



**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 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 and developed by creative writing majors, assist non-majors in their understanding of creative writing techniques, and provide every student, regardless of academic path, with a more comprehensive appreciation of creative work as lifetime readers of poetry and fiction.

**Learning 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, and critical thinking.



**Course Delivery**

The course will be delivered face-to-face and it will make use of Blackboard. For this purpose, students must have access to a computer and the internet. 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 Materials & Technology Requirements**

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

Ensure your UTEP email account is working and that you have internet access and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser. You will need to have access to a computer/laptop.

The following software is recommended: Microsoft Office and Adobe Acrobat Reader. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course. If you do not have a word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs for free via UTEP’s Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please avoid contacting me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

**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.

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

**Syllabus Scavenger Quiz:** You will fill out a quiz testing your knowledge about the course requirements and the design of your Blackboard shell. This activity ensures you read the syllabus carefully—instead of going over it during the hectic first week of class— and navigate Blackboard at your own pace. Due date: Monday, September 4 by 12 pm. *30 points*



**Reading Journals (RJ):** The purpose of this weekly assignment is to process the material by yourself to then engage in conversation with your classmates and instructor. To write mindful reading journals please read the materials carefully before class, think about what you read and how it made you feel, then answer the prompts as best as you can— there are no right or wrong answers (only unsubstantiated ones!). There are two types of RJs:





circumstances that affect your ability to attend class. **Course drop deadline is Friday, November 3, 2023.**

**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, I suggest you follow the following to keep track of your assignments: First name\_CRW 3362\_Assignment Name. For example: Alessandra\_CRW3362\_RJ 1.

Please note that while assignments will be submitted electronically to Blackboard, I will also request a print copy of some CEs to ease physical discomforts associated with the use of the computer screen and keyboard. I ask for your understanding. In turn, I know printing credits are limited (more importantly, our tree population is being decimated), so I will limit this request as much as possible. There will be a combination of icons— —at the bottom of CEs to notify you of this requirement.

**Quality:** While this is a writing class where creative pieces are produced, and credit is given for turning 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. For that reason, a professional tone should extend to *all* the writing you do for this class (posts and emails included). 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, Professor/Ms. Narvez 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. I will keep an eye on overly negative, aggressive critique, which is quite a rare occurrence, so please enjoy sharing your work and receiving feedback.

**Tech Etiquette:** As a courtesy to your classmates and instructor, please refrain from using cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc. for recreational purposes while class is ongoing. Creative writing courses are taught in small classrooms, not in large auditoriums where non-academic use of technology goes unnoticed.

**COVID-19 Precautions:** Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your result to [covidaction@utep.edu](mailto:covidaction@utep.edu) so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

### 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 give 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.

**ChatGPT Use:** Because of the rapid pace of change represented by ChatGPT and similar programs, it is necessary to set clear standards regarding their use in a creative writing class: *all* assignment submissions *must* constitute original pieces of writing composed by the student-author *without* the assistance of AI text generators. I recognize ChatGPT can be a valuable generative tool, if a writer is experienced, and has a clear idea of how to use it to further their creative goals. For an introductory course, however, it’s vital that students rely on their original ideas, process and creativity to generate creative work. The same policy applies to reading journals.

**ADA:** The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with



Wed 9/6	<b>Read</b> "Awful Poems" (Steve Kowit)
<b>Week 3</b>	
<b>Imagery cont'd</b>	
<b>Due by Mon 9/11 @ 12 pm on Bb</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>CE 2</b></li> <li>o <b>RJ 2 BB</b></li> </ul>
Mon 9/11	<b>Read</b> "Images" (Kim Addonizio and Dorianne Laux) "Dim Lady" (Harryette Mullen) "Elliptical" (Harryette Mullen)
Wed 9/13	<b>Read</b> "Negative" (Kevin Young) "Gate C-22" (Ellen Bass)
<b>Week 4</b>	
<b>Prosody (Musicality) in Free Verse Poetry</b>	
<b>Due by Mon 9/18 @ 12 pm on Bb</b>	<b>CE 3</b>
<b>Due on M or W</b>	<b>RJ3 TK (Talk):</b> Participate in class, no BB post due. Sign RJ TK sheet by the end of class to account for your participation.
Mon 9/18	<b>Read</b> Prosody handout "Line Breaks" (Steve Kowit) "Paramour" (Rosa Alcalá)
Wed 9/20	<b>Read</b> "Rhumba" (Rita Dove) "The Sawgrass Women Make Me Nervous" (Lauren Berry)
<b>Week 5</b>	
<b>Prosody (Musicality) CONT'd + Introduction to Conferences &amp; Workshop</b>	
<b>Due by Mon 9/25 @ 12 pm on Bb</b>	<b>Extra Credit RJ</b>
<b>Due on M or W</b>	<b>RJ4 TK</b>
Mon 9/25	<b>Read</b> "(Citizen) (illegal)" (José Olivarez) "September 14, 2013..." (Patricia Smith)
Wed 9/27	Introduction to Individual Conferences & Workshop: Etiquette & Guidelines  <b>! Attendance important:</b> We will be discussing how the next 3 weeks of class will work & you will be meeting with your 2 small groups.
<b>Due by Fri 9/29 @ 5pm in mailbox</b>	<b>CE 4</b>
<b>Week 6</b>	
<b>Individual Conferences</b>	





