



## **ENGL 2307: Creative Writing**

**Fall 2018**

CRN 17872

MW 8-9.20

San Jacinto 231

3 Credit Hours

3 Contact Hours/Week

16-week Term

Lecture

Dr. Ranjana Varghese  
Office Hours: MW 7-8; 9.30-11;  
and by appointment

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Office: San Jacinto 215

### **Course Description:**

Practical experience in the techniques of imaginative writing. May include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, screenwriting, or drama.

Core curriculum course.

3 Credit Hours.

Prerequisites: ENGL 1301 or permission of the Department Chair.

This is a course designed to introduce the student to the forms, strategies, and techniques involved in creative writing. The student may be given a series of directed assignments which may be critiqued in class.

This course provides an opportunity for students to create imaginative works for pleasure and publication. This is a class designed as an introductory course in the craft of poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction for both the beginning writer as well as for the writer who has been writing informally for a while. Although William Wordsworth said that poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings,” there is a science and craft to writing good fiction and poetry, and this is what we will explore in this class.

Use this class as a resource to explore your creative instincts and to display your talents. This is a venue for your writing to be workshopped by me and your colleagues. Even though it may sometimes be painful to have someone critique your writing, the process of workshopping your material is essential to your development as a writer. It is often the case that we grow too attached to our writing to look at it critically and objectively. As a result, we may not be sensitive enough to recognize not only the flaws that hold back our work, but also the strengths that could make it better. Therefore, we workshop.

In order for us to grow and develop as writers, we must not only be constant editors of our work, but we must also be avid readers of the work of other writers. There will be regularly assigned readings which we will discuss at the beginning of each class period. We will use these readings to gather knowledge about craft, extract encouragement, and to obtain inspiration.

We will devote a third of the semester to the study and writing of poetry, a third to fiction, and a third to creative non-fiction. These genres inform one another, and it is often the case that the exploration of one improves the others.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Understand literary tropes and points of craft.
- Apply terms to specific examples and written exercises.
- Analyze representative works of published writers.
- Analyze and evaluate other students' works.
- Write creative works in a variety of genres.

## English Program Learning Outcomes

- Write in appropriate genres using varied rhetorical strategies.
- Write in appropriate genres to explain and evaluate rhetorical and/or literary strategies employed in argument, persuasion, and various genres.
- Analyze various genres of writing for form, method, meaning, and interpretation.
- Employ research in academic writing styles and use appropriate documentation style.
- Communicate ideas effectively through discussion.

## Core Objectives

Given the rapid evolution of necessary knowledge and skills and the need to take into account global, national, state, and local cultures, the core curriculum must ensure that students will develop the essential knowledge and skills they need to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in life. Through the Texas Core Curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning.

Students enrolled in this core curriculum course will complete assignments designed to cultivate the following core objectives:

- **Critical Thinking Skills**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
- **Communication Skills**—to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
- **Social Responsibility**—to include intercultural competency, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- **Teamwork**—to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.

## Goals:

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. write fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry, with all the requisite elements that define those genres;
2. think critically about texts and be able to discuss other works of fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry (and other genres like drama and cinema) in terms of how they achieve or don't achieve their aesthetic and emotional effects;
3. know the basic elements of fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry, including such concepts as imagery, point of view, dialogue, epiphany, climax, lineation, metaphor, simile, alliteration, assonance, voice, etc;
4. take constructive criticism and use it to revise and improve your own writing.

## Textbooks:

Recommended:

Burroway, Janet. *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft. 3rd Edition*. Boston: Longman, 2010.

**Materials:**

1. A two-pocket folder in which to keep all your homework and in-class writing assignments.
2. A large, lightweight notebook to serve as an informal journal—you will use this (or your two-pocket folder) to jot down ideas, observations, etcetera.
3. A USB flash drive. It is important for you to save all your work for this class on an external drive, NOT on your computer's hard drive. Computers crash, so if you have your work saved on a USB, all won't be lost. Failure to turn in assignments because you did not save your work to a reliable source such as a USB flash drive is not acceptable or excusable.
4. A good university-level dictionary and thesaurus. I expect a college-level understanding and use of the English language from you, so having these will help you greatly as you read and write.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Student Success for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable us to provide any resources that HCC may possess.

