

Final Portfolio and Reading: 20% of Final Grade

Final Portfolio

- Required Elements:
 - Process Documents: first draft *and* revision stages of your polished pieces from three genres.
 - Polished Writing:
 - one revised and polished short story
 - 3 revised and polished poems
 - 1 revised and polished drama or Creative Nonfiction piece
 - Reflection Essay: 2-page personal essay on your development as a writer and your revision process.
- Assessment: Your final portfolio will be assessed using the rubric on this page

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.

Final Portfolio Grading Rubric: 17 Points		
Requirement	Meets Expectation	Does Not Meet Expectation
Short Fiction: 2 points one polished and revised short fiction piece between 750-1000 words demonstrating awareness of conventions of short fiction as discussed in class.		
Short Fiction Process Documents: 3 points early draft and process versions of your polished short fiction piece, including at least two revision stages.		
Poetry: 2 points three polished and revised poems, demonstrating awareness of conventions of poetry as discussed in class.		
Poetry Process Documents: 3 points early draft and process versions of your polished poems. At least two revision stages per poem.		
Drama or Creative Nonfiction: 2 points one polished and revised drama <i>or</i> creative nonfiction piece, as well as early draft and process versions		
Drama or Creative Nonfiction Process Documents: 2 points early draft and process versions of your polished piece, including at least two revision stages.		
Reflection Essay: 3 points 500-750 word personal essay on your development as a writer and your revision process toward the creation of your final portfolio.		

Workshop Written Responses: 30% of Final Grade

Assignment Introduction:

This class is a workshop, and as such your feedback to your peers is of critical importance. Your work in peer responses is as important as your own creative work in this course.

Assignment Requirements:

- You must provide separate written feedback for every piece in every workshop
- Each response must be 250-500 words in length
- You must turn in two copies of each response
 - 1 printed copy due at the start of class on the day of that workshop
 - 1 digital copy due at the start of class on Moodle on the day of that workshop
- Late feedback will not be accepted. If you come to a workshop without feedback for each student, you will be asked to leave class. This will count as an absence.

Genre Specifications:

Your feedback should address specific targeted points for each genre, based upon the conventions discussed in class. Please refer to the genre specifications on the following pages for expectations.

Formatting Guidelines:

Feedback should be typed in Times New Roman 12pt font, and must include each of the following:

- your name
- author's name
- title(s) of piece(s)
- date of workshop
- genre-specific feedback requirements

Grading Information:

- Grading criteria for written workshop feedback are included in the following Rubric.
- Workshop responses are 30% of your final grade, which makes them the same value as your own creative work. This indicates that I want you to provide thoughtful and serious feedback. The grade breaks down as follows:
 - 10% of final grade per genre
 - 3.33% of final grade per workshop day (with some variation for number of pieces/day).

Workshop Written Feedback Rubric		
Expectation	Meets Expectation Well	Does Not Meet Expectation
Response offers detailed and useful answers to workshop questions		
Response thoroughly addresses specific genre requirements (6 areas for prose and drama, 5 areas for poetry)		
Response uses direct references and quotations from peer work as supporting evidence		
Response is 250 to 500 words of useful content, low on filler words or "it's good" "I like it" "I don't like it" type comments		

Participation and Workshop Citizenship Grade: 10% of Final Grade

Critical Importance:

Because this class is a workshop, the labor you perform on behalf of the other members of our class is of critical importance. This is evidenced by the fact that your engagement during class, a large number of which are workshops, and your written workshop feedback to peers makes up almost half of your final grade (40%).

In other words, your active participation in class is more important for this class than any other format of class.

- You cannot be silent and receive an A for participation.
- **It is possible to fail your participation and workshop citizenship grade.**
- Because you are required to bring written feedback to all workshops, you are uniquely prepared to participate by giving verbal feedback.

Important Participation Grade Information:

- Classroom behavior issues will subtract from your grade—if you are absent or late, utilize a cellphone/tablet/laptop inappropriately during class, fall asleep, show up lacking the texts/class materials for the day, keep silent too often during our discussions, or are disruptive in any way, points will be deducted. If you are present and on time, pay attention during our lectures, stay awake, come to class prepared, engage with our discussions, and are otherwise not disruptive, you will get full credit for classroom behavior.
- If you are disrespectful or disruptive during workshop, whether of your own work or any other student's work, you will be asked to leave class. If you are asked to leave before class is half over, your instructor reserves the right to count this class as an absence. If you are asked to leave class more than halfway through class on three separate occasions, your instructor reserves the right to count this as an absence.

