

ENGL 223 007: Introduction to Creative Writing
TR: 12:30 – 1 :45PM in HLG 304

Instructor: Hannah Ritorto
Email: ProfRitorto@gmail.com

Office: H. L. Griffin 354
Office Hours: T12:00-12:30; R 12:00-12:30; 3:30-4:30

Course Description and Objectives

In this course, students will examine the basic conventions of poetry, drama, fiction, and creative nonfiction while focusing heavily on writing, workshopping, and revision.

Students will be expected to perform the following tasks:

- Familiarize themselves with the conventions of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama.
- Perform close readings of texts, examining their form, content, and structure
- Use critical vocabulary to discuss the form, content, and structure of texts (in written work and in class discussions)
- Engage with peers in a constructive, productive, and respectful way in workshop.
- Generate original works of prose, poetry, and drama or creative nonfiction.
- Revise their own work across multiple drafts, considering the form, content, structure, and rhetorical situations of their own texts
- Create a portfolio of polished work.

Required Texts, Materials, and Access

Readings:

- All course readings will be available on our class Moodle page in .doc, .pdf, or html formats

Materials:

- Writers Notebook- paper or digital
- Folder for turning in Final Portfolio

Access:

- Consistent, reliable access to course Moodle page both for work outside of class and during class time.
- You are not required to have the portable tech that would enable you to access Moodle during class time. However, if you do not have this access, you are required to bring to class printed copies of all the readings we will be discussing with you to class.
- Note: Cell phones are useful tools, but are not ideal for deeply interacting with texts during class time. It is my preference that you not rely exclusively on cell phones for text access during class.

Grade Distribution

Category	% of Grade	Grading Scale:
Homework and In-Class Writing	10%	90-100 = A
Participation and Citizenship	10%	80-89 = B
Workshop Written Responses	30%	70-79= C
Unit and Workshop Assignments	30%	60-69=D
Final Portfolio and Reading	20%	59 and below= F

Course Requirements

For more information on specific assignments, please refer to Assignment Guidelines document.

Homework and In-Class Assignments: 10% of Final Grade

- **Writing Prompts:** You will be given short creative writing assignments in the form of prompts throughout the semester. These prompts are designed to allow you to generate ideas for your assignments and practice the elements of fiction, poetry, drama, and CNF writing that we will discuss in class. While the prompts will be designed to help you focus on one or a few of the fundamental concepts we discuss, the content will be up to you—the prompts are meant to help you practice certain basic concepts while allowing you creative freedom. Developing prompt responses into short stories and poems to turn in is encouraged.
- **In-Class Responses:** Sometimes, you will be assigned work in-class. This work may include creative writing prompts, group assignments, responses to the reading, questions on the reading, and—if necessary—reading quizzes.

Participation and Workshop Citizenship: 10% of Final Grade

See Assignment Guidelines for details

Unit Assignments and Workshop Pieces: 30% of final grade

- 2 short stories/ 1 for workshop
 - o **Short Stories:** You will be required to write two short 750-1500-word fictional stories incorporating elements of fiction writing that we discuss in class. You will choose one story to be reviewed by your peers and revised for your final portfolio. These stories are designed to be short so that you will have a chance to complete two full stories. If you would like to write a longer story for one or both short story assignments or if you would like to combine your first and second stories for workshop, please speak with me. The specific requirements of this assignment will be given to you closer to the assignment due date.
- 4 poems/ 1 for workshop
 - o **Closed Form Poem:** You will be required to write one poem which uses a closed form, incorporating the elements of that poetic form that we discuss in class. One of your poems (closed form or free verse) will be reviewed by your peers and revised for your final portfolio. The specific requirements of this assignment will be given to you closer to the assignment due date.
 - o **Free Verse Poem:** You will be required to write one free verse poem, incorporating the elements of that poetic form that we discuss in class. One of your poems (closed form or free verse) will be reviewed by your peers and revised for your final portfolio. The specific requirements of this assignment will be given to you closer to the assignment due date.
 - o **2 Author's choice poems:** your two remaining poems may be either closed form or free verse, but should incorporate the appropriate elements of your chosen form from our class discussion.
- 1 drama or creative nonfiction piece/ 1 for workshop
- 3 Critical Responses: You will be required to write three 250-500 word double-spaced critical responses to the texts we discuss in class: 1 in response to short fiction, 1 in response to poetry, and 1 in response to either drama or CNF. In these responses, you will need to

