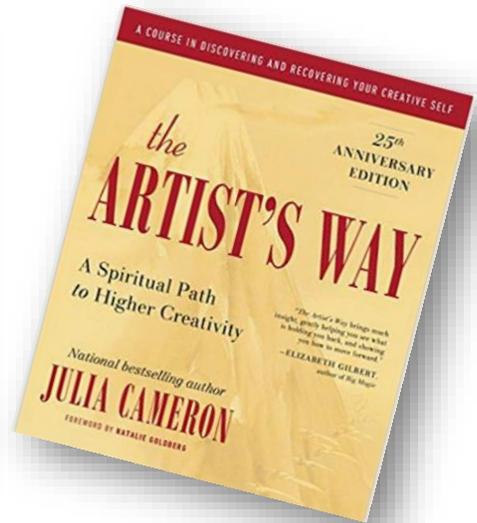
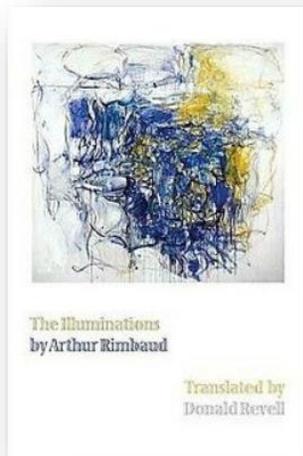



Welcome to Honors 430
THE CYBER CAFÉ
Creative Writing Workshop (online!)
 Fall 2020

Professor Jaclyn Costello, MFA – Office Hours in person Tuesday/Thursday by appointment.
 E-mail me to set up a meeting: costello@unlv.nevada.edu.



Required Texts

Fiction: *The Sheltering Sky*, Paul Bowles
 Poetry: *The Illuminations*, Arthur Rimbaud, translated by Donald Revell
 Non-Fiction: *The Artist's Way*, Julia Cameron

Grade Breakdown

Motivated completion of Creative Writing Assignment	20%
Re-write/re-think of Creative Writing Assignment	10%
Formal responses to your peers' writing + Daily Mana + picture activity	20%
Weekly responses to Professor's Video/Written Prompts	20%
Book Responses to each of the three texts (10% each: 3 MLA pages each)	30%

A	94-100	A-	90-93	B+	87-89	B	84-86
B-	80-83	C+	77-79	C	74-76	C-	70-73

Technological Learning Curve

During the first week of class, familiarize yourself with: the website, including how to respond to your peers' writing (including adding a picture as your icon in the comment section.) There will be an online tutorial to help you learn, & I am happy to answer tech. questions *if* you reach out during the first week of class, but after that, you are expected to complete your assignments accurately & on time and can no longer use "I didn't know how to do it" as an excuse 😊

A Note on the Big Creative Writing Assignment

Your creative submission may be in the form of a short story, a novel excerpt, poetry, or a hybrid-format. The total number of finished, “perfected,” double-spaced, fiction pages for the semester must be between 10-15 pages. The total number of finished, “perfected,” poetry lines for the semester must be between 80-150 lines. Remember: the goal is to complete a polished, thoughtful set of pages, rather than to churn out the most possible words. This is a workshop on *craft*. Details to follow, later in this syllabus.

Attendance

Attendance is determined by your thoughtful participation in the online discussions/prompts, as well as your responses to your peers’ writing. It does not matter at what time each day or evening you respond; however, to receive full credit, you must respond to your peers’ online writing assignments before 11:59 p.m. two days after their assignment is uploaded. For example, if Tyler’s poetry is due to be posted on September 14th, you have until 11: 59 p.m. on September 16th to post your feedback online. Otherwise, you are docked points for that assignment.

University Policies

The university policies can be found by clicking the link below. You are expected to read these policies. https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/EVPP-SyllabiContent-MinimumCriteria-2019-2020.pdf

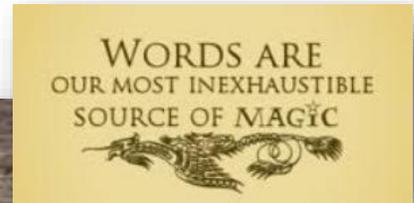
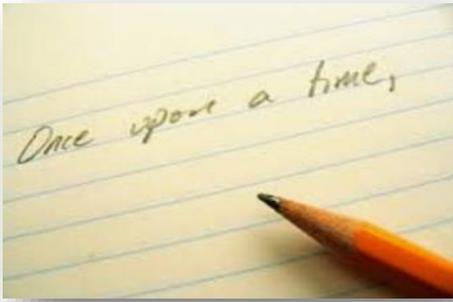
Each of our Course Objectives accords with a particular UULO:

Intellectual Breadth and Life-Long Learning: Students will compare and contrast key ideas and ethical issues drawn from different cultures and time periods: i.e. *The Sheltering Sky* explores conflicts involving Americans living in Northern Africa mid-20th century; *The Illuminations* is French poetry written in the 19th century.

