Catalog Entry

Introduction to Creative Writing (3-0) Study and practice of essential techniques of creative writing in at least two genres. This course satisfies your liberal arts block elective or functions as a gateway course along with CRW 3364 for majors and minors.

Course Description

In order to respond to the call to write creatively, writers must learn the basic elements that inform his/her/their chosen medium—poetry or fiction—and read the work of authors that have mastered their craft. This course spearheads the knowledge that will be gradually acquired by creative writing majors, assist non-majors in their development of creative writing techniques, and provide every student, regardless of academic path, with a more comprehensive appreciation of creative work as readers of poetry and fiction throughout their lifetime.

Course Delivery

The course will be delivered online using Blackboard, Blackboard Collaborate and Zoom with synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded) components. Synchronous components include a Meet-and-Greet session, live lectures using Zoom, and weekly virtual office hours using Blackboard Collaborate. Attendance to the live lectures is optional, and live lectures will be recorded so students can access these at a later time. Asynchronous components include recorded lectures that can be accessed whenever the student chooses. This is not a self-paced class. The course is organized by weeks with corresponding assignments and deadlines. The course will feature lecture, discussion, and workshop components.

Course Outcomes

Throughout this course, students will:

- Recognize literary devices used in poetry and fiction, and apply them to their own work.
- Provide and receive professional criticism of peers’ poetry or short story submissions.
- Produce a final portfolio with a critical preface and revised versions of a poem and short story.
This course is also designed to promote your overall success, inside and outside the classroom. The coursework will help you improve in key areas such as communication, confidence, critical thinking and teamwork.

Course Materials

No textbook required; all course materials are available through Blackboard.

Course Assignments

CRW 3362 is graded on a scale of 0-1000. The course assignments are outlined below. Please note that specific instructions will be provided on Blackboard.

Orientation Assignments: For Week 1 you will submit an introduction post and participate in a syllabus scavenger hunt. The purpose of these one-time assignments is to navigate Blackboard and to start creating a sense of community and collaboration among your classmates and instructor. Due date: Sunday, August 30 by 11:59 pm. 25 points/12.5 points each

Reading Journals (RJ): You will post your reading journal, and a three-sentence (minimum) response to one of your classmates. The purpose of this assignment is to process the material by yourself to then engage with different perspectives. To write mindful reading journals and responses please read the materials carefully, take notes, and make lists of observations and/or questions you’d like to share in your posts. Due date: Sundays by 11:59 pm (for specific dates please go to the course calendar). 144 points/16 points each

In-Class Assignments (ICAs): You will address specific prompts provided by the instructor. The purpose of these activities is to apply/test concepts related to the writing of poetry or short stories, and to generate material that will be workshopped and included in your final portfolio. Due date: Sundays by 11:59 pm (for specific dates please go to the course calendar). 165 points/16.5 points each

Small Group Workshop: You will participate in small group workshops where you’ll share a poem (1 page) and a short story (5-8 pages), and follow a workshop prompt provided by the instructor to discuss what works and what needs improvement. Due date: Friday of Week 7 and Week 15 by 11:59 pm (for specific dates please go to the course calendar). 400 points/200 each

Virtual Poetry Factory: You will submit a video that features you reading your poem out loud. Due Date: Week 16; date TBA. 26 points

Final Portfolio: You will produce a final portfolio that contains a critical preface, and revised versions of the poem and short story submitted during workshop. Due date: Friday, December 11 by 11:59 pm. 240 points

Grade Distribution

1000-900 = A
899-800 = B
799 -700 = C
699- 600 = D
599 and below = F
Classroom Policies

**Late Work:** Assignments are due by 11:59 pm on Sundays with the exception of three assignments: feedback for small group workshops on Friday, October 9 and Friday, December 4, as well as the Final Portfolio due on Friday, December 11. I will only accept late work on a case-by-case basis, and only if the student contacts me at least 24 hours before the assignment deadline. Please keep in mind that technology is fallible, like all things man made. For this reason, avoid posting or uploading assignments at the last minute. If you encounter technological problems please contact UTEP’s Help Desk as soon as possible.

