

## Fañomnåkan/FALL 2024

### CREATIVE WRITING 311

Section 01: TTH 12:30-1:50

Classroom: EC 105

Office # EC 216

Office Hours: M, T, W, TH: 10-11:00; F: 10:00-12:00

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All I need is a sheet of paper and something to write with, and then  
I can turn the world upside down. — Friedrich Nietzsche

All originality comes from reading. —Julius von Sachs

LINK [Course Descriptions | University of Guam \(uog.edu\)](#)

### REQUIRED TEXTS

#### Landmark Readings in Four Modes of Severe Expression

(Writers in EN 311 will submit stories in the four modes listed below)

#### ALIENATED OBSERVATION:

- ◆ Kafka, *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories* (Schocken 1995)
- ◆ Samuel Beckett, *Ill Seen, Ill Said* (Grove Press, 1981)

#### WEIRDNESS:

- ◆ S. T. Joshi, *Great Weird Tales* (Dover Books, 1999)

#### TRANSGRESSION:

- ◆ Kathy Acker, *Essential Acker* (Grove Press, 2002)

#### CONFLICTED RELATION:

- ◆ Thomas Bernhard, *Yes* (Phoenix Editions, 1992)

*Definition--Creative writing is a form of writing which is not merely concerned with disseminating information but also incorporating the right emotions and intricate details and ideas associated with it. It relies on imagination as much as discursive rationality, poetic effects as much as grammar, and on imagery and character and tone as much as direct reporting of an incident or plot.*

#### **Contingency**

*For story content and style, the key thing is to cherish contingency, your humanity and mortality, and stop envying and fetishizing machines, who are learning from us everything we know and do without becoming human. We only become less human by transferring our duties to them, since over time we no longer recall or*

*understand the powers of artists and sages. Machines can't duplicate or replicate subjectivity and its flesh, which are radically contingent, hence absurd, romantic and tragic (Wasn't this one of the themes of Bladerunner--mortality?)*

### ***The Realm of the (Five) Senses***

*"We learn from the feel of an embrace and taste of ice cream, from battle wounds and wedding ceremonies and athletic defeats, from bee stings and dog licks, from watching sunsets and riding roller coasters and reading Keats aloud and listening to Mozart alone. Trying to train a computer about the meaning of love or grief is like trying to tell an alien about rock and roll." -- [After Six Decades of Computer Science at Harvard | Harvard Magazine](#)*

### **Official Learning Objectives**

- a. Writers will gain experience in writing fiction, gradually perfecting drafts with the final goal of entering a contest or publication in a literary journal...
- b. Writers will demonstrate their understanding of fiction, interpreting both their own and that of their classmates...
- c. Writers will edit work and practice constructive criticism and editorial decision making, including the judgment of prospective publication quality...
- d. Writers will carefully read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss it in class, noting its relevance for their practice and art of poetry writing

**[LINK Course Descriptions | University of Guam \(uog.edu\)](#)**

### **Assignment Schedule:**

**WORKSHOP FORMAT will be followed the entire semester. Be opportunistic: bring writing to every class. Readings are done for Tuesday so that you have the weekend to accomplish them. You are responsible for doing the assigned readings and for preparing stories to be shared with classmates. Writers present stories on a rotational basis, but if the scheduled writer does not show up, anyone can jump in and read their story.**

### **CLASS SCHEDULE/Assignments**

Thurs. 8/15: Course Introduction; the four sub-genres: Alienated Observation; Weirdness; Transgression; Conflicted Relation: Example of Alienated Observation: "Last Voyage of Bryan the Sailor"  
Tues. 8/20: Alienated Observation: Kafka's "A Country Doctor"; "The Bucket Rider"  
Thurs. 8/22: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 8/27: Alienated Observation: "The Metamorphosis"  
Thurs. 8/29: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 9/3: Alienated Observation: "A Visit to a Mine"  
Thurs. 9/5: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 9/10: Weird: "The Dead Valley"; "The Voice in the Night"  
Thurs. 9/12: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 9/17: Weird: "The Inmost Light"  
Thurs. 9/19: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 9/24: Weird: "The Man Who Loved Trees"  
Thurs. 9/26: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 10/1: Weird: "Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family"  
Thurs. 10/3: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 10/8: FALL BREAK  
Thurs. 10/10: FALL BREAK  
Tues. 10/15: Transgression: Kathy Acker's "The Childlike Life of the Black Tarantula"  
Thurs. 10/17: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 10/22: Acker: "Blood and Guts in High School"  
Thurs. 10/24: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 10/29: Acker: "Empire of the Senseless"

Thurs. 10/31: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 11/5: WORKSHOP  
Thurs. 11/7: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 11/12: Conflicted Relation: Thomas Bernhard's YES  
Thurs. 11/14: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 11/19: WORKSHOP  
Thurs. 11/21: WORKSHOP  
Tues. 11/26: WORKSHOP  
Thurs. 11/28: THANKSGIVING  
Tues. 12/3: Portfolio workshop  
Thurs. 12/5: **Portfolios due**  
Tues. 12/10: Official Exam Period  
Wed. 12/11: Official Exam Period  
Thurs. 12/12: Official Exam

### Methods of Evaluation

- ◆ The four stories you are required to write will be weighted for a total of **80%**, submitted in a **final portfolio of original writings**. (You can of course write more than that!)
- ◆ Active and vigorous participation, especially in *presenting* your own stories and *critiquing* the stories of classmates = **20%**.

