

ENGL 105X, Section 32823R: CREATIVE WRITING FOR NON-MAJORS
FALL 2019: W 2:00-4:20 p.m., MRF 206

Instructor: Piotr Florczyk
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Office Hours: W, 12:45-1:45 p.m. (and by appointment)

Course Description:

Although writing is a solitary activity, this semester we will immerse ourselves in the reading, writing, and critiquing of a select group of poems, essays, and translations. In addition to focusing on close-reading and insightful analysis of creative writing texts, we will also examine various social, political, and cultural contexts to see if and how they might have impacted the authors under discussion. Furthermore, as we share one another's work and provide feedback, we will learn how to present our own work, how to take in a critique, and how to revise our work. Our ultimate goal will be to experience the creative process together, so that our workshop experience is not just an addendum to the creative act, but an extension of it, with something creative happening in the room for each of us.

Required Texts and Materials:

- Handouts (provided by instructor/posted to Blackboard)

Although this is a writing course, the handouts form its foundation. You are responsible for reading all assigned texts and attending each class prepared to participate in class discussion. Without reading the texts, you will not be able to complete the assignments.

Course Learning Objectives:

The aim of the workshop is to offer all participants the intellectual and creative guidance to help them develop their own creative texts as well as the necessary techniques for participation in the ongoing dialogue with other writers and critics; more specifically:

1. The ability to articulate a craft-based analysis of works of literature, including your own;
2. The ability to describe and define the conventions, forms, and expectations of various literary genres;
3. The ability to take a piece of our own writing all the way from first inspiration to a final polished draft by responding to critique and comments of instructor and fellow students;
4. Demonstration of constructive participation in a writers' workshop by providing specific and helpful comments to fellow student writers;
5. Application of critical thinking and reading skills to written analysis of literary works and texts;

Grading:

- 2 poems (with revisions), 15% of grade
- 2 essays (with revisions), 15% of grade
- 1 translation (poetry or prose), 10% of grade
- 2 written response to an assigned reading (300 words), 10% of grade
- Oral Presentation, 15% of grade
- Course self-reflection (300 words), 5% of grade
- Miscellaneous requirements: *active* participation and feedback, etc., 20% of grade
- Final portfolio (revisions!), 10% of grade

Extra Credit Opportunity: taking part in an event commemorating the fall of the Berlin Wall this November. Details TBA.

Writing Assignments:

Two brief reading responses: Please respond in approx. 300 words to the previous week's readings, addressing the text's technique. What makes it successful, not successful? Why? Due Week 3/4 and 13 (single-spaced)

Two poems: Please turn in a free-verse poem for workshopping in class. The poem should be 20-30 lines in length (single-spaced).

Two essays/creative non-fiction pieces: Please turn in an essay for workshopping in class. The essay, creative or personal, should also be argumentative or clear about its thesis. Approx. 1,200 words in length (double-spaced).

One translation: after discussing your chosen text with me, please translate a poem or a prose text into English (single-spaced). Due Week 15 (in-class, no in your portfolio).

Oral presentation: You are responsible for a 15-minute presentation on an author and his/her craft. Your presentation should include a writing exercise. Due Week 8 or 10.

One course self-reflection: In 300 words, please reflect on your development as a writer/poet/translator during this past quarter (single-spaced)

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend class on regular basis and not be late. Students who miss more than two classes or come in late more than twice will have their participation grade lowered one step (for example, from A to B). However, if serious illness, family emergencies, or other crises occur during the term, one of the key things you must do is contact me AND your advisor as soon as possible.

Policies:

- Abusive behavior of any kind, toward instructor or another student, is forbidden by college policy and may result in expulsion.
- No work will be accepted late unless previous arrangements (at least 24 hours in advance) have been made with me.
- All writing assignments should be double-spaced, typed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with standard margins, and paginated. Poetry may be single-spaced.
- The use of electronic devices (headphones, cell phones, laptops, etc.) in the classroom is permitted, but please asks for permission first.

Tentative Class schedule:

Week 1: INTRODUCTION AND WRITING EXERCISES (POETRY)
W 8/28

Week 2: POETRY
W 9/4
Reading due: WEEK 2 handout
Writing due: POEM 1 (GROUP A)

Week 3: POETRY
W 9/11
Reading due: WEEK 3 handout
Writing due: POEM 1 (GROUP B)
Writing due: Written response #1 (GROUP A)

Week 4: POETRY
W 9/18
Reading due: WEEK 4 handout
Writing due: POEM 2 (GROUP A)
Writing due: Written response #1 (GROUP B)

Week 5: POETRY
W 9/25
Reading Due: WEEK 5 handout
Writing due: POEM 2 (GROUP B)

Week 6: ESSAY/NON-FICTION
W 10/2
Reading due: Joan Didion “Why I Write”
<http://people.bridgewater.edu/~atrupe/ENG310/Didion.pdf>
Writing due: ESSAY 1 (GROUP A)

Week 7: ESSAY/NON-FICTION
W 10/9
Reading Due: Pico Iyer, “Cities of Sleep”
<http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2013/mar/21/cities-sleep/>
Writing due: ESSAY 1 (GROUP B)

Week 8: ORAL PRESENTATIONS
W 10/16 **GROUP A**

Week 9: **CLASS CANCELLED**
W 10/23

Week 10: ORAL PRESENTATIONS
W 10/30 **GROUP B**

Week 11: ESSAY/NON-FICTION
W 11/6 **Reading due:** Aida Alami’s “Somali and American: Portrait of a Minnesota Community.” <https://bit.ly/2J9BsTf>
Writing due: ESSAY 2 (GROUP A)

Week 12: ESSAY/NON-FICTION
W 11/13 **Reading due:** Viet Thanh Nguyen’s “In Praise of Doubt and Uselessness”
Writing due: ESSAY 2 (GROUP B)

Week 13: TRANSLATION (In-class exercises)
W 11/20 **Reading due:** Jacek Gutorow’s “Letter from Poland: On Translating Poetry” <https://bit.ly/2XxLI0P>
Writing due: Written response #2 (GROUPS A & B)

Week 14: **NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING**
W 11/27

Week 15: TRANSLATION
W 12/4 **Writing due: 1 translation**
Writing due: Portfolio of all your work: revised poems/essays, and your course self-reflection

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE TO BE ANNOUNCED

Bibliography for further study:

See me.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism—presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Support Systems:

The Writing Center – 213-740-3691 Offers one-on-one support for academic writing. Appointments for individual consultations can be made online. <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/> Students whose primary language is not English may also check with the American Language Institute <http://ali.usc.edu>

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu