

UW-Stevens Point

English 253 -04: Introduction to Creative Writing

Fall 2023

<p>credits: 3</p> <p>For UWSP GEP: this course counts toward the Arts requirement</p>	<p>instructor:</p> <p>Professor Jill Stukenberg (Jill is fine!) <i>she, her, hers</i></p>
<p>meeting rooms and times:</p> <p>T/TR: 11:00 – 12:15 pm CCC 233</p>	<p>Contact:</p> <p>email: jstukenb@uwsp.edu</p>
<p>exam period:</p> <p>Thursday, December 21, 10:15 – 12:15 (please hold for any final activities)</p>	<p>Jill's office hours:</p> <p>Tuesdays 2-3 and Thursdays from 10 - 11, in Jill's CCC office #422. I am on the Wausau campus on MWF, with office hours there Mondays and Fridays 2-3. I can meet by zoom during those hours or at other times. Just email to ask. If we agree to meet on zoom, we'll use this room:</p> <p>https://uwsp.zoom.us/j/8831574589</p>

textbook and materials

- Sellers, Heather. *The Practice of Creative Writing: A Guide for Students, 4th Ed.* Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2021.
- storage media for saving your work, such as a jump or flash drive. Save all versions of all drafts and keep all work returned to you with comments by instructor and peers; a portfolio will be due at the end of the semester.
- This course will make use of a Canvas site, Word, your campus email, and possibly other platforms. Students will be invited to collaborate using Google docs during class. Ask for help using these tools at any time.
- I recommend that students bring a laptop to class for in-class writing. (It is also possible to do in class writing by hand in a notebook).

course description:

Training and practice for the beginning writer in various forms of poetry and fiction; class discussion of student work.

learning outcomes:

Arts attribute for the General Education Program

- Describe, analyze or critique creative works utilizing knowledge of relevant aesthetic criteria or stylistic forms.

Do at least ONE of the following

- Identify and explain the relationship between particular traditions or genres of creative expression and their social, historical or cultural contexts.
- Demonstrate an understanding of creative expression by producing or performing a creative work.

instructor's specific learning outcomes:

Processes of Creative Writing

- Explore invention techniques and activities individually and collaboratively throughout the semester. These activities may include but are not limited to free writing, journal keeping, brainstorming, imaginative association, creativity exercises, generating multiple versions of a particular piece.
- Generate and revise with specific elements (such as image, line, juxtaposition) whether for exercises or longer pieces.
- Practice critical feedback techniques and activities for works-in-progress throughout the semester which may include but are not limited to large and/or small group workshop discussions, one-on-one partner exchanges, and written peer draft critiques.
- Show development in receiving and responding to feedback.
- Demonstrate (by the end of the semester) holistic revision of pieces of creative writing to rework aspects of drafts that shape overall development, such as character, setting, voice, theme, conflict, tone.
- Demonstrate editing not only for error correction but for “the best words in the best order” (Coleridge), that is, editing for precision, concision, care, and originality in style and syntax.
- Engage in writing that involves reflection and self-assessment of abilities and skills covered in learning outcomes, including their own creative choices.

Reading as a Creative Writer

- Identify, understand and use vocabulary of genre elements. These elements may include but are not limited to:
 - Fiction: characterization, plot, and conflict.
 - Poetry: imagery, musicality, and use of forms.
 - Drama: dialogue, plot, and stage directions.
 - Creative Nonfiction incorporates elements from other genres. (To some extent, all genres rely on “Show Don’t Tell,” the ability to generate specific examples and actions. close reading of authors’ work)
- Engage in close reading of authors’ works.
- Identify and explain authors’ creative choices and analyze the effects of those choices on a published text.

grading: How can creative writing be graded?

	What is it?	Who sees?	How submitted?	What is being graded? (skills, learning outcomes)	Portion of grade?
Exercises	Used to generate ideas and practice with skills; most completed in journal for periodic checks (see calendar). A few are in-class collaborative activities, for points.	Classmates if you choose to share, and the instructor	Often written during class meetings, not always named in advance on daily schedule; send google journal link to Jill or turn in notebook journal two times	Entries are not graded on content, but on effort/attempt. Taking a stab and trying something new is more important than doing these "right"!	15% (20 points for each journal check (2); a few other exercises with points given in Canvas)
Canvas discussion posts, syllabus quiz	Practice close reading skills and analysis of assigned readings	Instructor and classmates see discussion board	Canvas discussion board	Your developing skills of "reading like a writer;" understanding of terms and elements; ability to apply them in analysis of professional works	15% (6 points each, plus syllabus quiz). Extra credit can be earned here.
Workshop feedback, reflections on workshop, story conference with instructor	Practice process skills of creative writing, including giving and responding to feedback.	Workshop group members and instructor see feedback you give; only instructor and you see your reflections	Workshop feedback given verbally and in writing in Canvas; reflections submitted to Canvas.	Your developing skills of using the creative writing process; "reading like a writer" skills also demonstrated in feedback given to peers.	25% (10 pts for each of 4 workshops; 5 points for 3 reflections; 10 points conference Extra Credit can be earned here.

