**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**HUMAN EXPRESSION**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number: EN 215, Introduction to Creative Writing**

**Home Department: English**

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Lynn Domina, [ldomina@nmu.edu](mailto:ldomina@nmu.edu), 227-2711

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): 2+ sections every Fall and Winter

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? YES

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

A. Overview of the course content

EN 215, Introduction to Creative Writing, provides students with an introduction to the craft of writing poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and drama/script writing, emphasizing the analysis of models and class discussion of student work. Students read published work with an eye toward divining craft techniques (structure, point of view, voice, theme, syntax, etc.) which they then apply when they generate their own creative work. Course work includes reading assignments, reading reflections, writing exercises, and conversation about craft, all culminating in the creation of their own creative writing (stories, essay, poems, screenplays, plays), which are then workshopped and revised after the digestion of peer and instructor feedback.

B. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes.

**Critical Thinking Component**. Students read and evaluate works of literature as a means of unpacking evidence of effective craft techniques. They integrate those techniques into their own writing as they build their own narratives, poems, and scenes. They evaluate their own and their peers’ work within the structure of a workshop, and they re-think and re-imagine their own writing based on the critique they receive from their readers.

**Human Expression Component**. Students read published works of literature and discuss the intended and achieved aesthetic goals of the writer and then use that discussion to help them establish and achieve their own aesthetic goals. They create their own work, evidencing innovative thinking. Creative writing necessarily involves the acknowledgement of contradictions. Feedback from peers is never unilateral and writers must evaluate and privilege the suggestions that will lead her/him toward the best revision.

C. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

EN 215 students have successfully completed EN 211. Some students go on to become English Writing majors, though the course also attracts students from other majors with a secondary interest in creative writing.

D. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

EN 215 is taught exclusively by students in our MFA program. Our grad students gain valuable teaching experience in their discipline, preparing them for job searches and further graduate study. The opportunity to teach creative writing makes our program attractive to quality applicants.

E. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Evidence** | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | **READING**. Throughout the semester, student will read published literature for models of technique and craft: point of view, setting, voice, tense, structure, etc. Students provide written and/or verbal analysis and responses to the literature.  Grading Rate: at least 10-30% (written responses and/or class participation)  Expected proficiency rate: 80% |
| **Integrate** | Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | **WRITING**. Students will consider and integrate craft techniques divined in the course reading as they generate their own creative work. A final portfolio of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and/or scripts is required.  Grading rate: at least 50-80% (initial drafts, writing exercises, and final revisions)  Expected proficiency: 80% |
| **Evaluate** | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | **WORKSHOP**. Students will peer review each other’s work in full-class and/or small-group workshops which serve to evaluate student creative works and to initiate critical discussion. Students provide written and/or verbal feedback for each other.  Students will be graded on their ability to make insightful and constructive critiques of their peers’ drafts based on principles and guidelines of effective creative writing.  Grading rate: at least 10-30% (written and verbal peer feedback)  Expected proficiency: 80% |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
HUMAN EXPRESSION**

*Attainment of the HUMAN EXPRESSION Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DIMENSION** | **WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED** | **PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT** |
| **Knowledge of the role of the aesthetic** | Demonstrate comprehension of the role of aesthetic in the human experience including artistic, literary, and rhetorical expression. | **READING**. Students examine the human experience as chronicled in contemporary literature.  Grading Rate: 10-30% (written responses and/or class participation)  Expected proficiency rate: 80% |
| **Innovative Thinking** | Create or adapt activities, ideas, or questions expressing both creativity and experience | **WRITING**. Students write creative works in the form of stories, essays, plays, and/or poems.  Grading rate: 50-80% (initial drafts, writing exercises, and final revisions)  Expected proficiency: 80% |
| **Acknowledging contradictions** | Integrates alternate interpretations or contradictory perspectives or ideas. | **WORKSHOP**. Students provide feedback and critique to each other in regular workshops, and they revise their work, taking into account peer and instructor feedback.  Students will be graded on their ability to revise their own drafts using peer and instructor feedback (which could include contradictory perspectives/ideas).  Grading rate: 10-30% (written and verbal peer feedback)  Expected proficiency: 80% |

**Syllabus**

**Fall 2014**

**EN 215, Intro to Creative Writing, Section 02**

Course Sequence Number: 81030

**Instructor:** Cory Ferrer

**Office:** Jamrich 3280

**Email:** cferrer@nmu.edu

**Time:** Tuesday and Thursday 3:00 pm - 4:40 pm

**Room:** Jamrich 3319

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday 1:00pm to 3:00pm

**Goals:**

This semester we will develop our abilities as both writers and readers by exploring 4 literary genres: essays, plays, short stories, and poetry. This class will provide you with a space to push the range and depth of your creative voice, to experiment and make mistakes in a safe environment, and to discuss questions about literature and creative writing today. You will practice your skills as editors and critics, working with fellow students who share your interest in writing. By the end of the semester, you will submit a comprehensive portfolio of your work.

