**Professor McCabe**

**English 105—the ONLINE version**

Writing Through the Genres, Writing as Discovery, Exploration, Imagination, Insight

“Imagination is my best friend,

Got to watch for the greedy hand.” –Neil Young

“I was waiting for something and nothing arrived […]

My dear sweet Nothing let’s start anew”—The Villagers

**Description**

This class very broadly presents a chance for you to write and to process parts of your emerging “story,” to confront difficult poetic and cultural difficulties in a safe space. We are living in a time of great change, and as in other tumultuous periods in history, writers are called “to hold” ideas, feelings, movements, memories, events that otherwise are lost in the day-to-day. This is the time to keep your journal, and find out what moves you and what doesn’t, what centers you and what disturbs you, what you treasure and what you disdain. The aim is to discover in the imagination a method for finding space and time outside of usual routines.

In fact, you will be asked to write as a ritual practice, doing free-writing exercises and drafting in your journals, drawing upon your inner world as it responds to itself and the outer world. Writing asks a lot from us, and we will need to be kind to each other and ourselves. I require readings in poems, lyric essay, short fiction, and writings in response. You will also be responding in a workshop setting to the writing of your peers. (See **Assignments** for list of what is required; all subject to change, of course.)

If you are willing to read deeply, risk writing your unfolding truths and insights, and to participate conscientiously in the online class, this is the place for you. It is necessary everyone show up on screen, unless there is a compelling reason not to, for optimum success.

**Readings**

**We will read (all in Content section of your Blackboard page) poems, essays, and a short novella. All are either available by pdf or by a link to the library for downloading online reading.**

Muriel Rukeyser, “I Lived in the First Century of World Wars

Muriel Rukeyser, Chapter One, from *Life of Poetry.*

Elizabeth Bishop’s “Crusoe in England”

Frederick Douglas essay “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (July 5, 1852)

Carolyn Williams’s “You want a Confederate Monument”

Bishop, “In the Waiting Room”

“Three poems: Frost, Thylias Moss, Brenda Hillman”

Octavia Butler’s “Necessary Being”

Anna Journey’s “An Arrangement of Skin”

Bishop’s “One Art” and drafts

I will also have a packet of other pertinent poems.

**Schedule of Readings.**

**Announcement: Assignment #1 due of 1 ½ page by August 16, noon, before class; see assignment list.**

**Week 1 Aug 17** Read from the short profiles in class; Discuss Rukeyser’s “I Lived in the First Century of World Wars”; Discuss her Chapter One, from *Life of Poetry.* Again both posted in content portion of Blackboard.

**Week 2 Aug 24**

Discuss Bishop’s “Crusoe in England,” based on the novel by 18th.c. Daniel Defoe it was based on (see a plot summary online if you have not read this once highly popular novel about survival after shipwreck); in class writing; **Assign #2.**

**Week 3 Aug 31** Workshop for Assignment #2 **(Group 1)**

Week 5 LABOR DAY Sept 7

**Week 6 Sept 14** Workshop for Assignment #2 **(Group 2)**

**Week 7 Sept 21** Discuss Douglass essay “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (July 5, 1852),, Carolyn Williams’s “You want a Confederate Monument,” Bishop, “In the Waiting Room,” and “Three poems: Frost, Hillman” Assign # 3 (poem or essay)

**Week 8 Sept 28** Workshop for #3 **Group 2**

**Week 9 Oct 5** Workshop for #3 **Group 1**

**Week 10 Oct 12** Futures: Discuss Octavia Butler’s “Necessary Being” longish novella. Be mindful; Assign #4 (short-short story or essay)

**Week 11 Oct 19** Workshop for #4 **Group 1**

**Week 12 Oct 26** Workshop for #4 **Group 2**

**Week 13 Nov 2** Obsessions: Discuss Anna Journey’s “An Arrangement of Skin”; Bishop’s “One Art” and drafts. Assign #5 (open genre)

**Week 14 Nov 9**. **Workshop for All**

Portfolio due to me online Wednesday **Nov 18** with all assignments, and your journal (see below)

**Assignments should be turned in to me online at** [**mccabe@usc.edu**](mailto:mccabe@usc.edu)**, including your paragraph responses to peer writing due from you when your Group is not “up” for workshop.**

**Email list of students**

**Group 1**

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**Group 2**

kellere@usc.edu; joyceali@usc.edu; gmargari@usc.edu; irogers@usc.edu; jxthomas@usc.edu; [lawrenhw@usc.edu](mailto:lawrenhw@usc.edu) [mccabe@usc.edu](mailto:mccabe@usc.edu)

1. **Announcement: Assignment #1 due of 1 ½ page by August 16, noon, before class; see assignment list. I will send reminders out about the assignments.**
2. 1-2 page Short essay of self-introduction, and why you want to write, and what inspires you now? You can post these to the discussion board for everyone to read before class on August 17. Think about what is the most important thing(s) we need to know about you. **Due Aug. 16**
3. 2-4 page “lyric” essay or poem based on your quarantine experiences; what you learned; what you find most challenging as well as most inspiring. Put yourself on an island, like Crusoe, then tell your story of the spring to summer, condensed. **Due Aug. 30.**
4. A poem or essay (2-4 pages) based on the readings of Douglass, Williams, Bishop, or one of “three poems.” This assignment requires you to hone in upon an “issue” and write creatively about it, but especially central to the assignment, find a ‘moment’ or ‘moments” that have been transformative in how you are both a private personal being and a social, cultural, historical one. **Due Sept. 7**
5. A short-short story or essay, dystopian or utopian or both, inspired by Butler. 4-5 pages.

**Due Oct. 18**

1. Open Genre on an obsession, or area you want to explore; what are your current obsessions, then narrow it down. 1-3 pages. **Due Nov 8**

**Requirements**

--Complete Readings Assigned for Day of Class

--Keep a Journal for portfolio, including free-writing, and at least notes and a draft towards assignment 30%

--Complete all five writings on due date (each workshop 10%) 50%

The main criterion for your grade is showing up, readiness to participate, preparedness, completing all assignments on time as well as your engagement, supplying positive, helpful comments. If you just do your best, you will have the whole percentage. 20%

We may not be able to read the whole of all assignments depending on length, but classmates will have notes on the whole and be able to talk about the whole work submitted. We will have only ten minutes maximum for each student thus your grade largely depends on your prepared readiness to engage with the material, with me and your peers, again part of the 20%.

**Logistics**

There will be two groups of students (I will separate you randomly), so that on workshop days we can focus more carefully. All students *NOT* submitting their work for scrutiny the day of Workshop classes (indicated in schedule) will write a mini-review (a paragraph or so about each of the submitted poems) to be emailed to me, and the author of the piece *after* we’ve discussed in class. Use these paragraphs as **talking notes** for the material of your peers.

**Remember class etiquette, and speak with agape (impersonal higher love) driving your comments.**

We will go over what to expect in a workshop the first day, written here in short. Please submit all works by noon Sunday at the latest before they are due for workshop, giving everyone a chance to have quality feedback to supply each writer.

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:

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