Introduction to Creative Writing
CRW 3362—26027  CRBL C204  TR 9 – 10:20 AM

“If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that.”
-Stephen King

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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 this course, students will be introduced to the study and practice of creative writing in two genres—poetry and fiction. This means we will have fun exploring our creativity and voices, but we will also work hard. Through selected readings and discussions, students will become familiar with the fundamental forms and techniques of poetry and fiction. Students will then practice and develop their craft by engaging in exercises and participating in writing workshops.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
At the end of this course, students will be able to:
• Identify literary devices and employ them in their writing.
• Draw on knowledge of techniques to create works of poetry and fiction.
• Explore the creative process through writing.
• Engage in effective workshop practices with their community of peers.
• Create and submit a final portfolio of their edited work.

REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS
All required reading will be available on Blackboard (Bb), so there is no book to purchase. **Assigned texts should be read before coming to class.** In order to participate in discussions, students will be required to bring a printed, annotated copy of the assigned text to class, their ideas, and their voices. Failure to read and engage in class discussions will result in loss of points. Additionally, quizzes may be administered without notice to evaluate students’ preparation. For workshop participation, students will be required to bring printed copies of their drafts to distribute to everyone in class. A journal/notebook is required for note
keeping and drafting of poetry and fiction exercises. This syllabus must be brought to every class meeting.

COURSE DELIVERY
This course makes extensive use of the online learning platform, Bb. All of the reading and supplementary material for the class will be delivered via Bb. Furthermore, all assignments are to be submitted through Bb. It is strongly recommended that you have access to the Internet from home and are comfortable using a computer. If home access is not possible, arrangements can be made to use a computer regularly on campus in order to complete the work. Student computer labs are often available until midnight, but schedules do vary. A great deal of work will be done online, and not having access to a computer will affect your ability to turn in assignments on time. Keep in mind that, as with any technology, you may experience issues with Blackboard. It is your responsibility to plan for this and submit your assignments in a timely manner. Waiting until minutes before the deadline is a risky. I advise submitting your assignments well ahead of the deadline to account for any issues you may experience.

READINGS & RESPONSES
Readings and responses will be assigned weekly, except during workshop days, when the reading will be another student’s draft and the response will be a review of their work. Students are required to read assigned texts BEFORE class. To be clear, if the course schedule lists the text over imagery on Jan. 28th, it should be read before that day, as it will be the focus of discussion on the 28th. Therefore, you should expect me to engage you in discussion. The responses will be 200 words in length and will address an assigned element of craft, according to the program. Please consult the program schedule for due dates and topics.

FICTION & POETRY EXERCISES
Writing projects will be assigned throughout the semester and are designed to strengthen the student’s understanding of the craft. I will assign five poetry and five fiction exercises which will be started during class. These are exercises that are meant to spark your creativity but also to guide your writing process. Students who meet the guidelines for each assignment and demonstrate engagement with the prompt can expect to earn full credit for each piece.

WORKSHOPS
On or about Week 7, we will engage in our first workshop and will do so again around Week 14. What is a workshop, you might ask? A workshop is a structured group activity in which the whole class carefully reads, analyzes, and gives feedback over each other’s work. It is an opportunity for a writer to learn about their work from various perspectives. Students enjoy this activity and look forward with anticipation and curiosity to their work’s reception from their community of fellow writers. Therefore, it is not only courteous that you come to class and actively participate, but it is also expected of you, in your role as a serious writer.
The role of a literary critic, which is what each student will become during the workshop, should be taken 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. While credit will be given for turning work on time, poor grammar, evident lack of effort, and/or failure to follow guidelines will affect your point allotment. In order to participate in the workshop, each student must do the following:

1. Print and distribute copies of their poetry or fiction pieces to all participants during the designed distribution day.
2. Carefully read the assigned student’s work before the designated workshop day, annotate the draft with observations about the poem or story’s strengths/weaknesses, and provide constructive feedback on how the work can be improved.
3. On the day of the workshop, be prepared to comment over each poem or story, cite specific examples within the work, and defend your assertions. When reacting (whether verbal or written) to someone’s writing, address the text, not the student.

