

UW Stevens Point at Wausau
English 253: Introduction to Creative Writing
Fall 2019

credits: 3 Critical and Creative Thinking (for AAS degree) Arts (for UWSP General Education)	instructor: Professor or Ms. Jill Stukenberg (Jill) <i>she, her, hers</i> Associate Professor of English
section: W01-Lec Regular, 82056 meets: M & W 9:30 – 10:45, room 241	email: jstukenb@uwsp.edu
exam period: Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2:45 – 4:45 pm	Jill's office phone: (715) 261-6277 Messages checked Monday – Friday.
prerequisite: Completion of Eng 98 with a C or higher or placement into Eng 101 or 150.	MTH office: #305, hours: Wednesdays and Fridays 11 – 12. Appointments available at other times, and via Skype. Skype ID: Jill Stukenberg.

textbook and materials

- Sellers, Heather. *The Practice of Creative Writing: A Guide for Students, 3rd Ed.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017.
- paper for printing and/or costs for printing some readings and workshop submissions.
- storage media for saving your work, such as a jump or flash drive. **Save all versions of all drafts and keep all work returned to you with comments by instructor and peers; a portfolio will be due at the end of the semester.**
- This course will make use of a Canvas site, Google docs, Word, your campus email, and possibly other platforms. All are free for students. Ask for help using them at any time.
- A laptop computer is recommended for in-class writing.
- In Fall 2019, students will also be required—for one assignment—to attend one out-of-class creative writing reading or play. The instructor will describe multiple options in class, many of which will be free, including readings and events with the Central Wisconsin Book Festival (last weekend in September) and campus play productions.

course description:

Training and practice for the beginning writer in various forms of poetry and fiction; class discussion of student work.

learning outcomes: This course helps students meet multiple goals:

toward the AAS degree: *Critical and Creative Thinking Skills* attribute includes inquiry, problem solving, and qualitative and quantitative reasoning proficiencies, and may be typically included as learning goals in different disciplines throughout the university curriculum

toward the UWSP general education program: *Arts* attribute:

- 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 particular 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.

instructor's specific learning outcomes:

Processes of Creative Writing

- Explore invention techniques and activities individually and collaboratively throughout the semester. These activities may include but are not limited to free writing, journal keeping, brainstorming, imaginative association, creativity exercises, generating multiple versions of a particular piece.
- Generate and revise with specific elements (such as image, line, juxtaposition) whether for exercises or longer pieces.
- Practice critical feedback techniques and activities for works-in-progress throughout the semester which may include but are not limited to large and/or small group workshop discussions, one-on-one partner exchanges, and written peer draft critiques.
- Show development in receiving and responding to feedback.
- Demonstrate (by the end of the semester) holistic revision of pieces of creative writing to rework aspects of drafts that shape overall development, such as character, setting, voice, theme, conflict, tone.
- Demonstrate editing not only for error correction but for “the best words in the best order” (Coleridge), that is, editing for precision, concision, care, and originality in style and syntax.
- Engage in writing that involves reflection and self-assessment of abilities and skills covered in learning outcomes, including their own creative choices.

Reading as a Creative Writer

- Identify, understand and use vocabulary of genre elements. These elements may include but are not limited to:
 - Fiction: characterization, plot, and conflict.
 - Poetry: imagery, musicality, and use of forms.
 - Drama: dialogue, plot, and stage directions.
 - Creative Nonfiction incorporates elements from other genres. (To some extent, all genres rely on “Show Don’t Tell,” the ability to generate specific examples and actions. close reading of authors’ work)
- Engage in close reading of authors’ works.
- Identify and explain authors’ creative choices and analyze the effects of those choices on a published text.

a few things to know about college-level creative writing courses

- You’ll be asked to create and submit only *new* work in this class—that is, work written this semester and written specifically for class/workshop assignments.
- Your classmates will read your work (and you’ll read theirs) in regular small group workshops, and you’ll be graded on your developing ability to give feedback to others (verbally and in writing) and to write reflective letters (author’s notes) about your own work.
- All of your submissions will be read and responded to by your peers and by the instructor as “drafts in progress.” You’ll hear descriptions of how the work affected them and their suggestions for what you might try next.
- You’ll be asked to revise your work, and even to revise it *radically*, taking a completed piece and experimenting with what other direction it could have taken.
- You’ll read and be encouraged to work in multiple different genres (poetry, creative nonfiction, plays, flash, memoir, hybrid digital). In all forms, we’ll take it as our challenge to create literary art.
- At the end of the semester, there won’t be a final exam, but you’ll turn in a final portfolio of your revised and edited work.

