Introduction to Creative Writing
CRWRI-UA.815.061
TR 1:30pm-4:40pm
Summer 2020 [Session 2]
Rosanne Z. English
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Office Hours: Tuesday 11 AM - 1 PM (location TBD)

Introduction:
Welcome, writers! This summer we will work as a community to explore the practice and craft of creative writing, and produce original work. You will challenge yourself to be better readers, writers, and thinkers. This course endeavors to help you build a foundation for a writer’s life.

Objectives:
➔ Write. Produce material that you are proud of and will return to for revision. Sharpen your skills as a writer. Develop an arsenal of techniques for building poems or stories.
➔ Expand. Read to challenge your horizons. Explore texts that represent a multiplicity of diverse voices, perspectives, and worldviews. Exercise empathy and kindness.
➔ Imagine. Realize writing is limitless. See the world around you and listen to it, record it. Consider how writing can empower you to have agency and build new worlds.
➔ Give. Create community and be generous. Share the space. Be thoughtful in your feedback to each other; treat your peers’ work with the kind care and rigor it deserves.
➔ Observe. Reckon with the writing we read and share. Develop a line of inquiry. Feel what sparks joy or begs questions. Take stock of craft and content that moves you to admiration — explore why.

Grading:
20% Attendance
❏ refer to syllabus policy
20% Participation
❏ spoken contribution to discussion and workshop
❏ written responses to class prompts (8 total) and notes on classmates’ class workshop submissions (8 total), submit at end of class.
❏ You will receive these materials back at the start of the next class.
20% Poetry Submissions [Workshop]
❏ submit two poems (1-2 pages per poem), during two workshops of your choice during which your group (A or B) goes.
20% Fiction Submissions  [Workshop]
❏ submit one fiction piece (2 - 4 pages per piece), during two workshops of your choice during which your group (A or B) goes.
10% Critical Response

- choose a novel or book of poetry from outside class reading.
- choose three craft topics from classes 1 - 6 that interest you and perform a function in your chosen text.
- tell me what you will be writing about by Class 7, Tuesday July 28th
- submit a 3 - 4 page critical response by Class 10, Tuesday August 6th, explaining with textual support and detail how your chosen text successfully engages the craft techniques to make a strong and moving creation.

10% Final Portfolio

- submit a final, summative class portfolio that includes
  - 3 revised pieces (1 fiction, 1 poem, the third piece is genre of choice).
  - include original and revised piece
  - 1 - 2 page reflection on revision process.
  - 1 - 2 page explication and analysis of craft elements in your work.
  - 1 - 2 page statement of how your identity or philosophy as a writer has evolved or become established a result of the coursework.

Attendance:

We only have 12 sessions together. Attend every class. Attendance is 20% of your grade. The class is at its best with you and your work here. You are permitted, however, one unexcused absence (an excused absence required a doctor’s note or official document). After that, you will lose a half letter grade per absence. For example, an A will become an A- instead, and so on. Don’t come late. If you are 15 minutes late, that is ½ an absence. If you are 30 minutes late, it counts as an absence.

Required Texts:

- I will make course readings available to you by bringing handouts to class and/or posting to the NYU course page. Some readings will be instructive in terms of craft or criticism, in addition to the texts selected to model or explore a topic.
- 1 book of poetry or novel of your choice (see Critical Response assignment)

Materials:

- NO LAPTOPS may be used during class.
- A class notebook. A pen, a pencil.
- A class folder.
- Suggestion: keep a separate, dedicated writer’s notebook. It’s up to you, but we will discuss the practice and its merits on the first day. You can decide if it will
help you. We’ll also talk about using your phones to your advantage (Voice Recorder, Notes, etc.)

Workshop:

★ **NOTE**: you must **print out enough copies for the whole class** when it is your turn to bring work to class. If you do not, **your submission will not count for the class**, and it will affect your participation grade.

During workshop, students will submit work for the class to enjoy and critique. You will submit a total of four poems and four fiction pieces throughout the course. You will submit on a rotating basis, depending on your group (A or B). It does not matter what class you bring poetry or fiction to; it is up to you, as long as you submit the required number of assignments for each. We will discuss in class in greater detail what type of poem or fiction piece you might submit and what shape it might take. In addition, we will discuss and practice several methods of how to give feedback in a supportive and helpful, concrete way. What is most important, however, is to be kind, open-minded, respectful, and to recall that a piece of writing in this stage of being born belongs only to its writer, not to you. We will also discuss what to consider before submitting a piece to the class community. Remember to be sensitive to not only your classmates’ boundaries and needs, but also your own. Your submissions should include an element that refers back to at least one craft topic or prompt we have discussed previously in class. You do not need to defend the link to the course in writing, just be able to explain it to the class.

