
INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING: A CROSS-GENRE WORKSHOP in Spring 2019 (CL2100)

Course Code	CL2100	Professor(s)	Sian Dafydd
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-108
Class Schedule	W: 13:45-16:40 in G-002	Office Hours	11.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.
Credits	4	Email	sdafydd@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

In this course, students are introduced to the genres and practice of writing fiction, poetry and non-fiction while also exploring the exciting boundaries and creative possibility between genres.

What Professor Dafydd wants most for students engaging with craft and thoughts on craft in this course is to nurture artfulness and creative freedom. The workshop format is designed to develop a writer's ability and understanding of aspects of craft. Because cross-fertilization enriches creativity, students are encouraged to experiment with prose, poetry and other more experimental genres, to find a way to express their own literary voice, stretching themselves to reach outside what they may consider to be their primary genre and sample a range of cross-genre possibilities. The distinctive design of the program emphasizes the connection between reading and the students' own writing and fosters creative risk-taking in a safe and playful literary 'salon'.

We will read and listen to work from many English-speaking parts of the world – The UK, Ireland, Australia, India, Canada, America as well as work in translation from many other languages. Our aim is to introduce a diverse literary voice *through* the English language, not only *in* the English language. Let the class reading be a mere introduction – follow it up with your own reading and your own curiosity.

“Don't be 'a writer' but instead be *writing*. Being 'a writer' means being stagnant. The act of writing shows movement, activity, life. When you stop moving, you're dead. It's never too soon to start writing, as soon as you learn to read.” – William Faulkner

The course will welcome guest writers occasionally as part of class time and the Comparative Literature Department, with the Creative Writing team and the Center for Writers and Translators arrange some evening events which students are encouraged to attend. Do also look out for events arranged the student Creative Writing Club and our literary review, Paris Atlantic.

Course Learning Outcomes

To develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the art of poetry and creative prose writing through practice and analysis.

To develop skills in editing and writing strategy.

To explore the defining characteristics of poetry, fiction, and literary nonfiction and where the borders between them blur.

General Education

Course Outline

COURSE SCHEDULE

January

Week I

Wednesday January 23rd

Course Introduction. Developing Language Curiosity: Ways to play.

Submit (following Monday by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One Word Poem and an example of your 10 observation journal

Week II – 28th – 1st (February)

Wednesday 30th January

Developing World Curiosity 1: Ways to play.

Reading: Wu Ming-Yi, Horatio Claire, Lydia Davis,

Submit: edited and developed example of work you started in workshop (following Monday by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose

February

****4 week segment during which guest seminars will be given in the first half of the afternoon and a more traditional workshop of submitted work in the second half ****

Week III - 4th – 8th

Wednesday 6th February

Rendering Place: readings to be decided (D.P.)

Workshop of Monday's submitted work

Submit (following Monday by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose

Week IV - 11th - 15th

Wednesday 13th February

Developing World Curiosity 2: Ways to play.

Reading: William Saroyan, Sylvia Plath, Orhan Pamuk, Ted Hughes, Esther Morgan

Submit (following Monday by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose

Week V - 18th – 22nd

Wednesday 20th February DEADLINE 1ST REACTION PAPER

The power of voice – dialogue in all genres, readings to be decided (A.D.)

Workshop of Monday's submitted work

Submit (following Monday by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose

Week VI - 25th –1st (March)

Wednesday 27th February

The power of perspective, readings to be decided (D.B)

Workshop of Monday's submitted work

Submit (following AFTER SPRING BREAK- Monday - by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose

February 26th, - (Tues) Faculty Retreat (no classes)

March

March 4th – 15th, spring break (no classes)

Week VII – 4th –8

Week VIII –11th - 15th _

****During the next 4 workshops, the Paris Writer in Residence (collaboration between AUP, University of Kent and the Irish Cultural Center, Paris) will be around. Some flexibility will be in the schedule to allow for their visit(s) and events. Keep your ears peeled for further news on this. ****

Week IX - 18th -22nd

Wednesday 20th March

Class visit from our Writer in Residence, Sampurna Chattarji

Reading: tbc

Submit (Monday 1st April by email. One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose but in this case, following the instructions of Visual Verse. More details in class.

Workshop of Monday's submitted work

March 22nd Mid-semester grades due

Week X - 25th – 29th –

Wednesday 27th March

Conferences (discussion of your writing to date, your aspirations this term and submitted/graded work)

April

Week XI – 1st -5th

Wednesday 3rd April

Writing Marathon Workshop and/or Field Trip with Sampurna Chattarji

Submit: to be confirmed, based on workshop (following Monday by email – see instructions on submitting workshop) One 20-line poem or 500 words of prose

April 5th, last day to withdraw from a course /no credit option

Week XIII – 8th – 12th

Wednesday 10th April DEADLINE 2nd REACTION PAPER

Focus on Editing #1: Seeing the same thing, differently ('slant'): Saying it without saying it class.