discuss fundamental elements of the text and how the author is using them. These responses are to be turned in the same day that the text is up for discussion and are due at the start of class. These exercises are about learning to break down and examine written texts; you will be graded on the effort and thought you put into your analysis of the text and completion of the requirements, not “correctness” of interpretation.

Workshop Responses: 30% of Final Grade

You will be required to provide written responses, 250-500 words in length (double-spaced), to your peers’ texts that are up for workshop: 1 response per classmate per genre. Your peer responses must be thoughtful analyses of the text you are responding to. Specific details on response expectations are available in the course Assignment Guidelines document. Your response must be one of constructive criticism and needs to focus on what the author’s goals are for his/her text, not on what you would do if it were your own text. Rude or inappropriate comments about the text or author will not be tolerated and will result in a zero for the response. I will provide an example response before the first workshop in each genre. I will provide a response for all student texts.

Final Portfolio and Reading: 20% of Final Grade

- Final Portfolio
 - Your portfolio will contain one polished, complete short story, 3 revised poems, 1 revised drama or CNF piece, as well as first-draft and revision-stage copies of those texts, and a 2-page personal essay on your development as a writer and your revision process.
- Final Reading
 - We will have a final reading during our final exam period during which you will read one prose piece or two poems from your portfolio. This reading is required and is a part of your final portfolio and reading grade.

Classroom Expectations

I take my responsibility as an instructor very seriously, and I expect you to do the same as students. Remember that your grade in this (and any) class is *your responsibility*, as you are responsible for your learning. If you find at any time during the term that you are having difficulties meeting the requirements for this course, you should speak to me immediately. Taking responsibility for your own learning means:

1. **Attendance is vital.** I expect you to attend class, and I do not respond to emails asking “what did I miss?” nor provide make-up lectures during office hours or at any other time. You may miss three class sessions without penalty. Each subsequent absence will lower your final grade in the course by 5%. Excessive unexcused absences (more than 6) will therefore automatically result in an F in the course unless you withdraw officially.
2. **Punctuality is Important.** If on occasion you must choose between arriving late or being absent, join us as unobtrusively as possible. Three instances of being more than 10 minutes late or leaving class more than 10 minutes early will combine to count as one of your three absences. See the Assignment Guidelines document for how lateness can specifically affect your participation grade.

3. **Preparation and Participation is Important.** Have the reading materials read, any homework/assignments completed, your class materials (texts, notebook, writing instruments) with you, and be ready to engage with your peers and the lessons. This class will be much more interesting—and you will do better—if you are prepared for it. Please see the Assignment Guidelines document for how coming to class prepared and actively participating in course discussion and activities specifically affect your participation grade.
4. **Handheld electronic devices and laptops are to be used responsibly during class.** Many of our course texts will be accessed online and, as you are required to bring them to class with you, of course it makes sense that you will want to use your technology to access them rather than printing them all. For this reason, the use of laptops, tablets, and phones to access course materials is acceptable. However, be aware that texting/messaging or otherwise using your technology inappropriately during class time is disrespectful to our learning community and will negatively affect your participation grade. In addition, please note that cell phones are useful tools, but are not ideal for deeply interacting with texts during class time. It is my preference that you not rely exclusively on cell phones for text access during class.
5. **It is everyone's responsibility to create an environment conducive to learning.** In order to maximize the learning experience for all, students are expected to conduct themselves professionally and to minimize behaviors that distract fellow students from concentrating on our discussion and other classroom activities. Behaviors that are particularly distracting and not allowed during our class time are as follows:
 - talking while someone else is talking (other students or the instructor)
 - allowing your cell phone to ring or vibrate
 - making rude or inappropriate comments to peers or instructorPlease refrain from these behaviors in order to help create the best possible learning environment for yourself and others. Please see the Assignment Guidelines document for how disruptive behavior can specifically affect your participation grade. In addition, rude or inappropriate comments will not be tolerated and will result in dismissal from class.

