

**English 160: Intro to Creative Writing**  
**Spring 2023, T/Th 12:30pm-1:50pm**  
**Dickinson Hall, Room 405**

Instructor: Eric Johnson

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00pm-3:00pm, and by appointment

Office: Dickinson Hall, Room 516

Phone: (847) 555-1234

Email: [ewijohnson@poetryu.edu](mailto:ewijohnson@poetryu.edu)

### **Course Objectives**

This course serves as an introduction to creative writing in all genres. Students will explore texts in poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and hybrid genres, and learn to apply those techniques to their own writing. Students will also have the opportunity to workshop some of their writing.

This course will provide the opportunity to:

- Engage in readings and discussion of poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and hybrid genres
- Analyze writing as an art form to better understand the craft
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in students' own writing
- Complete weekly writing assignments
- Revise work and practice revision techniques

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Discuss and critically analyze the foundational techniques of each genre of creative writing
- Employ or adapt tools and techniques of language to their own writing
- Produce a final portfolio of original writing

### **Course Components**

This course will be split between readings/discussion and composing/revising. We will cover all of the major genres, including poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and hybrid. Students will complete readings and assignments for each of the genres. Each student will sign up for 2 workshops, they can select which two genres they want to workshop in. The last part of the class will revolve around revision strategies.

### **Grading**

Writing Assignments: 6 assignments: 3 poems, 1 fiction, 1 non-fiction, 1 hybrid at 4 points each (24 points total)

Readings/Discussion: 10 weeks at 2 points each (20 points total)

Written Workshop Feedback: 6 workshops at 4 points each (24 points total)

Final Portfolio: revision of 2 poems, and 2 of: fiction, non-fiction, hybrid at 8 points each (32 points total)

### **Grading Scale**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Points</b>
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D	60-69
F	Below 60

### **Office Hours**

Available in-person or over Zoom. Appointments are encouraged, but not required. If you drop-in, please note that you may have to wait as students with appointments will have first dibs. If you can't make office hours, email or talk to me and we can set up another time to meet.

### **Contact Info**

Email is the easiest way to reach me. Do not count on me responding after 5pm or on weekends, so plan ahead!

### **Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism is not tolerated. Your first offense will be a non-negotiable 0 on the assignment. Your second offense will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and will result in probable expulsion from the program. Don't do it. If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, please come talk to me.

### **Formatting**

For prose: Nothing unusual. 12 pt Times New Roman or 11 pt Calibri. Double-spaced, default margins. For poems: Anything goes, but it must be legible. Standard fonts are encouraged.

### **Attendance**

You are allowed two absences for any reason. I do not need to know the reason, but you do need to let me know. Send me an email saying you are using one of your excused absences. That said, please plan on being present for your workshop days, because you will not have a chance to redo

them unless you can convince another student to switch with you. I will not help you switch days. You must switch at least a week in advance of your workshop, and I must be informed at least a week in advance. Having any unexcused absences (read: an absence that you do not notify me of beforehand) or more than two excused absences will result in automatic withdrawal from the course, or if after the withdrawal deadline, a failing grade.

### **Punctuality**

Please show up on time and be prepared to participate. Showing up more than 10 minutes late more than twice will result in an absence.

### **Late Work**

For all assignments *except for workshop pieces*, you have an 8-hour grace period. After that, late work will incur a 10% penalty for every 24 hours, up to 72 hours, after which you will receive a 0 on the assignment. No late assignments will be accepted for workshop pieces, as the rest of the class is relying on you.

### **Extensions**

For all assignments *except for workshop pieces*, you can have up to two extensions of 72 hours for any reason. Just email me and let me know you'd like to use one of your extensions. If you have extenuating circumstances, please talk to me and we can work something out!

### **Classroom Conduct**

Please be respectful of everyone in the class. I would like to cultivate a positive environment, but I cannot do it by myself. I need everyone's participation.

### **Learning Accommodations**

If you require any accommodations, please contact the Office of Accommodations. They will get in touch with me to provide anything you need.

### **Content Warnings**

Literature can be described as the study and artistic expression of human lives and emotions. Not all of these lives, actions, or emotions are pleasant, and in fact, many are extremely unpleasant and difficult to engage with. To that end, this serves as a blanket content notification for the entire course. Please note that we may encounter texts that deal with violence, drug abuse, racism, sexual violence, and more. If you have a particular type of content that you know you find difficult, please talk with me and I will work with you on providing an individual notification or alternative reading. Similarly, if you come across something that you are not able to engage with, feel free to stop reading. If we are discussing in class and you need to leave for a few minutes, please do so.

Finally, I would also encourage everyone to include content notifications for the work you submit, both for myself as well as the class as a whole. Please act with compassion and empathy, and always use your best judgement.

## **Restricted Content**

The only content that will be restricted is gratuitous violence and hate speech. Gratuitous is defined here as not being necessary to the piece. This can be very subjective, so please talk to me if you are unsure. Remember to be respectful towards everyone in our class.

