

## **English 5367: Studies in Creative Writing— Creative Nonfiction and Personal Narrative**

Semester: Spring 2020  
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Office Hours: MW 1-2:15PM or by appointment

### **Catalog Description**

This course introduces students to terminologies, practices, and methods for discussing, writing, and critiquing Creative Writing critically with an attention to the elements of craft from the perspective of Creative Writers. Students in this course learn to teach aspects of Creative Writing.

### **Course Description**

This course invites students to explore the work, art, and craft of Creative Writing. While this course focuses on creative nonfiction and personal narrative genres, we will also read and discuss texts/works that highlight creative writing as a discipline and pedagogy. Thus, this course treats Creative Writing as a *study* with various methods, inroads, and access points that serve to define its relevance both inside and beyond the academy. Meant to be an introduction to the field of Creative Writing, this course emphasizes creative writing and its teaching as our main object of examination. Throughout the semester, we will be drawing connections among creative writing theory, craft, and classroom application.

Topics leading our investigation include: the evolution of creative writing as a study, institutional and pedagogical contexts informing the field of creative writing, and reading and crafting creative nonfiction texts. Students will have the opportunity to write, respond to, and reflect upon weekly course readings and peer texts. Additionally, students will be expected to create pedagogical materials that incorporate creative nonfiction texts and refine craft-related questions.

### **Statement on Appropriate Creative Content**

Art is often a means by which we question and interrogate the presuppositions of our everyday experiences. Therefore, transgressions of normative values is an inevitable part of any artistic undertaking. However, please remain tactful and tasteful in all handling of your creative endeavors. Given that this is an academic setting, make sure the topics you choose to write about and how you discuss these topics maintain basic rules of speech and decorum. In other words, avoid expletives and cruel, offensive, or insensitive material. This being a graduate-level course, I will rely on your judgment and discretion in determining what constitutes cruel and insensitive material.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Read, discuss, and analyze creative nonfiction and personal narrative texts with a concern for purpose, audience, and context
2. Interpret and apply a variety of creative writing strategies to one's own writing
3. Weigh the ethical stakes and consequences of narrativizing real people and events

4. Identify the historical roots and disciplinary evolutions of current theories and methods in Creative Writing Studies
5. Craft pedagogical materials that incorporate current theories and methods in Creative Writing

### Texts

*Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction: Work from 1970 to the Present*, eds. Lex Williford and Michael Martone

\*\*\*Readings that cannot be found in *Touchstone* will be shared on Canvas.

### Grade Computation

Grading for writing projects will be based on content, organization, document design, and mechanics.

**Weekly Reading/Discussion Board Responses (40%)** — Students will be required to write 10 responses in total, each worth four points.

**Creative Project (20%)** — Students will be required to write a creative nonfiction or personal narrative essay (two single-spaced; 4 double-spaced). Students will also be expected to write a one, single-spaced page cover letter explaining their project.

**Creative Response Project (20%)** — Students will be required to write an extensive response to a peer's creative project (2 single-spaced pages, 4 double spaced)

**Creative Writing Assignment Project (20%)** — Students will compose a creative writing assignment for undergraduate writing students. Course materials should include an assignment description and evaluation criteria (one single-spaced page). The assignment should incorporate one primary text (either creative non-fiction, short fiction, or poetry). Students will also need to write a separate document that includes a teaching rationale. The teaching rationale should explain why you chose to assign such work, citing one theoretical text from the course readings (2 single-spaced, 4 double spaced)

**Reading/Discussion Board Response:** Your Discussion Board Responses are essential to your progress and participation in this class. There are 10 Discussion Board Responses for the course, each worth 4-percentage points (if you miss more than four Discussion Board Responses, then you will receive an F for your Discussion Board grade). Every student should submit a 300-word post to each Discussion Board as well as respond to two peer posts. Each peer response should be a minimum of 100 words. This makes your weekly Discussion Board responses a total of 500 words.