Late Assignments and Extensions:

Due to the collaborative nature of this course, all assignments will be due at the start of class and on paper, unless otherwise instructed. Late assignments will be penalized **5% per day**, including weekend days, except for valid medical or compassionate reasons (proper documentation will be required). That said, if your schedule is particularly busy in a week when an assignment is due, I am willing to discuss an extension; you must, however, contact me a full week before the original due date for the assignment. After that date, no extensions will be granted. The exception is the final portfolio, of which no late versions are accepted due to its proximity to the end of the semester.

Because timely submission of your chosen workshop pieces and written workshop feedback significantly impacts the work of the entire class, **late workshop pieces or written workshop feedback will not be accepted.** A writing workshop is a community based upon mutual respect, and the key focus of that respect is coming to class prepared to discuss your peer's work. If you come to class without written workshop feedback, you will be asked to leave class. **If you miss class on a workshop day, you are still responsible for turning in your written feedback to your peers and to Moodle within 24 hours of class.**

Moodle

We will be using Moodle for almost all our assigned readings, as well as for communication purposes. *You must be able to access and receive emails via Moodle because important announcements and notifications are sent through this platform.* Here is a Moodle student guide in case you have trouble with the system: <http://helpdesk.louisiana.edu/content/student-user-guide/1127>

Grades will not be tracked via Moodle; if you want to know your grade in the course, the grading scale is available via this document, and you may make an advance appointment with me to discuss your grade during office hours. Participation points will not be calculated until the end of the semester.

Office Hours and Support

I am available to you weekly during my office hours. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with me. If you find yourself struggling with the work of this course, do not hesitate to seek support. I understand the challenges of this course, and I am here to help you. If your class schedule conflicts with my office hours, we can make arrangements to meet outside office hours by appointment. It is imperative that, if you schedule such an appointment with me, you do not miss the appointment.

Email Policy

Remember that writing an email is a rhetorical act. Thus, when you email me (or your other professors)

- begin with a salutation (“Dear Professor Ritorto” for example)
- write in a polite and professional voice; clearly state your message
- end with a valediction, or complementary close (Sincerely, With regards, etc.)

I am happy to answer brief questions over email; for lengthier issues or complex questions, please see me during office hours. Exercise restraint when considering sending multiple consecutive emails. I make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends, though at times my schedule may not allow such immediate response. I do not provide essay feedback of any kind via email within 24 hours of the due date.

To demonstrate that you understand this process, please send me an email which contains a brief message following the above guidelines and a meme of your choice that relates to creative writing.

Academic Integrity

The UL Lafayette policy on plagiarism is as follows (text excerpted from the university catalog):

“The University holds that all work for which a student will receive a grade or credit shall be an original contribution or shall be properly documented to indicate sources. Abrogation of this principle entails dishonesty, defeats the purpose of instruction, and undermines the high goals of the University. Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. Students shall be assumed to know the acceptable methods and techniques for proper documentation of sources and to avoid cheating and plagiarism in all work submitted for credit, whether prepared in or out of class

“Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. The minimum penalty for a student guilty of either dishonest act is a grade of ‘zero’ for the assignment in question. The maximum penalty is dismissal from the University.”

If you have any questions as to what constitutes academic dishonesty in any of its forms, consult with me as soon as possible.

Policy on Children in Class

Currently, the university does not have a policy for children in the classroom. The policy described here is a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff, and faculty parents.

1. All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary.
2. For older children and babies, I understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to miss class to stay home with a child. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
3. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
4. In all situations when babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your child needs special attention or is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met.
5. The exception to this policy is in the event of a child sick with any form of contagious illness, as I must ask you not bring them into our class environment. If you must miss class because your child is ill, please email me and I will work with you.
6. Finally, I understand that the largest barrier for completing coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem-solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for student-parenting balance.