**Readings:**

Reading is an essential part of learning how to write, much in the same way that listening is an important part of learning how to talk. Much of what we read this semester will come from our four “Best American” anthologies. This will expose us to a variety of work, while giving a sense of is being written and published today. Each of you will be responsible for helping to choose the reading. While it’s useful for an instructor to introduce students to new work, it’s also important to pursue your own independent reading interests. Feel free to browse the anthologies, and read whatever happens to grabs you. You will be responsible for leading one class discussion on a piece from one of the anthologies. Also, if you have a favorite poem, play, short story, or essay that you would like to study as part of the class, I am open to suggestions. However, the piece on which you lead a discussion must come from the anthologies.

There will be assigned readings every week, some pieces chosen by your classmates, some chosen by your instructor. You will be expected to read closely and critically. In a writing class, we are less interested with what a text “means” are more interested with how it works. What makes it compelling? How does it keep its reader interested? How do the various elements work as a whole? We must be critics as well as close readers. None of these are sacred texts. If something in a piece isn’t working it’s important to address why. Furthermore, feel free to open the discussion beyond craft. Why does this matter? Is this theme relevant to our times? Nothing is off limits.

If you find anything we read offensive, problematic, or inflammatory, please feel free to address it in class. The ongoing dialogue of literature must be an inclusive space,open to points of view that represent all races, genders, sexual orientations, ages, physiques, abilities, regions, and cultures. Respect and listen to your classmates, and expect to respected and listened to in return.

**Writing:**

Since this is a class in creative writing, obviously we’ll be doing quite a bit of it. On workshops days, you will bring in a rough draft for your peers to edit. A revision of that piece will then be due in your final portfolio at the end of the semester. However, towards the end of the semester we will have two “revision workshops,” where you bring in a second draft to be critiqued, a piece that you really want to polish, with the idea that you will revise it a third time for the final portfolio. Writing is a process that involves multiple drafts. Even after three re-writes, there will likely be changes you still want to make, places where the draft doesn’t quite live up to your vision. Please experiment with your revisions. Nothing teaches quite like trial and error. As well as the larger projects, each week you will write an “emulation” of something we have read for class, and you will keep an observation journal in which you record small, interesting things that you witness or observe during the course of the semester. We will often spend class time writing, either working on major projects or on classroom activities. Come to class ready to write.

**Required Materials:**

*Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief*. David Starkey. Bedford St. Martin’s. Boston: 2013.

*The Best American Essays 2013.* Ed. Cheryl Strayed. Houghton Mifflin. New York: 2013.

*The Best Ten Minute Plays 2013.* Ed. Lawrence Harbison. Smith and Kraus. Hanover: 2013.

*The Best American Short Stories 2013.* Ed. Elizabeth Strout. Houghton Mifflin. New York: 2013.

*The Best American Poetry 2013.* Ed. Denise Duhamel. Houghton Mifflin. New York: 2013.

*The Sky is a Nest of Swallows: A Collection of Poems and Essays by Afghan Women Writers.* Belleville

Books Press. Charleston: 2012.

Laptop with Internet Access

Notebook for in class writing

**Submission/ Late Work Policy**

With the exception of in class work, most of the work you submit will be online. I will make a drop box on EduCat for each assignment I expect. Your final portfolio must be submitted by the due date in order to receive full credit. It will be marked down one full letter grade for each day it is late. If you bring in a rough draft after the workshop day, you will miss credit for being prepared for that workshop. Journal entries and emulations turned in late will be marked down by 1/3.

**Plagiarism**

**Do not, under any circumstances, hand in someone else’s work as your own. This includes copying and pasting from other papers, failing to cite sources, or having someone else write for you.**

Academic dishonesty is an important issue and is treated very seriously in the English Department at NMU. The pertinent sections of the NMU Student Handbook Student Code on academic dishonesty are listed below.

2.2.3 Academic Dishonesty (penalty: not less than disciplinary probation; not more than expulsion) This regulation does not preclude an academic penalty imposed by an instructor as provided for in Student Rights and Responsibilities, Section 1.2.3.

