague and subject to changes at any time, but it should give you an idea of what I'm planning for you. As you can see, the course is separated into 4 larger sections.

Week 1: Intro & Paperwork

Week 2: Formatting Your Manuscripts, and Why Creative Writing?

Part 1: The Creative Process

Week 3: Issues in Writing 1: Beginnings / Form & Structure / Group Critique

Week 4: Issues in Writing 2: Ends / Group Critique

Week 5: Issues in Writing 3: Middles/ Group Critique

Week 6: Issues in Writing 4: Character / Group Critique

Week 7: Issues in Writing 5: Voice / Group Critique

Week 8: Midterm Conferences & Midterm Portfolio Submission

Part 2: Advanced Issues

Week 9: Issues in Writing 6: Unity / Group Critique

Week 10: Issues in Writing 7: Form / Group Critique

Week 11: Issues in Writing 8: Narrative / Group Critique

Week 12: Issues in Writing 9: Intention and Meaning / Group Critique

Week 13: Issues in Writing 10: Diction / Group Critique

Week 14: Group Critiques & Proofreading Workshop

Week 15: Wrap-up & Final Conferences, Portfolio Submission

Week 16: Portfolio Review