

## **Introduction to Creative Writing**

CRWRI-UA 815 013

Instructor: Sonja Bjelić

T/TR 8:00-9:15

Location: 194M\_303

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Office hours: by appointment

**Course overview:** Together we will cultivate a practice of close reading, rigorous inquiry, experimentation, and play. Through exposure to a spectrum of canonical texts, lively and engaged discussions, and open-ended writing prompts, this course is designed to be as generative as possible.

**Course Objective:** To come to see writing as a creative process rather than an isolated act.

**Structure:** This course will be a combination of workshop and craft class. Tuesdays will be devoted to discussing course readings while Thursdays will be workshop days. All workshop materials are due the Tuesday *before* your workshop. This gives your classmates time to thoroughly read and annotate your work in preparation for workshop. All creative writing exercises that appear on the syllabus are due the *following* Tuesday. Additional writing exercises, recitations and reading responses/presentations will be periodically integrated into class.

### **Grading**

#### **Attendance and participation (50%)**

Your consistent and timely presence in class is expected. Two unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction. Three instances of tardiness or early departure will likewise result in a grade reduction. Please come with a thoughtful, engaged, and collaborative spirit. The success and energy of the class depends on everyone's willingness to contribute.

#### **Assignments (30%)**

All assignments should demonstrate thoughtfulness and an earnest effort. The bulk of your assignments will be weekly creative writing assignments. Other assignments may include recitations and reading responses/presentations. **To receive full credit, all work must be submitted on time.**

#### **Final Portfolio and Statement of Purpose (20%)**

Your final portfolio is the culmination of a semester's work and is a reflection of your growth and engagement as a student. The portfolio will consist of 20 pages of thoroughly revised creative writing and a Statement of Purpose.

**Academic Integrity:** All the work you submit must be your own. Remember, New York University has a strict no-tolerance policy when it comes to plagiarism. If there is any indication that the work you submit is not original, it will be reported to a higher academic authority and disciplinary measures will be taken. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, please see the Academic Integrity for Students at NYU.

**Disability Disclaimer:** If you have a disability requiring accommodations, please come see me after class or during office hours.

**Sexual Harassment:** Harassment of any form will not be tolerated. If you feel unsafe at any point during the semester, please come see me after class or during office hours.

**Wellness and Support:** Being a student comes with a whole slew of unique stressors and challenges. If at any point during your academic career you feel that you need some additional support, please be aware of New York Universities health and wellness services, which offer a variety of counseling services and psychiatric care. For more info and/or urgent care, call the 24/7 Wellness Exchange # at: (212) 443-9999.

## SYLLABUS

- Jan 29 (T) Introductions, course overview, collaborative writing exercise, read *The Cares of a Family Man*  
**Make: an Odradek**
- Jan 31 (Th) Introduce the deconstruction method *The Seven Aspects* and practice applying to *The Cares of a Family Man*  
**Read: *Metamorphosis***  
**Write: a piece of flash fiction from the perspective of an unlikely character, inhabit the consciousness of something unexpected and surprising (1 page)**
- Feb 5 (T) Discuss *Metamorphosis*  
**Read: select Borges**
- Feb 7 (Th) Discuss: select Borges  
**Read: *Waiting for Godot***  
**Write: a short story that relies on obscurity and/or or withholds important information (3+ pages)**
- Feb 12 (T) Discuss: *Waiting for Godot*  
**Read: *Near to the Wild Heart***
- Feb. 14 (Th) Discuss: *Near to the Wild Heart*  
**Read: *Near to the Wild Heart***  
**Write: a stream of consciousness narrative (3+ pages)**
- Feb. 19 (T) Discuss: *Near to the Wild Heart*

**Read: excerpts from *Exercises in Style***

Feb. 21 (Th)

Workshop X

**Read: *Invisible Cities***

**Write: a Triptych—three scenes or a scene from three different perspectives or in three different styles (2 pages)**

Feb. 23

Discuss: *Invisible Cities*

**Read: *Variations on the Right to Remain Silent***

Feb. 28 (Th)

Workshop Z

**Read: select Chekov**

**Write: a conceptual art project manifested as a text (1 page)**

March 5 (T)

Discuss: select Chekov

March 7 (Th)

Workshop X

**Read: *Autobiography of Red***

**Write: a text that utilizes either physical or metaphysical silence (2 pages)**

March 12 (T)

Discuss: *Autobiography of Red*

March 14 (Th)

Workshop Z

**BREAK**

March 26 (T)

Read: *Poetry is Not a Luxury*, select Audre Lorde, collaborative writing exercise

**Read: select Emily Dickinson**

March 28 (Th)

Workshop X

**Read: section from *Tender Buttons***

**Write: a poem that uses abstract language to describe concrete things/images (1 page)**

April 2 (T)

Discuss: *Tender Buttons*

**Read: select Basho**

April 4 (Th)

Workshop Z

**Read: select Lorca, select Aime Cesaire**

**Write: a Renga in collaboration with a partner (2 pages)**

- April 9 (T) Discuss: select Lorca, select Aime Cesaire  
**Read: *The Poem as a Field of Action***
- April 11 (Th) Workshop X  
**Read: *Mean Free Path***  
**Write: a text that utilizes constraints (1 page)**
- April 16 (T) Discuss: *Mean Free Path*  
**Read: Rilke**
- April 18 (Th) Workshop Z  
**Read: select Adonis, select Mahmoud Darwish**  
**Write: text as “prayer” or that leaves room for “God to rush in,” as Anne Carson says (1 page)**
- April 23 (T) Discuss: select Adonis, select Mahmoud Darwish  
**Read: select Paul Celan**
- April 25 (Th) Workshop X  
**Read: select T.S. Eliot, select Elizabeth Bishop**  
**Write: an elliptical poem (1 page)**
- April 30 (T) Discuss: select T.S. Eliot, select Elizabeth Bishop  
**Read: select Sappho**
- May 2 (Th) Workshop Z  
**Read: select Frank Bidart, John Ashbery**  
**Write: a dramatic monologue poem (1 page)**
- May 7 (T) Discuss: select Frank Bidart, select John Ashbery  
**Memorize: a poem or text of your choice (at least 14 lines)**
- May 9 (Th) Recitations  
**Write: Statement of Purpose (1 page)**
- May, 14 (T) Celebrate, eat food, class reading
- May, 16 (Th) **Turn in portfolios**