	"El Gordo" (Jaime Cortez) "Corzo" (Brenna Gomez)
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**Week 10**

**Point of View**

<b>Due by Mon 10/30 @ 12 pm on Bb</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ CE 6</li><li>○ RJ6 BB</li><li>○ Extra Credit CE</li></ul>
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<b>Mon 10/30</b>	<b>Read</b> "All at One Point" (Italo Calvino) "Hills Like White Elephants" (Ernest Hemingway) "Blackberries" (Leslie Norris)
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<b>Wed 11/1</b>	<b>Read</b> "Girl" (Jamaica Kincaid) "Powder Puff" (Estella Gonzalez) <b>Due by the end of Day on Bb</b> CE 7
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**Course Drop Deadline:** Friday, November 3

**Week 11**

**Dialogue**

<b>Due by Mon 11/6 @ 12 pm on Bb</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Dialogue Rules Quiz</li><li>○ Extra Credit RJ</li></ul>
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<b>Due on M or W</b>	RJ7 TK
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<b>Mon 11/6</b>	<b>Read</b> "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been" (Joyce Carol Oates) "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" (J.D. Salinger)
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<b>Wed 11/8</b>	<b>Read</b> Dialogue Rules Handout
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<b>Due by Fri 11/10 @ 5pm in mailbox</b>	CE 8
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**Week 12**

**Individual Conferences**

<b>Mon 11/13</b>	<b>Individual Conferences:</b> 7 students <b>Due by end of day on Bb</b> CE 9
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<b>Wed 11/15</b>	<b>Individual Conferences:</b> 8 students <b>Due by end of day on Bb</b> CE 9
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**Week 13**

**Individual Conferences CONT'd + Revision**

<b>Mon 11/20</b>	<b>Individual Conferences:</b> 7 students <b>Due by end of day on Bb</b> CE 9
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<b>Wed 11/22</b>	<b>Read</b> "And Furthermore, Part I: Door Shut, Door Open" (Stephen King) <b>! Attendance important:</b> After revision discussion, you will be meeting with your 2 small groups.
<b>Due by Fri 11/24 @ midnight on Bb</b>	<b>Short story</b> for Small Group Fiction Workshop
<b>Workshop Prep</b> (over the weekend)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Read 4-5 short stories on 11/27 and 11/29</li><li>○ Read workshop questionnaire</li><li>○ Make notes for in-person discussion based on questionnaire</li><li>○ Optional: Get started on your four, 200-word feedback posts, due on Fri 12/1</li></ul>

**Week 14**

**Small Group Workshop (Fiction)**

<b>Mon 11/27</b>	<b>Small Group Workshop</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Share feedback with 2 peers in your small group</li><li>○ BB post due on 12/1</li></ul>
<b>Wed 11/29</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Share feedback with 2 peers in your small group</li><li>○ BB post due on 12/1</li></ul>
<b>Due by Fri 12/1 @ midnight</b>	<b>Feedback posts for 4 short stories</b>



**Week 15**

**Final Portfolio & Poetry Factory**

<b>Mon 12/4</b>	Discussion of Final Portfolio Requirements & Guidelines (Zoom)
<b>Wed 12/6</b>	Class Review Activity (Bring your class notes!) <b>Poetry Factory</b> (class reading): location and Time TBA

**Week 16**

**Finals Week**

<b>Due by Wed 12/13 @ midnight</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Final Portfolio</b></li><li>○ <b>Poetry Factory Video</b> (individual)</li></ul>
<b>Congratulations!</b> You read this far 😊 	<b>For Syllabus Scavenger Quiz's Last Question due Mon 9/4 by 12 pm</b> <b>This syllabus has been revised specifically for this semester.</b> <b>This time, a former student who took this course last year gave me amazing feedback so the class could be better</b>  . <b>Their initials are E. M. and their emoji is a frog.</b> <b>Please send good vibes their way ☀️</b>

