

Teaching Creative Writing 4340/5340 30562/30563

Dr. Stephanie Vanderslice

M,W 3-4:15 Thompson104

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Office Hours: Online Monday 10-12, In Office: MW, 4:15-5:30 and by apt.

E-mail: stephv@uca.edu E-mail is the *best* way to reach me between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm. weekdays, intermittently on weekends. Translation: if you email me at midnight, don't expect an immediate response.

CLASS WEBSITE: I will post some documents on Blackboard, including this syllabus. Talking points will also be posted on Blackboard.

Twitter feed: @wordamour, essays on the writing life: huffingtonpost.com search: Geek's Guide to the Writing Life/Stephanie Vanderslice

What interests me in teaching is less the emergence of the occasional genius than the overall finding of language by those who did not have it. . .

Adrienne Rich

Welcome to *Teaching Creative Writing*, a course designed to examine the history and changes that have taken place in the creative writing classroom in the last century and how they have affected the culture of writing itself. It is designed for students who may be teaching creative writing at the college level or in the community, or including creative writing in their curriculum at the K-University levels. It's even a good course for people who spend a lot of time in creative writing courses—taking you inside the belly of the beast, so to speak.

Areas to be covered include the history of creative writing pedagogy, up to and including modern pedagogical approaches to the field, as well as curriculum design in the creative writing course. These courses are rare, even in graduate school, although they are growing in number at the graduate level. If you are an undergraduate in this class, consider yourself one of the few undergraduates nationwide who have studied these issues—you're not only in a good position to land an assistantship if you apply to grad school, you're on the cutting edge! If you're a graduate student, you're still well ahead of the curve.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students studying history, theory and method in the teaching of creative writing will:

- understand the history of teaching creative writing in the context of the institutionalization of professional writing instruction in U.S. postsecondary education.
- understand and be able to use current theoretical approaches to the teaching of creative writing.
- apply this knowledge to the observation and description of a creative writing course or unit at the elementary, secondary, or post-secondary level.

Required Texts

1. Bishop, Wendy. *Released Into Language: Options for Teaching Creative Writing* (available on the class website; only reading 3 chapters from it)
2. *Teaching Creative Writing to Undergraduates: A Practical Guide*. By Kelly Ritter and Stephanie Vanderslice.
3. *Creative Writing In the Digital Age* Clark et al
4. *A Stranger's Journey: Race, Identity and Narrative Craft in Writing* Mura
5. *Can Creative Writing Really Be Taught* Vanderslice & Manery

Assignments:

1. Syllabus (Grad Students Only). 200 pts
2. Teacher Observation/Interview (Undergrad Only) Essay 5-7 pages 200 pts.
3. Digital Book Poster Presentation/Annotation 200 pts.
5. Discussion Leadership/Article Discussion/ (sign up) 200 pts.
6. Talking Points (total)
Undergrads 400 pts
Grad Students 200 pts
7. Graduate Students ONLY Abstract/proposal and 10-15 page paper on issue of interest in teaching creative writing. In lieu of Teacher Observation essay, intended to give you something you can present at a conference or publish. 200 pts.

Assignments Explained

Talking Points: Every single book we read will have 10 talking points, a list of points, questions, observations, from the reading that might help contribute to the conversation. Every essay we read will have 5 talking points. You'll post your talking points on Blackboard. **Undergrads:** yes, your talking points are worth more. You can thank former undergrads who weren't good about doing the readings for that, also I removed a former assignment to make up for it.

Syllabus (grad students only): Graduate students will create a syllabus for an introductory, multigenre creative writing course that will include a 1-2 paragraph typed, double spaced rationale for the choices you made.

