

English 253: Introduction to Creative Writing, Secs. 1, 2/Fall 2021

Dr. Patricia Gott

Office: 318 CCC Email: pgott@uwsp.edu

Office Hours: VIRTUAL

--Tuesdays: 3:30-4:15

--Wednesdays: 1-1:50

--Thursdays 12:50-1:50

--Other times by appointment

OFFICIAL UWSP FACE COVERING POLICY: (Note—We are an online course, but I am posting this in case we do meet in small group conferences. FACE COVERINGS NEED TO BE WORN FOR ANY IN-PERSON CONTACT). At all UW-Stevens Point campus locations, the wearing of **FACE COVERINGS is MANDATORY IN ALL BUILDINGS**, including classrooms, laboratories, studios, and other instructional spaces. Any student with a condition that impacts their use of a face covering should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center to discuss accommodations in classes.

Course Description:

This course will explore the ways in which language—sharpened, focused, and refined to the quality of art—helps us navigate the vagaries of the human condition. Reading and writing intensively, we hope to uncover the strengths and limitations of poetry and fiction. We will critique classic examples of each form, take what we learn, and experiment in our own writing. **Each of you will be expected to complete at least one 6-10 page short story, one 3-page short flash fiction piece and 5-7 poems.** Roughly half the semester will be devoted to each genre. We will share our work in class and regularly open it up to a peer critique. Students must be willing to test their imaginations and improve their work through revision. By semester's end, you will be expected to turn in a portfolio of revised work. Despite the size of the class, everyone should expect to be fully engaged with the material and attentive to their classmates: attendance and participation are mandatory.

UWSP Learning Outcomes – Investigation Level-Arts

Students will:

- *Describe, analyze, or critique creative works utilizing knowledge of relevant aesthetic criteria or stylistic forms.*

Do at least ONE of the following

- *Identify and explain the relationship between traditions or genres of creative expression and their social, historical, or cultural contexts.*
- *Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by producing or performing a creative work.*

Required Materials:

- One notebook for notes and in class writing assignments
- One pocket folder for collection of work
- A device to create, save and print up your writing.

Required texts:

- Poetry: **A Writer's Guide and Anthology. Huey and Kaneko. Bloomsbury Press.**
AVAILABLE: PURCHASE TEXT
- Selected texts available on Canvas or online (see syllabus)

Email Policy/Format: You will be using email regularly this semester as it is the best way to reach me and are a good way to reach classmates. You will be expected to use proper grammar, sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation in your emails, in addition to respectful and appropriate language. Please use your UWSP account for all correspondence related to this class.

Canvas: Canvas is the course management software program UWSP uses to create online classrooms. You'll find our online classroom for the semester on Canvas. You can access Canvas by going to the UWSP homepage, finding the "Log-ins" drop-down menu in the top right corner of the screen, and hovering over it. When the menu appears, click on Canvas. You'll turn in your intermediate drafts, final drafts, and postings to me via Assignments, I'll post supplementary materials for you to read and view, we'll occasionally have electronic discussions, and you'll find updated scores and grades there.

Technology Use in class: Use of cell phones, except for specific class purposes, IS PROHIBITED and cell phones and other electronic devices should be put away AND turned off during class. Computers should only be used for course assignments; please shut down other tabs and webpages if you do need to use a pc while in the synchronous portion of our class.

Recording Policy: Students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities without written permission from the instructor. Anyone violating this policy will be asked to turn off the device being used. Refusal to comply with the policy will result in a report to the Dean of Students.

Grade Range: As far as the grade range, a C represents average but satisfactory development of the above criteria, a B represents above average development, and an A representing superior development and effort towards the criteria above. Work that represents below average development will receive a D. D work suggests that a writer is not involved in his or her writing and is unaware of the contexts, format, and stylistic choices that affect that writing. Work that is not submitted will receive an F. **Note: Incompletes can be given only in the case of a medical emergency.** We will discuss the grading rubric in more detail later.

SCALE: A = 94-100 % A- = 90-93% 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 = 0-59%

Participation:

This course will involve a blend of lecture, workshop, and discussion. It is important that you come prepared to participate in class activities and complete all the reading IN ADVANCE OF CLASS. For workshops, this includes reading and marking poems and stories for the workshop sessions. Discussions are particularly important in creative writing classes, and you are expected to offer their opinions as both readers and writers. Good participation involves thoughtful responses to the assigned readings and a willingness to share written work (formal and informal). The participation requirement will not be met if you sit quietly through discussion and workshop and fail to engage with the material. Sometimes, a probing, thought-provoking question can be more useful than an assertion. The essence of discussion is play, trying out new ideas and seeing how they “work.” Art is dynamic, and one line of thinking—even if it seems “wrong” or incomplete—will always lead to something new and potentially beautiful. Art without risk is so often mired down in conventionality; thinking without risk (or, put another way, without play) leads to stagnation.