**Ability Services**

Houston Community College is dedicated to providing an inclusive learning environment by removing barriers and opening access for qualified students with documented disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Ability Services is the designated office responsible for approving and coordinating reasonable accommodations and services in order to assist students with disabilities in reaching their full academic potential. In order to receive reasonable accommodations or evacuation assistance in an emergency, the student must be registered with Ability Services.

If you have a documented disability (e.g. learning, hearing, vision, physical, mental health, or a chronic health condition), that may require accommodations, please contact the appropriate Ability Services Office below. Please note that classroom accommodations cannot be provided prior to your Instructor's receipt of an accommodation letter and accommodations are not retroactive. Accommodations can be requested at any time during the semester, however if an accommodation letter is provided to the Instructor after the first day of class, sufficient time (1 week) must be allotted for the Instructor to implement the accommodations.

Ability Service Contact Information:**Central College**

713.718.6164

**Coleman College**

713-718-7376

**Northeast College**

713-718-8322

**Northwest College**

713-718-5422

713-718-5408

**Southeast College**

713-718-7144

**Southwest College**

713-718-5910

**Adaptive Equipment/Assistive Technology**

713-718-6629

713-718-5604

**Interpreting and CART services**

713-718-6333

### **Accommodations due to a Qualified Disability**

HCC strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please meet with a campus Abilities Counselor as soon as possible in order to establish reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and Ability Services. It is the policy and practice of HCC to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. For more information, please go to <http://www.hccs.edu/support-services/disability-services/>

### **Libraries**

HCC has a Learning Resource Center at each campus for student use. The library provides electronic resources including an online catalog system as well as numerous databases that contain full-text articles all available at <https://library.hccs.edu>. Additionally, many of the required texts are on reserve at the library. Find out library locations and hours here: [http://library.hccs.edu/about\\_us/locations\\_hours](http://library.hccs.edu/about_us/locations_hours)

### **Online Tutoring**

The goal of online tutoring is to help students become academically independent through guided assistance by HCC faculty or faculty-eligible tutors in almost all departments. Our tutoring is asynchronous, which means that it is NOT real-time.

Students can get real-time help on campus and through several textbook sources. We believe that when tutors can take time to absorb and analyze the work, we give a different type of help. Because the tutoring is asynchronous, it is important for students to plan ahead. It generally takes about two days to get a complete review back, and it may be longer than that when hundreds of papers come in every day for several days in a row. It is crucial for students to look at the yellow banner on the log-in page to see how long the turn-around time is.

Students can submit work 24/7/365; we tutor even when the college is closed for holidays or natural disasters. All HCC students can take advantage of online tutoring by logging on to <https://hccs.upswing.io/>. The HCC email address and the associated password get students into the online tutoring site, so when the email password changes, so does the Upswing password.

### **Open Computer Labs**

Students have free access to the internet and word processing in open computer labs available at HCC campuses. Check on the door of the open computer lab for hours of operation.

### **Tutoring Centers**

The HCC Tutoring Centers provide academic support to our diverse student population by creating an open atmosphere of learning for all students enrolled at HCC. Using a variety of tutoring techniques, we assist students across academic disciplines, addressing their individual needs in a constructive, safe, and welcoming environment. Our emphasis is on maximizing academic potential while promoting student success and retention. We are committed to helping students achieve their educational, personal, and career goals by empowering them to become confident, independent, lifelong learners.

Tutoring for individual subjects is offered at specific times throughout the week on various campuses. There is no need to make an appointment. If you need a tutor, please refer to our website: <http://ctle3.hccs.edu/alltutoring/> for times and locations. For more information about tutoring at HCC, please go to [hccs.edu/district/students/tutoring](http://hccs.edu/district/students/tutoring).

## Important HCCS and Course Policies

Please see <http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/student-handbook/> for any changes to HCC policies that might happen during the semester.