.02 No students shall submit as their own to an instructor any work which contains ideas or materials taken from another without full acknowledgement of the author and the source.

.03 No students shall submit as their own any work or assignment which contains content falsified by the student or content the student knows to be false.

.06 No students shall knowingly participate in, or otherwise facilitate, the academic dishonesty, as described above, of another student.

**Attendance/Tardiness/Decorum Policy**

You are expected to attend class every scheduled session, to arrive on time, **have your assigned work completed, and participate in classroom activities and discussions**. In class work will often build off of assignments done out of class. If you have a legitimate, documented excuse for your absence or tardiness**, please notify me before the beginning of the class you are going to miss.** **If you miss class, then you are responsible for finding out what you missed. This includes any homework, lessons, or directions. You may contact me or another student to ask what you missed.**

You are also expected to be respectful towards your professor and your classmates. When you disrupt the class or distract your fellow classmates, you are interfering with your fellow students’ learning. As your instructor I reserve the right to remove any student from the classroom. Anyone asked to leave class for disruptive or disrespectful behavior will receive an absence for that day, and have to speak with me my office before returning to the classroom.

You will be allowed to miss **two class sessions** (four credit hours) without penalty. Each additional absence will lower your final grade by one third of a letter (i.e. from a B to a B-). **Three tardinesses will equal one absence.**

**Office Hours**

My office hours will be from **1-3 on Tuesdays and Thursdays**. If you cannot make it to either of these times, then we can schedule an alternative time. This is a time for you to come and show me works in progress, talk to me one on one about our class or ask any questions you might have. Office hours are your benefit, and I encourage all of you to come in for any reason.

**Laptop/Cell Phone Policy**

Please keep your laptops closed in class unless I instruct you to open them for use. We will have to use laptops for several in-class activities, including workshops. Know that using your laptops for personal purposes such as checking email or Facebook is a distraction to your fellow students and is considered disruptive and disrespectful to the class. Cell phone use is not permitted in class.

**ADA Statement**

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services office by: coming into the office at 2001 C.B. Hedgecock; calling 227-1700, or e-mailing [disserv@nmu.edu](mailto:disserv@nmu.edu). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state and University guidelines.

**Inclement Weather Policy**

On occasion, the University may cancel classes due to inclement weather. To find out if classes are being held, check the NMU website, or call 227-BRRR (2777), the weather line for NMU.

**Final Examination Period:**

There will not be a final exam in this class. Our final exam period is on Thursday, Dec 11, from 2pm to 3:50pm. Your final portfolio will be due by 3:50 pm.

**Helpful Campus Resources:**

**The Writing Center: (906) 227-2683**

**http://webb.nmu.edu/Centers/WritingCenter/**

**Vielmetti Health Center: (906) 227-2355**

**http://webb.nmu.edu/HealthCenter/**

**NMU Counseling and Consultation Services: (906) 227-2355** [**http://webb.nmu.edu/Centers/CounselingAnd**](http://webb.nmu.edu/Centers/CounselingAnd)**Consultation/**

**Grading Scale**

**A 94 – 100% B- 80 – 82% D+ 67 – 69%**

**A- 90 – 93% C+ 77 – 79% D 63 – 66%**

**B+ 87 – 89% C 73 – 76% D- 60 – 62%**

**B 83 – 86% C- 70 – 72% F 0 – 59%**

**Grading**

**Classroom Participation: 10%**

You have an important role to play in your classmates’ learning. During class time, you are expected to be mentally present and engaged in classroom activities such as discussions, group work, and in-class exercises. Your classroom participation grade will include:

* Willingness to ask questions volunteer answers
* Attentiveness and engagement in class discussion
* Contributions in workshops and group activities
* Attitude and enthusiasm and treatment of others

**Conferences: 5%**

During this semester we will meet twice in my office for a fifteen minute conference to discuss your drafts in progress, and address any issues, questions, or concerns you may be having about the class. Of course, you can stop by my office hours to do all of those things at any time during the semester, but only twice will you be required to do so. On these days we will not meet during our scheduled class time.

**Observation Journals: 5%**

Writing convincingly from your imagination will require a sharp eye for life’s strange little details. During the semester, you will keep a journal in which you record observations and experiences from your life. These may include overheard conversations or behavior, reflections on personal experience (any kind), or anything you witness during the week. I encourage you to keep a pad of paper on you to record things as they happen. One entry a week (about three small observations) will be due on EduCat. These observations may or may not find their way into your creative pieces, but at the very least you will have a chance to practice paying attention to the world in ways that yield material for written work.

