

LITR 2371: Introduction to Creative Writing  
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Office Hours: Mon. 5–7 & Wed. 2–4

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## Introduction to Creative Writing (*short-version draft syllabus*)

*Can the writer isolate and vivify all in experience that most deeply engages our intellects and our hearts?*

*Get to work. Your work is to keep cranking the flywheel that turns the gears that spin the belt in the engine of belief that keeps you and your desk in midair.*

—Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life*

### **Course Description, Learning Outcomes, and Core Objectives:**

This course will introduce you to the practice of writing poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Because that practice requires a knowledge of the tradition in which we write, you will engage in intensive reading across a range of genres and historical moments. The semester is divided into thirds, with about five weeks spent on poetry, fiction, and nonfiction respectively. By experimenting with a wide variety of exercises and approaches, you will discover which genres and styles suit you, and which intrigue or challenge you.

#### Learning Outcomes

- ❖ Analyze and demonstrate strategies for brainstorming, generating, and editing creative work
- ❖ Articulate a working vocabulary and demonstrate critical/analytical skills for giving useful feedback
- ❖ Demonstrate skills of listening with sensitivity and awareness of the difficulty of creative work, thus preparing for a lifetime of collaborative literary citizenship
- ❖ Practice the discipline of writing daily and submitting work in a timely fashion
- ❖ Discover the demands of the writing life, which include but are not limited to discipline, precision, seriousness in the approach to craft and form, as well as imaginative risk, spontaneity and playfulness.

#### Core Objectives

- ❖ Critical Thinking
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Social Responsibility

### **Required Texts:**

Stephen Minot, *Three Genres*

Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life*

Printouts of supplementary readings and your own work, as requested by the instructor

**Required Writing:**

Journal Entries	20% (10 x 2%)
Workshop Poems	15%
One short story	15%
One essay/memoir	15%
Critiques	10%
Participation	10%
Revisions	10%
Artist's Statement	5%

**Grading:**

Your grade in LITR 2371 depends on the level of writing in your workshop submissions, your ability to produce Journal entries on time, and with a consistent spirit of experimentation and adventure, your complete, attentive, serious, helpful critique letters (write for five workshop members in each of the three workshops, your revisions, artist's statement, and participation. Because the workshop depends on its members, and because the writing life is very much about "showing up," absences and a failure to provide insightful, thoughtful contributions to class discussion will limit your chances of success in the course.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>CO</b>	<b>Assessment Methods</b>	<b>Criteria/Targets</b>
Analyze and demonstrate strategies for brainstorming, generating, and editing creative work	CT, COM	Short story, essay/memoir, and/or,	70% students will receive acceptable or excellent.
Articulate a working vocabulary and demonstrate critical/analytical skills for giving useful feedback	CT, COM	Participation and Critiques	70% students will receive acceptable or excellent.
Demonstrate skills of listening with sensitivity and awareness of the difficulty of creative work, thus preparing for a lifetime of collaborative literary citizenship	SR, TW	Participation and Critiques	70% students will receive acceptable or excellent.
Practice the discipline of writing daily and submitting work in a timely fashion	COM	Journal Entries	70% students will receive acceptable or excellent.

Discover the demands of the writing life, which including include but are not limited to discipline, precision, seriousness in the approach to craft and form, as well as imaginative risk, spontaneity and playfulness.	CT, COM	Artist's Statement	70% students will receive acceptable or excellent
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### *Course Policies*

**Late Work:** You must anticipate problems, and submit your work EARLY to avoid lateness. You CAN upload a new draft if you get one done right before the deadline, but computer and printer problems at the last minute are NOT AN EXCUSE. Work submitted within one week of the deadline will receive a MAXIMUM OF A C (75%), and after one week, it's a ZERO.

**The Writing Center:** This is an instructional facility designed to provide all university students with peer tutors to help with their writing projects, and can support creative writing students do better in class. Their office is at SSB 2105, their phone number is (281) 283-2910, and their website is [www.uhcl.edu/writingcenter](http://www.uhcl.edu/writingcenter).

**Blackboard:** It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with Blackboard. Should you run into technical difficulties please contact UCT ([281] 283-2828) and/or use the support tabs.

**Disabilities:** The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact disability services (SSB 1.301, #281-283-2627) ASAP, and **provide me with an accommodation letter**.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism Policy:** All UHCL students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty. Please refer to the UHCL catalog and the Student Life Handbook for the University Academic Honesty Policy. Briefly, plagiarism is using another person's words and ideas as though they were your own and it is easy to avoid: simply put the material you have taken from someone else's writing in quotation marks and cite the person's name and publication in your paper. If you are paraphrasing from an outside source—explaining someone else's ideas using your own words—you *must still acknowledge and cite the source*. Plagiarism is not restricted to the use of published work; the **passing of another student's work as your own**, turning in **any work that you submitted for another class**, or having another person write your paper is also a case of plagiarism. If I suspect unacknowledged dependence on outside sources, I will investigate it thoroughly; a paper found to contain any plagiarized material will receive a "0" and is sufficient grounds for failing the course.

**6 Drop Rule Limitation:** Students who entered a Texas public college or university for the first time in fall 2007 or later should be aware of the course drop limitation imposed by the Texas Legislature. Dropping this or any other course between the first day of class and the census date for the semester/session does not affect your 6 drop rule count. Dropping a course between the census date and the last day to drop a class for the semester/session WILL count as one of your 6 permitted drops. You should take this into consideration before dropping this or any other course. Visit [www.uhcl.edu/records](http://www.uhcl.edu/records) for more information on the 6 drop rule and the census date information for the semester/session.

**Email:** I will do my best to answer all students emails as promptly as I can, which usually means within 24 hours, though I ask you to allow me 48 hours to respond. Please treat emails like **letters** rather than text messages, and use a salutation, good punctuation, and whole words.

**Emergency Hotline Number for University Closures:** 281-283-2221