### Academic Honesty

A student who is academically dishonest is, by definition, not showing that the coursework has been learned, and that student is claiming an advantage not available to other students. The instructor is responsible for measuring each student's individual achievements and also for ensuring that all students compete on a level playing field. Thus, in our system, the instructor has teaching, grading, and enforcing roles. You are expected to be familiar with the HCC's policy on Academic Honesty found in the catalogue. What that means is that if you are charged with an offense, pleading ignorance of the rules will not help you.

Just so there is no misunderstanding, plagiarism (using another's ideas or words without giving credit), collusion (unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit), and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. To be accepted, all papers require proof of their development. Students who plagiarize, collude, or cheat may face disciplinary action including the grade of 0 for the assignment, an F for the course, and/or dismissal from the college. (See Student Handbook)

My Webster's New World Dictionary defines plagiarism as "the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, or thoughts of another, and the representation of them as one's original work."

Penalties for plagiarism range from failure of the course to academic probation or expulsion.

Intentional or unintentional plagiarism is an offense; whether it is a paragraph or an entire paper that has been plagiarized, that paper will receive a 0.

As a student at Houston Community College, you are expected to exhibit honesty, integrity, and high standards in your academic work. Members of the college community benefit from an open, honest educational environment. We are all responsible for encouraging and promoting academic integrity, a code of moral and artistic honesty. In a class in which you are enrolled for the love of writing, ideally plagiarism should not be a problem; however, there have been instances in which students have represented the work of others as their own. This is a serious offense and I do not tolerate instances of this. Please respect your own artistic integrity as well as that of your classmates and professor. Submit only your OWN work. If you borrow something from another source, be sure to acknowledge it—if you are unsure how to do that, please ask me.

\*\*\* You must NOT use any work that you've done for another class in this class. All work done for this class must be work done by you during this semester, just for this class. \*\*\*

### Attendance

Attendance, preparedness, and participation are essential for your success in this course. HCC does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. If you are not in class, you are absent. HCC Policy states that you can miss up to but not exceeding 12.5% of class hours, which is equivalent to 6 hours. When you miss class, you are still responsible for what happens in class. Keep in mind that whatever the reason for your absence, you will still miss important course work. If you know you must be absent or if you have an emergency, let me know **before class** and make plans to meet with me in office hours. If you have more than four (4) absences before the official date of record—**September 10th**—you may be automatically withdrawn from the course.

### **Campus Carry**

At HCC the safety of our students, staff, and faculty is our first priority. As of August 1, 2017, Houston Community College is subject to the Campus Carry Law (SB11 2015). For more information, visit the HCC Campus Carry web page at <http://www.hccs.edu/departments/police/campus-carry/campus-carry-and-open-carry-faqs/> .

### **Campus Safety**

If you are on campus and need emergency assistance, call 713-718-8888 or, from any campus phone, 8-8888. Use this emergency number instead of 911, which gets routed back to the HCC Police Department dispatch thus lengthening response time to your emergency situation.

### **EGLS3 (Evaluation for Greater Learning Student Survey System)**

At Houston Community College, professors believe that thoughtful student feedback is necessary to improve teaching and learning. During a designated time near the end of the term, you will be asked to answer a short online survey of research-based questions related to instruction. The anonymous results of the survey will be made available to your professors and division chairs for continual improvement of instruction. Go to <http://www.hccs.edu/resources-for/current-students/egls3-evaluate-your-professors/> for directions.

### **Final Grade of FX**

Students who stop attending class or stop actively participating in class and do not withdraw themselves prior to the withdrawal deadline may either be dropped by their professor for excessive absences or be assigned the final grade of FX at the end of the semester. Students who stop attending classes or who stop actively participating in classes will receive a grade of FX, as compared to an earned grade of F, which is due to poor performance. Logging into a DE course without active participation is considered non-attending.

Please note that HCC will not disperse financial aid funding for students who have never attended class. Students who receive financial aid but fail to attend class will be reported to the Department of Education and may have to pay back their aid. A grade of FX is treated exactly the same as a grade of F in terms of GPA, probation, suspension, and satisfactory academic progress.

