Artists are athletes of perception. –Robert Stone

Do not fear mistakes. There are none. –Miles Davis

Try again. Fail again. Fail better. –Samuel Beckett

Description: W554 is a practicum in teaching creative writing at the university level. Through reading and experience we will explore the creative process as well as the assumptions and practices unique—and not so unique—to creative writing classes. We will consider invention, revision, and assessment; craft and content; various approaches to workshop; the role of reading in a writing life; authority; and writer-teacher/student-writer dynamics. While we will concentrate on the undergraduate experience, the model for most creative writing teaching comes from the graduate level workshop, and as such, we will reflect on the changing concerns of the maturing writer, exploring how teaching and writing lives coexist at the graduate level and beyond as well look at current takes on the writer in the academy.

Grade: Your course grade will be determined by the following (due dates on class calendar):

• active reading and contribution to discussion over the texts’ central ideas and concerns and most importantly, what use you can make of them as artists/teachers;
• several brief response papers to course texts;
• a written review of a writing text of your choosing;
• several annotated lesson plans and writing exercises for W103 sections;
• a teaching presentation on an element of craft;
• observation write-ups on visits to both a 100- & 200-level creative writing class;
• final project: develop a syllabus and sample set of supporting materials for a 200-level undergraduate creative writing course that includes: a course description complete with policies and a calendar of readings and assignments; an annotated set of exercises; and a grading system with rationale.

Texts
Barry, Syllabus
Kardos, Art and Craft of Fiction
Vanderslice & Ritter, Teaching Creative Writing to Undergrads

All other course readings are available on our W554 CANVAS page under the Files tab.
CALENDAR

Week One
8/28  Screening: *This American Life* “Making the Invisible Visible”
     Handouts: Barry “Two Questions”

Week Two
9/4   Beginnings
     **Vanderslice & Ritter** “I Finally Get to Teach CW: Now What?”
     **Kardos**: Ch2 Relevant Detail & Ch3 Starting Your Story
     CANVAS: Bishop “Ten Inventions and Variations”; Cohen Writing the Life
     Poetic Ch2-8 & Ch61-63
     **Response paper due**

Week Three
9/11  Critiquing Student Work
     CANVAS: Bishop “Responding & Revising”; “Evaluating & Responding”;
     **Vanderslice & Ritter** “The ‘A’ Word: Assessing and Responding…” &
     “Considering the Text”
     Bring samples of student work: Assignment 1 comments
     Annotated in-class exercise due

Week Four
9/18  Generative Revision
     CANVAS: Rosal “Poetry & the Art of the Accident”; from *Poets on
     Teaching*: {Exercises/Praxis (9pp); {Talks/Directives (16pp); Bishop,
     “Revision & Your Writing”; Cohen: Ch 17-19; Ch 34 Stanzas; Ch39
     ArtRevision; & “Common Pitfalls in Beginnings and Endings”
     **Kardos** Chs 9&10 Clarity & Revision
     **Lesson plan for revision due**

Week Five
9/25  Workshop & Portfolio
     Vanderslice & Ritter “Facilitating the Writers’ Workshop”
     CANVAS: Cain, “Reinvisioning Workshop”; Castro “Racial & Ethnic
     Justice in the CW Course”; Sharma “Exploring Bias in the Writing
     Workshop”; Bishop “Evaluating Your Writing” (portfolio)
     **Response paper due**

Week 6
10/2  Reading Creatively
     CANVAS: Cohen Ch51-53; Lorde “The Transformation of Silence into
     Language”; Lorca “Play and Theory of the Duende”; Rich “As If Your Life
     Depended On It”; & Winterson “Art Objects”
     **Response paper due**
Week 7  
10/9  
**Breathe**  
Barry *Syllabus*  
**Response paper due**

Week 8  
10/16  
Transitions: Plot/Conflict (Gay) & Memoir (Skyhorse)  
Teaching Lab 1  
*Kardos* Chs 4 & 5

Week 9  
10/23  
Lectures: Character (Gay) & Personal Essay (Skyhorse)  
Teaching Lab 2  
*Kardos* Chs 6 & 7

Week 10  
10/30  
Lectures: Voice/Dialogue (Gay) & Imagery/Metaphor (Skyhorse)  
Teaching Lab 3  
*Kardos* Chs 8 & 9

Week 11  
11/6  
Lectures: Details (Gay) & Voice/Style/Repetition (Skyhorse)  
Teaching Lab 4  
*Kardos* Ch 2 revisited

Week 12  
11/13  
The Creative Writing Classroom  
Blythe & Sweet “The Writing Community: A New Model…”  
Cosgrove “Teaching and Learning as Improvisational Performance …”  
Vanderslice & Ritter: “Troubleshooting the CW Classroom”  
**Response paper due**

Week 13  
11/20  
Course Design & Planning Workshop  
Canvas: CD&P Folder  
**Last day to turn in Observation Reports for CW visits (103 & 203)**

11/27  
**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

Week 14  
12/4  
Course Design & Planning Workshop, continued  
Canvas: CD&P Folder  
**Bring W203 syllabus draft (4 copies)**

Week 15  
12/11  
**Book Reviews/Discussion of creative writing texts**  
Complete syllabus and supporting materials for a 200-level single- or mixed-genre creative writing course.