

Sample 2-credit courses

WRIT 324? Setting as Character, 2 credits (first half of Fall 2025, Monday nights from 6 - 9:50 pm, Synchronous)

Course Description

This intensive creative writing seminar will focus on creating settings that make your stories, poems, or creative non-fiction pieces as memorable as possible. Often, setting is seen simply as a backdrop for your characters to shine. In this workshop, we will mine and refine the physical surroundings of your pieces so that the settings "live and breathe" as intensely as your characters' inner and outer journeys. Subjects to be addressed include: What general principles contribute to universally engaging settings throughout a wide swath of genres and forms of creative writing? How can your setting get into the "smell" of your characters' thoughts, as well as settle on their skin? How does setting function similarly and differently in a variety of literary forms? Students will be encouraged to develop their writerly voices and visions through the study, discussion, and modeling of published authors, as well as through writing exercises and workshopping one another's pieces for feedback.

PREREQUISITES: WRIT 251: Introduction to Creative Writing or WRIT 359 Boot Camp

Competence Statement

Students will gain knowledge and practice in creating memorable settings based on literary artistic principles, such as sensory and significant details, atmosphere, zeitgeist, dialogue, etc.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes, both theoretical and practical, that students will gain through completion of this course:

- an understanding of the basic and advanced aspects of setting as character in creative writing
- ability to identify and implement the general principles of creating memorable settings in works of short creative writing
- ability to draft, critique, edit and revise short works of creative writing into finished or close-to-being-finished works that emphasize setting as character
- understanding of similarities and differences between how setting has historically been successfully employed in fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction
- contribution to a creative writing workshop, which by definition is an intimate, closely-woven community, as evidenced by attendance, focused attention, informed and thoughtful oral and written feedback on peer submissions

WRIT 324? Spoken Word, Slam, and Performance Poetry, 2 credits, (second half of Fall 2025, Monday nights from 6 - 9:50 pm, Synchronous)

Course Description

Spoken Word, Slam, and Performance Poetry is a writing-intensive, performance-inclusive workshop. We will cover a survey of oral poetics dating back to the ancient Greeks, African Griots, Japanese Haiku battlers, Beats, Slam poets, all the way to today's most cutting edge spoken word artists working in the oral tradition. What is the difference between "page" and "performance" poetry? How do we most successfully tap into the imagination, observation, and experiences within us to create poems and bring them to life "in the air"? How can a great poem be killed by its delivery? How can a mediocre poem still *kill* audiences on stage? Students will be encouraged to develop their poetic voices through discussion, study, and modeling of the work of professional spoken word artists, as well as through writing exercises and workshopping one another's pieces. Field trips to local open mic events, reading series, and/or poetry slams are required.

PREREQUISITES: WRIT 251: Introduction to Creative Writing or WRIT 359 Boot Camp

Competence Statement

Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the richness of oral poetics through reading, viewing, writing, and performing spoken word poetry throughout the ages.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes, both theoretical and practical, that students will gain through completion of this course:

- an understanding of the basic aspects of spoken word poetry writing and performance
- ability to implement the essentials of creative writing craft in works of short creative writing, including voice, tense, point of view, narrative and/or lyric arc, pacing, use of specific details, beginnings and endings, titles and creative use of language and vocabulary
- ability to draft, critique, edit and revise short works of creative writing into finished or close-to-being-finished works
- understanding of how aspects of creative writing craft apply to spoken word poetry
- contribution to a creative writing workshop, which by definition is an intimate, closely-woven community, as evidenced by attendance, focused attention, informed and thoughtful oral and written feedback on peer submissions