

TERM: Spring 2026

COURSE NUMBER & CATEGORY: ENGL 2105: Creative Writing for Non-Majors

COURSE TITLE: Creative Writing for Non-Majors

SECTION TIMES/DAYS: MWF 12:15 – 1:25 PM and MWF 3:05 PM – 4:15 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michelle Bitting

COURSE DESCRIPTION/PRINCIPAL TOPICS:

Times of great change and upheaval inspire need and desire for cultivating imagination and personal expression. We tell stories to save our lives and each other, making magic and re-envisioning mythologies toward an evolving embrace of humankind. We are all writers, and this course aims to help carry your unique voice and inspire your imagined narratives onto the page. In this course, students have an opportunity to read closely, learn about, and write into a variety of forms, including Poetry, Fiction, and Dramatic scenes or monologues as we read masterful examples across genres and discuss traditional and innovative approaches. Attention to various writers' structural choices, as well as an emphasis on Play and Experimentation are key to nurturing Flow and Invention. We will read and contemplate modern and contemporary writers with an eye and ear to how they mine memory, imagination, personal experience, mythology, history, and current events to create work that blends and shapes new paths of literary perception, adding, in the spirit of Leo Tolstoy "our light to the sum of light." Some authors considered include Diane Seuss, Carmen Maria Machado, Anton Chekhov, Natalie Diaz, George Saunders, Tennessee Williams, James Baldwin, Sylvia Plath, Terrance Hayes, Suzan-Lori Parks, Sam Shepard, Joyce Carol Oates, and others. In turn, students will demonstrate techniques observed through the writing they generate and their attention to workshopping collaboratively with fellow students. Strong focus will be on developing a basic understanding of craft, a critical vocabulary for supportive in-class discussion of Poetry, Prose, and Theater, and a sense of connection, via art, to vital personal, political & cultural forces of the past and present. Students will respond to in-class exercises and prompts designed to develop flow, innovation, and depth. Craft talks, journaling, workshops, anthology examples, theoretical writings, viewings, and great author examples stimulate discussion and inspire new student work.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to identify and apply basic principles of writing in Poetry, Prose, and Drama. They will also be able to Identify and describe various styles, structures, and modes of Creative Writing and apply this knowledge in positive classroom critique and revision. They will be able to identify, describe, and apply important elements like voice, image, setting, behavior, figurative language, plot, arc, disruption, and compression, among other devices in the writing of authors studied, as well as in their classmates' and their own individual work.

CLASS LEVEL RESTRICTION:

N/A

RECOMMENDED/PREREQUISITES:

N/A

COURSE ATTRIBUTES:

This course does not count toward the English major or minor requirements; however, English majors interested in creative writing are advised to take one lower-division ENGL 2100 course to satisfy the Core Curriculum EXP: Creative Experience requirement.

CORE ATTRIBUTES:

Creative Experience (ECRE)