

## Introduction to Creative Writing

WRTG-205, ShR, Spring 2024, 3 credits

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<b>Instructor</b>	Julie Hensley
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<b>Course Meeting Days and Time</b>	M/W 11:00--12:15
<b>Office Hours</b>	T 2:30-4:30

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### Catalog Description:

Through generative exercises, students will survey four creative genres (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and genre blur), learning correlative techniques such as diction, imagery, characterization, narration, setting, and plot. The course will utilize small group workshops, and students will prepare a final portfolio that includes a sample of each genre.

### Credit Hour Policy Statement:

#### Standard lecture:

"This class meets the federal credit hour policy of 1 hour of class with an expected 2 hours of additional student work outside of class each week for approximately 15 weeks for each hour of credit, or a total of 45-75 total hours for each credit." (Def 1)

### General Education Requirements:

This course meets the General Education requirements for Outcome 5 Overlay E Writing.

### Course Learning Objectives:

- To develop personal aesthetic using the model of contemporary literature.
- To improve skills through invention exercises and varied approaches.
- To master important terminology for use in creation and editing processes.
- To craft original work in three genres.
- To learn how to use peer review as an approach to revision.

### Methods of Instructions:

Lecture, discussion, generative exercises, small group workshops

### Textbooks and Required Reading:

-- *Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief*, David Starkey (Fourth Edition, ISBN 978-1-319-21596-5)

--various texts linked online

### Course Schedule:

**M Jan 15:** Introductions, review syllabus, "Where I'm From" <http://www.georgeellalyon.com/where.html>

### **W Jan 17:** Ex #1: Home

Read "A Few things you should know about creative writing (1-9), **Writing Poetry:** "Write before you read," "The elements of poetry," "The short poem: three models," "Lines and stanzas," and "Meter and rhythm" (15-36), from **An Anthology of Poetry:** "On Being Told I Don't Speak Like a Black Person" (85), "Barn Swallows" (88), "Small Kindness" (89), "I Feel Sorry for Jesus" (92), "Ukulele" (90), "Daystar"

### **M Jan 22:** Ex #2: Dividing/Stolen Line

Read **Writing Poetry:** "The music of poetry," "Images, symbols, and figurative language," "Diction, syntax, and the language of poetry" (37-53), and from **An Anthology of Poetry:** "Marriage as a Skateboard Flung off a Bridge" (81), "If I Should Come upon Your House Lonely in the West Texas Desert (82), "The Blue Bowl" (87), "Portrait of My Father as a Young Black Man" (91), "Rosetta" (96), (93), ("You Fit into Me")

### **W Jan 24:** Ex #3 Twisted Simile

Read **Writing Poetry:** "Poetic forms" (36-69), and from **An Anthology of Poetry,** "House Party Sonnet: 66" (79), "new shoes and an old flame" (95), ("Another Lullaby for Insomniacs," "Stable")

### **M Jan 29:** Ex # 4 Formalist/Invented Form

### **W Jan 31:** Manuscript copies for POETRY workshop/peer review

**M Feb 5:** Read **Writing the Short-Short Story:** "Write before you read," "The elements of fiction," "The short-short story: three models," "Structure and design," "Creating characters" (98-128) and **An Anthology of Short-Short Stories:** "The Hit Man" (158), "Collisions" (172), ("Frank Mills")

### **W Feb 7:** Ex #5: Character Inventory

Read **Writing the Short-Short Story:** "Writing dialogue," (128-133), and from **An Anthology of Short-Short Stories:** "Things My Mother Said" (152), "Loser" (154), "Popular Mechanics" (161), "Reunion (163)

### **M Feb 12:** Ex #6: Dialogue Skit

Read **Writing the Short-short Story:** "Setting the Scene," and from **An Anthology of Short-Short Stories:** "His Birthday" (165), "The Harvest" (178), ("Wolf's Head Lake," "The Colonel")