Good Workshop Citizenship

Good workshop citizenship is achieved by performing a valuable and positive service to your peers during workshops, and includes the following behaviors:

- Feedback goes beyond “I like this/don't like this” “I believe this/don't believe this” and focuses on specific comments that enable the writer to take concrete steps in revision.
- Feedback focuses on what would be most helpful for the writer's goals, not on what you would do if you were revising the piece for your own goals.
- Feedback is constructive—every piece could benefit from revision, but feedback must be forward-looking rather than dismissive.
- Writers do not become argumentative or defensive during their own workshops. Your peers are giving feedback because they are trying to help your work be the best it can be. No writer, at any level, is above revision, and many of the best and most successful writers rely heavily on revision. You have not brought a perfect piece to workshop, so responding to constructive criticism negatively violates the standards of workshop citizenship.

If you are shy, or speaking in class makes you anxious:

- I understand that this is a real challenge, and do not want to downplay the challenges of anxiety. However, if you verbally participate in fewer than three workshop sessions, you will not receive an A for participation, no matter the level to which you engage with the following option.
- **Option for speaking less in workshop:**
 - If you know that you will struggle to participate verbally in workshop, you may counteract this silence by providing longer written feedback for your peers. Rather than 250-500 words of feedback, you need to provide 500-750 words of feedback consistently to your peers. This shows a real attempt at workshop citizenship, and your efforts will be rewarded in your participation grade. If you are taking this option, *you need to indicate at the top of each applicable piece of feedback that you have done so.*

Guidelines for Prose Workshop Responses

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper for each long prose piece being workshopped. (Long prose pieces include fiction stories and creative nonfiction pieces or podcasts.) Responses should be typed, single spaced in Times New Roman 12pt font and 250 to 500 words in length.

- **What is the piece about?**
 - **What is the story** (the plot, the event, the action being conveyed)?
 - **What is the situation** (the deeper emotional truth, the theme, the “why” of the action / reason it matters)?
- **What is working well?**
- **What isn’t working?**
 - Note: this is a place where you can address lingering questions you have about the piece.

In terms of what is/isn’t working, you must answer both questions and examine *at least* three of the following things in your responses. You may include more than three if it helps you reach the word count and respond fully to the piece.

- **Language**
 - How does the syntax (word order/sentence structure) flow? Are the words appropriate and fitting? Is the language interesting or colorful?
 - Is the language distracting in any areas?
 - Where can the language be cleaned up? Where can it flow better? What passages / sections flow really well?
 - Are any literary devices being used here that add to or distract from the piece?
 - Where is the language most / least vivid?
 - What suggestions do you have for improving the language of this piece?
- **Characterization**
 - How are characters illustrated (is it through their own eyes, the eyes of a narrator, or the eyes of another character)? Does this work well? Why or why not?
 - Are there enough details about characters to form a vivid picture of them?
 - What passages / pieces of information describe characters and what does that information tell you?
- **Dialogue**
 - Does the way the characters speak or comport themselves make sense? Do they use slang / jargon appropriate to them? Are the characters speaking believably to one another? What does their dialogue convey about their thoughts / feelings / relationships?
 - Does the dialogue help move the piece forward in terms of theme or plot? How?
 - What does the dialogue add? Is it distracting in any way?
- **Descriptive details**
 - How are descriptive details utilized in this piece?
 - Are the details included (especially ones that help illuminate the way the world appears to characters) fitting?
 - Do the details help “paint a picture” for the reader, or do the details need to be flushed out?
 - Are any senses appealed to more than the others?
 - What could be described in more detail? What doesn’t need to be described as much?
- **Structure**
 - Does the structure of the piece fit with what is being told?
 - If there is a section that moves away from the action, does it fit well with the rest of the piece?
 - How does the structure (the way things are being told and presented) fit with and reflect the content (what is being told, or the situation behind the story)?
 - Does the order of information in this piece make sense?
- **Hierarchy of Information**
 - Keeping in mind what we talked about in class (that things that are longer or at the beginning/end seem more important) are the important details given appropriate space and focus?
 - If the details that we include first about a character are the most salient, does the order of details work well for the piece?
 - What does the way in which details are presented tell you about the characters, events, settings, society, or other things in the piece?
 - Should some details be moved up or down in hierarchy to better reflect their primacy and importance?