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following:

In Class Written and Verbal Participation:

	20%
Drafts of Assignments: ONE 6-10 page short story	
=and one 3 page short short	15%
*5-7 poems	15%
Portfolio of revised work	<u>50%</u>
	100%

*Collected as we go

(The portfolio should include revisions of at least 5 poems and the story/stories.)

NOTE: No letter grades will be assigned to any of the stories/poems written during the term; instead, students will receive feedback on drafts of their work, with the expectation that some will be revised and submitted as the final portfolio, which will be graded. All stories and poems must be completed and handed in by the last week of the class.

Assignment Format: ALL OUT OF CLASS assignments must be typed on white paper **double-spaced**, in **12 pt. Times New Roman or Calibri**. Use **one-inch margins all around**.

At the top of each assignment you should type:

Your name

(FOR WORKSHOP PORTION) Date your story is to be workshopped

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Workshop:

Everyone is expected to put their short story up for workshop; this is part of your participation

grade. This is a chance to hear what other people have to say about the text. Sit back, take notes, and watch how people have reacted to your work. This immediate feedback is invaluable and gives you the opportunity to assess the successes and shortcomings of what you've hoped to achieve.

All poems and stories to be workshopped must be emailed to the Canvas Discussion Page (253, Section 1) a FULL 48 HOURS before they are supposed to be workshopped. For example, if your story is up on Monday, Week 12, your story is due by Saturday, Week 12 at 5 pm. Readers (everyone in class) are encouraged to read the story twice, make helpful notes in the margins (or on a separate sheet of paper), and present their findings to the class.

Attendance: Given the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, requiring students to be physically present in a face-to-face class is inappropriate. Requiring participation in a synchronous online class can also be problematic. Therefore, for the duration of this health crisis, instructors may not establish an attendance policy that directly connects class attendance to a student's grade without providing online, asynchronous alternatives that can substitute for attendance. Grading policies that include attendance are acceptable if they define "attendance" to include participation in online asynchronous activities as an alternative.

Late Assignment Policy: All work is due the day indicated on the syllabus. Please make every attempt to make your workshop date/time (discussed later in the semester). Unless I indicate otherwise, final drafts of creative work will be docked a half of a letter grade if they are not handed in the week they are due. I will not accept late assignments one week beyond the due date except in the case of a documented illness or family emergency. **Please use Canvas to submit all your assignments.**

Plagiarism: Whenever you borrow ideas and materials from outside sources, it is necessary to acknowledge the source of your borrowing. Failure to do this constitutes plagiarism--a very serious offense. Writers generally borrow from others in two ways:

1. Paraphrasing, quoting directly, or using a combination of paraphrasing and direct quotation. Please use the MLA citation guidelines to properly cite the types of borrowing outlined above. We'll discuss the MLA guidelines in class.
2. Deliberately placing your name on someone else's written work--using file papers, copying, and pasting from the internet without citation, letting friends or hired professionals write your papers, etc. This type of "borrowing" will be treated in accordance with the University policy on Academic Misconduct. See the UWSP Handbook, Chapter 14 available at <http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>.

Double-dipping: I assume that all work that you turn in during the term is original and current. Creative work written in high school, or for another class, should not be submitted here (unless you clear it with me first). Work that has already been published on the Internet should not be submitted for class. I want you to write your best work; it is important that this

work draws from your fullest experiences as a student, writer, and aesthetic being. If I discover that work submitted for this class was written for another class, I will penalize the final course grade.

Academic Freedom Policy:

This course has a **NO CENSORSHIP** policy for both the writing you submit, and the comments peers make on that work. I will not censor because of sexual content, elements of violence, religious or political perspectives. (However, writing on topics that are illegal, dangerous and/or present a violation of safety IS NOT ALLOWED. (ex. child pornography or terroristic threats IS OFF LIMITS as is harassment of others via writing). This policy also applies for materials submitted for sessions. Students are expected to respond to the writings of others with judiciousness, deliberation, and fairness. However, honesty is expected in all critiques; if a story contains sexism, homophobia, or intolerance, then readers are responsible for pointing out potentially unsavory aspects of a work.

Resources: The Writing Lab consultants are successful UWSP students who can discuss any type of writing at any stage of the drafting process; including brainstorming, outlining, and research or citations. They work with experienced writers as well as struggling writers; we believe that everyone benefits from discussions about their writing.

Writing Lab are currently being held virtually via Zoom

Meetings by appointment or short notice times available

All services in the Writing Lab are free

If you have questions or would like to make an appointment, please contact the TLC via email (tlctutor@uwsp.edu) or phone (715-346-3568).