★ **NOTE**: at the end of class, I will collect all materials back from the day’s workshop, in order to review the comments and feedback that you are leaving for each other. You will receive the materials back at the start of the next class, so you have comments to work from for any possible revising you may want to do on a piece for the **Final Portfolio**.

**Plagiarism:**
All incidents of plagiarism, no matter how they are resolved, must be reported to the department, as we are required to report the student’s name, the nature of the offense, and the penalty to the Associate Dean for Students. Do not plagiarize! It will result in severe academic consequences.

**Course Outline**

**Class 1** Tuesday, July 7th  
Topic: **Motivation & World Creation**

**Due Today**
- at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #1.

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**Class 2 Thursday, July 9th**

**Topic: Cultivating a Subject**


**Due Today**
- Assigned reading completed.
- Group A Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
- Bring copies for the class!
- at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #2.
- at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

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**Class 3 Tuesday, July 14th**

**Topic: Form & Structure**

*Selections from* “Hills Like White Elephants” by Hemingway, Excerpt from “The Plot Against America” by Roth. Poems by Dickinson, Brown, Diaz, Hayes, Bishop.

**Due Today:**
- Group B Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
- Bring copies for the class!
- at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #3.
- at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

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**Class 4 Thursday, July 16th**

**Topic: Place & Setting**

Excerpts from “1984” by Orwell, “One Hundred Years of Solitude” by Marquez, “Blood Meridian” by McCarthy. Poems by Mary Oliver, Mark Doty.

**Due Today:**
Class 5 Tuesday, July 21
Topic: **Persona & Character**
Poems selected from: *The Virginia Colony for Epileptics and Feebleminded*, Molly McCully Brown, Zbigniew Herbert, “Skinhead” by Patricia Smith.

Due Today:
- Assigned reading completed.
- Group A Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
- Bring copies for the class!
- at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #4.
- at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

Class 6 Thursday, July 23
Topic: **Language & Image**
Excerpts from Borges
Selected poems by Hayes, Oppen, Smith, Charles
*The Art of Description* by Mark Doty.

Due Today:
- Assigned reading completed.
- Group A Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
- Bring copies for the class!
- at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #5.
- at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

Class 7 Tuesday, July 28
Topic: **Plot & Story**
Due Today:
☐ turn in a typed paragraph explaining what you will write about for the Critical Response due for Class 10, August 6 — what text, what three craft elements, and why.
☐ Group B Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
☐ Bring copies for the class!
☐ at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #7.
☐ at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

Class 8 Thursday, July 30

Topic: Elegy & Honoring

Excerpts from: To the Lighthouse by Woolfe.
Selections from Gabriel by Hirsch, selected Cavafy, Neruda, Olds, Gay.

Due Today:

☐ Assigned reading completed.
☐ Group A Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
☐ Bring copies for the class!
☐ at the end of class, turn in your written response to in class prompt #8.
☐ at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

Class 9 Tuesday, August 4th

Topic: Voice & Truth
Excerpts from The Things They Carried by O’Brien, “Heritage” by Torres. “A Man Told Me the Story of His Life” by Paley. Selected poems by: Howe, Asghar, Diaz, Franklin, Akbar.

Due Today:

☐ Group B Workshop — bring 2 poems or 1 fiction piece to class.
☐ Bring copies for the class!
☐ at the end of class, turn in today’s workshop materials with your feedback.

Class 10 Thursday, August 6th

Topic: Ekphrastic & Historical

Excerpts from: The Goldfinch by Tarte, Woolf Hall by Mantel, A Thousand Splendid Suns by Hosseini. Poems selected by: Gerke, Vuong, O’Hara, Smith, Coste-Lewis

Due Today:
Assigned reading completed.
3 - 4 page critical response to a book of poetry or novel of your choice
Bring to class to submit to me as a typed, hard copy.
Be prepared to tell the class a little about what you chose to write about and why.

Class 11 Tuesday, August 11th

Topic: A. Ethics & Intent
B. Revision
Sound Machine by Rachel Zucker, The Art of Memoir by Mary Karr
Texts on revision.

Due Today:
- Bring in 1 piece for revision workshop (preparation for portfolio).

Class 12 Thursday, August 13th
Topic: Celebration!
Read student work!
Present Portfolios, Celebrate!
Due Today:
- Final Portfolio!

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 the instructor’s attention. Please send 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 at any point in the semester, please feel safe to reach out to me and I can guide you to the NYU Wellness Center.