

# Creative Writing Syllabus

Even Semester 2018

The State Islamic University of North Sumatra



*"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."*

— Maya Angelou, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

*"Start writing, no matter what. The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on."*

— Louis L'Amour

## **Instructor:**

Rahmah Fithriani, S.S., M.Hum., Ph.D.

## **Contact Information:**

Email: rahmah.fithriani@fulbrightmail.org

## **Course Description:**

This is an introductory course in creative writing: emphasis on poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. No previous experience is required. This course is designed to give students the opportunity to think and write creatively, thus think of our classroom as an artist's studio. We will write and rewrite, collaborate, discuss, and build. Most of our time in this course will be spent reading and discussing each other's creative work. During workshop, we will offer constructive feedback in both small and large groups. My role as the instructor is to encourage you to love writing and to guide you as you hone your craft.

## **Course Objectives:**

- explore the creative process through writing
- define/determine individual goals as a writer
- become familiar with the basic techniques and terminology of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction writing
- learn how to critique (and be critiqued) constructively
- reinforce revising skills, not only of language but also of ideas
- prepare a portfolio of original work

## **Course materials:**

Spring File/Binder

Loose-leaf paper

Hard-cover journal

Flash drive (one/class)

# Creative Writing Syllabus

Even Semester 2018

The State Islamic University of North Sumatra

## Class Requirements:

Attendance: I will be taking attendance during each class session, and your attendance does significantly affect your grade. Arriving late to class and leaving class early will negatively affect the attendance portion of the grade. If you arrive 15 minutes after the starting time or leave 15 minutes before the end time you will be considered absent.

Participation: I expect your full participation in the class by engaging in our workshop discussions and actively asking questions during the lecture portion of class. The more you ask questions, the better you'll shape the class, and the more you'll learn. Since we will be workshopping our work during class, it is needed for you to provide feedback to each other's work. Try to use the "pat/slap" method of critiquing (your commentary on the work should give both positive as well as negative feedback, and present any negative comments in as positive a manner as possible). When you're critiqued, in turn, please remember to take any negative feedback as being intended to help you. Remember that your fellow students are critiquing your work, not you personally.

Reflective journal: The purpose of the journal is to give you the opportunity to write regularly. It is a place for you to write and create –don't worry about spelling, grammar, or flow. Just write. You will be responsible for writing in your journal in about 150 to 200 words/entry after each class meeting. **Journals will be collected periodically as a means of accountability.** I will let you know in advance when they will be collected.

Poetry packet: By the mid semester, you will be submitting a poetry packet consisting of a poetry book and all drafts of your poems. The poetry book should include at least seven poems that you create and an opening remark highlighting your writing experience during the creation. You are encouraged to make three copies of the poetry book; one to be submitted, one for you to keep, and the other as a gift for your special one. **(Due in the mid-semester week)**

Review packet: You will be writing 2 review articles (one of a movie or a book and one of a place) of no more than 500 words each. These reviews should be submitted along with all the drafts from the first to the final ones. **(Due in the final-semester week)**

## Grading:

- Attendance & participation: 20%
- Reflective journal: 35%
- Poetry packet: 25%
- Review packet: 20%

## Class Policy & Expectations:

Plagiarism: I expect each student to be honest in academic performance. Failure to do so may result in failing this class. **Make sure all your work and writing is your own.**

# Creative Writing Syllabus

Even Semester 2018

The State Islamic University of North Sumatra

Late assignments: I do not accept late assignments as they will make it difficult for all students. Therefore, work or assignments turned in late will receive no credit and significantly lower your final course grade.

Conferences: I would like the chance to meet with each of you individually and discuss your work, and encourage you to take advantage of that. However, conferences should be scheduled in advance, though if I'm in my office and have the time, I'm happy to discuss things with you on an impromptu basis.

Cell phones: should be turned off or on vibrate mode: unless a call is an emergency, I expect you to answer it after class or during break. Do not text during class. You will be considered absent for the class if I see you checking your messages or texting on your phone during a lecture or during the workshops.

Laptops: I don't mind laptops being used to take notes or do your work. However, if you're using the laptop to access Facebook, Twitter, or other social media sites, or if you're checking your e-mail or surfing the web randomly, I will consider you absent for that class.

## **Suggested Readings:**

Disher, Garry. (2001). *Writing fiction: An introduction to the craft*. New South Wales: Allen & Unwin.

Earnshaw, Steven. (Ed.). (2014). *The handbook of creative writing (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press Ltd.

Hirschi, Heather. (2004). *Creative writing: The easy way*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's Educational Series, Inc.

Livingston, Myra Cohn. (1991). *Poem-making: Ways to begin writing poetry*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Morley, David. (2007). *The Cambridge introduction to creative writing*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.