

Creative Writing, level 9

Year: Senior (12)
Course Code: W233439

Prerequisites: English 3
Course Code (Short): CW9

Description: Creative Writing looks at storytelling in various modes and varied global traditions to inspire students to create original work of their own. Students will examine critically acclaimed and popular works by authors from around the world, and these works will serve as model texts and inspiration for students in the class. Students will prioritize creative efforts, reading texts “as a writer” rather than for pure literary study.

Students who register for this course will experiment and practice different artistic modes, including personal essays, creative nonfiction, short stories, poems, plays, and screenplays. The class runs in a workshop model where all students are part of a community of writers who read, write, and share their work in a safe space that provides constructive criticism for all. Students will understand how writing is structured to create particular effects, and they will see connections between their own writing, their classmates’ writing, and the writing of canonical and contemporary authors.

Core authors: Stephen King, Ling Ma, Henrik Ibsen, and Sarah Ruhl. Film selections include *Tommy Orange*.

Creative Writing meets the English graduation requirement if taken for a grade. It may also be taken as an enrichment course (for grade or P/NC) if taken concurrently with another senior English course.

WRITING EXPECTATIONS

SEMESTER 1:

- Two main writing projects: Personal Essay and Short Story
- Smaller writing projects: College essay, begin a Poetry Portfolio

SEMESTER 2:

- Two main writing projects: Drama/Screenplay and a final project (choose your own genre)
- Smaller writing projects: complete Poetry Portfolio; pitch materials for longer works

READING EXPECTATIONS:

SEMESTER 1:

- Core texts in bold plus a range of essays, short stories, and poetry from the syllabus

SEMESTER 2:

- Core texts in bold plus a range of poetry and screenplays from the syllabus
- Independent reading

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READING LIST
Bold are core texts

SEMESTER 1: Prose & Poetry

- Unit 1. Summer Reading: *Chicago Stories* (self-published anthology – NT Bookstore)
- "Chicago", by Carl Sandburg from *Poetry Foundation*
 - "Chicago", by Patricia Smith from *Shoulda Been Jimi Savannah*
 - "The Hustlers", by Nelson Algren from *Chicago: City on the Make*
 - "At the Shedd Aquarium", by Robin Schiff
 - "The Jewel", by Richard Jones
 - "Buddy Guy's Legends", by Allen Braden
 - "Hancock O'Hare", by Michael Austin
 - "Cloud Gate" (Millenium Park), by Ellen Wehle from *City of Big Shoulders*
 - "The Beach Umbrella", by Cyrus Colter from *The Beach Umbrella*
 - "We Real Cool", by Gwendolyn Brooks from *Selected Poems*
 - "The Golden Angel Pancake House", by C. McGrath, *Springs Comes to Chicago*
 - "Pet Milk", by Stuart Dybek from *Coast of Chicago*
 - "Cotton Candy", by Edward Hirsch from *The Living Fire*
 - "Harold Shack #1", by Nate Marshall from *Wild Hundreds*
 - "Reza's Restaurant", by Kaveh Akbar from *VQR Online*
- Unit 2. College Essay Materials
- Unit 3. Personal Essay
- **Core Text: *Short Takes*, ed. Judith Kitchen (selections)**
 - Essays from Selections
- Unit 4. Short Story
- **Course Packet** to include 6-8 Short Stories
 - Choices include (see Selections for full list):
 - Raymond Carver, *Will You Please Be Quiet Please*
 - Junot Diaz, *Drown*
 - Stuart Dybek, *Coast of Chicago*
 - Stephen King, *Nightmares and Dreamscapes*
 - Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*
 - Murakami, *The Elephant Vanishes*
 - Ottessa Moshfeghe, *Homesick for Another World*
 - Day Vasquez, *Lovers on All Saints Day*
 - Jenny Zhang, *Sour Heart*
- Unit 5. Poetry
- **Course packet** to include selected poems
 - Poets included (see Selections for full list):
 - Maya Angelou
 - Richard Blanco
 - Billy Collins

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- T.S. Eliot
- Kimiko Hahn
- Pablo Neruda
- Naomi Shihab Nye
- Walt Whitman
- W.B. Yeats.