Reading: Bukowsky, HJ Hyland, Carol Anne Duffy, Lydia Davis

Workshop of Monday's submitted work

No submission. Class writing will have developed editing skills. Keep working on other drafts.

Week XIV – 14th – 19th

Wednesday 16th April

Focus on Editing #2: re-wording, re-wilding

Reading: Lydia Davis, Kathleen Jamie, Rhian Edwards, Cynan Jones, Anis Arafai

You will be encouraged to identify work you've already written to bring to class today and together, we'll be working on re-writing and editing, helping each other in the process.

Class writing will have developed editing skills. Keep working on other drafts.

Submit (in this case, by FRIDAY THE 19TH OF APRIL, submit drafts of portfolios group#1)

Week XV – 22nd – 26th

Wednesday 24th April

Reading Group Exercise #1 (see notes on what this is)

Workshop of Portfolio pieces

Submit (in this case, by FRIDAY THE 26TH OF APRIL, submit drafts of portfolios group#2)

April 22nd, Easter Monday, no classes

Week XVI – 29th – 3rd (May)

Wednesday 1st May NO CLASSES

May 1st, Holiday, no classes library closed

May

Week XVII – 6th – 10th

Wednesday 8th May Last Day of Classes

Reading Group Exercise #2 (see notes on what this is)

Workshop of Portfolio pieces

May 8th, last day of classes,

May 9th - 12th, reading days

May 13th – 17th, Final Exam _____

FINAL CONFERENCE DATE TBC

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty

member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

No matter what the reason for missing a class, it is the student's responsibility to alert the professor prior to this class, as soon as it is possible.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and *especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods*.

In the case of this course, due to the intensive class schedule, two or more absences in the class will automatically result in the student receiving an "F" grade in the course.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT:

As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is strongly committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly research and formal written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in these domains as part of their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation, often referring students to the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency in English is monitored at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising processes, while the student is completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program courses and senior theses.

Grading Policy

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Class Assignments (approximately 500 words each or 1 poem approx. 20 lines long)
- 2 Reaction Papers
- Final Portfolio: may contain edited versions of class submissions (prose 2,500-3,000 words OR 6 poems) with a 500-word essay on your creative process.

GRADING:

Class participation/exercises	20%
Reaction Papers	10%
Conferences; Portfolio	70%

Other

FAQs

How do I say your name (and other communication related subjects)?

My name: I don't mind if you call me Professor Dafydd or Siân. That's up to you. Miss/Ms etc or any title referring to marital status is not relevant to our work space. I sympathise that my name, being Welsh and long, is not easy for everybody. Just ask me how it should be pronounced. My full name is Siân Melangell Dafydd.

Communication: please allow 2 working days for me to respond to an e-mail. If you have not received a response in this time, feel free to check-in using the same e-mail thread or asking me before/after class. Keep emails as brief as possible.

Submitting Work: When you send your submissions by email (to the address above), keep your email to a style that you'd adopt if you were submitting an email to an editor – this will be good habit building. An email with attached work but with no words by you in the body of the email is therefore unacceptable.

Make sure that your work is in a **Word Document**. Make sure to put **your name and the title of the work at the top of the document**.

Save your document like this:

Name_Surname_Assign1

Name_Surname_Assing2

Name_Surname_Reaction_Paper1

Name_Surname_Portfolio (all work for your portfolio should go in one Word Document)

Submit work by 9 a.m. the Monday after you were given the assignment (or the Monday before the next workshop if we have spring break in the middle). **Any late work risks not being read or workshopped.**

Remember to format your work professionally. Number your pages and include your name, the assignment number and (work-in-progress) title on the first page. Please spell-check, proofread and punctuate. Use a legible font (Times New Roman or Calibri for example) with one inch margins. Improper formatting makes reading your work difficult.

What should I expect in a workshop?

Workshop Style 1 (noted in blue on the schedule)

We occasionally hold hands-on workshops when work is generated and discussed within the class itself. In this case, we don't have a deadline for submission on the Monday before class. Be sure to have what it takes to write: notebook or laptop. A phone will not do.