**Attendance:** Attendance will be noted by your week-to-week performance. This means that if you persistently fail to turn in assignments or respect deadlines, you may earn a failing grade if you do not withdraw from the course. *The responsibility to withdraw from the course is yours;* I will not automatically withdraw you if your performance is unsatisfactory. Please notify me as soon as possible if you encounter extraordinary circumstances that affect your ability to attend class. **Course drop deadline is Friday, October 30th, 2020.**

**Withdrawals:** Each semester has a drop date beyond which an instructor can no longer drop a student with a “W.” Students who fail to fulfill assignments after the drop date must necessarily receive an “F.” However, in the event of exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the instructor of the course and the academic dean, a grade of “W” may be obtained. The student is responsible for supplying written documentation to support the request for a “W.” Acceptable reasons for a “W” include: personal or family emergencies, death of a family member, military leave, or an exceptional work schedule that prevents you from completing the course. Before you decide to withdraw from the course, please contact your academic advisor to discuss this option, and don’t hesitate to contact me as well for input.

**Format:** All assignments will be turned in through Blackboard in 12-point Times New Roman or a font of similar size with your name on the upper left margin. For the poem, you may use single or double space; for the short story, it must be double spaced with page numbers. When naming files, please follow this to facilitate downloading and grading: First name_CRW3362_Assignment_CRN. For example: Alessandra_CRW3362_RJ1_12694.

**Quality:** While this is a writing class where creative pieces are produced, and credit is given for turning these and other assignments on time, (unjustified) poor grammar, evident lack of effort, and/or failure to follow guidelines will affect your grade.

**Netiquette:** Your conduct during class should always be respectful and professional towards your instructor and classmates alike. In an online class, this is especially true as we will mostly rely on electronic communication to interact with each other. For that reason, a professional tone should extend to *all* the writing you do for this class (posts, assignments, and emails). Therefore, please consider the template below when addressing me or your classmates through email or Blackboard, and don’t forget to include a subject when writing an email.

*Hello or Dear [name of recipient; address me as Alessandra or Ms. (not Mrs) Narváez Varela],
Write the content of your email here. Make sure you proofread for proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Try to use formal, professional language.
Sincerely or Best [the sign off is up to you as long as you signal it is the end of your message],
Your name*

For more suggestions to communicate successfully and professionally in an online setting, please go to Blackboard>Weeks>Week 1>Read Me First.
Workshop Etiquette: You should take the literary critic role seriously, as your classmates’ poems and short stories are highly personal pieces that deserve your careful reading, time and respect. If these are observed, then the critique of your work should never be taken personally. Also, I will defend your writing ferociously from disrespectful, pointless critique (which is a rare occurrence) so please enjoy writing creatively, sharing your work, and receiving feedback.

Communication: Maintaining constant, open lines of communication between students and instructor is key to every productive and enjoyable learning experience. This is especially the case for online courses, more so as we adapt to the challenges posed by the current global health crisis. For this reason, it is vital that you communicate with me as soon as possible about extenuating circumstances that affect your performance. I’m invested in helping you navigate the course and succeed, but you have to communicate with me and keep me updated.

There are several ways in which communication will take place:

   **Email:** Contact me at anarvaez2@utep.edu using your UTEP email. The first time you write to me please type my email as given; don’t rely on the automatic feature of the electronic directory because it will send your message to the wrong domain. My response time for emails sent Monday through Friday 9-5pm is 24-48 hours; for emails sent on weekends, I will respond until the next day of business.

   **Announcements:** I will send weekly communication through the Announcement tool in Blackboard. Please check your UTEP email often for that is where Blackboard announcements are sent instantly. You can also read my announcements by going to “Announcements” on Blackboard’s left-side menu.

   **Virtual Office Hours:** I will have a Blackboard Collaborate “office” where you can visit me to ask questions in real time. Virtual office hours will take place on Mondays from 2-3:30 pm or by making an appointment (please note I’m in the Mountain Time Zone). You will access the virtual office by going to “Virtual Office” on Blackboard’s left-side menu.

   **Zoom Live Lectures:** I will host several live lectures to interact with students and to review certain elements of the writing of poems and short stories that are more complex. These lectures will take place on Tuesdays from 3-4:20 pm. Attendance is optional, and I will record these live lectures so students can access them at a later time. You will “join” these lectures by going to “Live Lectures” on Blackboard’s left-side menu; alternatively, I might also send you a link to your UTEP email. Pre-recorded lectures will also be available for viewing. Pre-recorded lectures and recorded live lectures will be found in each week’s “Lecture” folder. The course calendar and Blackboard include more information about specific dates.

   **Blackboard comments:** I will give you feedback on your assignments by using Blackboard. Please make sure to read these as I provide personalized input designed to help you digest the content and improve your performance in the course. My response time for grading and feedback is within 1 week for short assignments and up to 2 weeks for longer assignments.

