

Creative Writing Workshop
ENGLISH 205, 305, 405

11:00am-12:45pm TTh

PL213

Spring Semester, 2019

Instructor: Gayle Brandeis

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Office hours by appointment

This workshop will give us an opportunity to explore our passion for language and storytelling in a thorough, fun, and rigorous way. We will deepen this passion by reading poems and stories, discussing craft and form, reading and commenting on each other's creative work, and doing lots of in class writing. This class will help you refine and expand your writing voice and give you a broader sense of possibility for your creative work. I also hope it will show you that writing can be a way of being in the world, in the vein of the late poet Mary Oliver's "Instructions for living a life":

"Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it."

Text: *2019 Pushcart Prize XLIII: Best of the Small Presses*, edited by Bill Henderson (make sure you get the 2019 edition, as this is a yearly publication)

General guidelines:

--Come to class on time and prepared, and be sure to turn off all cell phones, iPods, etc. Laptops are okay for notes, accessing assigned reading, and doing in-class writing, but you may not go online.

--Type all assignments in 12pt Times New Roman (or a comparable standard font) in black ink, page numbers clearly marked. Double spaced for prose, single spaced for poetry.

—Email your workshop pieces to me at least 48 hours before your scheduled workshop and I'll post it on Canvas, or send to the class via Canvas, yourself, or bring copies of the story the class session before your workshop time (we will set the schedule the first day of class). I will pass out a separate sheet of workshop guidelines to clarify the process. It is important to me to create a safe, supportive workshop environment, one in which everyone is honest but kind. My greatest hope is that all of you will leave workshop excited to make your work even better.

Grading:

—Two absences are acceptable (though not desirable); anything beyond that will affect your grade.

Your grading will be based upon these things:

—Your original creative work

205 students will workshop and revise one creative piece (short fiction, creative non-fiction or poem; 10 pages of double spaced maximum for prose; 5 pages single spaced maximum for poetry)

305 students will workshop and revise two creative pieces

405 students will workshop and revise two creative pieces and give a presentation on a writer or aspect of craft of their choice

—Your written responses to all assigned readings from the text

--Your participation in class (including discussions, workshop critiques and in-class writing exercises)

All students will turn in a portfolio of workshopped work and revision(s), along with a short essay explaining the revision process and also what they learned over the semester, in addition to their favorite three in class writings.

Class Schedule

T 9/17 Introduction to our time together--intentions, expectations, etc.

Th 9/19 Discuss “The World’s on Fire, Can We Still Talk About Books?” by Rebecca Makkai (<https://electricliterature.com/the-worlds-on-fire-can-we-still-talk-about-books/>) and “Art in the Age of Apocalypses” by Lacy M. Johnson (<https://tinhouse.com/art-in-the-age-of-apocalypses/>) and related craft issues; write

T 9/24 Discuss “Dare” (p. 1) and “Church Ladies” (p 45) in *Feral, North Carolina, 1965* by June Saraceno (**Get your copy of the book for free in the registrar’s office**) and related craft issues; write

Th 9/26 Discuss “Wedding Night” by Rebecca Makkai (<https://as.vanderbilt.edu/nashvillereview/archives/2558>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

F 9/27-S 9/28*Rebecca Makkai will be giving a reading on Friday and a workshop on Saturday—attend for extra credit and enrichment*****

T 10/1 Discuss “Parachute” by Maggie Smith (p. 231) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 10/3 Discuss “Kylie Wears Balmain” by Sarah Resnick (p. 147) and related craft issues; workshop; write

T 10/8 23NO CLASS

Th 10/10 Discuss “Guerrilla Marketing” by Sanjay Agnihotri (p. 309) related craft issues; workshop; write

T 10/15 Discuss “Barbie Chang Want to Be Someone” by Victoria Chang (p. 173) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 10/17 Discuss “On Mercy” by Lacy M. Johnson (<https://www.guernicamag.com/on-mercy/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

F 2/22-S 2/23*Lacy M Johnson will be giving a reading on Friday and a workshop on Saturday—attend for extra credit and enrichment*****

T 10/22 Discuss “My Hobby Needed a Hobby” by Dana Roeser (p. 196) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 10/24 Discuss “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Anthony Marra (p. 60) and related craft issues; workshop; write

T 10/29 Discuss “UDFJ-39546284” by Rick Barot (p. 328) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 10/31 Discuss “Pilgrimage to the Pointy Toe Boots” by Michael Branch (<https://www.terrain.org/2019/nonfiction/pilgrimage-pointy-toed-boots/>) and related craft issues; workshop; write

F 11/1-Sa 11/2 *Michael Branch will be giving a reading on Friday and a workshop Saturday—attend for extra credit and enrichment!*****

T 11/5 Discuss “Wonder Days” by Nomi Stone (p. 390) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 11/7 Discuss “A Flock, A Siege, a Murmuration” by Su-Yee Lin (p. 284) and related craft issues; workshop; write

T 11/12 Discuss “Autism Screening Questionnaire—Speech and Language Delay” by Oliver De La Paz (p. 412) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 11/14 Discuss “Do I Look Sick to You? (Notes on How to Make Love to a Cancer Patient)” by C.J. Hribal (p. 416) and related craft issues; workshop; write

T 11/19 Discuss “Blue Coming” by Thylias Moss (p 444) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 11/21 Discuss “Taco Night” by Julie Hecht (p. 331) and related craft issues; workshop; write

T 11/26 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Th 11/28 THANKSGIVING BREAK (HAPPY THANKSGIVING!)

T 12/3 Discuss “Codeswitch Decomposing into Lil Wayne Lyric” by ulan Randall (p. 446) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 12/5 Discuss “What Has Irony Done for Us Lately” by Pam Houston (p. 19) and related craft issues; workshop; write

T 12/10 Discuss “Into the Mystery” by Tony Hoagland (p. 58) and related craft issues; workshop; write

Th 12/12 In class readings/presentations **PORTFOLIOS DUE**

SCHOOL POLICIES

Sierra Nevada College Mission Statement: Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

Core Themes: Liberal Arts, Professional Preparedness, Entrepreneurial Thinking, Sustainability

Learning Differences: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, hconover@sierranevada.edu.

The Honor Code: The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code: SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the Honor Code and the consequences of violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM and FABRICATION and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code become part of a student's academic record.

1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

The SNC Email System: The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year.

Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having email redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC email account.