## **What to Bring to Class**

Notebook, writing instruments, water, snacks if you need (although please refrain from anything too aromatic and any common allergens (no peanuts, etc.)). I will ask you to keep your phones put away. It shows disrespect to not be fully engaged. Laptops are fine, although if I notice that you are looking at content not related to class, or if you are not participating, I may ask you to put them away.

## **Additional Help**

There is a wonderful Writing Center and a Tutoring Center on campus, so please feel free to contact them if you need any additional assistance.

## **Schedule**

### *Week 1—Introductions*

#### *Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: Syllabus

#### *Thursday:*

Read/Discuss: selected essays on creative writing

### *Week 2—Foundations of Poetry*

#### *Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: selected Shakespeare Sonnets; “Tintern Abbey,” William Wordsworth; excerpts from *Song of Myself*, Walt Whitman; selections from Emily Dickinson; “Thanatopsis” and “Autumn Woods,” William Cullen Bryant; selections from Jane Johnston Schoolcraft; excerpts from *The Canterbury Tales*

#### *Thursday:*

In-class writing exercises

**Due today:** Assignment 1 (poem)

If you’re in Workshop 1, bring copies for everyone

### *Week 3—Modern Poetry*

#### *Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: selections from Sylvia Plath; excerpts from *Four Quartets*, T.S. Eliot; selected haiku, Ezra Pound; selections from Lorine Niedecker; “We Real Cool,” Gwendolyn Brooks; “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird,” Wallace Stevens; excerpts from *Trilogy*, H.D.; selections from William Carlos Williams; excerpts from *Tender Buttons*, Gertrude Stein; “The Fish,” Marianne Moore; selections from George Oppen.

*Thursday:*

Workshop 1

**Due today:** Assignment 2 (poem)  
If you’re in Workshop 2, bring copies for everyone  
Written feedback for Workshop 1

#### *Week 4—Contemporary Poetry*

*Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: excerpts from *frank: sonnets*, Diane Seuss; excerpts from *A Cruelty Special to Our Species*, Emily Jungmin Yoon; excerpts from *Salvinia Molesta*, Victoria Chang; excerpts from *feeld*, Charles Jos; excerpts from *Whereas*, Layli Long Soldier; excerpts from *She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks*, M. NourbeSe Philip; excerpts from *Burying the Mountain*, Shangyang Fang; excerpts from *The Tradition*, Jericho Brown; excerpts from *Guillotine*, Eduardo C. Corral.

*Thursday:*

Workshop 2

**Due today:** Assignment 3 (poem)  
If you’re in Workshop 3, bring copies for everyone  
Written feedback for Workshop 2

#### *Week 5—Fiction pt. 1*

*Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: excerpts from *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf; excerpts from *Housekeeping*, Marilynne Robinson.

*Thursday:*

Workshop 3

**Due today:** Written feedback for Workshop 3  
If you’re in Workshop 4, bring copies for everyone

#### *Week 6—Fiction pt. 2*

*Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: excerpts from *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Angela Carter; excerpts from *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston.

*Thursday:*

## Workshop 4

**Due today:** Assignment 4 (fiction, 8-10 pages)  
 If you're in Workshop 5, bring copies for everyone  
 Written feedback for Workshop 4

*Week 7—Creative Non-Fiction pt. 1**Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: excerpts from *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Joan Didion;  
 excerpts from *The Library Book*, Susan Orlean.

*Thursday:*

## Workshop 5

**Due today:** Written feedback for Workshop 5  
 If you're in Workshop 6, bring copies for everyone

*Week 8—Creative Non-Fiction pt. 2**Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: excerpts from *Crying in H Mart*, Michelle Zauner; excerpts from  
*Before We Were Trans*, Kit Heyam.

*Thursday:*

## Workshop 6

**Due today:** Assignment 5 (non-fiction, 8-10 pages)  
 If you're in Workshop 7, bring copies for everyone  
 Written feedback for Workshop 6

*Week 9—Hybrid Genres pt. 1**Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: *Bluets*, Maggie Nelson

*Thursday:*

## Workshop 7

**Due today:** Written feedback for Workshop 7  
 If you're in Workshop 8, bring copies for everyone

*Week 10—Hybrid Genres pt. 2**Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: *Antiman: A Hybrid Memoir*, Rajiv Mohabir

*Thursday:*

## Workshop 8

**Due today:** Assignment 6 (hybrid, 4-8 pages),  
 Written feedback for Workshop 8

*Week 11—Revision Strategies**Tuesday:*

Read/Discuss: selections in Canvas, tbd

*Thursday:*

Continue working on revisions, discuss in class

*Week 12—Wrapping Up**Tuesday:*

Continue working on revisions, discuss in class

*Thursday:*

Celebration of accomplishments &amp; sharing writing

**Due today:** Final Portfolio