### Attendance

**Three absences without official excuse** will drop your grade *a full letter grade* for the semester. Most importantly, keep in touch by email or phone regarding your absences, emergencies, assignments, and so on. Communication is MUCH better than silence when it comes to these official matters. *If you desire classmates to show up when you present your story, then you should reciprocate in kind and show up when they read their stories.* This is a core issue in creative writing workshops. SHOW UP. PARTICIPATE.

**Class participation** is important in a workshop setting, which is not a lecture format. Such participation involves showing up for class prepared, responding intelligently to stories presented by students in our workshop; presenting one's own writing at the scheduled time, etc.

### Classroom = LDZ (LOW DISTRACTION ZONE)

- ◆ NO SMARTPHONE or SOCIAL MEDIA DURING CLASS (put away to avoid collateral distractions)
- ◆ MINIMIZE BACKGROUND NOISE, INTERRUPTIONS, AND DISTRACTION
- ◆ Quietly open and close the classroom door; go to lavatory before class if necessary, etc.

### Official AI Statement

*"The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a research tool is allowed, but it must not replace the student's original ideas, creativity, and critical thinking. AI should be used only as a tool to assist in research, and proper attribution must be given to any AI-generated content. All work submitted for grading must be the sole product of the student's endeavors. Any violation of academic integrity will be dealt with accordingly.*

### ADA Syllabus Statement

The University of Guam (UOG) is committed to achieving equal opportunity and full participation of persons with disabilities by providing non-discriminatory access to its services and facilities through the ADA Office. The Mission of the ADA Office is to ensure non-discriminatory access to all benefits, privileges, opportunities and obligations to faculty, staff and community members with disabilities and to ensure a process for full compliance by UOG with the ADA of 1990, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, taking into account the economic climate and multi-cultural diversity of the institution.

The ADA Office can be contacted at telephone number (671) 735-2244 or Telephone Device for the Deaf (TDD) number (671) 735-2243. The Enrollment Management & Student Success office provides reasonable

accommodations for students in accordance with the UOG Policy and Procedure for student applicants with a disability. The ADA policy can be found on this website.

**"Plagiarism** is the deliberate attempt to deceive the reader through the appropriation and representation as one's own the work and words of others. Academic plagiarism occurs when a writer repeatedly uses more than four words from a printed source without the use of quotation marks and a precise reference to the original source in a work presented as the author's [read plagiarist's] own research and scholarship. Continuous paraphrasing without serious interaction with another person's views, by way or argument or the addition of new material and insights, is a form of plagiarism in academic work."

### ***BENEFITS OF TAKING A CREATIVE WRITING COURSE (but no safety or guarantees!)***

- 1. Discover yourself and your path as a writer. Even when you select a word or sentence to write, you are individuating yourself at a micrological scale. No pretending. Do not call yourself a "writer" unless you write (and publish if possible). Writers write!***
- 2. Find out your writing strengths and weaknesses. The best part about receiving critiques from your peers is that they tell you what you're doing wrong, but also what works.***
- 3. Learn to handle critiques of your work. Critics are not always right, but when you agree with them, process the flaws in your writing without personal resentment. The criticism is about the story, not you. You'll learn how to separate yourself from your work, and you'll be able to not only handle but actually embrace (and look forward to) critiques.***
- 4. Help others improve their writing. Writers are a sort of tribe of individuals who depend upon detailed criticism to thrive. Flattery is bullshit. Praise is lovely but can be toxic to young writers. You are not here to be "liked" or "like" or "dislike" but to write. Writers write.***
- 5. Meet people who share your passion. This is a great opportunity to meet like-minded people, some of whom may become lifelong friends, writing partners, or your future writing group.***
- 6. The ultimate goal of EN 311 is to become a better writer, and a workshop might do that for you.***
- 7. Experiment rather than repeat yourself. Adopt new writing techniques. Risk taking is rewarded!***
- 8. Gain experience and get a lot of creative writing practice. This is one of the most valuable benefits of a creative writing workshop. When writers work on their own, they tend to procrastinate, get distracted, and generally don't finish most of the projects they start. But in a workshop, you're forced to get it done. This gives you lots of great experience and practice, and it also builds good writing habits.***

***From [Essential Lessons You'll Learn in a Creative Writing Workshop | Writing Forward](#)***