### **W Feb 14:** Ex #7: Setting the Tension

Read **Writing the Short-short Story**: “Deciding on point of view, developing tone and style,” (138-144), and from **An Anthology of Short-Short Stories**, “Girl” (170),

“A Kid’s Guide to Divorce”

<https://www.northernhighlands.org/cms/lib5/NJ01000179/Centricity/Domain/115/The%20Kids%20Guide%20to%20Divorce.pdf>

(“Hills Like White Elephants”)

**M Feb 19: Ex #8: POV Switch**

**W Feb 21: Manuscript copies for FICTION workshop**

**M Feb 26**: Read **Writing Short Creative Nonfiction**: “Write before you read,” “The elements of creative nonfiction,” “Short creative nonfiction: three models” (174-188) and from **An Anthology of Short Creative Nonfiction**: “The Witching Hour” (227), “Twilight” (235), (“Bowling”)

**W Feb 28: Ex #9: Into the Map**

Read **Writing Short Creative Nonfiction**: “Organizing creative nonfiction,” “Telling the truth,” “Creative nonfiction as narrative” (189-204)), and from **An Anthology of Short Creative Nonfiction**: “The Burnt Plane” (234), “My Papa’s Waltz” (223), (“Good Faith”)

**Mar. 1-11: *Midterm Break***

**W Mar 13: Ex #10: Qualified Scene**

Read **Writing Short Creative Nonfiction**: “The poetry of creative nonfiction,” “Writing yourself into creative nonfiction,” “Ethics and Edicts” and from **An Anthology of Short Creative Nonfiction**: “The Mute Sense” (222), “Sketch” (2226), “El Toro Rojo” (226), (“A Brief History of Water”)

**M Mar 18: Ex #11: Threads**

**W Mar 20: Manuscript copies for NONFICTION Workshop**

**M Mar 25**: Read prose poems:

- “What I Think about When Someone Uses ‘Pussy’ as a Synonym for Weak” <https://poets.org/poem/what-i-think-about-when-someone-uses-pussy-synonym-weak>
- “My Mother’s Birds” <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/my-mother-s-birds-2/>
- “Mount Olive” [https://AZDAILY SUN.COM/MOUNT-OLIVE/ARTICLE\\_AB07CA0E-FC62-5F3C-96B5-E0DE71424A36.HTML](https://AZDAILY SUN.COM/MOUNT-OLIVE/ARTICLE_AB07CA0E-FC62-5F3C-96B5-E0DE71424A36.HTML)

**W Mar 27: Ex #12: Prose poem**

Read list essays in *Brevity*:

- “I Cannot Explain My Fear”

<https://brevitymag.com/nonfiction/i-cannot-explain-my-fear/>

- “An Address to My Fellow Faculty Who Have Asked Me to Speak About My Work” <https://brevitymag.com/nonfiction/an-address-to-my-fellow-faculty/>
- “The Things I’ve Lost” <https://brevitymag.com/nonfiction/things-lost/>

#### **M Apr 1: Ex #13 List poem/essay**

Read reinvented fairytales:

- “Werewolf” <https://biblioklept.org/2012/06/03/read-the-werewolf-a-short-fable-by-angela-carter/>
- “Beauty and the Beast” <https://endicottstudio.typepad.com/poetrylist/beauty-and-the-beast-by-jaimes-alsop.html>
- “Hansel and Gretel Duet” <https://endicottstudio.typepad.com/poetrylist/hansel-and-gretel-duet-by-nan-fry.html>

#### **W Apr 3: Ex #14: Fairytale Reinvention**

Read oral history: “No Name Woman”

[https://www.sevanoland.com/uploads/1/1/8/0/118081022/nonamewomankingston\\_1.pdf](https://www.sevanoland.com/uploads/1/1/8/0/118081022/nonamewomankingston_1.pdf)

#### **M Apr 8: Ex #15: Oral History**

#### **W Apr 10: Manuscript copies for Genre Blur Workshop**

#### **M Apr 15: Final Portfolio Guidelines, Revision**

#### **W Apr 17: Portfolio Conferences**

#### **M Apr 22: Portfolio Conferences**

#### **W Apr 24: Final Portfolios**

#### **Grading Criteria:**

Your final grade will reflect both your abilities as a writer and your commitment to the writing process.

