

CREATIVE WRITING, Fall 2020

Dr. Phillip Lobo

Office: EL-B008D

Office Hours: MWF 10-11:30am, 2-3:30pm; T 11:45am-12:45pm; also 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

Journal Writing/Workshop Participation: 20%

Graded chiefly on completion; you will not be judged qualitatively, as long as you show sufficient effort. I will, each weekend, collect the journals 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 journal writing.

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: 20%

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.

LATE/MAKE UP WORK

Generally speaking I will expect you to submit your work in a timely fashion, with each unit project being due before the start of the next unit's first class, and the final project being due at the end of the final week. If you find that you cannot complete the work in the allotted time, please contact me as quickly as possible so we can work out a plan for late submission. Otherwise I will deduct a letter grade for each class day that the project is late; try and avoid this at all costs! For missed daily and take-home writing exercises, I'll expect you to speak to me in office hours about the circumstances of the missing work, and so we can decide on a reasonable timeframe for you to make up those assignments. If you do not contact me and the assignments are unaccounted after two days of classes, you will receive a zero for that assignment. Again, try to not let this happen! Your best bet is always to keep me in the loop should problems arise. I will always try and give you the best chance of success.

ATTENDANCE

You are expected to be in class and on time daily. Failure to do so will hurt your overall grade (specifically participation) as well as interfering with your ability to fulfill the required assignments. Sleeping in class constitutes an unexcused absence. If you have an emergency and cannot make it to class, I ask that you contact me in person via email. If you arrive five minutes late to class, you will be considered tardy. If you are more than ten minutes late, it will be considered an unexcused absence, but you will still be expected to attend class, and to complete all the day's writing assignments.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

You are required to produce work that is academically honest. Direct and indirect plagiarism, the definitions of which will be discussed in class, are unacceptable and have serious academic consequences. If you have any doubt as to whether or not your work is academically honest, contact me before you submit it so we can discuss the situation.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require any special accommodations due to a disability, let me know as soon as possible and I will make whatever adjustments are necessary for your comfort in the class. Our goal is to help you succeed on your own terms, so never hesitate to assert a need if you have one.

TECHNOLOGY

Unless otherwise specified as part of the class assignment, laptops are to be closed and off your desks during class time. Phones should also be set to silent and placed in your bags where they will not risk becoming a distraction.

LITERATURE NOTE

Important literature is often about the deepest and most difficult struggles of humans to live authentically in a complex world. Through the thoughts and experiences of literary characters, we can examine and evaluate our personal responses to life's mysteries, complexities, disappointments, and joys. In addition, we begin to understand how a writer, in his or her own struggle to experience creatively, has responded to the social, political, and artistic environment of his/her times. The English Department at the Academy selects reading material that reflects these human struggles, has endured the test of time, and has earned a respected place in the universe of letters. The instructors will often include recently published poems, stories, and articles that reflect the diversity of contemporary cultures and experiences.

If, because of the powerful nature of the reading experience, you are unable to read and study a specific text with reasonable analytic objectivity, please confer with your instructor. Alternative texts are available.

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 and through university resources found at <http://cms.bsu.edu/campuslife/multiculturalcenter>. As such, it is important to ensure that your comments and behavior in class is respectful and inclusive. Discriminatory comments or behavior will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, in accordance with Indiana Academy and Ball State University policy.

MASK POLICY

The Indiana Academy will follow Ball State University's mask policy.

All people on campus—including faculty, staff, students, vendors, contractors, suppliers, and visitors—should wear face masks (covering nose and mouth) while inside campus buildings. Face masks are specifically required in the following situations:

- i. When in the presence of others (indoors or outdoors) and physical distancing is difficult to maintain, such as in hallways, elevators, stairs, public spaces, and common areas;
- ii. When in a classroom or laboratory;
- iii. When using campus transportation (such as a shuttle bus);
- iv. When multiple individuals are in a University vehicle.

Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to bring their own mask. Masks will be provided to anyone who is unable to bring a mask or their mask is damaged.

If a student declines to wear a face mask as required, the student will be referred to the Director of Academic Affairs or the Director of Residential Affairs. If the situation occurs in a classroom or other academic setting, it is considered a classroom management issue, and the teacher will remind the student of the requirement and give the student a chance to comply with it prior to referring the matter to the Director of Academic Affairs or the Director of Residential Affairs. Wearing masks is crucial to preventing the spread of COVID-19 to others.