Although all students are required to read and comment over all distributed workshop drafts, each student will be assigned only one piece for the workshop review. (I will explain this more in-depth during class.) The workshop schedule will be made during class, and each student’s session will be timed. If you are absent during a scheduled workshop day and/or fail to submit your piece, you will not earn credit.

READING EVENT
Each student will be required to attend at least one reading event hosted by the Creative Writing Department. The event can be held either on or off campus. A written response of 200 words should be submitted in Bb a week after attending the event. Any student who participates in more than one reading event will be given extra credit.

PORTFOLIO
Each student is required to produce a final portfolio which will be due on or before May 13th. The portfolio will contain a critical preface, all revised fiction and poetry submitted, including the two workshop drafts (1 fiction, 1 poetry) and their corresponding revised versions. Revising your work in a meaningful way is obligatory, so simplistic corrections (i.e. deleting/inserting a word, changing title etc.) will affect your point allotment. Please attend class for detailed instructions.
SUBMITTING WORK
Late work is not accepted. All work, including the workshop drafts you will 
distribute to your classmates, will be submitted to me through our Bb course 
shell. Since the Bb comment and grade function works best with Microsoft Word, 
you are required to submit all assignments as Microsoft Word or pdf documents, 
using a 12-pt. font, with one-inch margins and double-spaced, unless directed 
otherwise. I will not accept assignments any other way. Microsoft Word is 
available to students at all campus computers and through the Cloud. Be sure to 
format each assignment heading in the upper, left hand corner of the document 
as follows:

Sandra Cisneros 
CRW 3362 
Aug 27, 2019 
Poetry Exercise 1

A suggestion: Always save your work by naming each assignment with your first 
initial, last name, and an abbreviation of the assignment. For example, if your 
name is Sandra Cisneros, this is how you would name your file:

scisneros—exercise1
scisneros—poem1—draft

GRADE DISTRIBUTION BY POINTS
Students can earn a total of 1,000 points in the course:

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

W- A student will receive this grade if they drop the course before the 
university’s drop deadline of 2019.

Please note: All grades will be posted to Blackboard. It is your responsibility to officially 
drop from the course if you feel you won’t be successful in it, though you can ask me at any time about your current progress. If you do not officially drop, 
but you stop attending, you will receive an F for the course, as I will not drop the 
course for you.

Grading Policy
• 10 Reading & Responses 250 pts
• 2 Workshop Responses 100
• 2 Workshops 200 pts
• 5 Fiction Exercises 100 pts
• 5 Poetry Exercises 100 pts
• 1 Reading Event & Reflection 50 pts
• 1 Portfolio 200 pts
CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE/NETIQUETTE
• Electronic devices can be very helpful in the classroom whether a smartphone, tablet, or computer. However, if their use does not contribute to the conversation or tasks in the classroom, then I have the right to ask you to put it away or turn it off, even if it is a personal device.
• You are expected to demonstrate the utmost respect and courtesy for your peers with differing writing styles, viewpoints, and/or experiences. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or other hateful speech will not be tolerated.
• As a general rule, always consider audience, in class and online. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading your work. When reacting to someone (verbal or written), address the manuscript/draft, not the person. All communication, including emails, should be professionally written, using a greeting, body with a clear purpose, and a closing. In short, be courteous and take pride in your work.
• Blackboard is not a public internet venue. If any discussions are conducted via Bb, all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted in these online spaces is intended for classmates and professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space. If students wish to do so, they have the ethical obligation to first request the permission of the writer(s).

ATTENDANCE
According to The University of Texas at El Paso’s catalog: The student is expected to attend all classes and laboratory sessions and attendance is mandatory for all freshman-level courses. It is the responsibility of the student to inform each instructor of extended absences. (For further information regarding excused absences refer to UTEP’s Catalog.) Since this class meets twice a week, if you are absent for more than four classes, you may be dropped from the course. In the event of an absence, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed by asking your peers. Persistent tardiness and early exits will count as absences.

CURRICULUM AND CLASSROOM POLICIES
During our 30 class meetings, you are expected to actively participate in discussions and workshops. The class discussions will help you learn to improve your writing, often through the analysis of an assigned chapter, essay, poem, or short story. **If you do not read an assigned text, you will not be prepared for class and will be considered absent.** If you miss a workshop, it cannot be made up. Missing a scheduled conference with the instructor also constitutes an absence. Reminder: LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
The University of Texas at El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence. In the classroom and in all other academic activities, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity (http://www.catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academicregulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/). Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to,
cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. 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. Visit the Office of Dean of Students (https://www.utep.edu/studentaffairs/). Instructors are required to report the suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Affairs.

