ARHU 298J: CREATIVE WRITING
CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES IN POETRY
AND FICTION
Summer II, 2024

SYLLABUS

General Course Information
Designation: General Education: Distributive Studies: Scholarship in Practice
Number of Credits: 3

Course Dates: Jul. 8, 2024 – Jul. 26, 2024
Course Times: Mon-Tue-Wed-Thu., 1:pm to 2:45 pm
Professors: Dolapo Demuren
Email: odemuren@umd.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 3pm - 4pm or by appointment
Classroom: Online Zoom Classroom (Passcode: DOUT59)

Course Description

This is a three week-long intensive creative writing course with four main components: 1) **Reading and in-class discussions** of selected pieces of multicultural fiction and poetry 2) **Writing:** writing exercises will serve as prompts for students to write poems, short stories, and pieces of flash fiction 3) **Workshop:** group activity where students will share their original work, offer feedback to their peers, and receive constructive criticism from fellow students and the instructor. 4) **Portfolio Composition:** in which students will compile the entirety of their work (revised poems and short stories) and create an online portfolio. Additional course components include a final reading in which the students will share their revised work with peers.

Course Objectives
After successfully completing this course students will be able to:

- Read and analyze various multi-cultural works of poetry and fiction.
- Identify conventions and literary techniques used by professional writers and apply them in the creation of original works of poetry and fiction.
- Develop an inclusive literary workshop community where thoughtful comments and critiques are offered in an honest and respectful manner.
- Communicate emotion in writing using action verbs, dialogue, sensory language, and vivid imagery.
- Produce and, using an online digital publishing platform free of cost, self-publish a portfolio with their revised poems, fiction pieces, and journal entries.

Course Materials
There are no textbooks required for this course. Assigned readings will be available on ELMS.

Campus Policies

It is our shared responsibility to know and abide by the University of Maryland's policies that relate to all courses. Please visit www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html for the Office of Undergraduate Studies' full list of campus-wide policies such as

- Academic integrity
- Student and instructor conduct
- Accessibility and accommodations
- Attendance and excused absences
- Grades and appeals
- Copyright and intellectual property

Special Accommodations
The University of Maryland is committed to providing appropriate accommodations for students with accessibility needs. Students with documented accessibility requests should inform the instructors within the first two meetings and specify the type of accommodations required. To obtain an Accommodation Letter prepared by the Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS), a division of the University Counseling Center:

- Call (301) 314-7682
- E-mail dissup@umd.edu
- or visit the Shoemaker Building for more information.

Diversity
The University of Maryland values the diversity of its student body. Along with the University, as instructors, we are committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Potential devaluation of students in the classroom that can occur by reference to demeaning stereotypes of any group and/or overlooking the contributions of a particular group to the topic under discussion is inappropriate. (See Statement on Classroom Climate, http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1541).

Course-Specific Policies

Use of Technology
It is necessary to use a laptop or equivalent device to appropriately engage in this course. Additionally, as class will take place completely online, students will need to ensure full engagement in the course via the

Zoom platform. Students should have their *screens* on during class time, unless otherwise instructed. Additionally, it is mandatory that Zoom audio is operational and turned on during class time.

It is necessary to use a laptop, tablet, or any equivalent device to take notes, participate in class, and easily access assigned readings. However, indiscriminate use of personal technology during class interferes with the primary goal of this course—to have students engage in serious and dynamic class discussions and workshops— and will imply a deduction of participation points.

If you have any issues accessing technology that gives you access to Canvas and course materials, please contact us so we can assist you and help decide the best course of action.

Names/Pronouns and Self-Identifications
The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering inclusive and equitable classroom environments. The course instructors invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more.

Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. As instructors, we will do our best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and we ask you to do the same for all of your student peers. Canvas/Elms now lets you add your preferred pronouns as part of your personal profile. If you wish to note your pronouns there, all students and instructors will be able to see your pronouns wherever your name appears.

