CREATIVE WRITING FOR NON-MAJORS

CRW3930.01
3 credit hours

MWF 1:30-2:20 pm
Fall 2004, BA 115

Instructor: Juan Martinez
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Course Objectives

• To understand the techniques involved in writing poetry, nonfiction and fiction through readings, exercises, writing and editing.
• To hone your writing.
• To find fresh, innovative ways to engage with—and to produce—literature.

Required Texts and Materials

A reading journal (a spiral notebook is fine; a three-ring binder is better).
A reliable Internet connection and a reliable e-mail address (both are provided by UCF).

Course Description

This course will help you write better stories, essays, and poems. Every genre has its rules, its expectations, and its own set of rewards and frustrations—we'll be looking at those. We'll also be reading, closely and critically, many published writers who excel; there's no point in writing without reading, and we'll be doing a lot of both, but count on doing more reading than writing.

Grading Scale

A .................................. 95-100
A- .................................. 90-94
B+ .................................. 87-89
B .................................. 83-86
B- .................................. 80-82
C+ .................................. 77-79
C .................................. 73-76
C- .................................. 70-72
D+ .................................. 67-69
D .................................. 63-66
D- .................................. 60-62
F* .................................. >59

Evaluation: You will write four poems, one short story, and one essay. You will also be responsible for providing a typed, one-page response to all the pieces being workshoped. You will be graded on the quality and quantity of your writing. In addition, periodic, unannounced quizzes on the assigned readings will be administered. The final grade will be determined by

Four poems ................................ 20%
Short Story ................................ 20%
Essay ...................................... 20%
Participation ................................ 20%
Workshop responses .................. 10%
Quizzes .................................... 10%
**Missed/Late Assignments:** Obtain assignments and class notes from other students in the class or from the web. Most handouts and assignments will be available online. Assignments are due at the beginning of the assigned class period. Late assignments (anything turned in as much as a class period late) will earn at the most, a “C.” Assignments more than a class period late will not be accepted. All your drafts and final papers must be word processed.

**Makeup Exams:** There will be none.

**Attendance:** Every absence after three will negatively affect your grade. More than eight absences will result in automatic failure. Tardiness will not be tolerated—three tardies equal one absence. Show respect for your classmates and our work by arriving on time.

**Participation:** Participate. Respect the right of others to participate. No cell phones, no chatter, no disruptions of any kind—these will decrease your participation grade. You will, on the other hand, be rewarded for being actively engaged in the class; any comments that further discussion (without being digressive, rude or otherwise disruptive) are welcomed and encouraged and received with much joy.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is not acceptable academic behavior and is grounds for failure in the course. Do not plagiarize—do not appropriate someone else’s thoughts or images. Do not base your work on someone else’s or use, as inspiration, characters or situations from literature or any other medium, visual or otherwise. Rely on your own experience, your own observations, and your own ideas. Plagiarism will result in automatic failure for the assignment and possible dismissal from the course.

**Disability Statement:** UCF is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services at Student Resource Center Room 132, (407) 823-2371. If you need assistance and use a TDD, dial (407) 823-2116.

**On Workshops:** We’ll be talking about workshops at length before we actually dive into any of them but, since it’s at the heart of any creative writing class, and—since it will be the source of some of the most useful and most frustrating moments in the semester—it’s worth a word or two here. All good writing has been revised. Hardly anything comes out right the first time. Workshops are designed to help you revise your work. So behave civilly. Treat your peers with respect. When workshopping someone’s work, extend them the same courtesy: What is being reviewed, after all, is someone’s words. The entire focus of the process is trying to figure out how a particular piece can be made better.

**On Libraries:** They’re wonderful. We’ll be using the UCF library for a number of projects. Any writer interested in publication should become well acquainted with these institutions.

**On Publication:** We will be talking about some practical advice on getting your work published. In short, though, anyone who has been published, ever, has been a passionate and intense and in some ways a freaky reader. We’ll talk more about ways to become this sort of reader in class—and also formatting, cover letters, all that.

*Detailed assignments will be posted on the class website.*

*Read and print all assignments well ahead of time.*

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