



2018 Spring Course Offerings

Fiction

Wasserman Workshop UA M 5:20 – 7:50 pm

Book 2 NOTE: Enrollment in Book 2 is not restricted to only students who took Book 1. However, enrollment preference is given to those individuals until it is known how many open seats remain for new students. Students who have not taken Book 1 that are interested in possible spots should contact Professor David Giffels at dg36@uakron.edu to be put on the wait list.

Welcome to the continuation of book writing boot camp, fiction writers! This next unique workshop, the second in a two-semester sequence, is specifically designed for students already invested and engaged in the process of writing a book-length work of fiction. Working on a traditional novel? That's great! Envisioning a collection of short stories that are interlinked or maybe thematically connected? Terrific! Tackling a series of novellas or short shorts? Fantastic! Planning something experimental? We want to see that, too! As a class, we will be exploring just what a book-length work of fiction can be for each of us. Students are provided a manuscript submission schedule that allows for flexible creative output. Special attention is given to knowing that the foundation of every student's book-length work of fiction has already been set in place and that each classmate is now embarking on the execution of the forward progression of their narrative. The goal for the semester will be for all workshop members to come away from the class with the next 40 - 60 pages of her or his book-in-progress in solid working shape. There are no assigned readings for the course other than the creative work produced by workshop members. And you will not be constricted in this workshop. Instead, you will be encouraged to take your book project where your creative impulses lead you as we build a positive, supportive and inspiring semester-long classroom community.

Barzak Workshop YSU T 5:10 – 7:50 pm

Fiction continued...

Rahman C&T CSU Th 6:00 - 8:50 pm

The Literary Horror: This class will inform and hopefully invigorate the work of the student writer by examining techniques deployed by writers of literary horror fiction to turn madness and mayhem into art and meaning. We'll pair groundbreaking literary horror novels of the second half of the twentieth century (the 'new classics') with contemporary literary horror novels of the twenty-first century (the 'future classics') and see how they speak to each other. Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting Of Hill House* gulps a bitter cup of coffee with Victor LaValle's *The Devil In Silver* at a trendy brightly-lit cafe. Stephen King's *Salem's Lot* sips sour lager with Tananarive Due's *The Good House* at a dimly-lit dive. Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* passes a message scrawled on a sticky Post-It to Naomi Alderman's *The Power* while they treadmill next to one another. Peter Straub's *Ghost Story* prepares a neighborhood for David Mitchell's *The Bone Clocks* to move into. Octavia Butler's *Dawn* examines bruised fruit in a bodega aisle while Stephen Graham Jones' *Mongrels* purchases a pack of cigarettes at the counter. Hari Kunzru's *White Tears* and Joyce Carol Oates' *Zombie* are sad they can't connect. We'll read to see how the emerging student writer can continue the conversation by subverting or affirming the expectations of the form to enlighten and entertain. During the last three or four weeks, student writers will present 20 to 25 pages of original prose influenced by any tradition or traditions of literary horror to the class.

NONFICTION

Zach Savich C&T CSU T 6:00 - 8:50 pm

The Contemporary Personal Essay: This course will explore how the personal essay can respond to contemporary experience through diverse formal methods. After considering three modes of the personal essay that have been prominent since the "memoir boom" of the 1990s--the realist memoir, the lyric essay, and works of autotheory--we'll look at recent works that defy easy categorization, including books by authors who will visit CSU. We'll then consider "what's next" for the personal essay in light of current trends in publishing, digital media, and ways in which people talk about identity and culture. Students will complete three short personal essays, a series of responses that combine creative and critical methods, and a final project that includes a substantial personal essay and a critical component. Students should advance their skills as writers of creative nonfiction and their thinking about the possibilities for the personal essay. Authors studied will include Renee Gladman, James Allen Hall, Lily Hoang, Phillip Lopate, Mary Karr, Ander Monson, Maggie Nelson, David Foster Wallace, and others.

NONFICTION continued...

Giffels Workshop UA W 5:20 – 7:50 pm

COURSE FULL In this MFA creative nonfiction writing workshop, students will propose a semester-long writing project tuned toward their own literary style, goals and writing background. Once the proposals are discussed and approved, each student will submit two to three pieces of original work to be read and discussed by the workshop participants. Individual readings will also be assigned, tailored to each writer's aesthetic and goals.