Absences
Students are expected to inform the instructor of medically necessary absences and present the appropriate documentation (e.g. doctor's note) specifying the dates of the missed class period(s). These documents must include an acknowledgment that, (a) the information provided is true and correct, and (b) that the student understands that providing false information to University officials is a violation of Part 9(h) of the Code of Student Conduct. The University's policies on medical and other absences can be found at: http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1540

Tardiness
If a student is more than 30 minutes tardy for a class without a documented excuse, it will be counted as an absence. Being 20 minutes late for class more than twice also will be counted as one absence.

Participation
Participation is a key component of the final grade. Students will be asked to discuss the assigned readings and to comment on the work presented by peers.

- Given the interactive style of this class, attendance will be crucial to note-taking and thus your performance in this class. Attendance is particularly important also because the class discussion will be a critical component of your learning.

- **Each student is expected to make substantive contributions to every class discussion** and to the learning experience, and attendance is expected for every session.

- Students with a legitimate reason to miss class should communicate in advance with the instructor, except in the case of an emergency.

- Students who miss class are responsible for learning what they miss from that session.

Reading accountability

It is impossible to have a meaningful discussion if students have not read the assigned course materials. A short reading accountability quiz may be given at the beginning of some class periods to ensure that the required contents have been read.

Daily Writing Assignments

Students who submit their work in class and observe the specific guidelines for each assignment will receive full credit for each of these items. Students are expected to produce quality drafts for each of these assignments. These items should be understood as "works in progress," which will continue to improve through workshops and revision.

Workshop

Each student will have the opportunity to workshop the same number of pieces for the same amount of time. The number of works will be contingent on the final number of students enrolled in the class, and the time required to cover the most important academic contents. The instructor will explain the basic workshop goals and expectations. Workshop responses will be respectful, but they will also **not be shorter than 100 words for each piece** submitted to the workshop. They should also contain a minimum of 2 positive comments and 2 constructive comments.

Canvas- ELMS

During the first two class meetings, instructors will explain how to use Canvas/ELMS to access course contents and upload daily assignments.

Communication with Instructor

If you need to communicate with your instructor, please use either email or the Canvas/ELMS Messaging as the preferred mode of communication. If you are unable to use Canvas/ELMS, you can use the email address listed at the beginning of this syllabus to reach the instructor. The instructor will do their best to respond to your email within 24 hours except on weekends. If you have any questions, please email them with enough anticipation. Please, DO NOT email with questions that are easily found in the syllabus or on ELMS (i.e. When is this assignment due? How much is it worth? etc.) but please DO reach out about personal, academic, and intellectual concerns/questions.

Feedback from the instructor

The instructor will guide the conversation during workshop and offer verbal feedback to the students.

ELMS Announcements
Instructors will send IMPORTANT announcements via Canvas/ELMS Announcements and Messages. You must make sure that your email and announcement notifications (including changes in assignments and/or due dates) are enabled in Canvas/ELMS so you do not miss any messages. You are responsible for checking your email and Canvas/ELMS inbox with regular frequency.

Communication with Peers:
With a diversity of perspectives and experience, we may find ourselves in disagreement and/or debate with one another. As such, it is important that we agree to conduct ourselves in a professional manner and that we work together to foster and preserve a classroom environment in which we can respectfully discuss and deliberate controversial questions.

We encourage you to confidently exercise your right to free speech—bearing in mind, of course, that you will be expected to craft and defend arguments that support your position. Keep in mind, that free speech has its limit and this course is NOT the space for hate speech, harassment, or derogatory language. As instructors, we will make every reasonable attempt to create an atmosphere in which each student feels comfortable voicing their opinions without fear of being personally attacked, mocked, demeaned, or devalued. If you feel the classroom is not the space we intend to create for any reason, contact the instructors so they can address the issue.

Major Assignments

Final Portfolio
Each student will create a final portfolio of the work they have produced during the three-week period of this course. This includes pieces of short fiction and poetry that will be revised through small group workshops as well as revised journal entries.

Other Assignments:

Please see the course schedule.