### **International Students**

Receiving a W in a course may affect the status of your student Visa. Once a W is given for the course, it will not be changed to an F because of the visa consideration. Since January 1, 2003, International Students are restricted in the number of distance education courses that they may take during each semester. International students must have full-time enrollment status of 12 or more semester credit hours, and of these at least 9 semester credit hours must be face-to-face on-campus courses. Please contact the International Student Office at 713-718-8521 or email [int\\_student\\_svcs@hccs.edu](mailto:int_student_svcs@hccs.edu), if you have any questions about your visa status and other transfer issues.

### **Repeating Courses**

Students who repeat a course for three or more times will face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. Please ask your instructor or counselor/advisor about opportunities for tutoring and/or other assistance prior to considering course withdrawal or if you are not receiving passing grades.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

Houston Community College is committed to cultivating an environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature including sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual

harassment, and sexual violence. Sex discrimination includes all forms of sexual and gender-based misconduct and violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. The director of EEO/Compliance is designated as the Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator.

All inquiries concerning HCC policies, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations (such as Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504) and complaints may be directed to:

David Cross  
Director EEO/Compliance  
Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity  
3100 Main  
Houston, TX 77266-7517  
(713) 718-8271  
[institutional.equity@hccs.edu](mailto:institutional.equity@hccs.edu)

### **Title IX Discrimination**

Houston Community College is committed to cultivating an environment free from inappropriate conduct of a sexual or gender-based nature including sex discrimination, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Sex discrimination includes all forms of sexual and gender-based misconduct and violates an individual's fundamental rights and personal dignity. Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex-including pregnancy and parental status-in educational programs and activities. If you require an accommodation due to pregnancy please contact an Abilities Services Counselor. The Director of EEO/Compliance is designated as the Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator.

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David Cross  
Director EEO/Compliance  
Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity  
3100 Main  
Houston, TX 77266-7517  
(713) 718-8271  
[institutional.equity@hccs.edu](mailto:institutional.equity@hccs.edu)

### **Withdrawal Policy**

Before withdrawing from the course, it is important to communicate with your professor and counselors to discuss your options for succeeding in the course. If all other options have been exhausted, you may withdraw yourself, but the last date to withdraw this semester is **November 2, 2018**. Please remember that it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from a course. If you stop attending the class and don't withdraw by this date, you are subject to the FX grading policy.

### **Learning Web:**

I will post the materials for this class (such as the syllabus) on the Learning Web site for this class. You can access the Learning Web by clicking on Student Sign-ins at the top of the HCCS web page.

### **Email:**

Email is an official mode of communication for this course, and you are expected to provide me with a working email address that you and only you check regularly. I check my email frequently; however, unless we are planning a meeting, I may not respond to emails between 9 p.m. and 8 a.m. on weekdays or on the weekends. Also, be aware that email is not a substitute for in-class participation or face-to-face consultation. If you are having trouble in this course, make plans to meet with me in office hours.

## **Classroom Participation Policy:**

Your daily participation factors significantly into your overall grade. Participation means being physically and intellectually present and engaged in the class. In order for your daily participation grade to count, you must be present for the entire class period.

This is not a lecture class, but rather, a discussion-oriented one. You determine your success in it not only by the effort you put into reading and writing for it, but also by your active participation in it. I am not interested in what you know, but rather, in what you think.

The classes you take at HCC are not only beginning points for your academic career, they also prepare you for your professional life, whatever path that may be. You can and should hone a professional persona here. Because this is a course in critical thinking and human experience we will cover sensitive topics that demand respectful and thoughtful treatment rather than simplistic reduction to a singular viewpoint. Much of the class will be engaged in openly discussing these topics, so remember to treat your colleagues and me with the same respect that the texts and ideas demand.

As a student active in the learning community of this course, it is your responsibility to be respectful of the learning atmosphere in your classroom. To show respect of your fellow students and professor, please turn off your cell phone and other electronic devices, and refrain from using these devices in the classroom unless you receive permission from me ahead of time. This means that no electronic device (unless otherwise approved by me, such as a laptop in certain situations) should be on your desk, lap, or anywhere in sight or hearing during class.

Other examples of respectful behavior include:

1. listening actively and attentively
2. staying awake
3. arriving on time
4. coming to class prepared with the appropriate texts and assignments
5. doing the reading
6. actively participating in discussion
7. asking questions, respectfully, of your colleagues and/or me when an idea or assignment is unclear.

