

Joanna Acevedo

CRWRI-UA 815 019

Class Description:

In this class you will be reading and writing fiction and poetry, learning how to think critically about writing, and workshopping your peers. The course will be separated into two parts. In the first part, you will be reading work and responding to it in terms of elements of craft. In the second part, you will be workshopping the writing of your peers and submitting your own pieces for workshop.

Course Objectives:

1. A stronger understanding of the craft of both fiction and poetry, including elements of craft and trends in modern story-writing.
2. An ability to think and write critically about pieces of writing, as demonstrated in short response papers throughout the semester.
3. Building skills relating to workshopping and critiquing peer writing with empathy and compassion as well as a constructive eye.

Participation:

Class participation is mandatory. You will be required to participate at least once per class. Participation is 25% of your grade, this is important.

Specific guidelines for how to participate during workshop will be provided in class.

Readings:

A course reader will be available for you to purchase at (TBD). All other readings will be provided.

Response Papers:

You will be responsible for writing about everything you read in the form of short response papers. These papers should be one page, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, regular margins. If we read multiple pieces for a class, such as a selection of poems by one author, responses may be combined into one page. These papers are not summary, and they are not opinion pieces about whether or not you liked a particular piece. In these papers, you should address:

1. What are some technical aspects of the piece? How do these technical aspects work? (point of view, tense, form).

2. What are some of the themes of the piece? How do these themes relate to other pieces we have read in class (especially when we are reading multiple pieces at once).
3. How does this piece relate to the aspects of craft we have talked about in class (voice, time, plot, character)?

Responses will be graded as check, check minus, or check plus. Check pluses will be awarded to response papers which go above and beyond the requirements in terms of their analysis. Check minuses will be given to responses which are too short, do not address the concerns stated above, or focus too much on summary of the pieces.

You will also be responsible for critiquing your classmate's work. On workshop days you must bring in a page of critique for each classmate who is being workshopped. We will go over guidelines for critique in class before we begin workshopping. Please bring two copies of this critique: one for me, and one for your classmate whose work is being discussed. If two of your classmates are being workshopped on Tuesday, you should bring in four pieces of paper, two copies of each critique.

All response papers should be submitted in hard copy on the day they are due. Email submissions will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances (i.e., absence).

Short Writing Assignments:

In this class you will have six short writing assignments (a page or less) due throughout the semester. These assignments are meant to kickstart your writing process and help you work through ideas we are addressing in class. They will be graded on a check, check plus, check minus scale, similar to response papers. These assignments will be assigned on Tuesdays and will be due the following Tuesday. Assignments will be graded based on:

1. How well directions are followed in the assignment.
2. Successfulness of the piece--did it accomplish what it set out to accomplish?
3. Is the piece using elements of craft discussed in class?

Short writing assignments will be shared in class. All short writing assignments should be submitted in hard copy on the day they are due.

Workshop Submissions:

You will submit work for workshop twice during the semester, once for poetry and once for fiction.

The class day BEFORE you are going to be workshopped, you must bring in sixteen hard copies of your work to be distributed to the class. If you are being workshopped on a Thursday, bring your copies on Tuesday. If a classmate is absent, you are responsible for getting them a copy of your work.

For poetry, you can submit one or multiple poems. There is no page limit. No more than three poems should be submitted at one time. However, excessively short poems (for which the author cannot reasonably justify their length) are discouraged as we need to have enough to discuss in class. Excessively long poems are also discouraged, as you do not want to overload your classmates with reading. If you think your submission is going to be too long or too short, please talk to me and I can review it before submission.

For fiction, one short story should be submitted. It should be at least five pages long. There is no upward page limit, but the same rules apply for fiction as for poetry: excessively long submissions are not fair to your classmates who have to read and comment on them. Around twenty pages should be the maximum.

I am happy to review submissions in advance of the class when they are due. You may email me drafts or schedule office hours to discuss the work. I only ask that you refrain from sending me drafts less than a week before they are due, so that I can properly provide comments and give you time to implement them.

After your workshop, you are required to meet with me for at least fifteen minutes to discuss the workshop and the comments made. This can be after class or during office hours. If you wish to schedule a longer meeting, this can be done during office hours.

Workshop submissions will be graded on an A-F scale. They will be graded on a similar rubric to that of the short writing assignments.

Absence and Lateness Policy:

Attendance is mandatory. Participation is a large portion of your grade. Three or more absences will bring your grade down half a letter. There are no excused absences except under extreme extenuating circumstances. Please contact me with any questions about absences.

A lateness is considered an arrival over five minutes after class has started. Three latenesses equal an absence, and more than three absences will bring your grade down half a letter.

If you know you are going to be absent or late, please email me at the earliest possible opportunity. If you are absent, please email me or your classmates for the missed assignments. If you are workshopping, it is your responsibility to get your work to absent classmates. If you are absent, please reach out to your classmates for the workshop pieces.