Teacher Observation/Interview Essay (undergrads only): In order to see creative writing pedagogy in action, you will make arrangements with creative writing teachers here on campus or in local schools (in terms of elementary schools, you may choose a teacher who is doing a creative writing *unit*). You'll visit the teacher's class to observe *twice*. You'll also conduct a 15-20 minute interview with the teacher about their experience and philosophies regarding teaching creative writing. Using what you've learned in this class about approaches to teaching creative writing, you'll then write an essay describing and analyzing this teacher's method and practice. **(In lieu of this essay/observation, graduate students taking this course will complete a different**

paper and presentation in consultation with the professor). **NOTE: To avoid conflicts of interest, I request that you not observe John Vanderslice.**

Digital Poster Presentation: You will be asked to choose a book of interest to you from the list provided here, read it and create an online poster reviewing it via nearpod, powerpoint, prezi or other digital form that I haven't thought of and you will present this to the class.

NOTE: If the book is not available in our library or in the local libraries, you may get it through Interlibrary Loan. They are relatively fast, but you need to give them *at least* a week, then you'll need time to read the book. If you want to own the book, you can always order it from the various online book stores (half.com can be very cheap) or from Hastings. You'll need a week at least to get the book and then time to read it (yes, I'm repeating myself for a reason). So, again, **CHOOSE YOUR BOOK EARLY AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO GET IT.**

Group Discussion Leadership—You will choose one article from one of the two essay collections and be responsible for leading class discussion and/or providing any in class activities to help the class understand the article on the day we discuss this book. There will be a sign up sheet where you will choose a date and list the article you have chosen.

Something you need to know about this course: Because this is a course about teaching, I am especially thoughtful about everything I ask you to do in it. Every assignment, every class activity in this course, especially, has been included because it models a best teaching practice. For example:

- *Why do I ask you to present on what you read and to lead discussion on it?* Because I don't like to lecture? No, lecturing is actually pretty easy once you create the lecture. Additionally, I've been teaching this class for 15 years and have given numerous talks about this subject nationally and internationally; if all I wanted to do was lecture, I'd be sitting pretty right now. I don't personally believe lectures are the best way for students to learn, however. I do it because teaching something *to others* is often the best way to learn. Keep this in mind when *you* teach. *To teach something is to learn it twice.*
- *Why do I give you choices (within limits) in your books and articles?* Because my experience and research shows me that choice allows people to feel more invested in what they're learning. People who are more invested in their learning *learn better.*
- There are some other activities we'll be doing in class I don't want to reveal right now (spoiler alert) but it's always good to be thinking, "How did this work for me? How could I tweak this to work for my students?"

CHOICES FOR DIGITAL BOOK PRESENTATION

Adsit, Janelle. *Towards an Inclusive Creative Writing: Threshold Concepts to Guide the Literary Writing Curriculum*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

**Beck, Heather. Ed. *Teaching Creative Writing*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Bishop, Wendy and Hans Ostrum, Eds. *Colors of a Different Horse: Rethinking Creative Writing Theory and Pedagogy*. Urbana, IL: NCTE: 1994.

Bishop, Wendy. *Teaching Lives: Essays and Stories*. Utah: Utah UP, 1997.

**Cain, Mary Ann. *Revisioning Writer's Talk: Gender and Culture in Acts of Composing*. Albany: SUNY P, 1995.

**Dawson, Paul. *Creative Writing and the New Humanities*. New York: Routledge, 2005.

Donnelly, Dianne and Graeme Harper, eds. *Key Issues in Creative Writing*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2012.

Donnelly, Dianne, ed.. *Does the Writing Workshop Still Work?* Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2012.

**Donnelly, Dianne. *Establishing Creative Writing Studies as an Academic Discipline*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2012.

**Haake, Katherine. *What Our Speech Disrupts: Feminism and Creative Writing Studies*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 2000.

Hunley, Tom. *Teaching Poetry Writing: A Five Canon Approach*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2007.

Leahy, Anna, ed. *Power and Identity in the Creative Writing Classroom: The Authority Project*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2007.

**Mayers, Timothy. *Rewriting Craft: Composition, Creative Writing and the Future of English Studies*. Pittsburgh, U of P Press, 2005.

**McGurl, Mark. *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2009.

Myers, D.G. *The Elephants Teach: Creative Writing Since 1880*. Chicago, U of Chicago P, 2006.

Vandermeulen, Carl. *Negotiating the Personal in Creative Writing*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2011.