Adapted from Dr. Melissa Cheyney's policy for parents

Food and Housing Insecurity Statement

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free service located on the first floor of Griffin Hall, in room 107. The Writing Center consultants are experienced writers who pride themselves on creating a comfortable environment for every phase of your writing project. From thesis statements, to research planning, document design, to just getting started, the Writing Center staff works to help you become more focused, organized, and confident with your work. In addition to providing the latest style manuals and handbooks, the Writing Center also operates a computer lab, located next door in Griffin Hall, room 108. Both of these services are free, student-operated, and devoted to helping you be a more successful and productive student. Walk-ins are accepted, but scheduling an appointment in advance is recommended. Students who are more than ten minutes late to an appointment must reschedule.

Writing Center Location: HL Griffin 107

Hours: Monday - Thursday 8am - 5pm; Friday 8am - 12pm

Library Satellite Station: Hours: Monday - Thursday 6pm - 9pm

For Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette makes accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office at 337-482-5252 or ssd@louisiana.edu during the first week of classes. SSD will assist you with an accommodation plan. The university also has a Supported Education Program (SEP, <http://disability.louisiana.edu/SEP.html>), which provides free confidential help on campus for students with psychological disabilities (Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, etc.). Please contact Kim A. Warren, MSW, PhD, LCSW, Supported Education Advisor, at 482-5252 or at kimawarren@louisiana.edu. She is located in the Conference Center, Room 126.

Campus Safety Information

1. University Police are the first responders for all emergencies on campus. Dial 911 or 482-6447 to report any emergency.
2. The Emergency Information Floor Plan is posted in the hallways for every building. This document includes evacuation routes and other important information. Please familiarize yourself with this document.
3. In the event that the building fire alarm is sounded, please exit the building immediately and notify University Police. Do not use the building elevator - look for the illuminated Exit Signs to direct you to safety.
4. During times of emergency, information may be available on the University's Emergency Hotline- 482-2222. This number is printed on the back of your ID card.
5. The University utilizes a text message service to notify its students and employees of campus wide emergencies. To subscribe to this service, log on to www.ul.mobilecampus.com.
6. If you have a special medical condition that might render you incapacitated during class, please make this known to your instructor as soon as possible, including any emergency contact information for your next of kin or similar.

Free Counseling

The university offers free counseling services to all students to assist with a wide range of concerns, including but *not limited to* stress, panic attacks, test anxiety, loneliness, depression, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts, addiction, family problems, relationship problems, abuse, unplanned pregnancy, etc. If you are dealing with any of these or other emotional challenges, do not hesitate to contact Counseling and testing services at 482-6480, counseling@louisiana.edu, or in person at the Saucier Wellness Center (in O. K. Allen Hall). They book appointments but also welcome drop-in visitors. For emergency counseling, call 911; the campus police can connect you to an on-call counselor.

Mandatory Reporting

As an employee of the state of Louisiana, I am by law a mandated reporter of many situations dealing with violations of personal safety. I am aware that the work of this class may occasionally interact with one's personal experiences that potentially fall within the bounds of situations I am mandated to report. Please be aware of this as you consider the information you share in class/office hours or include in your written assignments.

Disclaimer Statement: This syllabus is subject to change at instructor's discretion. Students should refer to Moodle for updates to this syllabus, including changes in homework assignments and due dates, which will also be announced in class. ***Be sure to check your UL email and Moodle regularly!***

Course Schedule Spring 2019
ENGL 223 007: Introduction to Creative Writing
TR: 12:30 – 1 :45PM in HLG 304

Preparedness: For each day that there has been an assigned reading, students are **required to have that text in class**, either printed or via electronic access.

