

## **2016-17 Senior Seminar**

### **Advanced Creative Writing –HS Level 7**

*Creative Writing seniors have a specialized curriculum intended to help them prepare for their post-secondary lives as young adults and to give them opportunities to share with the broader community who they are as writers, citizens, and stewards of the arts. It is a year of primarily large-scale projects intended to help them synthesize their time at DSA with their specific artistic talents and sensibilities. In addition, senior year provides opportunities to give back to their Creative Writing major and work as leaders and role models within our community of writers.*

### **CW Fall Field Trip**

It's tradition for the CW senior class to plan, coordinate and lead a field trip for the entire major during the week of October 5th. You must agree on a location and agenda that is suitable and engaging for students aged 11-18. Additionally, you must work within the constraints of the academic calendar, buses and finances. Lastly, you must design connected writing workshops for the trip. As the trip idea is evolving, please make sure to communicate with me consistently to ensure its feasibility. You will spend class time brainstorming and organizing this activity.

### **Senior Writing Workshop**

You will be responsible for leading both CW classes (10-12) in one writing lesson this year: the Senior Writing Workshop. Unlike AA FE's and Advanced FE's, the Senior Writing Workshop is open-ended to include whatever content and approach you believe best captures where you've arrived as a writer/human at this stage in your life. For instance, this could be a portrait and analysis of a writer that most influenced the evolution of your style, or perhaps it would focus on a few philosophies that tend to govern your beliefs and values. Whatever you choose, make sure to present it thoroughly and thoughtfully. The workshop will include a presentation, writing prompt, writing time, and an all-class sharing session at the end. The entire workshop, including sharing, should last approximately one hour. If you would like to use the whole class period (90 min), that is fine. Just make sure it isn't a hurried, flimsy affair. Everyone will be scheduled a day over the course of the week. You should be prepared to have conversations with me about your idea/approach beginning approximately two weeks ahead of your scheduled workshop.

### **Senior Chapbooks**

Throughout the school year, you will work on the design, creation and publication of a chapbook that contains your writing, along with elements of graphic design and visual art. Much time during first semester will be dedicated to your chapbook and will include lessons on typography and InDesign, as well as a number of assignments that require you to progressively build the book, spread by spread. Publication Party/Readings: **Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>**

### **Senior Journals**

In the beginning of the CW program, a core part of senior seminar was to send students away from the school and out into the city with specific reflective writing assignments. This year we are

incorporating the old tradition once again, alongside more flexibility for seniors on certain days of the week (Thursdays and Fridays), days where seniors are able to complete such assignments/reflections. Assignment topics will be given at the beginning of each quarter.

### Senior Critiques

During first semester, you will have an opportunity to receive significant feedback on several spreads intended for inclusion in your chapbook. You will read, critique and discuss portions of each other's chapbook, thereby aiding in the overall editing process for publication. You will meet with your critique groups approximately once per week for the duration of first semester.

You will also participate in critiques of the essays/prompts you will need to prepare for the college admission process.

### Stories on Stage Collaborative Writing Project

For the second year, the senior class will participate in a collaborative venture with *Stories on Stage*, a professional organization in Denver that highlights the work of writers in an on-stage performance format. Your job will be to write an original flash piece around a theme that we come up with as class which will then be performed live by a group of professional and DSA actors. Unlike *Telling Stories*, you will mainly focus on writing the pieces, and some of you will have the opportunity to present a dramatic reading on stage. The performance isn't held until April, but the final scripts will be due just after winter break. If you'd like more information about *Stories on Stage* right away, check out their website at: [storiesonstage.org](http://storiesonstage.org)

### College Application/Essay Preparation

Assisting with the writing, editing and submitting of college essays will be a part of the senior curriculum in CW this year. We will devote time and schedule deadlines to help keep you on track, organized, and feeling more confident about this process.

### Senior Projects

For your senior project, you must combine writing with at least one other art form for presentation/display as a way to share your writing with the larger community. Although subject matter and creative vision is purely up to you, many people choose a focus that provides insight into their evolution as a writer and human being over the past few years.

Senior Projects are scheduled for **March 16th at 7:00 pm**. The event will begin with performance-based projects in the Concert Hall, and will then move into select spaces to explore senior-created installation projects. More information is to come! You should begin brainstorming possibilities for your project as soon as possible.

### Graduation Video

At the end of the year, your senior Creative Writing class is responsible for conceptualizing, writing, filming and editing a two-to-three minute video that features each of the CW seniors and ties into your experience as seniors in the Creative Writing Department. The video will be shown at your 2017 graduation ceremony. Therefore, while you have creative freedom, your video must

also be approved by administration and must adhere to certain guidelines which we will discuss as we get closer. It is never too early to begin thinking about ideas for the video.

### **Completion of your DSA Internship Requirement**

Your high school CW requirement of an outside internship of 45 hours must be completed by the end of the first semester senior year. All documentation must be handed in by Dec. 7th for a grade entered into IC. I will be checking in with each of you individually to help you complete this process.

### **Other CW Curricular Activities**

In addition to the major curricular components above, you will also be expected to participate in all-major activities, including critique groups, teacher, peer, and guest artist-led workshops, nine week writing assignments. You will be responsible for giving written feedback on one middle school contract per semester.

*Happy Senior Year to you! Best wishes with all of your projects; I am excited to spend this year with you!*