Inquiry and Critical Thinking: Students will identify problems in assigned texts, as well as in their own writing; from there, they will articulate questions and integrate their findings/learnings into their writing. Students will also learn to articulate reasonable arguments and explanations for *why* and *how* they made the writing choices they did in their creative writing.

Communication: Students will effectively, clearly, and graciously learn to write constructive responses to their peers’ writing; i.e. they will learn to write effectively both generally and for specialized audiences. They will also demonstrate general academic literacy via their responses to the assigned texts. Additionally, they will effectively use the genres of ‘poetry’ and ‘fiction writing’ to express narrative and/or poetic sentiments, ideas, and inspirations. They will also be required to navigate the online format of this class, watch videos, read and respond to prompts in a group forum, post to a shared Instagram, and other technological aptitudes that will add to their skill-sets.

Global/Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness: Students will remain sensitive to the varying backgrounds, views, and ideologies expressed in their peers’ creative writing, as they respond to the writing in a kind and constructive way; they will, inevitably, be exposed to diverse perspectives from their peers linked to identity, ability, religion, politics, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. Finally, via their own introspective writing, students will demonstrate awareness of their own place in and effect on the world; as well, hopefully, they will see how the things they create (such as their stories and poems) also have a place in and effect on the world.



Course Philosophies

I discovered long ago that writing stories and poems allowed me to explore the world (and myself!) in innovative, depth-filled, satisfying ways that other disciplines didn't allow for. In this course, I'd like to offer you that same opportunity: a chance for you to explore yourself artistically and nurture your inner writer – that part of you that longs to express your understanding of the world through narrative and/or poetry. You are invited to write in any style that inspires you. Write about an idea, an emotion, a dystopic mystery, soulful prose, cerebral poetry, medical sci-fi, a fanciful love story, an abstract dialogue – the possibilities are endless for you! As long as your writing moves us in some way, or teaches us something new about the world, or challenges us to perceive reality differently, or simply tells a dang good story – you're on the right track.

This is a kind, supportive, encouraging environment in which you and your peers agree to constructively share insights on each other's prose and poetry with the objective of helping one another evolve as writers/poets. Not everyone will have the same aesthetic, and that's okay! Rather than trying to morph a peer's work into the work that *you* would have written, try to make suggestions to help your classmate's writing become the best version of what it's aiming to be. I will guide you through this process as the semester unfolds.

Weekly Expectations

Check out our class webpage **The Cyber Café** to respond to my weekly video prompts, receive your weekly reading assignment, and to post feedback on your peers' writing samples that will be uploaded to one of the writing rooms (2 peer assignments to read each week.)

Video/Written Prompts – found in the themed room: 'Professor's Palace.' What is a prompt? The prompts may relate to the books we're reading or to the peer-writing we're reading for that week. I will leave a dated prompt, and after you've read or watched it, you are required to either 1) post a new, two-paragraph-long response to the prompt OR, 2) post a two-paragraph-long response to one of your peers' existing comments on the prompt. Note: you are welcome to go above the two-paragraph limit, especially if you are engaged in a back-and-forth conversation with other writers on the topic.

Peer Writing – found in the following rooms, sorted by genre: ‘Poet’s Plaza,’ ‘The Novelist’s Nook,’ ‘Short Story Sanctuary,’ or ‘Hybrid Hall.’ (Note: be sure to check all the rooms each week, so you don’t miss the new uploads!!) Once we begin the workshop portion of this class, there will be two new pieces of writing uploaded (by me) for you to read each week. After you thoughtfully read through the new writing, complete your response in the following format:

Leave Three Paragraphs of Feedback for each piece of Writing in the Comments Sections

Paragraph One – in this paragraph, please share what worked well about this story/poetry. What did you enjoy? What were the strongest aspects of this writing? What did you think the piece was “about”? What stirred your emotions or entranced your mind?

Paragraph Two – in this paragraph, please provide constructive feedback for the author. What questions do you have about the author’s intentions or goals for this piece? Was anything unclear to you? What suggestions do you have about the plot, characters, areas to elaborate upon, areas to condense, poetic style, line-breaks, feelings you are left with, etc.?

Paragraph Three – in this paragraph, please provide any line edits you have for the author. Are their grammar mistakes? Confusing wording? Areas where different adjectives/verbs could be used? Strange changes in tenses?

‘Writing in the Valley’ Picture Activity

To add a little variety to the semester, you are required to complete this hands-on homework assignment at some point before Thanksgiving. Please also take a picture of the activity and post it to the ‘Daily Mana’ Instagram, along with a paragraph-long reflection under the post. Choose ONE:

- 1) Go to your favorite writing spot and meditate for 15-20 minutes before beginning your writing process. Notice the difference that meditation makes before beginning your craft.
- 2) Go into nature and write for an hour. Did you feel different writing outside versus sitting at a computer or in a corner in your room? Note: nature can be a patio with misters, if it’s hot!
- 3) Write a letter, short story, or poem for a friend, family member, or stranger & gift it to them. Do you usually give people *words* as gifts? What was their response? How did YOU feel?