Each Discussion Board Response should engage the ideas, questions, or concerns introduced in the weekly readings. In order to fully engage the authors you are reading, you will need to include direct quotations from each text to support your claims. When integrating quotations, please include in-text parenthetical citations that identify the author and page number. Punctuate quotations with quotation marks.

Each week, I will offer extended comments on a handful of Discussion Board posts that are reflective of claims, ideas, or struggles that the class as a whole is

considering/grappling with. Therefore, it's important that you read the entire Discussion Board thread to better understand and clarify weekly topics and reading questions.

The postings on the discussion board must be focused on the assigned topic. All technical problems associated with the Canvas, including access to discussion boards, passwords, and user IDs, should be directed to the respective departments. The course instructor would not answer any technical questions.

All postings on the discussion board must meet academic and professional standards. Abuses in forms of bullying and/or discriminatory comments on gender, sex, race, or ethnicity are not allowed and will be reported if the instructor's intervention does not see immediate changes of the behavior.

### **Grading**

To compute the final course grade, the following point totals are assigned to the standard letter grades of A through F:

A = 90-100 points

B = 80-89 points

C = 70-79 points

D = 60-69 points

F = 59 points and below

\*\*\*Failure to turn in a final draft of any paper will result in an F for the class without exception.

### **Draft Submission**

All drafts will be submitted via Canvas. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

### **Late Projects**

I will penalize late papers: half of a letter grade (e.g., A to B+) for the first day late; after that, a full letter grade (e.g., A to B).

There may be situations which warrant consideration for exceptions to the late draft policy. For consideration of an exception, you should establish your credibility as a student by engaging in substantive conversation via our Discussion Board and submitting work on time. Then, should a situation occur that hinders you from turning an assignment in on time, you will have a leg to stand on.

### **Syllabus Changes**

The information contained in the course syllabus, other than the grading criteria and absence and make-up policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice as long as the change is without prejudice to the students.

### **Additional Course Information**

#### **Paper Format**

All assignments will be left justified and double spaced

All assignments will be in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font  
All assignments should have a centered title and page numbers in the upper left corner.

In the upper left corner of all assignments, place this heading:

[Your name]  
English 5367  
Dr. Propper  
[Assignment name]  
[Date]

### **Contacting Me**

Email is the easiest way to contact me. However, etiquette and courtesy in correspondence is important; that is, be rhetorical and think about your audience. Because email is quick and easy, people often do not take the time to formulate emails that will effectively communicate what is desired. When emailing me, please include a subject/title for your email, an opening address (Dear Dr. Propper...), and a closing signature.

I will check my email regularly Mondays-Fridays from 9am-5pm. You can expect a response from me 48 hours after I have read your message (not 48 hours after you sent your message). For example, if you email me at 7pm on Friday, you should expect me to read your message on Monday morning. Consequently, you should expect a response 48 hours after I have read it (i.e., by Wednesday morning).

Lastly, I expect everyone to check their email at the same frequency. Put simply, you need to check your email regularly Mondays-Fridays from 9am-5pm. If you anticipate inconsistent email access being an issue, please speak with me.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty**

Please see UT Tyler's policy on scholastic dishonesty: <https://www.uttyler.edu/sci/?r=/judicialaffairs/>  
This class has a Zero Tolerance Policy for Scholastic Dishonesty. Any deliberate act of scholastic dishonesty will result in immediate failure of the entire course.

### **UT Tyler Honor Code**

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

### **Students Rights and Responsibilities**

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

### **Campus Carry**

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

### **UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University**

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.

Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit [www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free](http://www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free) (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

### **Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies**

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Please see academic calendar.

Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

### **State-Mandated Course Drop Policy**

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

### **Disability/Accessibility Services**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to

students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site. , the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

### **Student Absence due to Religious Observance**

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

### **Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities**

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

### **Social Security and FERPA Statement**

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

### **Emergency Exits and Evacuation**

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

### **Student Standards of Academic Conduct**

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

copying from another student's test paper;

using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test; failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;

possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;

using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;

collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;

discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;

divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;

substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;

paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;

falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;

taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and

misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

ii. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.

iii. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

**UT Tyler Resources for Students**

UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu

UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu

The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.

