INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING – HU2110.R01
Summer 2010, Fisher Hall 125, MTWR 11:05am-12:20pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will study and practice the art of being reader and writer, two states inseparable. You will read daily and purposefully, looking to how language is used on the page by those who do it best. You will write daily and purposefully, both informally (by keeping a writer’s journal) and formally (by creating more exacting works in the literary genres of poetry, short literary fiction, short literary nonfiction and drama). As a writer, you will learn to create little boxes of the world, cabinets of curiosity into which you will place your tarantulas, old newspapers, broken sex toys, jars of pickled mushrooms, sombreros, rolled up tubes of acne cream, tiger lilies, tobacco-stained false teeth, lipstick-stained cigarette butts, crows’ feet, naked Bible salesmen, bloody Band-aids, hairy warts, one-eyed cats and three-legged dogs—details burning angry, mean and bright. Students will learn to craft writing that offers readers of their creations more than the mere suggestion of a reality, but a vision of a world that creates its own.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief.
Kitty Snacks 3.
McSweeney’s 34.
Normal School 3
PANK 4.
1 Composition Notebook like this.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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Office hours are MTWR 10-11:00am, or by appointment.

POLICIES

1. Fulfill your responsibilities, seldom early, and never late. Attend class, complete all assignments on deadline, read, take notes, participate in class discussions, ask questions, be engaged, and be engaging.

2. More than three unexcused absences will result in a certain F in Attendance and Participation (see below under “Coursework”). I reserve the right to fail students for the course in the event of egregious absenteeism.

3. Late assignments will not be accepted and no coursework can be made up without written documentation excusing the absence. Early is a better option. Plan ahead.
4. Integrity and ethics are central to any community searching for truth. Anything less than total commitment to integrity and ethics undermines the efforts of the entire community. Every member is responsible and culpable. Breaking this compact will result in an F for the course. Don’t cheat.

5. Michigan Tech encourages ALL qualified persons to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please contact Professor Seigel as soon as possible and/or visit the Office of Student Affairs or phone 487-2951.

6. Concerning grading, and because of the nature of composing creative works, students can expect the following point system on all graded course work:

   3 = Very good to excellent. Student exceeded most to all course expectations.
   2 = OK. Student met course expectations.
   1 = Inferior. Student met few course expectations.
   0 = Failure. Student failed to make deadline and/or met few if any of the course expectations.

COURSEWORK

Attendance & Participation (10%): Come to class every day, prepared, & take part thoughtfully & conscientiously. Have the day’s readings (you cannot write if you do not read) completed prior to coming to class. Have the day’s writing assignments completed prior to coming to class (you cannot improve your writing unless you write). Come to each class with at least one question based on your reading and writing. Late assignments will not be accepted and no coursework can be made up without written documentation excusing the absence. Early is a better option. Plan ahead. More than three unexcused absences will result in a certain F in Attendance and Participation and I reserve the right to fail students for the course in the event of egregious absenteeism.

Informal Writing, The Writer’s Notebook (10%): You will be assigned both free writing assignments (in class) & writer’s prompts (take home) during every class. Always have your composition notebook with you in class. Keep all your notes and informal writing in your notebook. Consider these creative calisthenics. In addition, you are expected to produce words of your own: rants, raves, ideas, sketches, collage, stories, drawings, lists, poems, manifestoes, newspaper clippings, photographs, ticket stubs, late night ramblings, drunken outbursts, graffiti, letters to the dead, epiphanies, religious conversions, political vomit, cartoons, lyrics, travel logs, whatever. Your notebook travels everywhere you do, it is the place to work out your theory of the whole, your box of the world, a place where you can pile the detritus for later sifting. Your writer’s notebook is a weapon against writer’s block. You will write in it every single day, seven days a week. Muses are fickle, inspiration sparse – nurse your process, use your notebook.

Formal Writing, Poetry (20%): You will write 6 poems in sequence (meaning the work is somehow related) in whatever form you choose. In addition, you will write a 500-word process introduction to be included with the final copy of your poems.

Formal Writing, Short Literary Nonfiction (20%): You will write a piece of short creative nonfiction—personal essay, memoir, literary journalism, short lyric essay, etc.—1500-word minimum. In addition, you will write a 500-word process introduction to be included with the final copy of your essay.
Formal Writing, Short Literary Fiction (20%): You will write a piece of short fiction—1500-word minimum. In addition, you will write a 500-word process introduction to be included with the final copy of your story.

Formal Writing, The One-Act Play (20%): You will write a one-act play. In addition, students will write a 500-word process introduction to be included with the final copy of the play.

COURSE CALENDAR, SPRING 2009

Week 1
MTWR (May 10-13): Discuss poetry. Reading and writing TBA.

Week 2
MTW (May 17-19): Discuss poetry. Reading and writing TBA. R 05/20: Discuss Fiction. Reading and writing TBA. **Poetry Due.**

Week 3
MTWR (May 24-27): Discuss Fiction. Reading and writing TBA.

Week 4
M (May 31): Memorial Day, No Class
TW (June 1-2): Discuss Fiction. Reading and writing TBA.
R 06/03: Discuss Nonfiction. Reading and writing TBA. **Fiction Due.**

Week 5
MTWR (June 6-10): Discuss Nonfiction. Reading and writing TBA.

Week 6
MT (June 13-14): Discuss Nonfiction. Reading and writing TBA.
W (June 15): Discuss Drama. Reading and writing TBA. **Nonfiction Due.**
R (June 16): Discuss Drama. Reading and writing TBA.

Week 7
MTW (June 21-23): Discuss Drama. Reading and writing TBA.
R (June 24): Course Wrap. **Drama Due.**