#### **Creative Exercises (20%)**

I will provide creative exercises to help you generate new material. Aim to post at least one exercise each week. These assignments, never more than a page long, are meant to clarify technical aspects of craft. They are also meant to combat writer’s block, since any exercise could be fodder for your peer review manuscript or final portfolio. This writing may feel raw, unpolished, or incomplete, though students sometimes amaze me with what they are able to create quickly with very little space. These assignments are graded credit/no credit to encourage you to experiment and take risks. (Note: Exercises can only be submitted the week they are assigned. Feel free to choose the exercises which speak to you, but you must complete ten out of fifteen possible exercises to receive full credit in this category, and you must complete at least one exercise for each genre [poetry, fiction, nonfiction]. Each exercise is worth 2 points of your final grade.)

### Reading Quizzes (10%)

Ten brief, 3-question reading quizzes will test your comprehension of genre terminology and sample literature. Each quiz contains 3 questions. If you get 2 correct, you earn credit for that quiz.

### Peer Review Manuscripts (20%)

You will develop one of your exercises in each genre into a manuscript for peer review. In addition to submitting this manuscript to the instructor, you will share it with a small group of peers and receive their feedback. Each of these manuscripts (poetry, fiction, nonfiction, genre blur) are worth 5% of your grade.

### Peer Review Feedback/Discussion (20%)

At the end of each unit, developed manuscripts will be workshopped in small groups. You will be graded on the attention paid to your peers' manuscripts, including both written and verbal feedback.

### Final Creative Portfolio (20%)

You will submit a portfolio of your revised creative work at the end of the semester. This portfolio will be comprised of a story, an essay, a poem, and an example of blurred genre—what you consider to be your strongest writing in each category. These texts should be polished and, preferably, vetted by peer review.

### Discussion/Participation (10%)

Be prepared to talk about the assigned readings and occasionally share your writing exercises.

### **Withdrawal and Attendance policies:**

Harlaxton College expects regular class attendance by all students. Students are considered sufficiently mature to appreciate the necessity of regular and punctual attendance, to accept this personal responsibility and to accept the consequences of failure to attend. When absences occur due to emergency or medical reasons, students are expected to notify their instructors of the absence prior to class or to seek the assistance of the College nurse or a member of the Student Experience Team for help in notifying instructors.

Instructors have the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons upon review of appropriate documentation and professional recommendation supporting such a request. In the event of long-term illness, reasonable accommodations will be made to allow a student to complete a course. In these cases, the Dean will need to approve the long term nature of the accommodation.

The Dean of Harlaxton College has the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons.

Each instructor is expected to maintain an attendance policy in keeping with the nature of the Harlaxton program and may consider it in evaluating performance in their courses.

### **Policy Governing Unexcused Absences:**

Harlaxton College operates an attendance policy that is binding on all faculty and students. The number of unexcused absences that are allowed before incurring a penalty is related to the number of times a class meets each week. For courses which meet three times a week, students are allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences during the semester without attracting penalty points. For courses meeting twice a week two such absences are permitted, and for courses meeting once a week a single absence is allowed. Additional unexcused absences will attract a grade penalty.

Students accruing more than 2 unexcused absences throughout the semester will automatically receive a full-letter grade deduction (i.e. A to B) for their final course grade.

**Policy Governing Excused Absences.**

- Excused absences are not given to facilitate student travel independent of College-sponsored travel.
- Students may be permitted to miss class because of participation in academic field trips.
- Instructors must co-ordinate and confirm academic fieldtrips with the Dean, prior to the commencement of the Semester to ensure their inclusion in the Semester timetable.
- Where authorization for an academic fieldtrip is requested after the commencement of the semester, the request must be submitted to the Dean.