**These will be challenging for undergraduates. But maybe you like a challenge.

Monday	Wednesday
January 14 Class Begins Syllabi	January 16 Read Released into Language Chapters 1-3 (10 talking points) Watch City of Literature
January 21 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday NO CLASS	January 23 A Visual History of Creative Writing in Education Sign Up for Article/Discussion Leader
January 28 Bizarro Article (Online on BB) 5 Talking Points	January 30 Teaching Creative Writing to Undergrads 10 Talking Points
February 4 Open 1 st 8-Week Evals Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points	February 6 Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points
February 11 Article/Discussion Leader 5 Talking Points	February 13 Article/Discussion Leader 5 Talking Points
February 18 Article/Discussion Leader 5 Talking Points	February 20 Article/Discussion Leader 5 Talking Points
February 25 (Feb 24) Close 1 st 8-Week Evals No Class-Attend Arkatext	February 27 No Class—Attend Arkatext
March 4 A Stranger’s Journey Parts I and II (5 Talking Points total)	March 6 Mid-term Grades Due (Noon) A Stranger’s Journey Parts III and IV and Appendix (5 talking points total)
March 11 Read. Post 5 talking points. Hegamin, Tonya Cherie “Diversity and Inclusion” http://scholarworks.rit.edu/cqi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&context=jcws Graduate Students: Paper Abstract Due. 1 page double-spaced.	March 13 Read. Post 5 Talking Points. Read the following at this link: https://www.de-canon.com/blog/2017/5/5/writers-of-color-discussing-craft-an-invisible-archive <u>Salesses, Matthew. “Choosing Texts,” <i>Pleiades</i> (Jan 10, 2017).</u> <u>Salesses, Matthew. “Notes on Culture & Craft: Part 1,” <i>Pleiades</i> (Nov 7, 2016).</u> <u>Salesses, Matthew. “Notes on Culture & Craft: Part 2,” <i>Pleiades</i> (Jan 27, 2017).</u>

March 18 Spring Break	March 20 Spring Break
March 25 Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points	March 27 Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points
April 1 Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points	April 3 Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points
April 8 Open Spring Evals & 2 nd 8-Week Evals No Class-Bonnie Jo Campbell	April 10 Class Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points
April 15 Article/Discussion Leader Post 5 Talking Points	April 17 Make Up Days
April 22 Make Up Days	April 24 Final Exam: Digital Book Presentations-No Longer Than 5 Minutes. TIMED.
	May 3 Turn in: Turn in: Teacher Observation/Interviews (Undergrads) Final Paper: (Grads) Turn in Via Email
May 6 (May 5) Close Spring Evals & 2 nd 8-Week Evals (May 7) Final Grade Reports Due (Noon)	

Creative Writing Programs at UCA Calendar of Events, Spring 2019

T 2/12 Trenton Lee Stewart (fiction & children's books), 7:30pm, Hendrix, Reeves Recital Hall
M 2/25 ArkaText: Undergrad Student Reading, 3:00pm, WTH Lobby
T 2/26 ArkaText: McMath winner Craft Talk, 10:50am, WTH 331
ArkaText: McMath winner reading, 6-8 pm UCA Downtown
W 2/27 ArkaText: Toni Jensen (CNF), craft talk 10:00am, WTH 331
ArkaText: Toni Jensen (CNF), reading, 1:00pm, WTH lobby
R 2/28 ArkaText: C.C. Carter Craft Talk, (Poetry) 10:50am, WTH 331
ArkaText: C.C. Carter reading, (Poetry) 1:40pm WTH lobby
F 3/1 ArkaText: Graduate Student & Faculty 4-6 pm WTH Lobby
T 4/9 Bonnie Jo Campbell (fiction), Masterclass (MFA Students Only) 4:00pm, WTH 331
Bonnie Jo Campbell (fiction), Reading, 7:30pm COB 107
W 4/10 Bonnie Jo Campbell craft talk, 11am, WTH 331
W 4/11 Greg Brownderville (awesome Arkansas poet, now teaching at TCU), 7:30 pm,
Hendrix, Reeves Recital Hall

R 4/25 - Su 4/28

Arkansas Literary Festival, Rivermarket, Little Rock