As your professor and as a student in this class, it is our shared responsibility to develop and maintain a positive learning environment for everyone. I take this responsibility very seriously and will inform members of the class if their behavior makes it difficult for me to carry out this task. As a fellow learner, you are asked to respect the learning needs of your classmates and assist me in achieving this critical goal.

We'll spend a significant amount of class time having open discussions; please be respectful of your classmates— try not to interrupt, and please refrain from holding side conversations. While you are encouraged to challenge both your own opinions and those of your peers, please do so with respect for different ideas. I will promise to do my best to try to keep the classroom a safe place to share ideas, even tentative, uncertain ideas. In discussions, making connections with the readings, with topics discussed in previous classes, and with the comments that others have made in class is especially helpful to you and to everyone else and, therefore, is especially noted and appreciated. Inappropriate behavior can result in dismissal. I follow the guidelines in the *Student Handbook* closely, so please be aware that any unprofessional, discourteous, or inappropriate behavior will have its consequences.

Please follow the Golden Rule and be respectful of others and their values and beliefs.

I will expect you to contribute actively in class discussions (which will be a major part of each class period); in order to do that, you will have to come prepared to class. Being prepared for class includes bringing the relevant text/s, having done the assigned reading/s for the day, jotted down notes or ideas, done any assigned homework, and being prepared to contribute your thoughts and ideas to the class discussion.



I am not interested in what you know, but rather, in what you think; “I don't know” is never an acceptable response.

### **Workshop Etiquette:**

1. This class is a workshop. This means that you will each submit a work of poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction at various times over the course of the semester which will be read by me and your classmates and then discussed in terms of its strengths and weaknesses. The point of the workshop is to give you valuable feedback in terms of what you do well in your writing and what you could do to make it stronger. This will allow you to revise your work and shape it to the purpose you intended for it. We will start our workshops a few weeks into the semester: we will start with poetry, then move onto fiction, and finish the semester with workshopping your creative non-fiction. I will hand out sign up sheets for each workshop and you will sign up for the date on which you would like your work to be discussed. One full week before the date you signed up for is when you will bring a certain number of hard copies of your work (I will determine the number of copies once our class has settled) and hand them out to me and your classmates. We will make comments on your work and discuss it on the appropriate date.
2. This is a setting in which student work is *critiqued*, not *criticized*. This means that even though you will read your peers' work with a critical eye, you need to phrase your comments in constructive language. Tell them what is working well in their writing, and what needs to be worked on. Also tell them what they can do to make those aspects of their writing stronger. Remember: it is just as important to let someone know what they are doing well, as it is to tell them what needs more work.
3. Please read each work a few days before it is to be workshopped. Read it at least twice—the first time for pleasure, and the second and subsequent times with a critical eye.
4. Please be sure to respect the views and feelings of your peers and treat their work as you would have your own work treated. This is not a place to moralize, criticize, or proselytize. The subject matter of the work is up for discussion, but not for judgment. In this workshop we discuss the ways in which a writer can sharpen his/her skills so that his/her ideas can be conveyed well.
5. Your comments should be directed to the writer *about* their work. Never assume that a first-person narrator is the author him/herself. Never assume that the work is an autobiographical account. Treat each piece as its own entity. Do not attack the person of the author. Do not project moral issues or view points onto the author as his/her own views, beliefs. Each piece should be considered and treated as the products of a person's imagination. So please address the works as such.
6. When we begin workshopping student pieces, please make margin comments on the individual works themselves, and type a double-spaced, 250-word (minimum) comment sheet that elaborates upon your marginalia. Your comments should address larger issues as well as details of the work. You need to discuss what worked in the piece, as well as what needs more work, and suggestions for how the writer can address those issues. You need to turn in a copy of this comment sheet to the author, as well as a copy to me on the day when the story is workshopped. Be sure to put the word count on the comment sheet.
7. Given that this is a workshop in which writers hold their work up to the critical eyes of their peers and instructor, please understand that you need to develop a degree of “thick-skinnedness” with regard to your own work. Trust that your peers read your work with the idea of helping you hone your craft; therefore, take their *constructive* criticism seriously, and use it to make your work sharper. Do not take comments about work personally (if you follow the guidelines of this workshop, no comment should come across as such, anyway), or as an attack on your character or personality.

