

City University of New York (CUNY)

## CUNY Academic Works

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City College of New York

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2021

### Introduction to Creative Writing

Shamecca A. Harris

*CUNY City College*

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**Instructor:**

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**ENG 220: Introduction to Creative Writing | Fall 2021**

B [22824] MW 9:30AM - 10:45PM | NAC 7/219

<https://write2021.common.gc.cuny.edu/>

**Virtual Office Hours:**

M 1PM-2PM and by appointment

## Introduction and Course Description

### Introduction to Creative Writing – Online Hybrid

*“You write in order to change the world, knowing perfectly well that you probably can't, but also knowing that literature is indispensable to the world... The world changes according to the way people see it, and if you alter, even but a millimeter the way people look at reality, then you can change it.”*

– James Baldwin

#### Course Description

This introductory creative writing course asks students to explore their literary interests and proclivities through regular reading and writing activities designed to promote an in-depth understanding and appreciation for the craft of writing. Students will intellectually engage with both contemporary and classic authors within the main genres of creative writing and use the craft elements discussed in class to compose their own original poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction work. While studying various forms of creative writing, emphasis will be placed on the creative process of writing while encouraging students to find their writing voice. Student responsibilities include workshop participation, several short writing assignments, peer reviews of other students' work, a short story, a nonfiction essay, and a small collection of poems.

***Note: This course will blend synchronous and asynchronous online instruction into a hybrid format. While you will regularly engage with your peers and instructor through email, blogs, social networking, and other collaborative learning tools, you will also be asked to attend several live class sessions and workshops via Zoom. Students will have the option to attend scheduled class sessions in-person following the university deadline for student vaccination (September 27<sup>th</sup>).***

#### Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you should understand the following:

- the basic craft elements of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction writing
- critical reading skills for critiquing poetry, fiction, and essays
- a workshop method of critiquing creative writing
- the importance of revision within the creative writing process

#### Required Materials

This is a **Zero Textbook Cost** course. There are links to reading assignments that live online, and I have uploaded additional materials in portable document format (.pdf).

#### City College Blackboard

Other reading and writing materials, PowerPoint slideshows, educational links and videos will be posted online on Bb during the semester.

**Note: You must use your CCNY email address in Bb (log in to the CCNY Portal, click Blackboard, then Update Email in the Tools menu). If you add a non-CCNY domain email address in this window, you will not receive important course announcements.**

### **CUNY Academic Commons**

Other writing activities and assessments will be posted to the course blog on the CUNY Academic Commons throughout the semester. Overall, the course blog is a way for us to begin conversations about our work that we will continue offline in both small group and whole-class discussions.

**Note: You must use your CCNY College email address in order to access the Academic Commons. Register for an account at <https://commons.gc.cuny.edu>.**

## **Course Policies**

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### **Student Code of Conduct**

#### **co·ex·ist** (kō'ĭg-zĭst')

*intr.v.* co·ex·ist·ed, co·ex·ist·ing, co·ex·ists

- To exist together, at the same time, or in the same place.
- To live in peace with another or others despite differences, especially as a matter of policy

All student members of the College community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect for the rights and personal/academic well-being of others, preserves the integrity of the social and academic environment, and supports the mission of the College.

Read more at <http://www.ccnycuny.edu/studentaffairs/community-standards>

### **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion. Read the full Academic Integrity Policy [here](#).

### **Active Participation**

Success in this course is dependent on your active participation and engagement throughout the semester. As such, students are required to complete all assignments by the designated due date, and to actively participate in online discussions. Moreover, attendance for all scheduled class sessions and workshops is mandatory. If you find that you cannot meet these requirements due to special circumstances, please contact me as soon as possible. I'm happy to work with you to help you successfully complete this course.

### **Late Work**

All assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on the date in which they are due. If an assignment is late, your grade will be dropped by one-third of one letter (an A to an A-, for example) for each scheduled class session that passes after the time in which it was due. In addition, submission links will be closed one week following the assignment due date. Technological malfunctions are not an excuse for late work.

### **Email Etiquette**

Email communication is important and encouraged in this course. Students are expected to check their email on a frequent and consistent basis to receive important course announcements. Students may also email the instructor questions or comments of general interest at any time. I will typically respond within 24-48 hours.

**Note: Students are expected to use appropriate etiquette when communicating with the instructor via email. Please be sure to include a subject line, salutation, and closing in all electronic correspondence. You may find additional information on professional email etiquette [here](#).**

## Masks

Students will have the option to attend scheduled class sessions in-person following the university deadline for student vaccination (September 27<sup>th</sup>). Masks are required for everyone - both vaccinated and not – inside of the building.

## Resources

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### CCNY Libraries

<https://library.ccny.cuny.edu/>

CCNY Libraries will re-open as study space to fully vaccinated patrons with reservations. Please make a reservation [here](#).