4 Workshops	Develop freewriting into drafts for workshop; requires reflective author's note	Your small group workshop members and instructor	Post to Canvas assignment thread before class.	Graded on: timely submission effort; use of techniques; overall risk/creativity; <u>and</u> author's note for self-analysis skills	20% course grade
Final Portfolio	Assemble best examples of in-class writing; including some that show revisions since last submissions and strong editing; 4-6 page final reflection letter	Instructor sees	Submitted to Canvas	Your ability to analyze/reflect in the reflective letter; your use of processes to revise; and application of course techniques with some risk/creativity in "best pages" graded.	25%

Daily work grading, more detail:

I use a points system within the categories of exercises, discussion posts, reflections. In other grading categories—workshop grades, final portfolio—I assign holistic letter grades that correlate to the following percentages (and don't represent points "missed"). A = 95%; A- = 92%; B+ = 88%; B = 85%, etc. (This system allows me to, occasionally, acknowledge exceptional A+ work with a 97%, or 98%, or even sometimes a 100%.)

rubrics

See rubrics in Canvas for a breakdown on how the different assignments are graded. You'll notice that in some cases late work can still receive up to half credit (by the end of the module/unit), though please note that creates a bigger "ding" for a late workshop submission than for a late discussion post. (Late workshop submissions make it hard for the small group to workshop. Discuss any emergencies or illnesses that affect workshop submission or grade with the instructor right away. See below section on late work.)

grading scale:

A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82; C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70 – 72; D+ 67-69; D 63 – 66; F 62 and below.

course policies and how to do well in this class:

Attendance: Plan to attend every class period, and plan about an hour's worth of time before each class meeting (sometimes more) to complete readings and assignments; students will additionally prepare workshop submissions, and for some workshops read others' submissions before class. During class, students freewrite in journals and sometimes do other exercises for points. (Journals checked a

few times for points.) Attending workshops (and submitting drafts on time) is also a significant component of each workshop grade.

Use the [daily schedule](#) (see Canvas) so you know what's due what day and so you can see how soon workshops are coming up (which isn't as clear if you only look at the Canvas "assignments" tab or calendar).

Absences (try not to be absent):

- What to do if you miss one class? Send me an email. You are not required to explain private details, but at least let me know your plan to catch up. I do care that you are not here! I can also let you know what journal prompts you missed so you can add them to your journal. Note that if a workshop submission or workshop day was missed, more will be required for you to make up and the experience might not be equal (you might not get as substantial feedback, if any, from peers).
- What to do in the case of extended or multiple absences? Contact me as soon as possible to discuss class work. I can work with you to find solutions, including possible extensions, textbook pages that cover some concepts discussed during class, and meet with you in person or through zoom—though I can't truly replicate everything done during class. In some cases, missing a significant portion of a class may mean that "withdrawing" from the class is the best option. See deadlines for the "W" date and discuss with the instructor and your advisor. For any illness or emergency near the end of the semester, students who were on track to successfully complete the course can discuss the "I" or "incomplete" option with the instructor, though there are university parameters.

Late Work (try to avoid this):

- **Assignments:**
Assignments are usually due before a class period so learning in class can build on that work. Some assignments can still earn half credit if completed by the end of the unit. Email me cases of illness or emergency for consideration.
- **Workshop drafts:**
A late draft for workshop (peer review) means you may miss being joined to a group and miss the key class learning of giving and receiving draft feedback. Workshops are worth a lot of points in this class! If you have an emergency or illness, contact the instructor for information about how to earn points toward the workshop grade on the all-class review board. (Also used for earning extra credit.) You *may* also be able to get review from peers on your piece there.
- **Final Portfolios:**
No late final portfolios can be accepted.

