Creative Writing Courses

Spring 2027

Updated 10/20

300-level Creative Writing workshops may be repeated once for credit.

Poetry Workshop

CRW 285 A
Prof. Carter Smith
TR 12:30 - 1:45 PM

This workshop offers students an environment in which to develop and refine a creative practice dedicated to the writing of poems. The central experience of this course is the poetry workshop: a lively and supportive structure that writers use to distribute and discuss work in progress. In other words, in this class, you will write poems, you will have in-class conversations about them with your instructor and peers, and you will respond to the poetry written by other members of the class. In addition, you will get to participate in other dimensions of a literary-creative community by reading and discussing published poems from a wide variety of poetic traditions and attending campus events with visiting writers.

Short Story Workshop

CRW 286 A
Prof. Daniel Ruiz
MW 9:30 - 10:45 AM

In this workshop, we will be reading, discussing, and writing short stories, with the goal of familiarizing ourselves with the major craft elements and narrative strategies of fiction writing, such as plot, character, point of view, dialogue, description, setting, and several others. Each student will have multiple opportunities to share their writing in a supportive workshop environment. We will also take time to work on generative, in-class writing exercises, surrealist games, and more. Since an important part of this course will be dedicated to the art of reading and critiquing others' fiction, we will also discuss strategies and approaches for meaningfully responding to our readings as writers, as well as how to apply these strategies to your own creative work. We will learn about descriptive and prescriptive critique, close versus distance reading, and, most importantly, how to meet stories where they are. By the end of the course, you will have developed a creative portfolio featuring a variety of short fiction pieces, as well as a critical vocabulary for how to engage with the art of fiction writing.

Playwriting

CRW 384 / THE 360
Prof. Jonathan Herbert
MWF 10:00-10:50 AM

Advanced Poetry Workshop

CRW 385 A
Prof. Eric Ekstrand
WF 3:30-4:45 PM

Emphasis on reading and discussing student poems in terms of craftsmanship and general principles. May be repeated once.

Happily Ever After: Jane Austen and Popular Romance

CRW 386 A / ENG 302 A / HON 238A

Prof. Joanna Ruocco

MW 2:00-3:15 PM

Was Mr. Darcy the original alphahole? Can we trace every enemies-to-lovers romance back to *Pride & Prejudice*? Why does Jane Austen merit serious scholarly attention while popular romances are "guilty pleasures?" Is it sacrilege to discuss today's popular romance novels alongside Jane Austen's classic marriage plot novels?

We'll explore Austen's uses and transformations of romance and her legacy in today's popular novels. We'll examine the prejudices against novels that are often (but not always!) by, about, and for women, both in the nineteenth century and today. Reading several Austen novels, many popular romances published in the past 10 years, and watching a couple of films, we'll interrogate the power of romance as a cultural narrative across centuries. You'll learn the structure of romance narratives by writing your own romance novel (or at least part of one).

Advanced Creative Nonfiction Workshop

CRW 387 A

Prof. Eric G. Wilson

WF 12:30 - 1:45 PM

The purpose of this writing-intensive course is to study the craft of creative nonfiction, paying special attention to the memoir. We will develop our writing skills through brief weekly writing exercises, critiquing each other's writing, and completing two 6-10 page memoir essays. In addition, we'll learn about theories of memoir writing as well as read important memoirists, such as Joan Didion, Lauren Slater, Patricia Hampl, Maggie Nelson, Jamaica Kincaid, Gayle Pemberton, David Foster Wallace, David Shields, Scott Russell Sanders, James Baldwin, George Orwell, Maxine Hong Kingston, Ta-Nehisi Coates, and Jo Ann Beard.