

Intermediate & Advanced Creative Writing
11th & 12th Grade (Levels 4, 5 & 6)
2017-18

Instructor –Azar Kohzadi

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Room 232 (Office hours during lunch and after school by appointment.)

Greetings, writers! Welcome to Azar's high school intermediate/advanced creative writing class. Please review the sections below for important policies and procedures.

Cornerstones/Objectives

- **Heightened awareness/ways of seeing**~Learning to cultivate effective writing is learning to become more adept at seeing from diverse perspectives and exploring how external sight is linked to internal sight.
- **Develop, honor and celebrate students' voices**~Both verbally and in writing, through sharing and critique work in several capacities.
- **Meeting deadlines/working independently**~Through contracts & various assignments/projects, as well as contest entries, students will work independently to meet myriad, strict deadlines.
- **Development of diverse writing styles/forms** ~From learning new poetic forms, to exploring various genres, students will engage in variety of diverse writing exercises which allow them to learn new elements of craft, in order sculpt, experiment with, and develop their art of writing.
- **Inspiration/Reverence**~ Throughout the course, students will develop a repertoire of reading alongside writing, as well as look at a variety of examples from classic authors to contemporary poets in order to discuss talent in craft and model examples of excellent writing.
- **Artistic Exploration** Students will often engage in writing that includes or responds to other art forms.

Level-specific Curricular Components

For this class, three levels will be taught/facilitated:

- A. **Level 4 (year 2 or above)**– Writer's Bible (separate handout) and Contracts, along with all-class activities (see below).
- B. **Level 5 (year 3 or above)**–Novella Project Students in this level will complete a year-long project involving the development and completion of an original novella. Contract writing (other than novella pages) is not required.
- C. **Level 6 (year 3 or above)**–Modeled Writing and Contracts, along with all-class activities and assignments

All-Class Curricular Components

- **Workshop-based Assignments**—Based on a workshop led by a major teacher or guest artist, students will be responsible for at least one specific writing assignment approximately once per month.
- **Student-led FE's (short writing workshops)**—Each student is responsible for leading one writing exercise for the class each semester.
- **Teacher-led Writing Workshops**—At least once per week, students will be introduced to an element of craft that will help to expand writing ideas and repertoire of work.
- **Book Groups**—Students will select reading in their preferred literary area in order to establish a book club for close evaluation and analysis of texts.
- **Explications**—Approximately 2-4 times per month, the class instructor will select a short piece of writing to be explicated (thoroughly analyzed) by the class.
- **Critique Groups**—In small groups, students will carefully examine one another's work and provide feedback for peers regarding the strengths and weaknesses in their writing. Critiques will run throughout the school year.
- **Story Hour**—From time to time, students will have a class period just to listen to a story read by an actor, famous storyteller, or just the teacher. Students will discuss the story as well as examine the particular genre and techniques used in the story.
- **Share-out Days**—Periodically, we will hold specific days for everyone in the class share out. Other times, select groups will share. Sharing will often be based

A typical week:

Mondays—Short non-stop FE's or spill pages; Umbrella project workshops; silent work time for students on contracts

Tuesdays—Teacher-led workshops; Senior Writing Workshops

Wednesdays—Critique Groups; Share Out Days

Thursdays—(reading related) Explications; story hour; author appreciation;

Fridays—Food gatherings; student-led FE's

Grading Policies

(grading scale & method, deadlines, mode of delivery)

Grading is based on a traditional grading scale and will primarily reflect a student's ability to consistently meet deadlines, carry out specific assignment requirements, and hand in polished copies of work. Students' writing will not be graded based on artistic merit or traditional writing rules, such as a rigid focus on punctuation, paragraph development, etc. (Of course, however, polished final copies will be required and habitual sloppiness, etc., will require intervention in the way of conferencing and/or a lowered grade).

Deadlines

Dates for contracts and other deadlines will be posted in the classroom weeks in advance. Additionally, all students will have Gmail accounts through which they can access an online master calendar that contains assignment deadlines, events, and an overview of class agendas. Students should access their Gmail accounts and check the class calendar every few days.

Late Work

For full credit, you must have your work in by 3:00 pm on the day it is due. After 3:00 pm and for the following 24 hours, you may still turn in the work for 50% credit. After 24 hours of the date/time it is due, the assignment becomes a zero and can no longer be submitted.

Make-up Work

Making up work missed from excused absences needs to be completed within the amount of time legally allotted (so for every day you miss, you have an additional forty-eight hours to submit the assignment before it is considered late). It is your responsibility to find out what work you missed if you were absent

Submitting Work

- Per my request, most of your work will be submitted electronically to kohzadicw@gmail.com. And while I love the idea of going completely paperless for environmental reasons, I also know I cannot review all work via my computer screen. Some work, yes; but I will kindly request that for specific types of assignments, a hard copy be printed and handed to me directly. I will discuss this on an individual basis; however, as a general guideline, I request that poetry be submitted in hardcopy form; conversely, I request that prose be submitted via email only.
- Under no circumstance, unless there is a special situation which has been pre-discussed with me, should students submit work in any method other than directly

- in my hands or directly to my gmail account. (i.e.~I will not have a folder or tray for handing in assignments.)
- Any final work (contracts, story assignments, etc.) should be typed and relatively free of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, including typos. An occasional mistake is perfectly fine, but work laden with such errors is not deserving of an above-average grade. Please make sure to proofread and edit all work so that final submissions are polished and professional.

Participation

You are part of a community of writers where each individual voice adds richness to the collective experience; therefore, it is imperative you are consistent about attending class and being **on time**. Also, when you are present you must actively participate (Not all moments are good for daydreaming, texting, etc.); the CW program is built upon such participation (as you know), so please make sure to do your part. You will be given a participation grade at the end of each week; we will review the criteria evaluated for this grade.

Materials

Each student, regardless of his/her year in the program, is required to have an in-class journal. I strongly recommend each student have his or her own flash drive as well. Additional materials for independent projects, such as art/tech needs, may be needed as such assignments come up; there are also materials available in the classroom for student use.