Disclaimer: The instructor may make changes to this schedule at any time, both to assignments and due dates, based upon instructor’s discretion. Changes will be announced in class and/or via Moodle. *Please check your UL email and our course Moodle page regularly to ensure you are aware of changes.*

Unit I: Short Fiction

Week 1:

Thurs 1/17	Due: Register for Class, Access Moodle Page
	In Class: Discuss Syllabus, class expectations

Week 2:

Tues 1/22	Due: Read Syllabus, Assignment Guidelines Documents
	In Class: Conventions of Short Fiction
Weds 1/23	Drop/Add Deadline
Thurs 1/24	Due: Read Lahiri “A Temporary Matter”
	In Class: Discuss Lahiri

Week 3:

Tues 1/29	Due: Response paper 1 Read Flash Fiction Packet
	In Class: Discuss Response papers, Discuss Reading
Thurs 1/31	Due: Short Fiction 1 Read Worthen “Vigil”
	In Class: Discuss Reading Discuss workshop/revision

Week 4:

Tues 2/5	Due: Workshop 1 Responses
	In Class: Fiction workshop 1
Thurs 2/7	Due: Workshop 2 Responses
	In Class: Fiction workshop 2

Week 5:

Tues 2/12	Due: Workshop 3 Responses
	In Class: Fiction workshop 3
Thurs 2/14	Due: Short Fiction 2
	In Class: Small Group Work: Short Fiction 2

Unit II: Poetry

Week 6:

Tues 2/19	Due:
	In Class: Conventions of Poetry: Closed Form
Thurs 2/21	Due: Read Closed Form Poetry Packet
	In Class: Discuss Readings

Week 7:

Tues 2/26	Due: Read Free Verse Poetry Packet
	In Class: Conventions of Poetry: Free Verse Discuss Readings
Thurs 2/28	Due: Response Paper 2
	In Class: Writing Prompt

Week 8:

Tues 3/5	In Class: No Class: Mardi Gras Break
Thurs 3/7	Due: Closed Form Poem and Free Verse Poem Due
	In Class: Discuss Closed Form and Free Verse Poems Writing Prompt and Group Work Last Day to Withdraw with grade of "W"

Week 9:

Tues 3/12	Due: Workshop P1 Written Feedback
	In Class: Workshop P1
Thurs 3/14	Due: Workshop P2 Written Feedback
	In Class: Workshop P2

Week 10:

Tues 3/19	Due: Workshop P3 Written Feedback
	In Class: Workshop P3
Thurs 3/21	Due: Poems 3 and 4 Due
	In Class: Conventions of Creative Nonfiction

Unit III: Drama and Creative Nonfiction

Week 11:

Tues 3/26	Due: Read Goldbach "In the Memory of the Living"
	In Class: Discuss Goldbach Discuss Podcasts
Thurs 3/28	Due: Read Jamison "Morphology of the Hit"
	In Class: Discuss Jamison, Writing Prompt

Week 12:

Tues 4/2	Due: Read McLindon <i>Hitch</i>
	In Class: Conventions of Drama Discuss Reading

Thurs 4/4	Due: Read Jamieson <i>Not the One We Gave Her</i>
	In Class: Discuss Jamieson

Week 13:

Tues 4/19	Due: Response Paper 3 Read Huddle “Museum Piece” & Norris “Rain”
	In Class: Discuss Response Papers
Thurs 4/11	Due: Drama or CNF for Workshop Due
	In Class: Writing Prompt, Discuss Final Portfolio

Week 14:

Tues 4/16	Due:
	In Class: NO CLASS: Spring Break
Thurs 4/18	Due:
	In Class: NO CLASS: Spring Break

Week 15:

Tues 4/23	Due: Workshop D/CNF Written Feedback
	In Class: Small Group D/CNF Workshop
Thurs 4/25	Due: Prepare for conferences
	In Class: Individual Conferences

Week 16:

Tues 4/30	Due: Prepare for Conferences
	In Class: Individual Conferences
Thurs 5/2	Due: Prepare for Conferences
	In Class: Individual Conferences
	Last Day of Class

Finals Week:

Friday 5/10 8:00 - 10:30 AM	Due: Final Portfolio Due
	In Class: Class Final Reading

*Please note: This is our University-Scheduled final exam time. Final portfolios may be turned in at any point during finals week during office hours or by appointment.