DePaul University
School for New Learning
Undergraduate Program
"Creative Ink: The Art of Writing"
AI 276
Fall 2018

Faculty: R. Craig Sautter
7658 N. Rogers Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60626
(773) 262-5806
rcsautter@aol.com

Dates: Thursdays, September 6 – November 15, 2018
Location: Loop Campus
Hours: 5:45-9:00 p.m.

Course Description

Writing is one of the supreme ways a person can learn about themselves and the intricate worlds that surround them. Discovery of the sound and sense of language is often a mystifying excursion, a delightfully serious form of investigation and definition. Not only is writing, in its creative moments, a path of deep discovery, expression, and communication, but it is a primary medium for observation, advanced thinking, and an unleashed imagination, which is at the center of it all. It is a competence that can provide life-long pleasure.

This course will carry students through a series of creative writing exercises aimed at stimulating their imagination and discovering or amplifying their writing voice. Both advanced writers willing to challenge their own abilities and insights, and relative novices with little creative experience who wish to expand their writing skills, will fit into this class.

Students will be exposed to a variety of techniques for writing poetry and short stories. The course will combine in-class individual and group writing sessions and independent out-of-class writing and revising. In the past, all of the many students who have taken this class have created poems and stories of which they were justifiably proud. You will too.

Students will be expected to write no less than an hour a week on their own and to bring something they have written to class each week. (Xerox a copy for everyone in class.) Students will also read and discuss anthologized poems and stories by noted writers. And they will learn how to find outlets for their completed creative work in literary journals and magazines.
Competences & Learning Outcomes

The Arts & Ideas Category

A-1-A Can interpret works of art and relate them to one's own experience.

A-1-C Can analyze artistic or textual works in terms of form, content, and style.

A-2-A Can create an original work of art, explore its relationship to artistic form, and reflect on the creative process.

A-2-X (Student negotiated competence.)

A-5 Can define and analyze a creative process.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should have:

1. A better understanding of the creative process and ways that they can tap into it;

2. An appreciation and understanding of diverse forms of poetry and short stories;

3. An ability to analyze a poem or story, and more importantly, to critically evaluate and revise their own work;

4. An ability to intelligently talk about poetry and fiction;

5. Demonstrated their relevant competences.

Learning Strategies and Resources

1. Writing, writing, writing;

2. Reading poems and stories, analyzing these and our own writing, class discussions and readings;

3. Internet resources, tapes, films, Youtube;

4. In-class writing exercises each week ... revision and improvement of class work during the student's own time.
Required reading:


Learning Deliverables

1. On week 10, all students will submit a spiral notebook containing the evidence students wish to submit to support demonstration of their competences. This notebook should contain a record of pieces they have written in the class, with revisions (in order of last to first) and any out-of-class writing.

2. At the beginning of the notebook, include a weekly reading log of the poems, stories, or other relevant things you read from the anthologies or other sources during the 10 weeks.

3. At the end of the notebook, keep a list of new vocabulary words you learned in the poems or stories, plus a definition of the words.

4. Additionally, weekly contributions to class discussion and analysis will be considered as major evidence of new learning or prior competence.

Class Experience

Students will have 10 weeks to dedicate themselves to the pleasures and challenges of creative writing. We will start writing poems, exploring the creative process, reading and revising our work.

Half way through the class, we will take our skills for writing poetic lines into the longer form of writing short stories. We will work until we have at least one completed and revised short story.

We will also read, discuss, and analyze our own work, plus the poems and stories of noted writers found in anthologies.

Learning Tools

1. Pen or pencil or electronic writers;

2. Paper;
3. Imaginations.

**Assessment of Student Learning**

Your grade will be based on:

1. Completion of all reading and writing assignments;
2. The quality of your writing;
3. The quality of your class contributions to large and small discussion groups;
4. Your development as a writer.

Have fun in this class and your grade will take care of itself.

**How I Grade**

While some Instructors may approach your grade through a numeric system of points, I try to take a more holistic approach. My goal is to inspire you to learn more about yourself and your creative powers through writing.

Most adult students in our school are hard-working, highly-motivated, and highly-skilled, with meaningful life experience. Thus, based on my teaching interactions with our students, everyone in this class starts out with the presumption of being at least an “A –“ student.

So, if you do all the reading of text and weekly writing assignments, if you actively participate in class discussions of the above, you will confirm my assumption and receive at least an “A-.” The Quality of your work in the above assignments can raise you to an “A.”

However, if you fail to attend class, if you fail to write each week and bring your work to class, if you fail to do the assigned readings, if you fail to participate in discussions, I will begin subtracting from your presumed “A-” and the degree you fail to do the above will dictate how far your grade falls.

Likewise, if you improve as a writer through the 10 weeks, that will be factored positively into your final grade. (If I wanted to just judge you as a "good writer," I’d just give a writing test the first week and just assign an “A” to the best writers at the beginning. But my goal is to also help you improve as a creative writer and as a critical reader.) Thus the grade you receive is the one you earn, not one that I “give you.”