### Office of Information Technology (OIT)

<https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/it>

Lists distance learning resources as well as information on how to get technology help and support.

### Virtual Writing Center

<https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/writing>

Offers virtual assistance for students working on writing assignments and projects from any discipline. Writing consultants will work with you on planning, drafting, and revising — all of the important steps in your writing process.

### CCNY Counseling Center

<https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/counseling>

Provides remote mental health services including, individual short-term counseling, group counseling, and workshops. All services are free and confidential.

### The Gateway Advising Center

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/gateway/>

Assists students without a declared major through academic advising, mentoring, tutoring and workshops.

### The AccessAbility Center/Student Disability Services

<http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/accessability/>

Ensures full participation and meaningful access to all services, programs, and activities for students with disabilities.

### SEEK Peer Academic Learning Center

<https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/seek>

Offers counseling and peer tutoring for students in need of academic and financial support who have registered for the SEEK Program.

## Course Requirements

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<b>Active Participation</b> – 10%	Students <u>must</u> complete the assigned reading and writing activities and participate in class discussions on a regular basis.
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<b>Blog Posts</b> – 10%	Throughout the semester, you will complete several short writing assignments designed to help you practice the craft conventions discussed in class. In addition to posting your response to the course blog on the Academic Commons, you will also be asked to comment on at least two of your classmates' posts. <b>Note: To earn the full credit, responses must be substantive and include comments that enhance the discussion or help move the conversation forward.</b>
<b>Submissions</b> – 60%	You are required to write and workshop a manuscript of three (3) poems, one short story, and one creative nonfiction essay, each worth 20% of your overall grade. Further details and rubrics will be given with each assignment.
<b>Final Portfolio &amp; Theory of Writing</b> – 15%	The Final Portfolio and Theory of Writing are in many ways the most important documents that you'll create for this class. Assembling the Portfolio will help you to see your progress as a writer over the course of the semester, and the Theory of Writing will give you the chance to define who you are (and who you would like to be) as a creative writer.
<b>Peer Review Workshops</b> – 5%	Peer Review is an important and regular part of this class. You will be grouped with other students to workshop drafts of your assignments throughout the semester. It is important that you attend class to get the most out of your peer review workshops. Your ability to give and receive feedback will be important to the revision process and ultimately to your final grade.

## Grade Schema

A+ (97-100)	A (94-96)	A- (90-93)	
B+ (87-89)	B (84-86)	B- (80-83)	
C+ (77-79)	C (74-76)	C- (70-73)	
D+ (67-69)	D (64-66)	D- (60-63)	F (0-59)

## Schedule of Classes

\***Synchronous** = Live class session will take place via Zoom.

\***Asynchronous** = Assignment materials will be posted online. No class session scheduled.

WEEK I: COURSE OVERVIEW		
W 8/25	<i>Synchronous</i>	<b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review</b> syllabus and course blog</li> <li>• <b>Verify</b> CCNY email address in Blackboard (Bb)</li> </ul>
WEEK II: THE CREATIVE PROCESS		
M 8/30	<i>Synchronous</i>	<b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete</b> Pre-Course Survey</li> <li>• <b>Accept</b> author invitation to the CUNY Academic Commons</li> <li>• <a href="#">"The Creative Process"</a> by James Baldwin</li> <li>• <a href="#">"Write Like a Motherf*cker"</a> by Cheryl Strayed</li> <li>• <a href="#">"so you want to be a writer?"</a> by Charles Bukowski</li> </ul>

W 9/1	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>BLOG #1: LITERACY NARRATIVE DUE</b></li> </ul>
WEEK III: n/a		
M 9/6		<h1>COLLEGE CLOSED</h1>
W 9/8		
WEEK IV: THE CRAFT OF POETRY		
M 9/13	Synchronous	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Review</b> Poetry Submission Assignment Sheet</li> <li><a href="#">Excerpt from "The Poet"</a> by Ralph Waldo Emerson</li> <li><a href="#">"Someone is Writing a Poem"</a> by Adrienne Rich</li> <li><a href="#">"Invisible Architecture"</a> by Barbara Guest</li> </ul>
W 9/15		<h1>COLLEGE CLOSED</h1>
WEEK V: THE CRAFT OF POETRY (Cont'd)		
M 9/20	Synchronous	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Excerpt from <i>Citizen, VI</i></a> by Claudia Rankine</li> <li><a href="#">"the mother"</a> by Gwendolyn Brooks</li> <li><a href="#">"Girl"</a> by Jamaica Kincaid</li> <li><a href="#">"Riddle"</a> by Jericho Brown</li> <li><a href="#">"Rat Ode"</a> by Elizabeth Acevedo (Video)</li> </ul>
W 9/22	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Sign up</b> for peer review workshop</li> <li><b>BLOG #2: A POEM IN FORM DUE</b></li> </ul>
WEEK VI: PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS		
9/27-10/1	Synchronous	<p><b>***PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS**</b> <i>(by appointment only)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">"Shitty First Drafts"</a> by Anne Lamott</li> <li><b>POETRY SUBMISSION FIRST DRAFT DUE <u>BEFORE CLASS Monday, Sept. 27th</u></b></li> </ul>
WEEK VII: POETRY SUBMISSION		
M 10/4	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Review</b> each of your members' drafts and <b>post</b> peer review comments</li> </ul>
W 10/6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>POETRY SUBMISSION FINAL DRAFT DUE</i></li> </ul>
WEEK VIII: ELEMENTS OF FICTION		
M 10/11		<h1>COLLEGE CLOSED</h1>
WEEK VIII: ELEMENTS OF FICTION		