The following information is required:

- Purpose and brief description of the official Harlaxton event or academic fieldtrip.
- Dates, location, and times (as applicable).
- Alphabetical list of students involved [Last Name/First Name] along with their student identification number.

If approval is granted:

- Instructors affected will be notified at least one week prior to the class period during which absence is anticipated, or as soon as possible.
- Missed class time due to student participation is to be considered an excused absence.
- The grade of a student may not be lowered in any class due to excused absences.
- It is the student's responsibility - to take the initiative by consulting with their instructors before the absence occurs, and - to do what is required by the instructor to make up all missed assignments and/or examinations.
- Instructors are required to assist students in these occasional situations of excused absences.

**Honor Code:**

All students at the University of Evansville agree to the University honor code: *I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid, nor will I tolerate an environment that condones the use of unauthorized aid.*

**Disability Policy:**

It is the policy and practice of the University of Evansville to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Students should contact Disability Services within the Office of Counseling Services by calling 812-488-2663 to seek services or accommodations for disabilities. Written notification to faculty from Disability Services is required for academic accommodations.

The University of Evansville Disability Services office will share the request for academic accommodations with the Academic Support team at Harlaxton College. Staff members at Harlaxton will meet individually with students to discuss needs and provide additional information related to examinations or other assessments.

Students from partner institutions should provide the appropriate letter of accommodation from their institution to the Academic Support team at Harlaxton College.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Evansville expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect and civility. Harassing behaviors directed towards any member of our community will not be tolerated. As part of its commitment to non-discrimination, the University specifically prohibits harassment based on any other characteristics set forth in its nondiscrimination statement as follows: including race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, creed or religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status and all federally protected groups/classes. Any form of harassment undermines the mission of the University and negatively impacts the University community as a whole.

## Prohibited Conduct and Confidentiality

The University of Evansville is committed to fostering an atmosphere free from harassment and discrimination. This commitment includes identifying problems that may lead to sexual harassment and misconduct, as well as other forms of harassment and discrimination, by creating an atmosphere in which the entire University community is sensitive to preventing prohibited conduct. Additionally, the University is committed to providing support and resources to individuals who have experienced prohibited conduct. This commitment includes effectively responding when a student, visitor, guest or program participant is the victim of prohibited conduct.

All campus employees, students, and guests are required to abide by the Title IX and Other Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy, the Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and the Consensual Sexual or Romantic Relationships Between Employees and Students Policy. Violation of these policies could result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students and termination for employees.

Faculty members at the University of Evansville are considered "Responsible Employees" under the applicable federal guidelines and the University's policies. This means that I am unable to offer you confidentiality if you report any incidence of prohibited conduct to me as defined by Title IX statute. If I am made aware of a violation, I am required to report any known information to the Office of Institutional Equity.

You may choose to report the violation yourself the following ways:

Email: · Annie Sills, Assistant Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator: [cs175@evansville.edu](mailto:cs175@evansville.edu) ·

Keith Gehlhausen, Executive Director of HR and Institutional Equity: [kg77@evansville.edu](mailto:kg77@evansville.edu) ·

Title IX: [titleix@evansville.edu](mailto:titleix@evansville.edu)

Phone: 812-288-5261

Online: <https://www.evansville.edu/safety/report.cfm>

You may also choose to speak with a Confidential Resource. Confidential Resources are required to maintain confidentiality and cannot report violations to the Office of Institutional Equity:

### University of Evansville

- Counseling Services: [counselingservices@evansville.edu](mailto:counselingservices@evansville.edu), 812-488-2633
- Health Center Professionals: [healthcenter@evansville.edu](mailto:healthcenter@evansville.edu), 812-488-2033
- University Chaplain: [chaplain@evansville.edu](mailto:chaplain@evansville.edu), 812-488-5262

### Harlaxton College

- College Nurse: Lesley Selby, RGN, +44 01476 403027, [lselect@harlaxton.ac.uk](mailto:lselect@harlaxton.ac.uk)
- Counselling Services: [counselling@harlaxton.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@harlaxton.ac.uk)