8. When a person's work is being workshopped, they do not speak until the instructor directs them to. During a workshop other students and I will discuss the various elements of the work and address comments to the author as well as to one another. The author must pay attention to these comments and take notes. At the end of the discussion, the author will have the opportunity to speak, answer questions, or comment on the discussion.
9. Getting defensive about your work before, during, or after a workshop is counter-productive to the workshop. Again, take comments for what they are: to help you see what is working and what is not, and how to address that which is not working in order to make your work stronger.
10. Words that can be used in the workshop to describe someone's writing: Strong, effective, novel, original, convincing, funny, beautiful, emotional, not convincing enough, weak, unclear, confusing, etcetera. Every adjective or qualifier must be backed up by clear and logical supporting statements. "I don't know" is not an acceptable statement to use in terms of clarifying your opinions, ideas, statements.
11. Words that may NOT be used in the workshop to describe someone's writing: Crap, sucks, bad, I don't like this, etcetera. You know the kinds of words that are ineffective, which neither inspire, nor are constructive. Avoid them when discussing any work.

## **Course Work:**

### CREATIVE WORK AND YOUR PORTFOLIO:

\* You will turn in at least 1 poem (at least 14 lines long, single-spaced), 1 short story (at least 1750 words, completed, double-spaced), and 1 creative non-fiction piece (at least 1250 words, completed, double-spaced) to be workshopped over the course of the semester. You are welcome and encouraged to write and turn in more than the required minimum, and I am happy to meet with you to discuss any of them.

NOTE: If you generally write genre prose pieces (such as science fiction, detective fiction, children's fiction, spy fiction, romance, erotica, etc.), I ask that for the pieces you submit for this class are non-genre, literary pieces. You will gain much from writing out of your comfort zone, and the skills you learn and refine from writing non-genre pieces will ultimately help you in whatever kind of genre you are interested in writing.

You will be able to sign up for the days when your work will be workshopped. As such, your piece is due a full week before it is workshopped.

NOTE: If you do not submit your piece the day it is due, 10 points will be deducted from your final grade for the class. If you do not show up to class on the day when you signed up for a workshop, I will deduct 15 points from your final grade for the class.

You will need to make a certain number of copies of your pieces to be workshopped for the rest of the class. Each piece must be typed with your name on it. I ask that the poems are single-spaced and the prose double-spaced.

The portfolio that you will turn in to me by the end of the semester must contain \*\* at least 10 pieces (NOT 10 pages, but 10 individual pieces!) of writing that you have done for this class, including weekly assignments and the revised versions of all three workshopped pieces. All three genres (poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction) should be represented in your portfolio. The portfolio should contain your best work, so choose the pieces that you have developed and worked on over the course of the semester. Each piece must be typed with your name on it. I ask that the poems are single-spaced and the prose double-spaced.

### HOMEWORK:

Every week, for 10 weeks, you will have a writing assignment usually due on Monday (typed, single-spaced for poetry, double-spaced for prose, one-inch margins, pages numbered). Any serious attempt of at least one page will receive full credit, and there is no maximum limit. If you are absent on the day the assignment is given, I expect you to email me for the assignment; if you are absent when the assignment is due, you must email your homework to me (keep in mind that late assignments lose points).

The homework is vitally important to this class as it is a safe space for you to hit breakthroughs. Sometimes it takes a student four or five homework assignments to write an amazing piece. If you skip the weekly assignments, you will simply not develop as well as the other writers in the class. Your total homework grade will solely be determined by how many you turn in.

### WORKSHOP:

Since this is a large class for a workshop, we will start the workshops of your writing in the third week of the semester. Poems should be at least 14 lines long and single-spaced. Stories will have to be at least 1750 words and creative non-fiction pieces will have to be at least 1250 words in length and should be complete (i.e., they should have some closure at the end) and double-spaced. Each student will sign up to have their work discussed on a particular day; a full week before your workshop date you will bring a certain number of copies of your piece.

