ENGLISH 270  
(ENGCW_OX 270W (4059)  
Introduction to Creative Writing  
OXFORD COLLEGE  
of Emory University

Fall of 2019  

Instructor: Dr. William Wright  
Class Time: 1-2:15  
Classroom: Pierce Hall 228  
Office Location: Humanities 203 / Office Hours: By appointment on mornings of Mondays & Wednesdays or via e-mail  
Instructor Contact Information: william.wright2@emory.edu

Course Description

In this course, we will consider and work with your creative writing in several ways:

a. engage your poetry and fiction through a traditional workshop structure (in class)—
   • a workshop is a class in which class participants speak openly about another class member’s work in constructive, openhearted, and open-minded ways; I will mediate these conversations and teach you the best ways to participate in a workshop;

b. continue that conversation during the semester to augment in-class learning, to address concerns, and to furnish growing readings lists that might help advance your distinct styles;

c. read and learn from selections of contemporary writers that I'll furnish via handouts;

d. read certain creative works in poetry and fiction from different literary movements and traditions to amplify your understanding of the craft in general and your work in particular;

e. revise the work you present in workshop and other pieces you’ll be working on that you may present to me during the course;

f. place those revisions (based on my feedback and/or student feedback) into a portfolio of at least 20-25 pages by the end of the course.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

1. to determine whether information offered by other writers within workshop is helpful to their writing and to implement this information to improve your work.
2. be able to demonstrate knowledge of applied concepts to improve your work independently.
3. to learn to analyze and assess the quality and effectiveness of a poem or short story.
4. to learn to comment on others’ work within and outside of class using literary criteria demonstrated through examples I'll furnish and class conversations I'll mediate.
5. to learn to write poems and creative prose of literary quality.
6. to engage in a way of learning that enhances your approaches to other classes—whether writing-intensive or otherwise.

Conferences and Communication

a. I am here to offer you guidance about your writing and about the writing “world.” I am interested in your work—no matter your approach or style, and I am interested in your questions about your work, contemporary writing, and the broader writing community. Thus, feel free to e-mail me at any time, and I will respond within 24 hours. If you should need an office appointment, please e-mail me 24 hours in advance, as I will need to coordinate.

b. Too, if you feel you need more of a certain aspect of class time amplified for your work in general, e-mail me with questions.

Attendance Policy:

a. You are permitted two (2) absences. After two absences, one half of a letter grade will be deducted from your final grade for the course for each subsequent absence.

Workshop Method:

a. All students will e-mail their work to me at an appointed time before the workshop—Saturday nights by 9:30 PM—so that each student has ample time to read and consider the work we’ll be going over in classes on Mondays and Wednesdays, rather than having to rush responses within class. I will make a .pdf of all student poems and stories (earlier and later in the semester, respectively) and then send to the class.

b. During workshop, the writer will read his or her piece to the class or a section of a piece if it is longer and time constraints demand we shorten an entire reading. The class will discuss the writing, and I will remain relatively silent during this initial conversation—only mediating between comments. The writer’s work being assessed should save questions and comments until the conversation about your writing is completed. The next writer will read their work, and so on. During and at the end of the conversation for each piece, I will offer my comments based on class commentary and my own suggestions.

c. All students should offer handwritten or printed-out tracked annotations and marginalia throughout the student’s work and a summary about the writing at the bottom/on the back of the workshopped piece. This applies to every workshopped piece. These are to be brought to class as printed documents and passed to the student when their workshop has concluded.

Reading Assignments:

- During this class, I will furnish you (often electronically, sometimes in printout form) with copies of relevant writing by several well-known writers. If pertinent, we will dedicate time at the beginning of the class to discussion of the reading. These readings are chosen carefully to help your writing mature.
Honor Code:

- I assume you are familiar with the honor code. Do not plagiarize. The consequences are not worth it—ever.

Digital Devices:

- Unless directed otherwise, no digital devices are allowed in class. Cell phones are to be silenced and/or turned off and put away, out of sight. Laptops are fine, but allow me to introduce their presence into class gradually, rather than presuming they are fine to use.

The Office of Accessibility Services

The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, students must contact OAS and complete the registration process. Faculty may not provide disability accommodations until an accommodation letter has been processed; accommodations are not retroactive. Students registered with OAS who receive a letter outlining specific academic accommodations are strongly encouraged to coordinate a meeting time with their professor to discuss a protocol to implement the accommodations as needed throughout the semester. This meeting should occur as early in the semester as possible. Contact OAS for more information at (770) 784-4690 or oas.oxford@emory.edu. Additional information is available at the OAS website at http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html.

Remember: By 9:30 PM of Saturday nights throughout the semester, you are to send me work for the workshop. I will consolidate everyone’s files into a .pdf and send to each of you

Schedule of Classes:

August 28 [Wed]: Introduction to Course / Syllabus Overview / The Seven Senses / Interpretation of Creative Works / Workshopping Format / First Poem (“A Poem Is a Walk”)

September 2 [Mon] – Labor Day Holiday!

COURSE SECTION I: WRITING POETRY

(We will discuss poetic form, imagery, lineation, enjambment, stanza structure, poetic lines-as-micro poems, diction, metaphor, color tone, and myriad other aspects and nuances of poetry)

September 4 [Wednesday]: Workshop 1
September 9 [Monday]: Workshop 2
September 11 [Wednesday]: Workshop 3
September 16 [Monday]: Workshop 4
September 18 [Wednesday]: Workshop 5
September 23 [Monday]: Workshop 6
September 25 [Wednesday]: Workshop 7
September 30 [Monday]: Workshop 8
October 2 [Wednesday]: Workshop 9
October 7 [Monday]: Workshop 10
October 9 [Wednesday]: Final Poetry Workshop 11
October 14 – Fall Break!
October 16 – No Class Meeting

COURSE SECTION II: FICTION
(We will discuss throughout these sessions elements of fiction, including narrative, point of view, elements of conflict, dialogue, etc.)

October 21 [Monday] – Introduction to Fiction Writing
October 23 [Wednesday] – Workshop 12
October 30 [Wednesday] – Workshop 14
November 4 [Monday] – Workshop 15
November 6 [Wednesday] – Workshop 16
November 11 [Monday] – Workshop 17
November 13 [Wednesday] – Workshop 18
November 18 [Monday] – Workshop 19
November 20 [Wednesday] – Workshop 20
November 25 [Monday] – Final Fiction Workshop 21
November 27 – Thanksgiving Holiday!
December 2 – Celebration of Diversity (Bring Your Favorite Poem, Song, or Story to Share with the Class)
December 4 – Send any and all questions to me via e-mail (no class meeting)
December 12: Final Portfolios Due by e-mail to me at william.wright2@emory.edu