**Emulations 5%**

One of the best ways to develop the range of your voice is to experiment with “trying on” other writers’ styles. Once a week you will write a short emulation of something we’ve read for class. How you approach these will be up to you. You may choose any piece you haven’t already emulated, and you may imitate the voice, prose-style, structure, subject matter, theme, or any other element of craft. These will be informal assignments, approximately 500 words. The more you experiment, the more you will discover you are able to write in ways you didn’t even know you could. You may use your emulations to generate content for major assignments.

**Workshops: 10%**

Every piece you write for this class will undergo a workshop with your peers. This will not only give you a clearer sense of how an audience reacts to your work, but it will give you a chance to sharpen skills in editing and revision which you can then apply to your own work. 50% of your credit for the workshop grade will be from being prepared on workshop day, bringing in a complete rough draft for peer review. The other half will be from making insightful and constructive critiques of your classmates’ writings.

**Leading a Class Discussion: 5%**

After signing up for a given day, you will select a reading from one of the anthologies. You will read this selection very closely to gain a deeper understanding of the work (preferably reading it more than once), and write five or six discussion questions for the rest of class. Your selection will become part of the assigned reading for that day, and you will lead the class discussion on that piece.

**Portfolio: 60%**

As we will cover this semester, writing is a process of revision. Successful creative writing is achieved through a process of re-writing, re-imagining, and re-discovering. Your portfolio is intended as a showcase of the work you’ve done over the course of an entire semester, a record of effort and creative growth.

**Portfolio Requirements:**

1. Cover Page with Title
2. Table of Contents
3. At least two drafts of an Essay
4. At least two drafts of a 10 minute Play
5. At least two drafts of a short story
6. At least two drafts of your two poems
7. Two of your pieces from your revision workshop will include a third draft which you feel represents your best work.
8. 5 Best entries in your observation journal
9. 5 Best Emulations
10. 1000 word self-evaluation essay for your work in class this semester.

**Grading Breakdown:**

**Class Participation 10%**

**Observation Journals 5%**

**Weekly Emulations 5%**

**Workshops 10%**

**Presentations on Readings 5%**

**Conferences 5%**

**Portfolio 60%**

**Schedule**

**This schedule will change throughout the semester.**

**You will be notified of all changes in advance.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Wk | Date | Focus | Reading Due | Work Due |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | T  8/26 | Intro to the Class  Close Reading/ Observation |  |  |
|  | Th  8/28 | **Introduce Essay** | CW 4 Genres |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | T  9/2 | Sensory Details | Essays | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  9/4 | Voice | Essays |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | T  9/9 | Structure | Essays | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  9/11 | **Workshop** | Essays | **Rough Draft of Essay** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | T  9/16 | **Conferences no Class** |  |  |
|  | Th  9/18 | **Introduce 10 Minute Play** | CW 4 Genres | Journal and Emulation |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | T  9/23 | Character | Plays | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  9/25 | Dialogue | Plays |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | T  9/30 | Scene | Plays | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  10/2 | **Workshop** | Plays | **Rough Draft of Play** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | T  10/7 | Revision | Plays | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  10/9 | **Introduce Short Story** | CW 4 Genres |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | T  10/14 | Setting | Short Stories | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  10/16 | Perspective | Short Stories |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | T  10/21 | Narrative | Short Stories | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  10/23 | **Workshop** | Short Stories | **Rough Draft of Short Story** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | T  10/28 | Revision | Short Stories | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  10/30 | **Introduce Poetry** | CW 4 Genres |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | T  11/4 | Sound and Rhythm | Poems | Journal and Emulation |
|  | Th  11/6 | Image | Poems |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | T  11/11 | Voice | Poems |  |
|  | Th 11/13 | Concision/ Editing | Poems | **Rough Draft of a Poem** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 13 | T  11/18 | **Revision Workshop** | SNS | **Revised Piece** |
|  | Th 11/20 | **Conferences No Class** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 14 | T  11/25 | **Thanksgiving Break** |  |  |
|  | Th  11/27 | **Thanksgiving Break** |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 15 | T  12/2 | **Revision Workshop** | SNS | **Revised Piece** |
|  | Th  12/4 | **All Class Reading** |  | **Something you want to read out loud (3-4 minutes)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 16 |  | **Final Portfolios Due**  **Final Exam Period:**  **Thurs Dec 11, 2pm-3:50pm** |  |  |