Introduction to Creative Writing

CRW 201

**Instructor**: Kathryn Barber (Kate)

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**Office**: Kenan 1223

**Office Hours**: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12-2; Wednesdays 11-2; and by appointment

**Reading Materials:**

*Show and Tell* (UNCW PubLab textbook)

Class website: [www.kathrynmbarber.com](http://www.kathrynmbarber.com)

Genre section password: kenan

**Course Objectives and Goals**

* introduction to writing fiction
* analyze published work and techniques used
* recognize what is successful in a piece and what is not
* imitate forms of published works
* recognize various styles and forms of fiction
* create better understanding of art and craft of fiction
* provide critical feedback for the work of classmates

**Point Breakdown**

Journals (4 @ 25) 100 points Workshop Poem 50 points

Exercises (2@25) 50 points Workshop Prose 100 points

Quizzes & Participation 100 points Final Portfolio 300 points

Critiques 200 points Readings/Events (4@25) 100 points

A = 1000-950 points  
A- = 949-900 points

B+ = 899-866 points  
B= 865-833 points

B- = 832- 800 points

C+ = 799-766 points

C= 765-733 points  
C- = 732-700 points

D+ = 699-666 points

D= 665-633 points

D- = 632-600 points

F= 599-0 points

**Assignments**

No late assignments will be accepted for any reason unless arranged with instructor prior to missed assignment. If you are absent, you are still responsible for completing and submitting your assignment. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Canvas assignments will close promptly at the start of class. No extra credit work will be given. Any missed assignment will receive a zero. Any assignments containing emojis, text lingo, or improper grammar will be penalized. All assignments must follow guidelines posted online. Any assignment not meeting the length requirement will not receive a passing grade. Treat your CRW pieces as you would an English paper—use proper grammar and sentence structures, unless an obvious crafting choice is present.

**Workshops**

All workshop assignments must be submitted on the due date. Workshop pieces not submitted by deadline will not be workshopped, and the writer will forfeit both the workshop experience as well as any points associated with the assignment. Failure to attend class on your workshop day will result in a two-absence penalty.

**Exercises**

Students will complete one exercise in each remaining CRW genre.

**Journals**

Students will submit journals responding to pieces throughout the semester. Journals are due at the end of the semester. Selections must be either from the *Show and Tell* book or a piece posted online; *selections must not have been read in class.* Students are responsible for keeping up with completed journals.

**Critiques**

Students will be required to respond to one another’s work. Critiques should be at least ten sentences long, and must include both compliment and critique. Students will be *kind and fair* in their critiques. Failure to do so will result in penalization. Critiques are due on the day the writer is being workshopped.

**Portfolios**

In place of a final exam, students will submit a portfolio containing the semester’s work. Portfolios should include 1) original nonfiction piece, 2) original fiction piece, 3) revised workshop piece, 4) original poem, 5) revised poem, 6) statement of learning, and 7) craft analysis. Changes must be highlighted in revisions, and *significant* revisions must occur to obtain full point value.

**Participation**

Participation in this class is mandatory. Students will lose points for unapproved electronic devices, including texting, as well as sleeping, talking to neighbors, or working on assignments for other classes. Students are expected to respond verbally in class and participate in class discussions.

**Attendance**

Students are permitted to miss three classes (regardless of reason) without penalty. All absences exceeding three will result in a lowered letter grade for each absence. At five absences, per department policy, the student automatically fails the course. Arriving late to class twice will be equivalent to one absence. Leaving class early twice will be equivalent to one absence. Per university policy, no absences will be excused for any reason. Students should use the allotted three absences for instances such as illnesses and emergencies only. If you miss class, you are responsible for looking at the reading schedule and discerning what you have missed for the day, as well as obtaining notes from a classmate. Do not email me and ask what you missed for the day.

**Office Hours and Communication**

Students are encouraged to attend office hours, either for help with or discussion of assignments. While I strive to return emails in a timely fashion, please allow at least 24 hours for a reply. Additionally, do not expect immediate replies outside of business hours (after 5pm on weekdays or on weekends).

Please take note of the “Formatting Emails” document on the course website. When you email, please be sure to do so in a professional manner, from your student email account, in proper format (salutation, body text, and signature).