Daily Mana

The ‘Daily Mana’ Instagram account is shared account for you and your peers to post encouraging words, writing tips, creativity/writing memes, fun pictures of you writing or becoming inspired, and other helpful, supportive information about the creative process. You may find the informal setting and light-hearted exchanges very helpful, so feel free to share and explore as much as possible! Required during the semester: create 4 Instagram posts + respond to at least 4 existing posts.

Your Creative Submission

For Everyone

You will be assigned a due date for your first draft of writing. By 11:59 p.m. on your assigned day, you must e-mail to me: a PDF version of your document. If your writing is *not* properly loaded by that time, you will be dinged 10% per day it is late. That means: if your writing is due by 11:59 p.m. on Sept 14th, but you don’t load it until 8 a.m. on Sept 15th, you have already lost 10% of your grade for that assignment. Bottom line: don’t wait until the last minute! **Also, in that e-mail, tell me if your work is a short story, poetry, excerpt from a novel, or a hybrid.**

For Fiction Writers/Hybrid-genre Writers

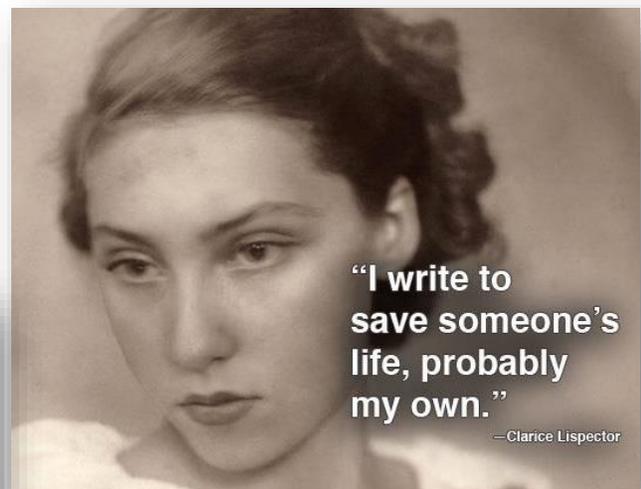
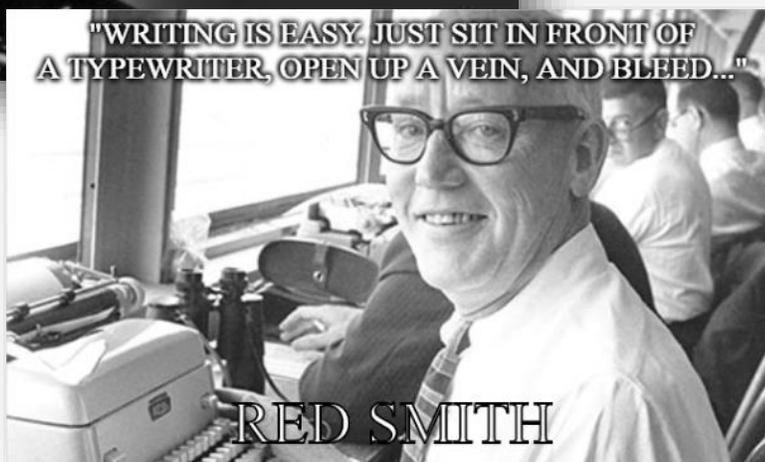
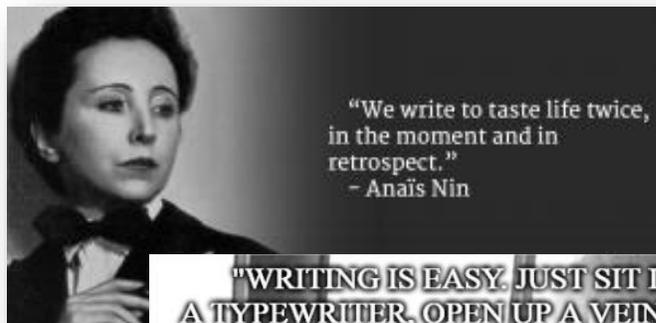
Draft One: please submit between 10-15 double-spaced pages of your **best possible creative writing**. Remember, it's not about length, which is why there is a page maximum; this is a class on craft, and I would rather have you submit 10 GLORUIOUS pages of divine writing, rather than a last-minute purge that totals 40 pages of un-refined 'mind gunk.' As for the style, topic, or other aesthetic requirements: there are none! Read the Course Philosophies on page 3 for more info.

For Poets

Draft One: please submit between 80-150 lines of your **best possible poetry**. Remember, it's not about length, which is why there is a line maximum; this is a class on craft, and I would rather have you submit 80 lines of AMAZING poetry, rather than a last-minute purge that totals 300 lines of un-refined 'mind gunk.' As for the style, topic, or other aesthetic requirements: there are none! Read the Course Philosophies on page 3 for more info.

For Everyone Again

Draft Two: after your peers and I have thoughtfully provided you with feedback, take some time to re-think and re-write your work. The due date for Draft Two (your final draft) is two weeks after your original due date for Draft One. Your final draft is to be e-mailed to me as a PDF.



Some serious quotes
from some serious writers.