

**ENG 281: Creative Writing  
Syllabus, Summer 2016**



CRN #2080/Online

Course Prerequisite: ENG 101

Course Credit: 3 credits; credit counts toward meeting degree requirements

**Instructor: Christine Ruggiero, Professor of English**

**Office:** Snow, 520; **Office Phone:** (860) 343-5878

**Summer Office Hours:** By appointment

**Mailbox:** Founders Hall

**The best way to reach me is through E-mail, in Blackboard, or, for a quicker response, to [cuggiero@mxcc.edu](mailto:cuggiero@mxcc.edu)** Email sent to this address goes directly to my cell phone which I check often. You're more likely to get a faster response than if you send through Blackboard.

**Required Texts:**

*The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry* (Addonizio & Laux)

*What If? Writing Exercises for Fiction Writers* (Bernays & Painter)

**Recommended Text:**

*The Synonym Finder* by J.I. Rodale

**Course Description:**

Students will learn and practice the craft elements of writing poetry, fiction, and/or non-fiction, examine the works of writers in the genres, and receive and offer critique. Students will submit pieces for possible publication in MxCC's literary journal, *Pegasus*.

**Scope of Course:**

Students will explore and hone their creative skills in writing poetry, short fiction, and personal narrative while reading, examining, and discussing works in the various genres. Students will use models for understanding and putting into practice the cause and effect relationship among style, form, and meaning, and develop voice and technique. While students will look to their own lives as a guide or driver for inspiration, they will also aim to reflect in their works recognition of the reader within the writer, expressions of the human experience which connect us all. Students will provide peer feedback on their original works, giving thoughtful and critical comments and suggestions, always beginning with what they like about a piece and then moving to what areas may be confusing or alarming or inconsistent in some way. Feedback should be as specific as possible. Students will not have a comprehensive exam but will be required to submit 3-5 pieces for possible publication in our college's literary journal, of which I am the faculty editor. Although I am editor, I do not choose the pieces for publication. I help in the process, but submission readers consist of four or five other English faculty and student officers in the Creative Writing Club.

## ENG 281, Creative Writing

This course is important because it will introduce students to various genres of creative writing, such as poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction, among others, as well as hone their skills in the creation of the works they produce. English 281 meets all general education core competencies but Mathematical Reasoning.

- **Communication:**  
The interactive process through which there is an exchange of verbal and/or nonverbal information.
- **Cultural Awareness:**  
Acknowledgement that society is diverse with groups of individuals possessing differing beliefs, values, attitudes, and customs that are shared from one generation to the next.
- **Social and Civic Responsibility:**  
Behavior that demonstrates adherence to legal/ethical standards established by society.
- **Critical Thinking:**  
Modes of reasoning including analyzing data, evaluating alternatives, setting priorities, and predicting outcomes.
- **Mathematical Reasoning:**  
Determination of approach, materials, and strategies necessary to solve a problem.
- **Technology Utilization:**  
Use tools of the trade to achieve a specific outcome.

These core competencies are important personally, academically, and professionally. The outcomes, as stated in the syllabus, are covered in this course. This course may be used to meet program requirements in General Studies and other select programs.

### Course Requirements:

- ❖ Meet all assignment guidelines. Complete all exercises (in grade book, these will be marked by a check, as "complete" or "incomplete"); approximately six poems (final drafts); two short stories, and one non-fiction (memoir) piece.
- ❖ Submit pieces for possible publication in MxCC's creative writing journal, *Pegasus*. Submit 3-5 poems; one short fiction and/or your memoir piece. Include submissions with final portfolio packet labeled *Pegasus* Submissions, and provide submissions electronically, through this e-mail: MX-Pegasus@mxcc.edu.
- ❖ Relinquish the notion of anonymity! You must be willing to share your work in a workshop style format—small group and whole class discussions, listening, helping, and supporting one another in meeting personal writing goals.
- ❖ Offer thoughtful feedback to others; be respectful in your critique of others' works, providing both positive feedback and constructive criticism, starting with what you liked about the pieces before offering suggestions for improvement.
- ❖ Pay attention to grammar, syntax, and mechanics for stylistic achievement (i.e., know the difference between a sentence fragment and a stylistic fragment).

### Grading Criteria:

Poetry:	5 poems, 10 points each =	50
Fiction:	2 stories, 10 points each =	20
Memoir:	1 story, 15 points =	15
Participation:		15

Students must regularly and actively evaluate and critique others' works; thoughtfully revise pieces once or twice; carefully edit their own works; and demonstrate a solid command of Standard English and how to manipulate and stylize it. Please note that participation points are earned by the following: completing the exercises which are graded "complete/incomplete;" reviewing and evaluating peers' work and preparing thoughtful and helpful written feedback; and completing discussion postings.

### **College Policies:**

**Course Withdrawal:** You may withdraw from this class any time before the end of the 11th week\* of the semester. A completed and signed withdrawal form must be on file in the Records Office by July 15 in order to receive a "W" on your transcript. If you fail to complete this process on time, you will receive a letter grade at the end of the semester, which will include zeroes for any work not submitted. Course withdrawals may affect financial aid and veteran's benefits. Please make this decision carefully and with the help of your advisor. See the Academic Calendar and the College Catalog for specific dates and procedures regarding the withdrawal process. I encourage you to see me if you have any questions.

*\* The withdrawal deadline for accelerated courses (late start/early end, winter, and summer) is the date at which 75% of the total course time has been completed.*

### **ADA Accommodation Statement**

"Students with physical or learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process." For more information, contact the Disability Support Services (D.S.S) at 860-343-5879.

### **Academic Honesty Statement**

"At Middlesex Community College we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees' Proscribed Conduct Policy in Section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees' Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally." **My Note on Academic Integrity:** The use of an outside source, in any paper, report or submission for academic credit without appropriate acknowledgement is plagiarism. It is unethical to present as one's own work the ideas, words or representations of another, without properly identifying the source. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to give credit for any quotation, idea or data borrowed from an outside source.

### **Religious Accommodation Statement**

If your religious obligations conflict with the course calendar requirements, and if you wish to request an accommodation, you must make your request in writing prior to the date of the assessment or activity you will miss and preferably at the beginning of the semester. When requesting a make-up quiz, test, exam, assignment, or activity, state the reason for your request and the date(s) on which your religious obligation(s) will conflict with the course calendar requirements. Also, if your religious obligation/holiday is unfamiliar to your instructor, you may be asked to provide a calendar which shows the published date(s) of your religious observance(s) or holiday(s).

"The wastepaper basket is the writer's best friend." *Isaac Bashevis Singer*

"Good writing is rewriting." *Truman Capote*

"The only need is the eye to see." *Willa Cather*

"Let the reader find that he cannot afford to omit any line of your writing because you have omitted every word that he can spare." *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"The Six Golden Rules of Writing: Read, read, read, and write, write, write."  
*Ernest Gaines*

"Writing is the only thing that, when I do it, I don't feel I should be doing something else."  
*Gloria Steinem*

"Reading makes immigrants of us all. It takes us away from home, but more important, it finds homes for us everywhere." - Jean Rhys

