

## **COURSE SYLLABUS (“GREEN SHEET”) INFORMATION** *Please read all of this... ☺*

EWRT 30.61Z, Introduction to Creative Writing

CRN #12589, Summer, 2020

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**Office Hour in ZOOM:** Tue, Wed, Thu. 12:30-1:30 PM <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/94806874601>

*Also available by e-mail and message in Canvas—responding within 24 hours weekdays.*

### **Course Goals:**

- write something every day; keep a notebook just for your creative writing
- read and appreciate a variety of fiction and poetry
- expand awareness and confront your assumptions about creative writing
- participate in a community of working creative writers, both in class and online
- give and receive supportive, thoughtful feedback
- get better at talking about the elements of poetry and fiction
- revise new poems and stories

### **Course Requirements:**

- be involved in Canvas; be devoted to our community online
- hand in 2 new pieces of writing per week from among various prompts as indicated
- give written feedback to colleagues in your poetry and fiction critique groups as instructed
- create a final portfolio of 15-20 or more pages of revised work
- read model poems and short stories as assigned

### **Extra Credit Options (20 pts. possible) (negotiate pts./projects with instructor)**

- attend a literary reading or event in person or online and report on it (10 pts)
- multimedia work: integrate your own work w/video, theater, music or dance (10-20 pts)

### **Required Texts**

- none but read what is posted! And write every day in a medium of your choice ☺

### **Grading\*:**

Weekly typed homework (20 x 10 pts.)	200 points
Longer story & final portfolio (week six)	100 points
Participation (quality, substance, consistency, leadership)	100 points
Free baseline points	<u>100 points</u>
	500 points

### **Grading Scale**

A= 460-500	A- =450-459	B+ =440-449
B= 410-439	B- =400-409	C+ =390-399
C= 350-398	D =300-349	F =0-299

### **Some Cautionary Notes:**

\*Participation is vital to this course. Contact—e-mail or telephone—instructor if you fall behind. If you don't log in for as week, you may be dropped. Lateness will strip points from your participation and assignment grades.

\*Reminder: don't plagiarize (steal the words and ideas of others); plagiarism gives you an "F" on the assignment in question and perilously jeopardizes your ability to pass the class. This can also end up on your permanent De Anza record.

### **EWRT 30 STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- Demonstrate a personal creative process in multiple literary genres.
- Identify and apply major technical and stylistic elements of imaginative writing.
- Evaluate one's peers' and one's own imaginative writing.

- **Assignments the first week (you only need to hand in one thing each day. Sometimes there are choices. You are welcome to do more work than required. I will offer extra credit for those who do up to three more substantive pieces than required during the quarter.)**
  - Introduce yourself in the “Introduction Forum” no later than Tuesday night, June 30th.
  - Make sure to read “Hints on How to Respond to Peers” no later than Tuesday night, 6/30, as well.
  - By Wednesday evening, July 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:55 PM, please post your first poem assignment—self naming chant after the Irish chant of Amergin & Cessair” **and/or** respond to the brilliant Ellery Akers poem prompt “What I Do,” also an autobiographical kind of poem, but based in a poetic gaze into the speaker’s literal activities. I recommend both since they are such different approaches to “self introduction” through poetry, but I can’t assume you’ll have time for that, and I want us to keep moving. I may also give you a “nicknames” assignment as well—to choose from—for your self-intro
  - By Thursday Evening, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 11:55 PM respond to the “anti-Hallmark Card” prompt of Margaret Atwood (or see David Lee’s “Loading a Boar” for a similar sort of subversive narrative of happiness).
  - By Friday Evening, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11:55 PM, please respond to Marge Piercy prompt “I Still Feel You.”
  - By Tuesday evening, July 7<sup>th</sup>, at 11:55 PM please respond to one of the prompts from “This is My Country,” or try the “Poem for our Time” prompt.

