

Creative Writing

Read, read, read. Read everything- trash, classics, good and bad, and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an apprentice and studies the master. Read! You'll absorb it. Then write...

-William Faulkner

This is designed to be a brief syllabus outlining some of the things we will touch on this semester, in order to help you improve your writing. If I've left anything out, or if you simply want to make sure some specific aspect of any of these topic areas gets covered, let me know (maybe a specific author or poet you want to make sure we look at).

I. Poetry

A poem should not mean, but be.

-Archibald MacLeish

A. structure/form

1. Fixed Forms
 - a. scansion/rhyme scheme
 - b. "classic" forms
 - c. Haiku & related forms
2. "free verse" / lyric poetry
3. concrete poetry
4. found poetry

B. Imagery

C. "The Ending"

II. Fiction

Some things can only be said in fiction, but that doesn't mean they aren't true.

-Aaron Latham

A. Structure

1. length
 - a. the vignette
 - b. the short story
 - c. the novella
 - d. the novel
2. Plot
 - a. plot structure
 - b. development
3. Characterization

- a. description
 - 1. physical traits
 - 2. emotional/relationships
- b. development
- 4. Setting
 - a. description
 - b. importance
 - 1. relationship to characters
 - 2. relationship to plot
- 5. Dialogue
 - a. structure
 - 1. external
 - 2. internal

III. *The Essay*

Writing, like life itself, is a voyage of discovery.

-Henry Miller

A. Structure/ Forms

- 1. The traditional “five-paragraph”
- 2. The “personal essay”
- 3. The interview
- 4. Critical essays/Reviews

C. Style

D. Voice

E. Audience

F. Research

- 1. Traditional sources
 - a. “library research”
 - b. interviews
- 2. Newer sources
 - a. internet/WWW

IV. *Stage/Screen*

A. Play

- 1. Structure/Format
 - a. setting first
 - b. dialogue
 - c. stage directions

B. Screen

- 1. Structure/Format
 - a. setting/story line
 - b. direction
 - c. cameras
 - d. “the treatment”

V. *Publishing*

Literature is like any other trade; you will never sell anything unless you go to the right shop. -George Bernard Shaw

A. Finding them

1. Literary magazines
 - a. college/community/local
 - b. “the big guys”
2. Publishing Houses (books)
3. “Vanity presses”
4. Self-publication

B. Rights/Ownership

1. Explanation
2. Protect yourself