- Sensitive material: Since a lot of what you'll read in this class are works by your peers that haven't been written yet (and which I won't see in advance), it's not always possible for me to provide you with a warning about sensitive material. I invite student writers to consider including their own advance notices for their readers for any sensitive material (also called "trigger warnings")—but it is up to each writer. Some of the readings from our textbook may also bring up issues that are sensitive for some people. While some works of art intend to cause discomfort, I do understand that can be very different for different people and that our purpose is learning. I invite students to talk with me about any concerns.
- As your instructor, I take seriously my role to protect your privacy as a student, including what you share through your writing. I ask all students to similarly respect each other's privacy—though please note that I cannot guarantee other students will do so. We will submit and share some writing through discussion boards, which means that writing could be visible to other small groups within our class, and may be easily transferable out of class if someone chooses to break our community trust. (Sharing classmates' work with others outside of our class, without their permission, would be breaking that trust.) At the same time, please know that if I learn of anything through a student or from student writing that makes me fear someone is in harm's way, I may report it. I am required to report sexual violence or discrimination, as well as crime on campus, and students may do so too using the following: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Anonymous-Report.aspx> If you would like to speak with someone who is not required to report, the campus counseling resources are a confidential resource for you. Ask in the Solution Center, or ask me to put you in touch with campus counseling resources. You are not alone. Please reach out.
- Finally, please know that I am a practicing creative writer. I see storytelling and language play as means to understand ourselves and the world around us, and as a form of profound and important play. If you want to know about my writing, you can see some here: <http://jillstukenberg.com/> I also publish in the area of creative writing teaching. I believe the study of creative writing—because it promotes creative and analytic thinking, understanding of process and emotional intelligence—is relevant and practical for *anyone's* future, in your work world and in your non-work world.

grading: How can creative writing be graded?

	What is it?	Who sees?	How submitted?	What is being graded? (skills, learning outcomes)	Portion of grade?
Writers' individual journal (google doc)	Used for in-class freewriting to generate ideas and practice with skills	Usually only you; with your permission some entries may be shared with the class	Send google journal link to instructor one time; I look over for completion but don't read everything fully or respond	Practice invention and generate material for workshop! Entries are not graded on content, but on effort/attempt of good tries for most/nearly all prompts	10% (half at midterm)
Daily work: Canvas discussion posts, all-class journal	Practice close reading skills and analysis of assigned readings in	Instructor and classmates see discussion	Canvas discussion board; all-class journal kept on	Your ability to read like a writer; your understanding of terms and	25% of the course is made up of these activities.

contributions, workshop feedback, and conferences with instructor	Canvas discussion posts and in written workshop feedback to others; brainstorm via the all-class journal	board and all-class journal responses; conferences with instructor are one-on-one, verbal	Google Docs, linked under “syllabus” in Canvas	elements, and ability to apply them in analysis of professional works; your developing ability to generate ideas for writing, and to give peers feedback.	See note on daily work grading below.
4 Workshops	Develop freewriting into drafts for workshop, as assigned; also requires reflective author’s note	Your small group workshop members and instructor (other classmates could see)	Post to Canvas thread before class.	Graded on: timely submission effort; use of techniques; overall risk/creativity; and author’s note for self-analysis skills	25% course grade
Sharable Digital Artifact	Instagram poem design; short podcast of a reading, poem video...	Classmates and instructor, and anyone you share it with online!	Share via Canvas thread; this brief presentation is our final, and may take place during final exam period.	Explore artistic convergence of digital and creative tools; re-see something for medium, and possibly a wider audience	10%
Final Portfolio	Assemble best examples of in-class writing; revise and edit your “best pages;” 4-6 page final reflection letter	Instructor sees	Submitted to Canvas	Your ability to analyze in the reflective letter; your risk and use of processes to revise; and application of course techniques in “best pages” graded.	30%