### **Basic Course shape and *tentative* schedule**

#### **Overview of weekly content**

June 29—July 5<sup>th</sup>: Course and student introductions. We’ll touch on among themes such as: metaphor as a language of liberation; poetry, like storytelling, as oral and ancient; literature and poetry as determining *what words mean*; poetry as a subversive function of language; the pleasures of *words themselves*; the nominal subject vs. the true subject of a poem; literal & figurative imagery, *concrete language*.

July 6 — July 12: Poetry, animals, and the body; poetry as a narrative with a leap; poetry of witness: poetry as a political act; writing about work; poetry and gender; poetry and the ode, the homage, the riddle, the dream, synesthetic mystery.

July 13 - July 19: Poems in sections, poem in strict forms and various free verse forms; *ekphrastic* poetry; slam and performance poems; group poems; love poems.

July 20- July 26: Flash fiction. Significant detail. Voice. Point of view. Immediacy and urgency in narration; writings of Elizabeth Tallent, Jane Martin, Jayne Anne Phillips, Studs Terkel, Jamaica Kincaid, Tobias Wolff, Toni Cade Bambara and others.

July 27 – August 2<sup>nd</sup>: The short story, continued: conflict, shape & structure, dialogue, development, flashback, tone. “Leaving out” vs. “putting in.” Model writers including: Raymond Carver, James Baldwin, Edwidge Danticat. Online and in-class fiction workshops.

August 3<sup>rd</sup> - August 8<sup>th</sup> Final portfolios due including peer & instructor fiction feedback. Possible class “zine” or requirement to send something you wrote out to a magazine.

See you online! Happy to be doing this work with you over the summer. Hope you find some pleasure, meaning, fulfillment in the work, and in the writing community.

Ken Weisner/ EWRT 30.61Z

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Initial Assignments, week one: This information is already posted in the announcement area of the week one calendar, and in my first news forum broadcast e-mail, but I'll repeat it again here: introduce yourself this first week in the introductions forum (poetically and prosaically), and over the course of the next week, write at least three drafts of new poems. Read all materials carefully! Don't worry if you're a beginner. This class is for *everybody*. Just dive in and try. Hard. It's perfectly OK. E-mail me with any concerns about that. ☺ First week schedule:

—Introduce yourself in the “Introduction Forum” no later than Tuesday night, June 30<sup>th</sup>.

—Make sure to read “Hints on How to Respond to Peers” no later than Tuesday night as well.

—By Wednesday evening, July 1st, at 11:55 PM, please post your first poem assignment—self-naming chant after the Irish chant of Amergin & Cessair” **and/or** respond to the brilliant Ellery Akers poem prompt “What I Do,” also an autobiographical kind of poem, but based in a poetic gaze into the speaker’s literal activities. I may provide you with a “nickname” poem to respond to as well.

—By Thursday evening, July 2nd, at 11:55 PM respond to the “anti-Hallmark Card” prompt of Margaret Atwood (or see David Lee’s “Loading a Boar” for a similar sort of subversive narrative of happiness).

—By Friday evening, July 3rd, at 11:55 PM, please respond to the Marge Piercy prompt “I Still Feel You.”

—By Tuesday evening, July 7th, at 11:55 PM please respond to one of the prompts from “This is My Country.” The alternate assignment there will be “A Poem for our Time.”

*[You only need to hand in one thing each day. Sometimes there are choices. You are welcome to do more work than required. I will offer some extra credit for those who do up to three more substantive pieces over the course of the quarter than required]*

**Important Note on Privacy:** If you write on a private subject that you don't want to share with the class, e-mail the piece to me directly. For some poems, maybe it will be that way. That's normal. *Write what's true and vital and important—be free and brave as a writer—and THEN decide if you are able to share it with the class or not.* I hope you do, but it is always, always up to you.

**One other thing:** write in a constantly *saved* word processing file before you paste/post in Canvas. Also, please respond to 3-4 of your colleagues for each assignment.

E-mail me if you have any questions or technical difficulties. I'll be alert to such issues this first week in particular. Good luck and enjoy our creative community—it's always incredible and amazingly supportive (the best kind of community). Just dive right in! -kw