**University Policies and Services**

**University Writing Center (UWC):** I encourage you to make use of the UWC during the planning, drafting, and/or revising phases of writing any assignment in this class. The trained writing consultants can help you a fresh perspective on ideas and help you with things like correctness, formatting, etc. The UWC is located on the main floor of the library, to the right of the elevators and computer lab. This is especially important for the short story section; thus, if you know you struggle with grammar, please get help before sharing your work, so we can focus on the content of the story, not its grammatical mistakes.
**Academic Integrity:** An act of plagiarism (or other form of academic dishonesty) will result in an ‘F’ for the course, and may include other University disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion. You should become familiar with the ethical guidelines for conduct spelled out in the Student Affairs section of the Handbook for Operating Procedures. Additionally, please be aware that you may not submit work for this class that was produced for another class. You must produce your own original work in this class and appropriately identify and portion of your work which is collaborative with others, borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts. Always cite your information. If you have doubts as to whether or not you are using your own or others’ work legally and ethically, ask me or stop by the UTEP Writing Center. Follow this primary principle: Be upfront and honest.

**ADA:** The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you suspect that you have a disability and need accommodation, please contact The Center for Accommodations & Support Services (CASS) at (915)747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu. The CASS office is located in Room 106, Union East. Students are responsible for presenting the instructor with any CASS accommodation letters and instructions.

**Military Student Success Center:** If you are a military student (veteran, dependent, active), consider visiting the Military Success Center at Library Room 205 or online at https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/mssc/. Please inform me if you need special accommodations. If you make me aware of a complication, I will work to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you.

**Calendar**

This calendar is subject to change. I will notify you about changes one week in advance, except for family or health emergencies that affect my ability to communicate with you promptly. Please check Blackboard and your email often.

*Optional* synchronous (live) lectures are marked with an asterisk* (relevant live lectures will be recorded).

Reading key: **RJ**=Reading Journal; **ICA**=In-Class Assignment.

### Week 1: 8/24-8/30

**Introductions, Syllabus and Blackboard**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Due by Sun 8/30 @ 11:59 pm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read Syllabus</td>
<td>Introduction post and response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore Blackboard</td>
<td>Syllabus Scavenger Hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join CRW 3362's Meet and Greet* (Tue 8/25 @ 3-4:20 pm) *=Attendance Optional</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*ICA 1: Go to Blackboard>Weeks> Week 1> ICA 1. For the following ICAs go to the corresponding week.*

### Week 2: 8/31-9/6

Why…poetry? & What is an “awful” poem?
| Activities | Read  
|------------|----------------------------------|
|            | “How to Read a Poem” (Edward Hirsch)  
|            | “Awful Poems” (Steve Kowit)  
|            | “Introduction to Poetry” (Billy Collins)  
| Join       | Live Lecture * (Tue 9/1 @ 3-4:20 pm): Go to Blackboard > Live Lectures  
|            | *=Attendance Optional  
| Due by Sun 9/6 @ 11:59 pm | o RJ1: Go to Blackboard > Weeks > Week 2 > RJ1 & RJ1 Response for questions. For the following RJs go to the corresponding week.  
|            | o RJ 1 Response: Post a reply to one classmate; two sentences minimum.  
|            | o ICA 2  
| Week 3: 9/7-9/13 | What is imagery in poetry? & What does it take to write “fresh” metaphors and similes?  
| Activities | Read  
|            | “Images” (Kim Addonizio and Dorianne Laux)  
|            | “Gate C-22” (Ellen Bass)  
|            | “Negative” (Kevin Young)  
|            | “Dim Lady” (Harryette Mullen)  
| Join       | Live Lecture* (Tue 9/8 @ 3-4:20 pm)  
| Due by Sun 9/13 @ 11:59 pm | o RJ 2  
|            | o RJ 2 Response  
|            | o ICA 3  
| Week 4: 9/14-9/20 | How is music created in free verse poems?  
| Activities | Read  
|            | Prosody handout  
|            | “Line Breaks” (Steve Kowit)  
|            | “Paramour” (Rosa Alcalá)  
|            | “The Sawgrass Women Make Me Nervous” (Lauren Berry)  
|            | “Rhumba” (Rita Dove)  
| Join       | Live Lecture* (Tue 9/15 @ 3-4:20 pm)  
| Due by Sun 9/20 @ 11:59 pm | o RJ 3  
|            | o RJ 3 Response  
|            | No ICA Due  
| Week 5: 9/21-9/27 | How is music created in free verse poems? CONT’D  
| Activities | Read  
|            | “Shadi” (Fatima Asghar)  
|            | “Never After” (Evie Shockley)  
| Watch      | Recorded Lecture  
| Due by Sun 9/27 @ | o ICA 4  