Daily work grading, more detail:

I use a points system within the category of daily work. In other grading categories—workshop grades, final portfolio, sharable artifact—percentages I assign merely correlate to holistic letter grades and don’t represent points missed or earned. : A = 95%; A- = 92%; B+ = 88%; B = 85%, etc. (This system does allow me to, very occasionally, acknowledge exceptional A+ work with a 97%, or 98%, or on the rarest occasions a 100%.)

Daily work points: about 80 - 100 total

All-class journal: 2 pts. for each on-time post. (8-10 total posts). No pts. for late posts.

Canvas Discussion Board responses: Up to 4 pts. for each on-time post and reply to two others. (About 8 -10 discussions total). Posts should be about 200 words and use vocabulary and concepts from related reading accurately and thoughtfully; replies to others should extend the conversation, agreeing by adding something new, disagreeing respectfully, or making interesting connections between posts. See rubric. Up to 2 pts. may be assigned for late responses within one week.

Workshop responses: In the beginning of the semester this will be done verbally, and not graded. By the last workshops, individual students are responsible for giving written feedback to group members prior to workshop, and the quality of this feedback is graded. See rubric that applies to written feedback, which should be about 150- 200 words meeting prompt questions and given on time.

Conferences with instructor: 4 points for attendance with drafts when required out of class.

grading scale:

A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82; C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70 – 72; D+ 67-69; D 64 – 66; F 63 and below.

course policies

- **Attendance:** Come to class and submit work on time. Missed classes add up to missed learning and so affect performance on all assignment types. **Not attending an in-person workshop can result in a lowered workshop score, even if your piece and author note and responses were submitted in advance.** (In case of illness or emergency or excused absence as described by state law—religious observation, pregnancy, required college-related travel obligation—discuss make up with the instructor. Of course I will work with you.)
- **Late work:** In general, late work receives half credit, and only if submitted in a week. **This can have a particularly large effect in the case of late workshop submissions. See rubric.**
- **Plagiarism (turning in writing that is not yours as if it yours) will result in a 0 grade, and possibly more severe penalties, such as course failure.** I do take this very seriously in a creative writing course. If you have a question, always ask before you turn it in.
- **Please silence, put away, and do not check or use cell phones during class.** Personal computers may be used during in-class writing, but please close them at other times.

ADA: Students desirous of specific accommodation as may fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act are encouraged to contact advisor Amy.Seering@uwc.edu (715) 261-6237.

Preferred Names: Please let me know if you use a different name than the one listed on the roster, or in Canvas. (I can also help you request changes to names on class rosters and Canvas.) I invite all students to let me know their preferred pronouns.

rubrics: see next pages

rubric for workshop submissions: Grades for workshop submissions reflect a combination of effort in attempting each workshop’s specific goals and demonstration of knowledge and thinking about those goals, and writing processes, in the author’s note. This rubric is a guide that shows the instructor’s general thinking in assigning these grades. Plus or minus grades are used when one element fit one category and the other a different category, and occasionally a middle grade when the elements differed greatly (one A level and one C level might result in a B grade). **You are always encouraged to talk with the instructor if you want to know a reason for a grade and how to do better next time!**