In short, I do not see your grade as a function of mathematics, but rather see grading and your achieving a grade as a kind of art based on effort. Also, I tend to think of a good/great class like a Super-Bowl team. If everyone contributes to the high quality of our class and common learning experience, then like the Super-Bowlers, everyone should be rewarded.

If you wish to discuss any of the above, or during the 10 weeks ask me how you are doing
(you should know how you are doing by what you are doing), I will be happy to engage you on the subject.

In the end, this class should be an intellectual, personal, and creative adventure. Engage yourself in these tasks and the lifelong rewards will be far more important to you than the grade you earn.

**But if you need to know percentages:**
15% of your grade is based on weekly readings;
85% of your grade is based on weekly writing assignments;

**SNL’s Grading Standards:**

“**A**” means the student accomplished the state objectives of the course in an EXCELLENT manner;
“**B**” means the student accomplished the state objectives of the course in a VERY GOOD manner;
“**C**” means the student accomplished the state objectives of the course in a SATISFACTORY manner;
“**D**” means the student accomplished the state objectives of the course in a POOR manner;
“**F**” means the student DID NOT ACCOMPLISH the stated objectives of the course.

**Incomplete Policy:**

**Incomplete (IN) Grade:** This process follows university policy. A student who encounters an unusual or unforeseeable circumstance that prevents her/him from completing the course requirements by the end of the term may request a time extension to complete the work.
- The student must formally initiate the request by submitting the Contract for Issuance of Incomplete Grade form (via email, word doc), no later than week 10 (or prior to the final week of a shorter-term course).
- The instructor has discretion to approve or not approve the student’s request for an IN grade.
- The instructor has discretion to set the deadline for completion of the work, which may be earlier but no later than two quarters (not counting Summer term).
- The instructor may not enter an IN grade on behalf of a student without a completed and agreed upon contract.
- The student is alerted that IN grades are not considered by Financial Aid as evidence of satisfactory academic progress.

Also, you should know that DePaul's policy is that if an Incomplete has not been finished within a year, your Incomplete will automatically become a "F."
Fall 2018 Schedule

Session 1: September 6, 2018  Overview, in-class poetry writing
Session 2: September 13, 2018  Discuss anthology poems, in-class writing
Session 3: September 20, 2018  Discuss anthology poems, in-class writing
Session 4: September 27, 2018  Discuss anthology poems, in-class writing
Session 5: October 4, 2018    Discuss anthology poems, in-class writing
Session 6: October 11, 2018  Discuss short stories, in-class fiction writing
Session 7: October 18, 2018  Discuss short stories, in-class writing
Session 8: October 25, 2018  Discuss short stories, in-class writing
Session 9: November 1, 2018  Discuss short stories, in-class writing
Session 10: November 8, 2018 Final class, notebook due, final class book
Session 11: November 15, 2018 Final, final time to turn in any work

Student Consultation

Feel free to contact the instructor to clarify work, discuss problems, or ask for guidance. The best way to contact me is rcsautter@aol.com.

I don't live on my email, but check it every day. Don't expect an instant message. Consult fellow students on missed assignments.

Course Policies

Class attendance is required unless you are sick, have an emergency, or are required to travel out-of-town by your work. If you are very sick, say the flu, do us all a favor and stay in bed. Contact the Instructor to find out what you missed and what is due the next class.

Also, consult the following when appropriate:

Academic Integrity Policy (UGRAD)
Incomplete (IN) and Research (R) Grades Expiration Policy
Course Withdrawal Timelines and Grade/Fee Consequences
Accommodations Based on the Impact of a Disability
Protection of Human Research Participants
Other Resources for Students
University Center for Writing-based Learning
SNL Writing Guide
Dean of Students Office

Faculty

R. Craig Sautter is a poet, short story writer, editor, publisher and political ad writer/producer/consultant. He is the author of 10 books, including a volume of poetry, Expresslanes Through The Inevitable City, plus non-fiction books, 26 Martyrs for These Latter Perilous Days (with Curt Johnson), New York Presidential Conventions, The Pre-TV Era (1839-1924), Philadelphia Presidential Conventions (1848-2000), Inside the Wigwam, Chicago Presidential Conventions 1860-1996 (with Alderman Edward M. Burke), (see www.presidentialconventions.com) The Wicked City: Chicago from Kenna to Capone (with Curt Johnson,) Floyd Dell: Essays from the Friday Literary Review 1909-1913, and Smart Schools, Smart Kids (With then New York Times Editor Edward B. Fiske and Sally Reed.) The Power of the Ballot (National Urban League staff project.)

His poetry also has appeared in literary magazines across the nation, in art shows, and a movie, "Wild Blue Moon." For several years, he served as "poet-in-residence" to 36 schools in upstate New York and for the Illinois Arts Council. His short stories have been publisher in literary magazines and he has performed at a Short Story Theatre. For 26 years, he has written and produced TV and radio ads for political campaigns, including Barack Obama's first six ads in 2000. He was the 47th president of the 103-year-old Society of Midland Authors (www.midlandauthors.com). For the past 37 years, he has taught a variety of courses at SNL. He’s recipient of several teaching awards. He was appointed and reappointed to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Advisory Board, a gubernatorial appointment.