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### Week 6: 9/28-10/4

**Social justice and poetry & Revision**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Read</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“September 14, 2013...” (Patricia Smith)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“(Citizen) (Illegal)” (José Olivarez)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Join**

- Live Lecture* (Tue 9/29 @ 3-4:20 pm)

**Due by Sun 10/4 @ 11:59 pm**

- RJ 4
- Poem first draft for Small Group Poetry Workshop
  - No RJ Response Due

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### Week 7: 10/5-10/11

**Small Group Workshop (Poetry)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Read</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 poems from the classmates in your small group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Poetry in Action” (NY Times)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Shifty First Drafts” (Anne Lamott)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Murder Your Darlings” (Seth Fried)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Watch**

- Recorded Lecture

**Due by Fri 10/9 @ 11:59 pm**

- Feedback for 2 poems

**Due by Sun 10/11 @ 11:59 pm**

- ICA 5

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### Week 8: 10/12-10/18

**What does it take to create believable characters?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Moths” (Helena Maria Viramontes)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“My Tocaya” (Sandra Cisneros)</td>
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</tbody>
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**Join**

- Live Lecture* (Tue 10/13 @ 3-4:20 pm)

**Due by Sun 10/18 @ 11:59 pm**

- RJ 5
- RJ 5 Response
- ICA 6

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### Week 9: 10/19-10/25

**How does literary dialogue differ from daily, human dialogue?**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dialogue Handout</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been” (Joyce Carol Oates)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“A Perfect Day for Bananafish” (J.D. Salinger)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Join**

- Live Lecture* (Tue 10/20 @ 3-4:20 pm)

**Due by Sun 10/25 @ 11:59 pm**

- RJ 6
- RJ 6 Response
  - No ICA Due
## Week 10: 10/26-11/1

### How does literary dialogue differ from daily, human dialogue? CONT'D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Read</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Fat” and “Popular Mechanics” (Raymond Carver)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Watch Recorded Lecture</td>
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**Course Drop Deadline:** Friday, October 30

Due by Sun 11/1 @ 11:59 pm
- ICA 7
- Extra Credit RJ

## Week 11: 11/2-11/8

### Why does it matter “who” tells a story and from “what distance?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“All at One Point” (Italo Calvino)</td>
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<td>“Hills Like White Elephants” (Ernest Hemingway)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Blackberries” (Leslie Norris)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Girl” (Jamaica Kincaid)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Watch Live Lecture* (Tue 11/3 @ 3-4:20 pm)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due by Sun 11/8 @ 11:59 pm
- RJ 7
- RJ 7 Response
- ICA 8

## Week 12: 11/9-11/15

### Isn’t setting just background? & Why so many flashbacks?!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Read</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The Flowers” (Alice Walker)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“Currents” (Hannah Bottomy Voskuil)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch Recorded Lecture</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Due by Sun 11/15 @ 11:59 pm
- RJ 8
- RJ 8 Response
- ICA 9

## Week 13: 11/16-11/22

### What is suspension of disbelief and verisimilitude? What is an unreliable narrator?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Corzo” (Brenna Gomez)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The School” (Donald Barthelme)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Join Live Lecture* (Tue 11/17 @ 3-4:20 pm)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Due by Sun 11/22 @ 11:59 pm
- RJ 9
- Short story first draft for Small Group Fiction Workshop
- No RJ Response Due

## Week 14: 11/23-11/29

**Thanksgiving**
Enjoy your break!

**Week 15: 11/30-12/6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 short stories from the classmates in your small group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“And Furthermore, Part I: Door Shut, Door Open” (Stephen King)</td>
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<td><strong>Watch</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recorded Lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Due by Fri 12/4 @ 11:59 pm</td>
<td><strong>Feedback for 2 short stories</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Due by Sun 12/6 @ 11:59 pm</td>
<td><strong>ICA 10</strong></td>
</tr>
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**Week 16: 12/7-12/11**

| Finals Week                         | Final Portfolio                                                      |
|                                     | Virtual Poetry Factory                                               |
|                                     | Extra Credit ICA                                                     |
| Due by Fri 12/11 @ 11:59 pm         | **Congratulations @ You made it this far!**                         |
|                                      | For Syllabus Scavenger Hunt Extra Credit Question due Fri 8/30 by 11:59 pm |

What did one balloon say to another balloon when flying in the desert?  
*Watch out for the cac-tussss!*