	Workshop draft	Author’s note (200 words; see each set of prompt questions)
A level; 95%	A-level: In addition to being on-time, shows particular creative inventiveness in applying techniques of the unit, or bringing in previous techniques studied too, or very full, complete effort (seems to have a few drafts behind it)	200 word Author’s note shows independent thinking about writing process of the piece and concepts of this unit, using relevant vocabulary, references to class readings or activities, etc and/or prior learning.
B level; 85%	On-time and full-effort clear; submission shows attention to goals of the assignment (example: to use image);	Author’s note mostly answers prompt questions with relevant vocabulary; may be shy of 200 words or could answer with more depth or use of concepts even if meets 200 words.
C level; 75%	Workshop piece submitted on time, some room for more application of concepts or fullness of attempt OR Workshop piece submitted, and even B or A level, but author’s note not submitted.	Author’s note attempted but doesn’t answer prompt questions directly or doesn’t use concepts/vocabulary with full accuracy yet; and/or is not meeting 200 words mark. May be unclear in basic writing, editing, etc.
D level; 65%	Workshop piece not attempting given assignment.	Author’s note attempted but does not demonstrate knowledge of concepts/techniques discussed this unit, and/or is particularly short or unclear, and/or unclear in basic writing, editing, etc.
F; 50%	Face to Face workshop missed with piece submitted on time; or workshop attended but piece submitted late (after workshop).	
0	Workshop piece not submitted.	

other rubrics related to daily work grades:

Reading and responding to professional and peer works as writers do can take time and practice to learn to do well. If you don't earn a four or six on your first attempt, don't lose heart! Talk with the instructor about your scores at any time, seeking advice on how you can improve.

discussion posts

4	In addition to criteria for 3, post shows original and insightful thinking, making connections to past readings or class discussions, deftly using concepts from class or Sellers text.
3	Post at least 200 words long, with two meaningful replies to previous students. Uses some Sellers concepts from recent readings correctly and relevantly, toward development of ability to read and analyze works as writers.
2	Post may be somewhat short, or not reply to two other students, or use concepts correctly. Or was submitted late (within the week, though).
1	Multiple required aspects missing.
0	Not submitted.

workshop responses given to others (when done in writing)

6	Posts completed before class for all group members. All are meeting goals of giving response feedback as described in prompts and practiced in class—and show attention for reading closely and generously and giving precise and useful feedback with compassion.
5	Posts completed before class for all group members. At least one post meeting all goals of giving response feedback as described in prompts and practiced in class, but with some others with room for going further in meeting those goals (in detail, compassion, use of vocabulary, etc). You are invited to discuss with the instructor.
4	Posts completed before class for all group members, about 150 – 200 words. Posts could do more to use class vocabulary or to describe the work and its effects more clearly or objectively. See See prompts for these posts and discuss your approach to them with the instructor.
3	Posts completed before class for all group members, but some somewhat insubstantial. See prompts for these posts and discuss how to do better with the instructor. Or, this score could reflect a late penalty. (Not posting before class.)
2	Insubstantial posts for more than one group member. Or this score could reflect a combination of lateness and somewhat insubstantial responses.
1	Insubstantial post for one group member.
0	Not submitted.

tentative schedule

See Canvas for specific daily assignments, in addition to this plan for major assignments and general weekly topics.

	Monday
Sep. 2 - 4	No class. Labor Day. Intro to journal, course, syllabus. Freewriting with image.
Sep. 9 - 11	Introduction to reading creative works, genres, metaphor, imitation, images.
Sep. 16 - 18	Reading continued, and introduction to workshop. Workshop 1. Conferences.
Sep. 23 – 25	Conferences continued. Introduction to pattern and insight, and close reading. Book Festival events this week and weekend!
Sep. 30 – Oct. 2	Introduction to revision, including radical revision.
Oct. 7 - 9	Workshop 2. Introduction to dialogue and collaborative writing of plays.
Oct. 14 - 16	Collaborate drafting of plays. Monologue to explore characters. Tension and energy in narrative arc.
Oct. 21 - 23	Playwrighting and in-class conferences with instructor.
Oct. 28 - 30	Workshop 3 of plays, including written comments, and introduction to forms.
Nov. 4 - 6	Braided creative nonfiction, micro memoir and flash.
Nov. 11 - 13	Introduction to poetry forms and writing in forms.
Nov. 18 - 20	Forms work continued, and conferences with instructor.
Nov. 25 – 27	Workshop 4 , with written feedback. Introduction of sharable digital artifacts and final portfolio. Thanksgiving Break Thursday and Friday.
Dec. 2 - 4	Introduction to sharable digital artifacts.
Dec. 9 - 11	Review and workshopping of sharable digital artifacts.

Final Exam period: Plan to attend. Sharable digital artifact presentations. Final Portfolios due.