P O E T R Y

Paulenich Workshop KSU T 4:25 – 7:05 pm ENG 66895

This is an old school poetry workshop. Students will submit a new poem (or two) each week. These will be our primary text and the focus of our weekly workshop discussions. Every student's submission will be workshopped each class. No waiting. Poets will also receive their peers' marginalia weekly. There will be no textbook as such. Instead, during the course of the semester I will assign reading recommendations particular to the work of each poet. That is, I will offer a kind of customized reading agenda for each individual student. Students are expected to read the assigned texts. Emphasis will be on craft. Our loadstone will be, to paraphrase John Ciardi, not what does the poem mean, but rather how does it mean? How does the poem do what it does, and how might that be improved at a nuts and bolts level? Students will be graded upon the quality and quantity of the work they produce. Out-of-genre students welcome.

Reese C&T YSU W 5:10 – 7:50 pm ENG 6968

Why Poetry?: This course will examine defenses of the poetic art, beginning in antiquity and dropping in on texts by Sidney and Shelley (among others), but focusing chiefly on contemporary discussions of what poetry is and what it does, what distinguishes it from other genres, and what role it has served or might serve in the larger (especially American) culture. Students will do several brief and informal presentations and write a full-length essay (academic, lyric, autobiographical—we'll leave room for many options here) that conveys their own ideas about poetry's essential nature.

Texts will include Matthew Zapruder's *Why Poetry?*; Jill Bialosky's *Poetry Will Save Your Life*; Ben Lerner's *The Hatred of Poetry*; Robert Pinsky's *Poetry, Democracy and Culture*, among others.

Playwriting

Geither Workshop CSU M 6:00 - 8:50 pm

Internship

Rahman Internship CSU Sat 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Before the semester starts, students should set up an 8-10 hour/week internship with a local business, nonprofit, arts program, press, or school in which their literary or creative writing skills will be utilized. Class topics will include: literary citizenship, teaching, editing, outreach, publishing, and post-MFA writing and career opportunities.

LITERATURE

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

Biddinger UA M 5:20 – 7:50 pm ENG 689

Theory & Practice of Modern Poetry: This graduate literature seminar begins with the Confessional and New York School poets, then flashes forward to the present day to examine the imprint these two movements have made upon contemporary poetry. We will consider the work of poets such as Sylvia Plath, John Berryman, Frank O'Hara, and Anne Sexton, then read contemporary works of poetry that reflect and reinvent the confessional mode. Class participation and attendance are essential. This seminar will include both critical and creative assignments.

Dukes UA M 5:20 – 7:50 pm

Modern British Literature: This course will focus on the history, culture, and manners of modernism as reflected in twentieth century British texts. We will read novels, novellas, and plays by Agatha Christie, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth Bowen, Evelyn Waugh, Barbara Pym, Muriel Spark, Graham Greene, Kingsley Amis, Kazuo Ishiguro, Noel Coward, Terrence Rattigan, Shelagh Delaney, Harold Pinter, and Caryl Churchill. One seminar presentation; one 5-10 minute presentation of why the novel or play of your choice is important to British modernism; two shorter papers, one major seminar paper. The shorter papers, either one or both, may be incorporated into the seminar paper.

LITERATURE continued...

CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Plum

CSU W 6:00 – 8:50 pm

ENG 616

Literature and Illness: Studies in Nonfiction: This graduate literature seminar will consider the challenges that illness presents to the writing of creative nonfiction. We will look at traditions of the illness memoir and at recent work that builds on, or departs from, these conventions in significant ways. We will investigate how metaphors of disease structure not only personal experience but public discourse, not only the life of the body but of the body politic. How does illness alter ideas of the narrating self? How may literature represent the time of illness? Does illness “belong” to the individual or to the collective, and what happens when we can’t tell? We’ll begin by framing issues central to the literature of illness, with readings by writers such as Virginia Woolf, Susan Sontag, Arthur Frank, Edward Said, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-Luc Nancy. We’ll then consider contemporary works of nonfiction, diverse in form and subject, by Audre Lorde, Svetlana Alexievich, Claudia Rankine, Sarah Manguso, Eula Biss, and others.