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 grammar and sentence structure. The UWC is located on the main floor of the library, to the right of the circulation desk.

ACCOMMODATIONS
Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and if there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together, we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to visit the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) in room 106, Union East Building, or contact them at 747-5148 or cass@utep.edu. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. There are also a range of resources on campus, including the Writing Center, Counseling Center, Military Student Success Center and Academic Advising Center.

MILITARY STUDENTS
Thank you for your service! If you are a military student (veteran, dependent, active) please visit the Military Student Success Center. I also recognize the complexities of being a student veteran. If you are a student veteran, please inform me if you need special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran-related developments can complicate your academic life. If you make me aware of a complication, I will do everything I can to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you.

IMPORTANT SPRING DATES
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 21</td>
<td>Spring classes begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 21-24</td>
<td>Late registration period</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 5</td>
<td>Spring Census Day</td>
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<td>Note: This is the last day to register for classes. If payment is not received by this day, students will be dropped.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 16-20</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>Spring drop/withdrawal deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 10</td>
<td>Spring Study Day—no classes</td>
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Spring 2020

May 7       Last day of classes
May 8       Dead Day
May 11-15   Final Exams
May 20      Grades are due

Please make note of office hours and email, and reach out to me if you need to. I look forward to helping you become better writers and readers this semester!
**COURSE PROGRAM**

* *Subject to change.* * Each student is expected to attend class and log into Bb in order to stay updated with the latest.

**Wk 1—Jan 20-24: Introduction**

Tuesday
- Class introduction, syllabus overview

Thursday
- Recap & “Close Reading” from Francine Prose’s *Reading Like a Writer*
- Tracy K. Smith reading event reminder (Jan 30th, 6:30 pm)

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**Poetry**

**Wk 2—Jan 27-31: Imagery**

Tuesday
- “Imagery” from John Sutherland’s *50 Literature Ideas You Really Need to Know*
- “Image” from Janet Burroway’s *Imaginative Writing*
- “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” by William Wordsworth
- “Leaving” by Cathy Song
- Reading Response 1
- Poetry Exercise 1: Describe a photograph (one with either people or objects) as though the scene is really happening; animate it with movement.

Thursday
- Discussion
- Word Association in-class activity

**Wk 3—Feb 3-7: Sound & Rhythm**

Tuesday
- “The Music of the Line” from Addonizio & Laux’s *The Poet’s Companion*
- Ch. 10 Poetry excerpts from Burroway’s *Imaginative Writing*
- “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” by Robert Frost
- “Theme for English B” by Langston Hughes
- Reading Response 2
- Poetry Exercise 2: Rewrite the lyrics of your favorite song. Use your own words, but keep the rhythm and rhyme scheme the same.

Thursday
- Discussion
- Meter in-class activity
**Wk 4—Feb 10-14: Simile & Metaphor**

**Tuesday**
- “Simile and Metaphor” from Addonizio & Laux’s *The Poet’s Companion*
- “Imagery, Connotation, and Metaphor” from Burroway’s *Imaginative Writing*
- “The art of the metaphor” – a Ted-Ed by Jane Hirshfield
- “Sonnet 73: That time of year thou mayest in me behold” by William Shakespeare
- “The Alchemy of Mothering” by Laurie Ann Guerrero
- Reading Response 3
- Poetry Exercise 3: Use an object to write a 10-line poem about an abstraction, like love, loneliness, fear, desire, greed, etc.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Simile and metaphor in-class activity

**Wk 5—Feb 17-21: Voice & Style**

**Tuesday**
- Ch. 3 “Voice” from Janet Burroway’s *Imaginative Writing*
- “Voice and Style” from Addonizio & Laux’s *The Poet’s Companion*
- Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Raven*
- “More than one man has reached up my skirt” by Natalie Scenters-Zapico
- Reading Response 4
- Poetry Exercise 4: Pick a favorite rapper/singer. Write about a memory using his/her voice.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Phrase manipulation in-class activity