Workshop Style 2 (noted in green on the schedule)

Another workshop style involves submitting work on the Monday before class. In this case, email it to me by 9. a.m. according to the guidelines above. You'll then receive an emailed 'Mastercopy' which will contain the work of all students for that class. Read this before class. Make sure you have this with you so that you can refer to a student's text for workshop. Some students will be chosen to be workshopped from that Mastercopy during our session together. I don't announce who in advance to avoid nerves or absent submissions. It also allows us to workshop a family of texts that work together for the class theme. Everybody will be workshopped the same number of times and each time we have a workshop of this nature, everybody will receive detailed notes from Professor Dafydd on a returned manuscript.

This term we have 2 other workshop styles.

1. A writing marathon towards the end of term which we will discuss further together.
2. The last 2 workshops of term are opportunities to workshop drafts of your portfolio. You will be split into two groups to submit your drafts. You will read your peers' work in advance of these sessions. By then, you'll be familiar with our community and style of giving feedback. The texts will be longer but we will work

One of AUP's unique qualities is that students come from all over the world. Graded work for this class should be written in English but I encourage all students to write in other languages should they wish to. I am able to read Welsh, French and Italian – however any submitted work

should also be provided in English as well as any original language. Translation is an art I enjoy exploring with students. If you're interested in the possibilities of deepening your relationship with the English language as well as another, through creative translation, I suggest that you have look at *Translation: A Creative Practice*, offered in the Summer Institute or *Literary Translation and Creative Writing*.

The module you've selected gives you the opportunity to explore, experiment and dedicate time to numerous genres in the English language, which in itself contains rich and numerous voices, dialects and ways of speaking.

Everybody's portfolio at the end of term will be sent to *Paris Atlantic* automatically unless you express a desire to the contrary. This is the University's Literary review. If your work or a part of it is selected for publication, you'll be contacted for permission and any editorial notes.

What is a Reaction Paper?

- A reaction to a **literary event** you attended (not a class).
- 500 words
- Not an essay but a creative piece of writing – so, in that case, it can take ANY form (memoir, journalistic, story - in YOUR voice) and that is why there's no example(s) provided.
- It is you, the writer, responding to writing /writer.

You go to an event. You take notes. What is interesting to you in the reading/discussion? This will give you your ideas. Respond. Engage with writing and craft – what is it? Why do take certain decisions?

I do not know what aspects of craft and the art of writing might be of interest to you or that you might agree/disagree with. Neither do I know what gems might come up in the events you go to. This is for you to discover and present in a way that's an engaging read.

I would advise that trying to fit in the whole event in 500 words is impossible, so you need to **choose your material** wisely so that you have space to consider what I explained above.

Work starting with 'I arrived late for X event', 'Shakespeare and Co is a bookshop...' or 'I had never heard of X writer or read their work' will be marked as unoriginal (we have received thousands of this sort over the years, as you can imagine – consider this to be a tip worth following. Engage your reader.)

What is a Reading Group Exercise? You will be split into 2 groups to present together in session #1 and #2 of the Reading Group Sessions. With Professor Dafydd, an element of style and craft, a writing obstacle to tackle or aspect of writing will be identified. Find reading material for the class:

- 1 poem, 1 work of fiction, 1 work of non-fiction and 1 text which defies genre categorisation.
- Make sure at least one is in translation
- Make sure none of the writers have been presented in class before
- Use the length/word-count of texts already provided in class as a guide. Close reading is our aim.

In these sessions, together, we will consider, what is it to 'read like a writer' and extract writing prompts from our reading.

How am I graded? Do have a look at the breakdown of grades for the course. Workshop submissions are not graded. Since this is work in progress, your participation and engagement is what I like to encourage rather than already 'perfect' or publishable work. The workshop submissions are graded only in terms of their contribution to your overall attendance and participation.

Your two Reaction Papers are graded and you will receive feedback on the first before submitting the second. Make sure you read the description of what we are asking for in the Reaction Paper (below) thoroughly before writing your piece. At midterm, you will not have a grade but you will be contacted by me if I fear that your participation and engagement in the course is worrying me. Your final grade in this class will be determined by the effort and engagement you bring to your work over the term, your development as a writer and the contributions you make to the workshop community.

I do all I can to create a space for a creative and supportive community. Do come to me if you are experiencing difficulties with the work, the rigours required to submit regularly or any aspect of the course. The workshop space is a place to test ideas, explore and if need be, fail in a safe place. If you feel anxious about sharing your work or writing regularly, remind yourself that you won't be the only one. Share your concerns with me or another writer in the group. Get into the practice of writing so often you always have work to submit. This is the time in your life when you can experiment. Time to do so isn't easy to come by in life but it is your obligation this term to be serious about being playful.

We will discuss workshop etiquette and help you develop your critical voice, no matter whose work you are reading with an editor's eye. Before workshop, read [this](#) article.