Take opportunities to revise:

On the workshop rubric, you'll see that one path to an "A" workshop grade is to include both a rough draft and a revised draft for any workshop submission (the two must show more difference in choices than surface editing). You'll be able to use feedback you receive on workshop submissions before submitting them again in the final portfolio—a multiplier for your points and grade in the class and where you get to show off your best work and revision skills.

Earn extra credit:

See Canvas. Attending some designated creative writing events is one way to earn extra credit. Other opportunities toward your workshop grade may be available by offering extra reviews on the all-class discussion board.

Seek extra help:

Writing Center tutors are successful UWSP students who are available to discuss all types of writing at any stage of the drafting process, including brainstorming, conducting research, editing, or handling citations. Tutors work with experienced as well as struggling writers. One-time and regular appointments are available, free of charge to all students. Find the link for online appointments in our Canvas course.

plagiarism and academic integrity: Your words and work in this course must be original (written by you), as well as written during this semester as part of this course. Plagiarism (turning in writing that is not yours as if it is yours, including if generated by A.I.) may result in a 0 grade, and possibly course failure and referral for campus disciplinary action.

If you have questions about how to borrow or allude to words or ideas from other artworks (songs, movies, books, etc), reach out to the instructor to ask, and use your author's note to acknowledge the use. In multimedia projects, images or sound used must be "free for creative use" or have been created by you.

If you have questions about how to use a tech tool ethically (anything from grammar check, to a rhyming dictionary, to ChatGPT) please also ask the instructor. I'm interested in these new tools and their uses for writing and creativity and communication too. If you choose to use a tech tool as part of brainstorming, fiddling with a section of a work, or other creative use, clearly explain your process using the tool for the instructor and peer readers in your author's note, and make sure that, overall, your submitted work does represent your own effort, creative choices, and accomplishment of learning outcomes. In this creative writing class, to achieve learning outcomes, the writing should be your own.

Disability resource center: The DRC can help students with accommodations to facilitate their learning. Visit room 108 in the Collins Classroom Center (current location of the DRC), or the website: <https://www.uwsp.edu/disability-resource-center/>

Names and pronouns: Please let me know if you use a different name than the one listed on the roster or in Canvas (and let me know if you'd like help making a change there). I invite you to tell me the pronouns to use when referring to you in front of others in class and hope you'll tell me if I mispronounce or misspell your name or use an incorrect pronoun. I do care that I get it right.

Confidentiality, reporting, counseling resources:

I take my responsibility to protect your privacy seriously. At the same time, please know that if I learn of anything through a student or from student writing that makes me fear someone is in harm's way, I may report it. I am required to report sexual violence or discrimination, and crime on campus, and students may do so too using the following: <https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Anonymous-Report.aspx> . If you

would like to speak with someone who is not required to report, the campus counseling resources are a confidential resource for you.

Content warnings:

Creative writing is an arena in which we explore fictional and nonfictional situations, feelings, and ideas that are human, often troubled, and sometimes troubling. At the same time, students have a right to learn in a setting where they are safe, and for some students that may include shielding themselves from some types of content. As a community, we will discuss practices for workshop that should help us to avoid problems. At any time, if you are assigned to read something for class (from our textbook or a fellow student) but you cannot do so because of content considerations, you will not be penalized. Please speak to the instructor so that we can work out an alternative.

tentative schedule

See Canvas for specific daily assignments, in addition to this plan for major assignments and general weekly topics.

Sept 5 - 7	Intro to course, syllabus. Introduction freewriting.
Sept. 12 - 14	Introduction to reading creative works, genres.
Sept. 19 - 21	Reading continued, with discussion of image and line break. Intro to workshop.
Sept. 26 - 28	Workshop 1. Intro to pattern.
Oct. 3 - 5	Intro to forms, and close reading practice.
Oct. 10 - 12	Discussion of formal styles and rhyme.
Oct. 17 - 19	Workshop 2. Discussion of tension and dialogue.
Oct. 24 - 26	Partners begin work on collaborative dialogue.
Oct. 31 – Nov. 2	Collaborative dialogue work continues and character exploration.
Nov. 7 - 9	Scene writing.
Nov. 14 - 16	Workshop 3.
Nov. 21	Discussion of layering in braided essays, poem films, Instagram poems. No class Thursday. Happy Thanksgiving!
Nov. 28 - 30	Student examples for workshop 4 workshopped.
Dec. 5 - 7	Workshop 4.
Dec. 12 - 14	Revising and writing final portfolio.

Final Exam period:

Final Portfolios due no later than December 21.