**Required Events**

Throughout the semester, you will be required to attend two readings or CRW events. These events may include, but are not limited, to MFA readings, Writers’ Club readings, department readings/events, *Ecotone*/*Atlantis*/*Chautauqua* launch parties, etc. You will write one paragraph about the event, including one quote from the event, to submit for point credit. The write up should detail the event attended and some important take away you can use to apply to your writing. During Writers’ Week, you are required to attend two events to replace the two cancelled classes. Please note, this totals four events; you may not count your two WW events as your class required events.

**Classroom Behavior and Classwork Requirements**

* Act respectfully. Disruption of the learning process will result in dismissal from the class and a zero on any assignments turned in that day.
* Disrespectful rhetoric, either to the instructor or another classmate, and/or bullying, will result in dismissal from the classroom.
* Refrain from using any electronic communication device in class, except by instructor’s permission. Usage of cellular devices and laptops in class will result in a lowered participation grade. Participation points will be affected by your classroom attention and continued use of devices. If you are continually asked to put away a device, you may also be asked to leave the classroom.
* While I may allow usage of laptops for viewing pieces, *you may not view pieces on your cellular device*.
* All assignments indicated on the syllabus are to be read prior to class.
* Plagiarism and cheating will result in a zero on the assignment and will be reported to the university.
* You are responsible for checking your *UNCW email address*. You are responsible for all assignments and notifications communicated through email.
* Printer/computer/electronic malfunctions are not valid excuses and will not be considered valid reason for late assignments or extra given time.
* Participate in class discussions. Not participating or speaking in class will result in a lowered final grade.

**Notes**

**Cardinal Sin of Workshop**: not showing up on the day you are to be workshopped.

**Warning:** Some readings in this class may contain language or offensive content.

Some readings may contain viewpoints that differ from yours morally or spiritually. My personal standpoint is that literature and art should not be censored. While you may not agree with the content, you will be expected to behave and speak appropriately and respectfully. You may not voice any political viewpoints when discussing material; we will discuss materials as art, not as political standing blocks. Students who voice opinions that could be considered hurtful or offensive by another student concerning race, spirituality, sexual orientation, etc., will be asked to leave the classroom.

**Tuesday, October 9**: Intro to Fiction; Scene vs. Summary; in-class exercises

**Thursday, October 11**: “On Choosing a Subject,” Wendy Brenner (SAT 3-6); “Bikini,” Alicia Erian (online)

**Tuesday, October 16**: “How to Talk a Character into Your Story,” Rebecca Lee (SAT 7-9); “Magic Words,” Jill McCorkle (online)

**Due:** Character Exercise

**Thursday, October 18**: “How Efficient Is Your Wheelbarrow?”, Clyde Edgerton (SAT 14-21); “Brownies,” ZZ Packer

**Due:** Workshop Poem

**Tuesday, October 22**: Poetry Workshops

**Thursday, October 24**: Poetry Workshops

**Tuesday, October 30**: WRITERS’ WEEK

**Thursday, November 1**: WRITERS’ WEEK

**Friday, November 2**

**Due:** Writers’ Week write ups

**Tuesday, November 6**: Poetry Workshops

**Thursday, November 8**: “What is Creative Writing, Anyway?” Philip Gerard (SAT 155-167); “Cloudburst,” Peter Trachtenburg (261-263); “Witness Tree,” Cameron Dezen Hammon (online)

**Due:** Years Exercise

**Tuesday, November 13**: Camille Dungy: ["The Conscientious Outsider" and "Tales from a Black Girl on Fire, or Why I Hate to Walk Outside and See Things Burning"](https://www.kathrynmbarber.com/s/camilledungy.pdf) (online)

**Thursday, November 15**: “Constructing Memoir,” Sarah Messer (SAT 178-180); “The Fire,” Sarah Messer (SAT 227-237)

**Due:** Prose Workshop Piece

**Tuesday, November 20**: Prose Workshops

**Thursday, November 22**: THANKSGIVING

**Tuesday, November 27**: Prose Workshops

**Thursday, November 29**: Prose Workshops

**Tuesday, December 4**: Prose Workshops