Grading Structure

Assignment Group	Percentage (%) of Final Grade
Writing Assignments	**10%**
In-class and Workshop Participation and Reading Accountability	**25%**
Submissions for Workshop	**20%**
Peer Feedback (written)	**15%**

Final Portfolio (prose section: 15%, Poetry section 15%)	30%
Total	100%

Academic Integrity
The University's **Code of Academic Integrity** is designed to ensure that the principles of academic honesty and integrity are upheld. Please ensure that you fully understand this code and its implications because all acts of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of this code. All students are expected to adhere to this Code. It is your responsibility to read it and know what it says, so you can start your professional life on the right path.

Grades
All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page under "Grades," allowing you to see your scores as they are entered. If you would like to review any of your grades, or have questions about how something was scored, feel free to email the instructors to schedule a time for us to meet and discuss.

Final letter grades are assigned based on the percentage of total assessment points earned.

Final Grade Cutoffs									
+	97.00%	+	87.00%	+	77.00%	+	67.00%	+	
A	94.00%	B	84.00%	C	74.00%	D	64.00%	F	<60.0%
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%	-	

Course Evaluation
Please submit a course evaluation through CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. All information submitted to CourseEvalUM is confidential. Campus will notify you when CourseEvalUM is open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses. Please go directly to the **Course Eval UM website** to complete your evaluations. By completing your evaluations at the end of this class, you will have the privilege of accessing through Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

Copyright Notice
Course materials are copyrighted and may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission. Class lectures and other materials are copy-righted, and they may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructors.

Tentative Course Schedule
Note: This is a **tentative schedule**, and subject to change as necessary – monitor the course ELMS page for current deadlines. In the unlikely event of a prolonged university closing or an extended absence from the

university, adjustments to the course schedule, deadlines, and assignments will be made based on the duration of the closing and the specific dates missed.

Fiction	
Date	*Class schedule and homework*
Monday 7/8	**Topics: Introduction to the Course** **In-class:** 　　Introductions 　　Review of course syllabus and grading policy 　　Review of Canvas 　　Overview of poetry and fiction units 　　Community and workshop guidelines 　　*Furor Scribendi* by Octavia Butler **Homework for next class:** 　　*The Danger of a Single Story* - Chimamanda Adichie 　　*Positive Obsession* by Octavia Butler CW: racism 　　*Speech Sounds* by Octavia Butler CW: violence, murder, reference to pandemic 　　Journal Assignment
Tuesday 7/9	**Topics: Introduction to Fiction Unit - Short Stories, Flash Fiction** **In-class**: 　　Discussion of assigned readings 　　Elements of fiction 　　In-class writing exercise: 11-Point plot boiler outline **Homework for next class:** 　　**Read:** 　　　*Axolotl* by Julio Cortazar 　　　*A Song of Wraiths and Ruin* chapters 1 and 2 by Roseanne A Brown CW: 　　　refugee-related trauma, anxiety 　　**Submit:** 　　　Circular flash fiction piece (in groups of 3 to 4 students) due by 9pm 　　　Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow
Wednesday 7/10	**Topics: Characters and Characterization** **In-class:** 　　Discussion of assigned readings 　　**Fiction Workshop #1 Circular Story** **Homework for next class:**

	Read:
	    Apology Note To My Roommate Irene After My Chimaera Destroyed Her Blue
	       Suede Heels by Kaely Horton
	    Girl by Jamaica Kincaid CW: sexism
	    Currents by Hannah Bottomy CW: death
	Submit:
	    Reverse Story due by 9pm
	    Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow

Thursday
7/11
	Topics: Point of View / Workshop
	
	In-class:
	    Discussion of assigned readings
	    Narrator's pronouns, degree of knowledge, reliability, and objectivity.
	    Nuts and Bolts: Thought: Verbs by Chuck Palahniuk
	    Fiction Workshop #1 (Continued) #2: Reverse Story
	
	Homework for next class:
	    Read:
	        All Systems Red chapter 1 by Martha Wells CW: violence
	        Optional: *The Myth-ing Link* by Pamelyn Casto
	
	    Submit:
	        Point of View Story due by 9pm
	        Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow

Monday 7/15	**Topics: Setting, Worldbuilding**
	
	In-class:
	    Discussion of assigned readings
	    Fiction Workshop #3 – Point of View Story
	
	Homework for next class:
	    Read:
	        Anatomy of a Cloud by Nancy Au
	        The House of Asterion by Jorge Luis Borges CW: death
	