Students with learning differences may want to visit UWSP's DATC (Disability and Assistive Technology Center ([715-346-3365](tel:715-346-3365) or email datctr@uwsp.edu) to work with that office.

LET'S START CREATING!!

English 253.2 **INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING--WEDNESDAY EVENING**

****NOTE: The optional readings from Huey Kaneko have the asterisks** in front of them. Everyone should read the ones WITHOUT the asterisks.**

Fall 2021 Writing Assignment and Reading List SEP 8 2021 VERSION

VERY IMPORTANT: Make sure you complete the assigned reading (including your peers' work in the workshop section) for each class period BEFORE you come to class. Also have the specific text(s) that includes that day's reading with you for our class session. Many readings are on Canvas. Finally, more readings* may be added, so **IF** the syllabus is modified* I'll send an email and put the revised syllabus on CANVAS

Week One: Sept. 8

Introduction to the class and one another/What does it mean to be a creative individual?

Class Policies and Poem Intros/ RitaDove Spill exercise: We will do it in class

Week Two: Sept. 15

Read: Starkey: 18-29; How poetry works (CANVAS)/Poetry exercises to begin. Line breaks, etc. Introduction to poetry/RitaDove Spill Due

Read Poems: O'Meara, Peacock, Snyder] (CANVAS)

****BEFORE CLASS, WRITE A PAGE ABOUT WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT ONE OF THESE POEMS. YOU might also consider POV (point of view), theme, and some literary devices IF THAT'S OK:**

Exercise: List Poems, How To (from Huey Kaneko Poems I on Canvas)

Week Three: Sep. 22

Read Starkey: 41-53 (CANVAS)/ Bring in a poem you're partial to (search at either poets.org, poemhunter and poetryfoundation.org)/Post to Canvas Discussion Board and again, write a bit about why you picked it and some salient features that make for a notable poem

Read Huey, Kaneko Poems II Elegy and Found Poems Discussed

"Moon Go Away Exercise" IN CLASS WRITING EXERCISE

****OPTIONAL READING FROM HUEY KANEKO: BEGINNINGS TO MUSIC (CANVAS)**

Week Four: Sep. 29

READ Huey Kaneko III Ars Poetica and Personal poems (CANVAS)

Also Appendix: 75 Poetry Exercises (CANVAS)

PLACES: Bring in a photo or a postcard of a scene to write about

Hand in a poem you've been working on/

Also read: "I, Too" by Langston Hughes, and "Letter to the Local Police" by June Jordan

<https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/i-too>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/48760/letter-to-the-local-police>

****OPTIONAL READING FROM HUEY KANEKO: OBSERVATION TO VOICE (CANVAS)**

Week Five: Oct. 6

Description: Showing vs. Telling/**Bring in 2 smallish objects to describe and write about**

Read from MicroFictions: "Cough" 26, "Daydreams," 28, "Your Fears are Justified" 36 (CANVAS)

****BEFORE CLASS, POST TO CANVAS: What sticks out about these stories? How does the short nature of them influence how we read them? Pick one and write a para. About it.**

Character Inventories: Wisconsin Death Trip (or other photo ex) photo exercise in class

Week Six: Oct. 13: **First drafts of three poems due** Read Margaret Atwood's "Death by Landscape" and Louise Erdrich's "The Red Convertible"
](CANVAS)/

In class: Conflict Exercise

Read from Starkey: INTRO TO SHORT STORIES/(CANVAS)

Week Seven: Oct. 20

Introduction to the short story continued / **Two new poems due**/SEE Huey and Kaneko: Appendix (75 Poetry Exercises)

Read Raymond Carver's "Popular Mechanics" and Tim O'Brien's "The Things They Carried"
(CANVAS) In class: Edward Hopper Exercise

Week Eight: Oct. 27

Dialogue Exercise (Post to Canvas)/ Workshops of your poems begins/Order will be determined before this date

Week Nine: Nov. 3: Workshop of poems Part II/See sign up list for story workshop

Week Ten: Nov. 10 **Workshopping of short stories begins/See sign up list

Week Eleven: Nov. 17

**Workshopping of short stories begins

Week Twelve: Nov. 24 **NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week Thirteen: Dec. 2 **Workshopping of stories continues

Week Fourteen: Dec. 9 **Workshopping of stories wraps up

Finals Week: ALL PORTFOLIOS Due Friday, Dec. 17 by 4 pm in Canvas dropbox,

****PORTFOLIOS CAN BE HANDED IN EARLY, but MAKE SURE TO PROOFREAD AND EDIT CAREFULLY!!**

Reminder: A class that is this exercise and workshop intensive CANNOT BE RETAUGHT, so make sure to ATTEND REGULARLY to get full credit.