Poetry Workshop Response Guidelines

For your poetry workshop responses, please respond to the following five aspects of your peers' poems. Your responses should be **no less than 250 words and no more than 500**. In order to achieve your word count, you will need to delve purposefully into each poem, using specific evidence from the poem for your claims (citing line numbers), and addressing the following questions:

- **What is the piece about?**
 - **What is the story** (the plot, the event, the action being conveyed)?
 - **What is the situation** (the deeper emotional truth, the theme, the “why” of the action / reason it matters)?
- **What is working well?**
- **What isn't working?**
 - Note: this is a place where you can address lingering questions you have about the piece.

In your responses, discuss each of the following five aspects to help answer the above questions:

- **Title**
 - What does the title of the poem tell you?
 - Is the title orienting the reader toward how to read this poem? Is it distracting?
 - Without reading it, what expectations do you have based on the title of this piece?
 - By the end of the poem, does it fulfill or defy the expectations the title sets?
- **Occurrence**
 - What is happening in this poem? (Note: this occurrence may not be an event—you might encounter a purely discursive work of poetry—in which case there is still a narrator addressing a reader.)
 - Who is speaking in this poem?
- **Tone**
 - What do the words in this poem tell you about the tone?
 - In terms of connotation and denotation, how does word choice suggest, illuminate, or convey a particular mood, pace, or feeling?
 - Do any structural elements or literary devices give this poem a particular tone?
 - How might aspects of the tone be heightened in revisions?
 - Are there any parts of the poem that work against what seems to be the tone this poem “wants” to posit?
- **Form**
 - Is this poem closed form or free verse? If it's closed form, what form does it follow?
 - What does the form tell you about the poem?
 - What is the relationship between form and content? What are the strengths/weaknesses?
 - How is enjambment employed in this form?
- **Literary Devices**
 - What literary devices are used in the poem (reference specific line numbers)? How do they contribute to occurrence, tone, or structure?
 - What is the effect of the literary devices used within this poem?

Drama Workshop Response Guidelines

For your drama workshop responses, please respond to at least four of the following six elements (from Aristotle). Your responses must be between 250 and 500 words. Please pay attention to both dialogue and space in your responses: how would this sound from the mouths of actors and how would this look on a stage? As always, our central workshop questions are:

- **What is the piece about?**
 - **What is the story** (the plot, the event, the action being conveyed)?
 - **What is the situation** (the deeper emotional truth, the theme, the “why” of the action / reason it matters)?
- **What is working well?**
- **What isn't working?**
 - Note: this is a place where you can address lingering questions you have about the piece.

In order to fully answer those questions, please address each of the following six elements of drama:

Six Aristotelian Elements of Drama:

- **Plot:** what happens in the play, the action, the “situation”
 - How is the plot of the scene functioning right now? Are there any obvious plot holes? How does the situation make sense or not? Is it entertaining? Realistic? Illuminating?
- **Theme:** the meaning, lesson, main idea, the “story”
 - What is the theme of this scene? What kind of emotional story is being told here and how does it work given the other elements of the scene?
- **Characters:** the people / animals (played by actors)
 - Are the characters in the play realistic? Do they seem static dynamic? Are they flat or full? Who are these characters and how are they characterized? What aspects of their character is most / least compelling?
- **Dialogue:** the written words that are spoken by characters when a play is performed
 - Where does the dialogue work particularly well and where can it be improved? How can this dialogue be made more realistic? How might it work better in this scene? Are there any moments that appear insufficient? What does the dialogue tell us and does it need to convey more or less information (and how might this be done)?
- **Music/Rhythm:** the rhythm of the dialogue (*not* actual music in the play)
 - What would this sound like as a spoken performance? How can the rhythm of the dialogue be improved in this?
- **Spectacle:** the visual elements of the play (when we discussed this in class we discussed “technical elements” of a play: scenery, costumes, and props)
 - How does the spectacle of this scene contribute to its meaning and affect? What parts of the spectacle are working toward the theme / plot in a positive way (and how) and what aspects are distracting (and why)?