W 10/13	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete</b> Poetry Reflection Survey</li> <li>• <b>Review</b> Fiction Submission Assignment Sheet</li> <li>• <a href="#">“That Crafty Feeling”</a> by Zadie Smith</li> <li>• <a href="#">“A Few Rules For Predicting The Future”</a> by Octavia Butler</li> </ul>
<b>WEEK IX: ELEMENTS OF FICTION (Cont’d)</b>		
M 10/18	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">“Recitatif”</a> by Toni Morrison</li> <li>• <a href="#">“Ghostface Aunty”</a> by Michael D. Cooperman</li> </ul>
W 10/20	<i>Asynchronous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sign up</b> for peer review workshop</li> <li>• <b>BLOG #3: FLASH FICTION STORY DUE</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK X: PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS</b>		
10/25-10/29	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p><b>***PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS** (by appointment only)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FICTION SUBMISSION FIRST DRAFT DUE <u>BEFORE CLASS Monday, Oct. 25th</u></b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XI: FICTION SUBMISSION</b>		
M 11/1	<i>Asynchronous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review</b> each of your members’ drafts and <b>post</b> peer review comments</li> </ul>
W 11/3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FICTION SUBMISSION FINAL DRAFT DUE</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XII: THE ART OF THE ESSAY</b>		
M 11/8	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete</b> Fiction Reflection Survey</li> <li>• <b>Review</b> Creative Nonfiction Submission Assignment Sheet</li> <li>• <a href="#">“Writing Personal Essays: On the Necessity of Turning Oneself Into a Character”</a> by Phillip Lopate</li> <li>• <a href="#">“Creative Lies I Tell My Nonfiction Students”</a> By Liz Stephens</li> <li>• <a href="#">“The Lyric Essay”</a> by Deborah Tall and John D’Agata,</li> </ul>
W 11/10	<i>Asynchronous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NONFICTION TOPIC REFLECTION DUE</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XIII: THE ART OF THE ESSAY (Cont’d)</b>		
M 11/15	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">“Ordinary Girls”</a> by Jaquira Diaz</li> <li>• <a href="#">“Girl”</a> by Alexander Chee</li> <li>• <a href="#">“The Pain Scale”</a> by Eula Biss</li> </ul>
W 11/17	<i>Asynchronous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sign up</b> for peer review workshop</li> <li>• <b>BLOG #4: FLASH NONFICTION ESSAY DUE</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XIV: PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS</b>		
11/22 –	<i>Synchronous</i>	<p><b>***PEER REVIEW WORKSHOPS** (by appointment only)</b></p>

11/24		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CREATIVE NONFICTION SUBMISSION FIRST DRAFT DUE <u>BEFORE CLASS Monday, Nov. 22nd.</u></b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XV: CREATIVE NONFICTION SUBMISSION</b>		
M 11/29	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review</b> each of your members' drafts and <b>post</b> peer review comments <b><u>no later than Monday, Nov. 29th.</u></b></li> </ul>
W 12/1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NONFICTION SUBMISSION FINAL DRAFT DUE</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XVI: THE BUSINESS OF PUBLISHING</b>		
M 12/6	Synchronous	<p><b>***LIVE CLASS VIA ZOOM*** 9:30AM-10:45AM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complete</b> Nonfiction Reflection Survey</li> <li>• <a href="#">"How to Submit Your Writing to Literary Magazines"</a> by Aerogramme Writers' Studio</li> <li>• <a href="#">"Ask the Writing Teacher: Fifty Shades of Rejection"</a> by Edan Lepucki</li> </ul>
W 12/8	Asynchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>BLOG #5: PUBLISHING PROPOSAL DUE</b></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK XVII: THEORY OF WRITING</b>		
M 12/13	Synchronous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review</b> Final Portfolio &amp; Theory of Writing Assignment Sheet</li> <li>• <a href="#">"Why I Write"</a> by George Orwell</li> </ul>
M 12/20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FINAL PORTFOLIO AND THEORY OF WRITING DUE</b></li> </ul>

*\*\*The instructor reserves the right to change any part of this schedule during the semester in order to adapt to changing course needs.*