Remember, if you do not have the right number of copies on the day designated or you do not submit your work on the due date, you will lose 10 points from your final grade. If you don't show up the day your piece is to be discussed, you will lose 15 points from your final grade.

### CLASS PARTICIPATION:

As part of this class is a workshop format, twenty percent of your grade will be for class participation. What I reward is quality over quantity. Questions and polite well-argued disagreement get high marks from me. Negative critiques should always be accompanied with statements of what the writer is doing well. Vague terms like "weird" or "cool" should be avoided or followed up with specific explanation. Any personal attack against a writer (i.e., critiquing the person instead of the work) or pettiness (e.g., revenge negative comments) will result in points being taken off of the final grade.

I reserve the right to drop a student for immature and disruptive behavior.

Before we start workshopping student pieces, you can earn up to 10 points for participation each class period. Once we start workshopping student pieces, you can earn up to 20 points for participation each class period. Your participation in the class will be graded as follows:

1. Being present in class: 2 points/day.
2. Being on time for class: 2 points/day.
3. Participating in and contributing to class activities—speaking up, sharing in-class written work, etc.: 6 points/day.
4. Participating in and contributing to workshop discussion: 10 points/day. I grade your contributions to workshop discussions based on the depth and specificity of your comments which demonstrate how well you have read and thought about your classmates' works. Simply repeating what someone else has already said, without further qualifying or adding to it in a clearly thoughtful and specific way does not add to your participation grade. So make sure that you have read carefully and thought critically about the workshop pieces on any given day. (Marginalia comments!)

NOTE: The unexpected happens. I understand this. If you are unable to make it to class, please contact me (via email as soon as possible and in person to follow up on the email) so we can discuss how you can catch up.

### WRITTEN COMMENTS:

After we start workshopping each other's pieces, each of you will be required to write at least 250 words of specifically-argued evaluation and provide a copy to me and a copy to the writer of the piece on the day the piece is workshopped. Print out the comment sheet for the writer and email me my copy before class. I will NOT accept late comment sheets.

Generally, I expect a paragraph about what is working well in the piece and what needs to be improved. The more specific your comments are, the better. You must put the word count at the top of the comment sheet. As well, I expect you to make some amount of marginal comments on their pieces, and I might one day take up a particular writer's returned stories just to see if you are doing so.

Over the course of the semester, you must turn in **15** comment sheets to me—5 on poetry, 5 on fiction, and 5 on creative non-fiction.

Please understand that even though you are not required to turn in comment sheets for every single workshop, you are still required to read through each workshop piece and write marginalia comments on the piece, which you will turn in to the writer on the day of his/her piece's workshop. You are also required to participate in each workshop, so having these marginalia comments is essential in helping you contribute to each workshop discussion.

### STYLE REPORTS:

Once this semester, you will have to write a style report, a 500-word analysis of a particular famous writer (literary, non-genre, from the last forty years) whose style you hope will have an influence on you. This is not literary or thematic analysis so much as a discussion of style or technique. You should provide specific examples (3-4 poems or excerpts of prose) from that writer and offer some amount of evaluation or analysis of your own. The examples of the writer's work that you include will not count towards the word count of the report. Please do **NOT** provide any biographical information; just focus on discussing the writer's writing style and techniques. You might use a writer I assign to read on the weekend or one you have discovered on your own (so long as you approve it with me beforehand). You may not write your report on another student in the class.

### EXTRA CREDIT:

You are required to turn in 10 homework pieces over the course of the semester (3 poems, 4 prose pieces that highlight different elements of fiction, and 3 non-fiction pieces that focus on aspects of writing creative non-fiction). In addition to these required 10 pieces, I will post four more writing prompts on the Learning Web for our class. You may earn extra credit by turning in work responding to any or all of these prompts for extra credit.

You may also turn in more than your required 15 written workshop comments to me for extra credit.

### YOUR JOURNAL:

This is a place where you will write every day—you will jot down ideas for pieces, observations, any free writing, etcetera. This will serve as a space for you to collect your inspiration. This is not graded, but I highly recommend that you get into the habit of keeping a journal and writing in it daily.