UT Tyler Counseling Center (903.566.7254)

**Course Schedule**

	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 1/13-1/17	Course syllabus and assignments	
Week 2 1/20-1/24  Creative Writing as a “Study”	Mayers, “One Simple Word: From Creative Writing to Creative Writing Studies” (Canvas)	Reading Response 1
Week 3 1/27-1/31	Ritter and Vanderslice, “Teaching Lore: Creative Writers and the University” (Canvas)	Reading Response 2

<p>Creative Writing and the University</p>		
<p>Week 4 2/3-2/7</p> <p>Talking Craft</p>	<p>Elbow, from <i>Writing Without Teachers</i> (Canvas)</p>	<p>Reading Response 3</p>
<p>Week 5 2/10-2/14</p> <p>Creative Nonfiction: Essay as Cultural Analysis</p>	<p>Orwell, “Politics and the English Language” (Canvas)</p>	<p>Reading Response 4</p>
<p>Week 6 2/17-2/21</p> <p>Literacy Narrative</p>	<p>Soliday, “Translating the Self and Difference through Literacy Narratives” (Canvas)</p> <p>Tan’s “Mother Tongue” (<i>Touchstone</i>)</p>	<p>Reading Response 5</p>
<p>Week 7 2/24-2/28</p>	<p>Gilyard’s Ch.1 from <i>Voices of the Self</i> (Canvas)</p>	<p>Reading Response 6</p>



Literacy Narrative		
<p>Week 8 3/2-3/6</p> <p>Personal Narrative</p>	<p>Bloom's "Living to Tell the Tale: The Complicated Ethics of Creative Nonfiction" (Canvas)</p> <p>Doty's "Return to Sender" (<i>Touchstone</i>)</p>	<p>***Creative Writing project due Friday, 3/6 on Canvas before midnight</p>
<p>Week 9 3/9-3/13</p>	<p>Spring Break – Classes canceled</p>	
<p>Week 10 3/16-3/20</p> <p>Personal Narrative</p>	<p>Sedaris "Repeat After Me" (<i>Touchstone</i>)</p> <p>Biss, "The Pain Scale" (<i>Touchstone</i>)</p>	<p>Reading Response 7</p>
<p>Week 11 3/23-3/27</p> <p>Lyric Essay</p>	<p>Carson "The Glass Essay" (<i>Touchstone</i>)</p> <p>Rae, "Narrative Technique in Ann Carson's 'The Glass Essay'" (Canvas)</p>	<p>Reading Response 8</p>
<p>Week 12 3/30-4/3</p> <p>Literary Journalism</p>	<p>Hart, "Reporting" from <i>Storycraft</i> (Canvas)</p> <p>Didion, "Some Dreamers" (Canvas)</p>	<p>***Creative Response Paper due Monday, 3/30 on Canvas by Midnight</p>

<p>Week 13</p> <p>4/6-4/10</p> <p>Literary Journalism</p>	<p>Clark, "The Line Between Fact and Fiction" (Canvas)</p> <p>Wallace, "Consider the Lobster" (<i>Touchstone</i>)</p>	<p>Reading Response 9</p>
<p>Week 14</p> <p>4/13-4/17</p> <p>Creative Writing and Pedagogy</p>	<p>"Reinventing Writing Classrooms: The Combination of Creating and Composing" from <i>Power and Identity in the Creative Writing Classroom</i> (Canvas)</p> <p>"The Pregnant Muse: Assumptions, Authority, and Accessibility" from <i>Power and Identity in the Creative Writing Classroom</i> (Canvas)</p>	
<p>Week 15</p> <p>4/20-4/24</p> <p>Finding a Home for Work</p>	<p>Creative Writing journals</p>	<p>Reading Response 10</p>
<p>Week 16</p> <p>4/27-5/1</p>		<p>***Final Creative Assignment due Monday, 4/27</p>