	   OR. Accepted (good for next time)
	
	    Submit:
	        Free Flash Fiction story due by Sunday at 9pm
	        Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class Monday

Tuesday 7/16	**Topics: Theme and Powerful Images** **In-class:** Discussion of assigned readings

	Fiction Workshop #4: TBD
	Guidelines for final portfolios (fiction section)
	
	Homework for next class:
	    Read:
	        Be Kind to Your Language - Timothy Snyder
	        Our Neighbor's House by Emily Carroll
	        Reading TBD
	
	    Submit:
	        Classified Newspaper Ad story due by 9pm
	        Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow

Wednesday
7/17
	Topics: Editing, Proofreading And Revising
	
	In-class:
	    Discussion of assigned readings
	    Fiction Workshop #5: Dialogue-based piece
	    Fiction section Wrap-up
	
	    Transition to Poetry
	    Large group discussion of experience with poetry
	    Small group discussion of favorite poems and poets. What is poetry? What does it look like? What does it mean to you?
	    Large group wrap-up discussion
	
	Homework for next class:
	
	    Read:
	    Making Room - Claudia Rankine (CW: racism)
	    We Real Cool - Gwendolyn Brooks
	    Introduction: The Golden Shovel
	    A Beautiful Sunday Afternoon - Ariel Francisco

	Poetry
Date	*Class schedule and homework*

Thursday
7/19
	Topics: Introduction to Poetry
	
	In-class:
	    Tentative - Online Visit
	    Introduction to poetry unit
	    Review *Differences between Poetry and Prose* handout
	    Discussion of assigned readings
	    In–class exercise: Golden Shovel

	Homework for next class:
	    Read/Watch:
	    Myths We Live By But Shouldn't
	    Imagery - Mary Oliver
	    To the Fig Tree on 9th & Christian - Ross Gay
	    On This The 100th Anniversary of the Sinking of the Titanic, We Reconsider the
	        Buoyancy of the Human Heart - Laura Lamb Brown-Lavoie (read by Sarah Kay)
	
	    Submit:
	    Poem 1: Free-Form Poem due by 9pm
	    Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow

Monday 7/22	**Topics: Imagery and other poetic devices**
	
	In-class:
	    Review *Poetic Devices* handout
	    Discussion of assigned readings
	    Discussion of *The Red Wheelbarrow* - William Carlos Williams and *In a Station of the Metro* - Ezra Pound
	    In-class exercise: Ekphrasis
	    Poetry workshop #1: Free-form Poem
	
	Homework for next class:
	    Read:
	    Narcissus Tweets - Airea D. Matthews
	    Letter to my Would-Be Lover on Geometry and Ponds - Airea D. Matthews
	    Poems from an Email Exchange - Hanif Abdurraqib
	    Jericho Brown's essay on the duplex and *"Gutting the Sonnet"* (CW: domestic abuse, sexual assault)
	
	    Submit:
	    Poem 2: Imagist-Inspired Poem due by 9pm
	    Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow

Tuesday 7/23	**Topics: Poetry and translation**
	
	In-class:
	    Discussion of assigned readings
	    In-class exercise: words with no direct translation
	    Review of Wang Wei
	    Poetry workshop #2: Imagist-Inspired Poem
	
	Homework for next class:
	    Read:

	Do Overs and Revision - Addonizio *Revision* - Mary Oliver *Poetry* - Marianne Moore (Read by John Green) *The Prestige* - Hanif Abdurraqib **Submit:** Poem 3: Translation Poem due by 9pm Give comments on workshop pieces before meeting for class tomorrow
Wednesday 7/24	**Topics: Poetry wrap up and presenting pieces** **In-class:** 　**Poetry workshop #3: Translation Poem** 　Practice readings in small groups 　Final review of portfolio **Homework for next class:** 　Final Portfolio due by midnight tonight 　Practice readings for event tomorrow, invite friends and family 　(We will decide as a class if we may invite family and friends).
Thursday 7/25	**Topics: Public reading and presentation** **In-class:** Last day of class Public reading. (We will decide as a class if we may invite family and friends).

Syllabus is subject to change.