Unit Assignments and Creative Pieces: 30% of final grade

Combined, your completed original creative writing pieces and unit response papers are 30% of your final grade. The requirements for each are as follows:

Original Creative Work: 20% of Final Grade

Fiction: 2 total short stories/ 1 for workshop: 7% of final grade

- Short Stories: You will be required to write two short 750-to-1500-word fictional stories incorporating the 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 write a flash fiction collection, please speak with me no later than 1 week before workshop pieces are due.
- Two versions of stories must be turned in
 - Online: Upload a .doc or .pdf file on Moodle by class time on the assigned due date. No late work will be accepted.
 - Printed: You must print enough copies of your workshop piece for each of your classmates to have their own printed version.

Poetry: 4 total poems/ 1 for workshop: 7% of final grade

- 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 poem must be fourteen lines in length or longer, fulfilling the requirements of the chosen form.
- 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 poem must be fourteen lines in length or longer, and actively engage the conventions of free-verse poetry we discussed in class
- 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. Each must be at least 14 lines in length.
- Two versions of Poems must be turned in:
 - Online: Upload a .doc or .pdf file on Moodle by class time on the assigned due date. No late work will be accepted.
 - Printed: You must print enough copies of your workshop piece for each of your classmates to have their own printed version.

Drama and Creative Nonfiction: 1 total drama *or* creative nonfiction piece/ 1 for workshop: 6% of final grade

- For our third workshop, you may choose to write either a work of drama or work of creative nonfiction.
- Your piece must directly engage the appropriate genre conventions discussed in class.
- You must turn in two copies of your Drama/CNF piece:
 - Online: Upload a .doc or .pdf file on Moodle by class time on the assigned due date. No late work will be accepted.
 - Printed: You must print enough copies of your workshop piece for each of your classmates to have their own printed version.
- **Podcast Option:** For this workshop, you may also choose to create a podcast episode. This episode must be turned in as an .mp3 file, as well as coming with a polished script that must be turned in as a .doc file. While your episode must have a polished script, you can, of course, ad-lib and riff in the moment and deviate from your script in ways that improve the overall episode.

Grading Rubric for Original Creative Work:

Original Creative Work: 20% of Final Grade		
Expectation	Meets Expectation Well	Does Not Meet Expectation
Piece meets the genre length requirements		
Piece engages purposefully and effectively with genre conventions discussed in class		
Piece demonstrates writing appropriate for a sophomore-level course		
Piece is a .doc or .docx file, Times New Roman, 12pt Font, double-spaced		
Piece represents original work, with a strong voice, and does not simply convert without adaptation from source material		
Piece is free from errors of carelessness such as typos and misspellings, missing information, redundancies, etc.		
Piece includes evidence of effective research where appropriate: does not include factual inaccuracies or lack important and verifiable information. This is especially critical in Creative Nonfiction and Podcasts, and will be weighted slightly higher in those genres.		

Unit Critical Response Papers: 10% of Final Grade

3 Critical Responses, 1 per genre:

- 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 (whichever of the two genres you have chosen to write in is the genre you will respond to).
- 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.

Genre Response Papers Grading Rubric		
Expectation	Meets Expectation Well	Does Not Meet Expectation
The paper is 250-500 words in length, and uses the space for thoughtful content rather than filler words or opinion statements.		
The paper directly and thoughtfully engages the genre conventions discussed in class to analyze the efficacy of the piece.		
The paper includes direct quotations from the text, and these quotations are relevant examples which are appropriately cited in MLA8.		
The paper includes writing appropriate for students in a sophomore-level class, and is free of organization problems and errors of carelessness.		
The paper meets MLA8 formatting guidelines.		

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.

- **You are responsible for turning in 1 prompt-response per week to the appropriate Moodle folder.** Unless a specific prompt is designated for that week, you may choose any from the Bank of Writing Prompts as your topic.
- **Prompts are intended to be informal writing.** The purpose of this assignment is to make sure you are actively writing throughout the course of the semester. I am not looking for perfect; I am looking for work, for honest engagement with the activity.
- **You may skip one week's prompt at any point during the semester without penalty.**
- You do not need to turn in a prompt during any week in which we have a scheduled, university-wide class cancellation (such as Mardi Gras or spring break).

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. Anything that you write down in class that is collected will be counted in this category.