Late Work Policy:

All response papers and short writing assignments turned in late will get an automatic check minus. Assignments later than a week will receive an automatic zero. Multiple check minuses may bring your grade down as much as half a letter. However, you are able to recoup one missed assignment per semester by attending a literary reading (see below).

Workshop assignments may not be turned in late. Failure to appear in class with sixteen copies of your work the class before they are due will result in a grade of zero. Missing your workshop day will also result in a grade of zero. If you are going to be absent the day before you are to be workshopped, you may distribute your work via email. Any known absences should be communicated as soon as possible so that your workshop day can be rescheduled if applicable.

Final Portfolio:

As your final project, you will be required to submit a portfolio of finished work. This work should include both fiction and poetry and show significant revisions based on the comments in workshop and my comments in your individual meeting. Your grade will reflect how effectively you implement feedback received in class. Final portfolios may be submitted by email. If you wish for me to provide comments on your final portfolio, please indicate this to me in your email.

Literary Reading Extra Credit:

Throughout the semester, you can attend a literary reading for the purpose of making up a missed response paper. You will be required to write a one-page paper about your impressions and observations of this reading. This can only be done once per semester. Additional details about the requirements of this extra-credit will be provided in class and I will provide suggestions about which readings to attend.

Grading:

Grading will be broken down as follows:

25% Participation

This includes latenesses, absences, and classroom participation.

25% Response Papers

This includes both reading responses and workshop critiques.

25% Short Writing Assignments

25% Workshop Submissions/Final Portfolio

This includes revisions, you may improve your initial workshop grade by submitting significant revisions.

Plagiarism:

Don't do it. This is a writing class and your grade is dependent on the way you interpret and imagine the assignments. Work that is deemed plagiarized will be an automatic zero and will be reported to the department. Please read NYU's Academic Integrity Policy:

<https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html>

Week-by-Week Reading Schedule (reading schedule subject to change):

Week 1: Introduction

Tuesday: Discussion of the Syllabus, Icebreakers

Thursday: "How To Become A Writer" by Lorrie Moore. "In Defense Of Fiction" by Zadie Smith (essay).

Week 2: Absurd Realism

Tuesday: Selected Poems, Charles Bukowski. Selected Poems, Charles Baudelaire.

Thursday: "William Wei" by Amie Barrodale. "Knockout" by John Jodzio.

Week 3: Life In The Fast Lane

Tuesday: "Chelsea Girls" by Eileen Myles. "Story of the Body" by Robert Hass.

First Writing Assignment Due.

Thursday: "Fast Lanes" by Jayne Anne Phillips. Go over First Writing Assignment.

Week 4: Women In Peril

Tuesday: Selected poems, Anne Sexton. Selected poems, Sylvia Plath.
Second Writing Assignment Due.

Thursday: "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" by Joyce Carol Oates. Go over Second Writing Assignment.

Week 5: Form And Death

Tuesday: Selected Poems, Robert Lowell. Selected Poems, Theodore Roethke.

Third Writing Assignment Due.

Thursday: “My Son The Murderer” by Bernard Malamud. Go over Third Writing Assignment.

Week 6: Great Artists Steal

Tuesday: “The Glass Essay” by Anne Carson.

Fourth Writing Assignment Due.

Thursday: “Spiritual America” by Rachel Kushner. Go over Fourth Writing Assignment.

Week 7: Things Get Weird

Tuesday: Selections of “Junky” by William Burroughs. Selections of “Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas” by Hunter S. Thompson.

Fifth Writing Assignment Due.

Thursday: “Car Crash While Hitch-Hiking” by Denis Johnson. Go over Fifth Writing Assignment.

Week 8: Escape

Tuesday: Selected Poems, Simone White. “A Small Place” by Jamaica Kincaid.

Sixth Writing Assignment Due.

Thursday: “Escape From Spiderhead” by George Saunders. Go over Sixth Writing Assignment.

Week 9

Tuesday: Workshop, Poetry

Thursday: Workshop, Poetry

Week 10

Tuesday: Workshop, Poetry

Thursday: Workshop, Poetry

Week 11

Tuesday: Workshop, Poetry

Thursday: Workshop, Fiction

Week 12

Tuesday: Workshop, Fiction

Thursday: Workshop, Fiction

Week 13

Tuesday: Workshop, Fiction

Thursday: Workshop, Fiction

Week 14

Tuesday: Workshop, Fiction

Thursday: Revisions Due. No class

Disability Disclosure Statement: Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998- 4980. NYU's Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities 726 Broadway, 2nd Floor New York, NY 10003-6675 Telephone: 212-998-4980 Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114 Web site: <http://www.nyu.edu/csd>

Student Wellness Policy: Unless we see explicit evidence in workshop that the speaker of a work is the writer themselves, we assume the speaker is fictional. However, certain content relating to murder, depression, suicide, sexual assault, or severe mental distress, such as seems to be a possible cry for help, will likely

prompt my attention. Please send me an email putting this work in context before submitting work, especially for workshop, that may be interpreted as such. If you do feel you need someone to talk to, please reach out to me and I can guide you to the NYU Wellness Center.