**Wk 6—Feb 24-28: Form**

**Tuesday**
- “More Repetition: Villanelle, Pantoum, Sestina” from Addonizio & Laux’s *The Poet’s Companion*
- “Learning the Sonnet” by Rachel Richardson
- “Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night” by Dylan Thomas
- “Harlem Hopscotch” by Maya Angelou
- “One Art” by Elizabeth Bishop
- Reading Response 5
- Poetry Exercise 5: Write a sonnet about something you love.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Distribution of poems for Poetry Workshop next week
Spring 2020

**Wk 7—Mar 2-6: Poetry Workshop**
**Poetry Workshop responses due in Bb on Tuesday, before class**

**Tuesday**
- Poetry Workshop, part 1

**Thursday**
- Poetry Workshop, part 2

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**Fiction**

**Wk 8—Mar 9-13: Point of View**

**Tuesday**
- Ch. 7 Call Me Ishmael: “Point of View” excerpts from Burroway’s *Writing Fiction*
- “Point of View” from John Gardner’s *The Art of Fiction*
- “Cat in the Rain” by Ernest Hemingway
- “Rape Fantasies” by Margaret Atwood
- Reading Response 6
- Fiction Exercise 1: Write about an event in two versions—one in 1st person POV, the other in 3rd person POV.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Pairs of beginning sentences in-class activity

**Wk 9—Mar 16-20: Spring Break**

**Wk 10—Mar 23-27: Setting**

**Tuesday**
- Ch. 5 “Setting” excerpts from Burroway’s *Imaginative Writing*
- “Long and Far Away: Fictional Setting” excerpts from Burroway’s *Writing Fiction*
- “A Rose for Emily” by William Faulkner
- “Real Women Have Bodies” by Carmen Maria Machado
- Reading Response 7
- Fiction Exercise 2: Create a setting from a list of characters I will provide.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Writing a scene in-class activity


**Wk 11—Mar 30-Apr 3: Character**

**Tuesday**
- “Character” from Anne Lamott’s *Bird by Bird*
- “Manipulate Characters with Setting” from Michael Noll’s *The Writer’s Field Guide to the Craft of Fiction*
- “The Life You Save May Be Your Own” by Flannery O’Connor
- “Thank You” by Alejandro Zambra
- Reading Response 8
- Fiction Exercise 3: Use one of your fiction exercises to develop one of your characters and try to determine what he/she wants. A list of guiding questions will be provided.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- “I’m sorry, but...” (take from Burroway’s *Writing Fiction*)

**Wk 12—Apr 6-10: Plot**

**Tuesday**
- “Plot” from Lamott’s *Bird by Bird*
- “Plotting” from Gardner’s *The Art of Fiction*
- “Little Red Riding Hood”
- “Padre Nuestro” by Rubén Degollado
- Reading Response 9
- Fiction Exercise 4: Write a story (no longer than three pages) in which the protagonist does not get what he/she wants, but which nevertheless ends happily.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Three by three in-class exercise.

**Wk 13—Apr 13-17: Dialogue**

**Tuesday**
- “Dialogue” from Lamott’s *Bird by Bird*
- “Dialogue” excerpts from Burroway’s *Writing Fiction*
- “Brother in Another Language” by Benjamin Alire Sáenz
- Fiction Exercise 5: Using one of your previous fiction exercises, intersperse dialogue with the action that is taking place.

**Thursday**
- Discussion
- Dialogue with a fellow student in-class activity
- Distribution of fiction piece for fiction workshop next week
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**Wk 14—Apr 20-24: Fiction Workshop**
**Fiction workshop responses due in Bb on Tuesday, before class**
Tuesday
- Fiction Workshop, part 1
Thursday
- Fiction Workshop, part 2

**Wk 15—Apr 27-May 1: Editing & Revision**
Tuesday
- “Revision & Editing” excerpts from Burroway’s *Imaginative Writing*
- “The Art of Revision: Most of What you Write Should be Cut” by Charles Johnson
Thursday
- In-class revision activity

**Wk 16—May 4-8: Recap & Portfolio**
Tuesday
- “Only Daughter” by Sandra Cisneros
- Recap of revising your work
- Reading Response 10
Thursday
- Recap Portfolio Requirements
- Portfolio due before Wed., May 13th
- Last class day!