

ENG 281: Creative Writing Syllabus, Summer 2018



CRN #2030/Online
Course Runs from 7/5-8/9

Course Prerequisite: ENG 101
Course Credit: 3 credits; credit counts toward meeting degree requirements; course fulfills Aesthetic Dimensions and Creativity TAP General Education Outcomes

Instructor: Christine Ruggiero, Professor of English
Office: Snow, 520; **Office Phone:** (860) 343-5878
Office Hours: by appointment or arranged phone conference

The best way to reach me is through E-mail. If you have a question on a specific assignment which I may need to look at in order to answer, then you should e-mail me in Blackboard. However, for inquiries that do not require my looking at Blackboard files, for a more immediate response, e-mail me at cruggiero@mxcc.edu E-mails sent to this address go directly to my cell phone which I check often. Expect responses within 24 hours, depending on the time of the e-mail, if not sooner.

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:

ENG*281, Creative Writing (3 credits)

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 in workshop setting. Students will submit end of semester portfolio and work for possible publication in *Pegasus* literary journal. *Prerequisite: ENG*101, ENG*101E, or ENG*101ALP.*

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 relationships of style, form and meaning, while developing voice and technique. As students 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, expressing the human experience which connects us all.

Students will provide peer feedback, giving thoughtful and critical comments and suggestions. Finally 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. Submissions are read and selected by English faculty and student officers in the Creative Writing Club. As this is an online course, following directions, reading them more than once, and meeting deadlines are crucial to being successful in the course.

Course Requirements:

- ❖ Meet all assignment guidelines for both graded writing and required exercises (in My Grades, these exercises will be marked "complete" or "incomplete" and count towards participation, worth 100 points of your grade)
- ❖ Write four poems; one short story, and one non-fiction (personal narrative/memoir) piece, meeting required writing goals.
- ❖ Regularly and thoughtfully critique others' works (according to suggested guidelines), providing both positive feedback and constructive criticism, starting with what you like about the piece and then explaining what areas may be confusing or alarming or inconsistent before offering suggestions for improvement. Feedback should be as specific as possible.
- ❖ Demonstrate a solid command of Standard English and how to manipulate and stylize it. Pay attention to grammar, syntax, and mechanics for stylistic achievement (i.e., know the difference between a sentence fragment and a stylistic fragment).
- ❖ Submit works for possible publication in MxCC's creative writing journal, *Pegasus*. Submit 1-2 poems, one short fiction, and/or your memoir piece, any combination of 3-5 pieces. Provide submissions electronically, through this e-mail: MX-Pegasus@mxcc.edu
- ❖ Relinquish the notion of anonymity! In order to succeed in this course, you must share your work, supporting one another in meeting writing goals.

Grading Criteria:

Poetry:	4 poems, 100 points each	400
Fiction:	1 short story, 150 points	150
Memoir:	1 personal narrative, 150 points	150
Participation:	Discussions/Critiques	100
Total:		800

Participation points are earned by the following: completing the exercises which are graded "complete/incomplete;" reviewing and evaluating peers' work thoughtfully and critically, giving thoughtful and helpful written feedback; completing discussion postings.

Course Withdrawal:

You may withdraw from this class any time by Monday, July 30. A completed and signed withdrawal form (or e-mail) must be on file in the Records Office 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 benefits. Please make this decision carefully and with the help of your advisor and or me. See the Academic Calendar and the College Catalog for specific dates and procedures regarding the withdrawal process. I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions.

College Policies:

For information about the college's policies and procedures regarding academic honesty, accessibility/disability services, attendance, audio-recording in the classroom, grade appeals, plagiarism, religious accommodations, weather and emergency closings, and more, please go to the following website: www.mxcc.edu/catalog/syllabus-policies/ or scan the QR code with your smart phone. Also, please become familiar with the policies regarding nondiscrimination, sexual misconduct, and general student conduct at the following website: www.mxcc.edu/nondiscrimination/.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT:

Middlesex Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

- Primary Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Adrienne Maslin; Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123
- **Ms. Anastasia Pych**, Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations
apych@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5751; Founder Hall 115

“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

This is an online course, and it is a fast-paced. However, it is not at your own pace. I will make assignments available one week prior to their due dates. Under course content there are folders that indicate homework due dates, and house documents, links when applicable, and directions for readings and writing requirements.

I will be online once (or twice) per day during the week, checking e-mail, answering any non-technical questions as they arise. If I forget something, such as to make a document available, or unlock a discussion board, please do not panic; that's called human error. And, as soon as I recognize an error or one is pointed out to me, I will work to correct it as quickly as possible and you will never be penalized, in this instance. If you don't hear back from me right away, keep in mind that I am probably otherwise indisposed but will check-in again soon.

Directions based upon FAQs:

1. **How to title your work:** Titles of your documents should include your first initial, full last name, and the assignment title. For example, if your name is Cindy Johnson and you are submitting your first poetry assignment, you would title your document: cjohsonpoemaddressingpoetry
2. **How to submit work: Written work should be submitted as attachments to discussion boards (unless otherwise indicated).** If they are not submitted as an attachment when I ask them to be, you will get a zero for that assignment. I will remind you once, if you forget. I cannot use track changes to make comments when you copy and paste your work into discussion postings or e-mail. Remember to **attach as a word document (not as notepad, etc.)** If you **do not have word, you can download it for free from your college e-mail by following these instructions:**

http://supportcenter.ct.edu/Service/Office365/Accessing_Student_Advantage.pdf
3. **When to submit work:** Most assignments will be given a due date of 11:59 p.m. on whatever day they are due, which will be due every two-three days, and will require quite a bit of reading to support the writing tasks. Most assignments will follow a Wednesday, Friday, Sunday pattern.
4. **How to boost your grade:** At the end of the session, there will be a grade boosting incentive, which will require revising one or more of your works. Look for the announcement at the end of July.

Course Schedule Overview:

All work is explained in detail and provided in Course Content in separate folders by title and due date; what you see below are general descriptions

Poetry: Readings are in *Poet's Companion* and provided in links

POEM #1: Poem on Poetry (inspired by Alice Walker and Billy Collins, along with web links provided on Blackboard); what kind of relationship do you have with poetry? What would you say to poetry, given the chance? See definition of poetry and poem addressing poetry assignments; readings via links.

POEM #2: Poem using Simile and Metaphor; read "Images," "Voice and Style," and "Simile and Metaphor." See favorite poem assignment and writing simile or metaphor poem assignment.

POEM #3: Poem on Diving Down into the Murky Depths: read "Writing and Knowing" (19-28); "The Family," (30-36); and "The Shadow" (56-61), and links and sample poems in the folder. See favorite poem assignment and shadow poem writing assignment.

POEM #4: Poems centering on form; read "The Music of the Line" (104-112); "Meter, Rhyme, and Form," (138-148); and "More Repetition: Villanelle, Pantoum, Sestina (161-170); and links. See favorite poem assignment based on Music of the Line or More Repetition and writing a form poem assignment.

Short fiction: Readings are in *What If?*, provided in links and in folders as PDFs

Readings

Overview: *What If?* 1-33; 35-58; other readings specified in Blackboard folders
"Soldier's Home"
"Hills Like White Elephants"
"The Storm"
"Everything that Rises Must Converge"

Dialogue: Links/documents specified in Blackboard folders

Writing: Favorite short story assignment
What If? Opening lines
Short Story and critique

Personal Narrative/Memoir: All are links provided in Blackboard folder

Readings: Differences between personal narrative and memoir

Writing: Memoir/personal narrative assignment
Memoir/Personal narrative and critique

Class ends: August 9, 2018