- Unit 6. Film – select one - Epic Structure: Hero’s Journey
- Miyazaki, *Spirited Away*
 - Del Toro, *Pan’s Labyrinth*

SEMESTER 2: Drama, Screenplays, and Independent Project

- Unit 1: Drama
- **Choose one** of the following:
 - Sarah Ruhl, *The Clean House*
 - Josefina López, *Real Women Have Curves*
 - Lorraine Hansberry, *Raisin in the Sun*
- Unit 2: Screenplays
- Selections from *Save the Cat* by Blake Snyder
- Unit 3: Poetry – **Independent reading** in poetry
- See Appendix for full list
- Unit 4: Film – choose one: Basic screenwriting formula
- Sian Heder, *Coda*
 - Lulu Wang, *The Farewell*
- Unit 5: Independent Project – students create in any genre
- Exemplar text: *Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine

SELECTIONS:

A. Poetry:

Title	Author	Note
“Embassy”	Auden	
“The Shield of Achilles”	Auden	
“The Fish”	Bishop	
“May I Feel Said He”	Cummings	
“In Mrs. Tilscher’s Class”	Duffy	
“Journey of the Magi”	Eliot	
“In a Surrealist Year”	Ferlinghetti	

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Title	Author	Note
"Home Burial"	Frost	
"Death of the Ball Turret Gunner"	Jarrell	
"Patterns"	Lowell	
"Innocence"	Nemerov	
"Snow Globe"	Nemerov	
"Daddy"	Plath	
"My Papa's Waltz"	Roethke	
Shakespeare sonnets	Shakespeare	
"If I Should Learn"	St. Vincent Millay	
"On Hearing a Symphony by Beethoven"	St. Vincent Millay	
"13 Ways of Looking at a Blackbird"	Stevens	
"The Shooting of John Dillinger..."	Wagoner	
"The Young Housewife"	Williams	
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"Embassy"	Auden	

B. Short Stories:

Title	Author	Note
"Visiting Hours"	Budnitz	
Stories from Tabloid Dreams	Butler	
"Water Babies"	Danticat	
"Hills Like White Elephants"	Hemingway	
"Soldier's Home"	Hemingway	
"A Dream"	Kafka	
"An Imperial Message"	Kafka	
"Thirst"	Kalfus	
Love and Honor.."	Le	
"Until Gwen"	Lehane	
"The Elephant Vanishes"	Murakami	
"Coffee Elsewhere"	Packer	
"Cask of Amontillado"	Poe	
"The Somebody"	Santiago	
"Bohemians"	Saunders	

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Title	Author	Note
"Golden Apples	Simpson	
"A and P"	Updike	
"Problems"	Updike	
"Bullet in the Brain"	Wolff	

C. Essays:

Title	Author	Note
"The Answer That Increasingly Appeals"	Black	
"So This Was Adolescence"	Dillard	
"On Dumpster Diving"	Eighner	
"How It Feels to be Colored Me"	Hurston	
"No Name Woman"	Kingston	
"This is Emo"	Klosterman	
"On Being Cripple"	Mairs	
"Big Boy"	Sedaris	
"I'll Eat What He's Wearing"	Sedaris	
"Santaland Diaries"	Sedaris	
"Shooting Dad"	Vowell	
"My Mother's Touch"	Wiggins	
"The Answer That Increasingly Appeals"	Black	
"So This Was Adolescence"	Dillard	
"On Dumpster Diving"	Eighner	
"How It Feels to be Colored Me"	Hurston	
"No Name Woman"	Kingston	
"This is Emo"	Klosterman	
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"My Mother's Touch"	Wiggins	

D. Film Clips:

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Title	Director	Year	Studio	Rating
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