

## CREATIVE WRITING, Fall 2022

Dr. Phillip Lobo

Office: EL-B008D

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12-1:00pm, 3-4:00pm; Tuesday 11:00-1:00pm; also digitally for two hours on Thursday, by appointment.

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This is a course designed to help you hone your creative writing. It will provide you with opportunities to try your hand at a variety of creative forms, developing a familiarity with each while helping you to choose one you find best suits your strengths and preferences. Over the course of the class you will complete a variety of projects - short fiction, poetry, plays and interactive fiction - with the goal of producing, by the end of the semester, a finished work, revised and polished, using a form and topic that is of most interest to you. The process will involve workshopping with other students, recognizing your own unique capacities as well as those of your classmates, assisting each other in making your creative work the best version of what it aims to be.

Throughout this process I will be present to offer prompts and activities, structure class time, and provide written feedback; I am also available during office hours and encourage you to take advantage of conferencing with me about your work as it progresses. However, the most important thing is that you **write**, as the best teacher is experience. Use the chance this class affords you to practice, and treat the activities as guidelines and aids, not constraints. We are here to foster the writer that you are, to discover the perspective that is yours and yours alone.

### ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

A: 100-94 A-: 93-90 B+: 89-87 B: 86-83 B-: 82-80 C+: 79-77 C: 76-73 C-: 72-70 D\*: 69 and lower

#### **In-Class Writing/Workshop Participation: 15%**

Graded chiefly on completion; you will not be judged qualitatively, as long as you show sufficient effort. I will, each weekend, request your ongoing drafts to make certain you have completed the assignment and followed the instructions. This grade will also reflect your active participation in the class workshops, which will follow the in-class writing; the workshops are especially important, as your classmates will be relying upon your feedback to improve their own work.

#### **Unit Projects:**

**Short Fiction Unit: 15%**

**Poetry Unit: 15%**

**Play Unit: 15%**

**Interactive Unit: 15%**

**TOTAL: 60%**

The first half of the semester will be split into three-week units. The goal of each unit will be to produce a complete first draft in each of the forms we take on. For the short fiction unit, a short story should be the end product; for poetry, a small collection of poems; for plays, a short play of one to three scenes; for interactive fiction, a small interactive work. No specific length will be required, but adequate effort and development must be shown to receive full credit. Check in with me in the week before final submission to make sure you are on track.

### **Final Project: 25%**

Over the last five weeks you will choose a final project in the form of your choice and work on bringing it to a level of polish beyond that of the unit projects. As such it will be held to a higher standard, showing development between drafts, demonstrating your ability to revise and refine. During this time you will meet with me to discuss your progress and demonstrate that you are working steadily to improve. The goal is to produce a work of which you can feel proud, and might wish to publish in print or online.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**ATTENDANCE:** Regular and punctual class attendance is expected and required of all students. If you are not in class when it officially begins, you will be marked tardy. If you show up to class ten or more minutes late, you will be marked absent for the day.

**LATE WORK:** Late assignments will not be accepted without an in-person discussion and a clear plan for timely submission. If I do not have your assignment when it is due, and we do not discuss a plan for, you risk receiving no credit for it. Please make every effort to make sure assignments are timely, and that you meet the deadlines as outlined in the syllabus. **If you must miss a class, plan ahead to get your work in before the deadline.** In the case of an excused absence (those deemed so by the school), you will need to contact me via email to make arrangements to get your missed work in.

**TECHNOLOGY:** Most of our class time will be spent writing. To that end, please make sure you have the materials and equipment you need to write each day in class. If you write longhand, make certain you have a notebook and a suitable utensil. If you use a computer for word processing and research (I sure do!) then make certain you bring it with you each day. I ask that you honor my trust by confining your computer use to the class task.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT**

You are responsible for the integrity of your work and you are required to produce work that is academically honest. This means that all of your work for this course must be your own and must be created specifically for this course. Failing to maintain the integrity of your work will have serious consequences. Submitting someone else's paper, including papers you obtain online, as your own writing is fraud. Attempting to take credit for someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them is plagiarism. Direct and indirect plagiarism, both of which we will discuss in class, are unacceptable and

have serious academic consequences. If you are even remotely uncertain about whether or not any part of your work is academically honest, contact me and we can sort it out. Please refer to the student handbook for additional information, including information that is new this year.

### CONTENT NOTE

Writing can be a deeply personal process, one which calls on our deepest experiences. It can also be experimental, broadening ourselves through acts of imagination. In this course, I'd like you to have as much creative freedom as possible, reaching both deep within yourself and wide into the world. However, writing is not an action that takes place in a void; discourse has effects on the world, and language is one of the most pervasive ways power is extended and expressed. In this course we will aspire to *ethical literary production*. This means being mindful of reiterating harmful language and malign tropes, as well as showing due humility before the limitations of our own experience. It also means being considerate of your classmates when you share your work. If you have concerns about the sensitivity of the topics you're writing about, the situations you're representing, please reach out to me; I promise to be understanding and compassionate, and to help you navigate the responsibility of creative freedom.

I'd also ask that you **provide content warnings for your material before sharing it with your classmates**; you can never know what effect your words will have, so let's work to keep each other safe. It's only when we feel safe, after all, that we can take the important risks!

### DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Ball State University aspires to be a university that attracts and retains a diverse faculty, staff and student body. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse as expressed in our [Beneficence Pledge](#). For Bias Incident Response information, please click [here](#) or e-mail [reportbias@bsu.edu](mailto:reportbias@bsu.edu).

### DISABILITY SERVICES

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. The [Office of Disability Services](#) coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at **765-285-5293** or [dsd@bsu.edu](mailto:dsd@bsu.edu).