Creative Writing
Course Syllabus – Ms. James

Creative writing is a workshop course in which we discover, analyze, and apply the methods and forms used in various forms of fiction, poetry, and dramatic writing. We emphasize experimentation and practice, taking our cues from published writers, poets, and playwrights such as Shakespeare, Dickinson, Faulkner, Boyle, Fitzgerald, Pinter, and many others. Writing is a craft, a process, a form of art in itself. We are guided by Ezra Pound's dictum: "Make it new." Creative writing does not only provide us with an opportunity to express ourselves, but also allows us to focus on word choice, diction, form, editing, idea generation, and other skills useful in fiction and non-fiction writing.

COURSE GOALS

Students will acquire and apply a variety of techniques to generate and edit fictional and non-fictional writing;

Students will understand the writing processes of professional writers and students writers;

Students will become familiar with both traditional and contemporary forms of fiction;

Students will evaluate fiction and non-fiction according to various criteria;

Students will read, edit, and evaluate as a writer/editor; goals are polish and accuracy.

Students will organize and keep a three-ring binder with all work in progress / all stages to reflect the utilization of the writing process / portfolio of all finished pieces will be kept on file.

Students will keep a daily writing journal that will provide practice in various forms of writing and inspiration for creative pieces.

COURSE LEARNING AREAS

Our study of creative writing will be in (but not limited to) the following areas:
- ➢ The writing process
- ➢ The basic elements of writing
- ➢ Poetry
- ➢ Drama
- ➢ Short stories
- ➢ Memoir/Autobiography

STUDENTS WILL KNOW

Upon successful completion of this course, including having been thoughtfully engaged in each learning task, with the group dynamic of the class, and having been willing to accept risks and challenges as a learner/writer, and make attempts to apply the material of the class to his or her own life, present and future, the student will know:

- that learning to write requires work and personal involvement;
- that different forms and styles of writing are required for different situations;
- that writing is both private and public, and can be improved through interaction with other students/writers;
- that writing improves with thoughtful practice; it is a skill that needs to be crafted;
- that all writing requires careful attention to organization, word choice, point of view, characterization, sensory detail, and a clear sense of purpose;
- that writing can be useful in coming to understand a topic, ourselves, or our place in relationship to other people, events or ideas;
- that writing can be either formal or informal, and that formal writing has different requirements in terms of form and style (always be aware of this when writing your own pieces);
- that in the early stages of writing a writer needs to suspend judgment of his/her own work;
- that a writer needs a chance to reflect upon his/her own work, which helps a writer identify his/her strengths and weaknesses, and become a more confident writer;
- that reading and analyzing a variety of other people's writing is important in the process of developing one's own writing;
- that reading can provide ways to clarify our own values and to bring preconceived ideas into question, adding to personal growth;
- that in order to become a better reader / writer one must practice;
- that good writers have sound reasons for everything that happens in their writing;
- that growth as a reader requires work, and personal involvement;
- that oral reading can be an effective way of communicating one's understanding of literature to an audience;
- that a thoughtful analysis of a piece of literature can enhance the performance of the literature in an oral reading;
- that attention to pace, tone, eye contact, and voice inflection can enhance audience experience with literature read aloud;
- that response to literature does not have to be limited to written or spoken language; that visual and dramatic representations of abstract ideas is a useful way of communicating one's understanding;
- that visual media can be read and analyzed just as much as language, and can lead to similar understandings of concepts, ideas and self;
- that discussion of ideas with a group of people or a fellow student can be used to expose one to other points of view and can give one a chance to try out ideas on an audience and can be effective in encouraging tolerance and open-mindedness;

●that the rewards of learning need not be limited to future goals, but can be valuable to a person's life in the present;

●that writing is a process which emphasizes that one follows all the steps in the writing process: prewriting, brainstorming, writing first drafts, peer-editing, self-editing, conferencing, reflecting, revising, polishing, and publishing (sharing in class and entering contests for publication).

STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE

●To acquire and apply a variety of techniques to generate and edit fictional writing;

●To understand the writing processes of professional writers;

●To become familiar with both traditional and contemporary forms of fiction / nonfiction;

●To evaluate fiction according to various criteria;

●To read as a writer and editor objectively;

●To orally share final works with fellow students, class members and to possibly submit some works to publications

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

May use the following assessment tools:

performance /effort

compositions

projects

self-evaluations

three-ring binder

conferencing

improvement

meeting deadlines

note taking / lectures

Daily work/ homework / class participation

Demonstrations / presentations

Rubrics for peer editing /evaluation

Following the steps in Writing Process

Portfolio with all work on file in class

Publication via literary journal, paper, etc.

Focused Concentration Areas- goals for achievement

Handing in all assignments on time

Journal entries