### **Grades:**

- Portfolio (at least 10 pieces—fiction, creative non-fiction, and poetry)	20%
- Homework	30%
- Class participation	20%
- Written comments on fellow student pieces	20%
- Style Report	10%

## Course Calendar

(This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change. I will announce any changes in class. It is your responsibility to stay on track.)

### Week 1

Aug 27 Course Syllabus; Student Introductions

HW: Exercises 1, 2

Read: Assigned poems

Aug 29

Image; Form

In-class writing exercise; Poetry

Sign up for the Poetry Workshop (First set of workshop poems due on September 12<sup>th</sup>)

Read: Assigned poems; In *Imaginative Writing (IW)* chapters 1, 2, 3, 10

HW: Exercise 1

### Week 2

Sep 3

\*\*\* Labor Day: No Class \*\*\*

Sep 5

**Exercise 1 Due**

Voice; In-class exercise; mock workshop

Read: Assigned poems; In *IW* chapter 5

HW: Exercise 2

### Week 3

Sep 10

**Exercise 2 Due**

Character; In-class exercise; mock workshop

Read: Assigned poems

HW: Exercise 3

Sep 12

In-class exercise

First set of poems for poetry workshop due (to be discussed on Sep. 19<sup>th</sup>)

Setting; In-class exercise

Read: Assigned poems; In *IW* chapter 6

HW:

### Week 4

Sep 17

**Exercise 3 Due**

In-class exercise

Read: Assigned poems

HW:

Sep 19

Poetry Workshop 1

Read: Assigned poems

HW:

### Week 5

Sep 24

Poetry Workshop 2

Read: Assigned poems

HW:

Sep 26

Poetry Workshop 3

Read: Assigned poems

HW:

**Week 6**

Oct 1 Poetry Workshop 4  
Start Fiction; Elements of Fiction  
Read: Assigned stories, In *IW* chapter 7  
HW: Fiction: Exercise 4

Oct 3 Poetry Workshop 5  
Elements of Fiction  
Read: Assigned stories; In *IW* chapter 9  
HW:

**Week 7**

Oct 8 **Exercise 4 Due**  
Writing a short story; Elements of Fiction  
In-class exercise  
Read: Assigned stories  
HW: Exercise 5

Oct 10 Writing a short story; Elements of Fiction  
In-class exercise  
Read: Assigned stories  
HW:

**Week 8**

Oct 15 **Exercise 5 Due**  
Elements of Fiction  
First set of short stories for fiction workshop due (to be discussed on Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>)  
Read: Assigned stories  
HW: Exercise 6

Oct 17 In-class exercise  
Read: Assigned stories  
HW:

**Week 9**

Oct 22 **Exercise 6 Due**  
Fiction Workshop 1  
Read: Assigned stories  
HW: Exercise 7

Oct 24 Fiction Workshop 2  
Read: Assigned stories  
HW:

**Week 10**

Oct 29 **Exercise 7 Due**  
Fiction Workshop 3  
Writing Creative Non-fiction

Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW: Exercise 8

Oct 31 Fiction Workshop 4  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

**Week 11**

Nov 5 **Exercise 8 Due**  
Fiction Workshop 5  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW: Exercise 9

Nov 7 Fiction Workshop 6  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces; In *IW* chapter 8  
HW: First set of creative non-fiction pieces due (to be discussed Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>)

**Week 12**

Nov 12 **Exercise 9 Due**  
Fiction Workshop 7  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW: Exercise 10

Nov 14 Creative Non-Fiction Workshop 1  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

**Week 13**

Nov 19 **Exercise 10 Due**  
Creative Non-Fiction Workshop 2  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

Nov 21 Creative Non-Fiction Workshop 3  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

**Week 14**

Nov 26 **Style Report Due**  
Creative Non-fiction Workshop 4  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

Nov 28 Creative Non-fiction Workshop 5  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

**Week 15**

Dec 3 Creative Non-fiction Workshop 6  
Read: Assigned creative non-fiction pieces  
HW:

Dec 5 Wrapping up

**Final Exam Date:**