

CA/T Community Classes (CCC)

Columbia Artist/Teachers
Writing Program, School of the Arts



Alumna Sigrid Nunez '75 Source: <https://imengine.public.prod.day.navigacloud.com/?uuid=990E4420-5C0C-4A05-AEF8-263EB47196D1&type=preview&function=cover&height=609&width=800>

SPRING 2026 COURSEBOOK

CA/T appreciates the generosity of the Mark R. Robin Memorial Fund for Creative Writing

ABOUT CCC

CA/T Community Classes (CCC) are free, non-credit creative writing seminars taught by MFA Writing Program students in Columbia University's School of the Arts. These classes in fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and cross-genre writing are designed to provide structured opportunities for students to write, to explore new approaches and forms, to discuss literature, and to receive feedback on their writing.

These courses are open to current Columbia and Barnard students in degree-granting programs, as well as staff, faculty, and School of the Arts alumni.

Classes meet weekly for five or six weeks, beginning Monday, March 23rd and ending Friday, May 1st. Courses will be offered in-person in Columbia University's Dodge Hall or via Zoom as designated below.

HOW TO REGISTER

Classes are first-come, first-served. You may register for up to two (2) CCC courses a semester. The registration period will close on Wednesday, March 11th at 11:45 pm. Classes that fill up will be specified as waitlist only.

To choose your classes, please fill out the Spring 2026 [Registration Form](#). You will be contacted only if you have been assigned a class, or later if you are moved off a waitlist.

More information is also available at our website, <https://arts.columbia.edu/cat/CCC>.

If you have any further questions about registration, please email the CCC coordinators, Savannah Carren (sec2237@columbia.edu) and Lara Waas (lw3184@columbia.edu). They can also pass along any questions about a specific course to the instructor.

COURSE LIST

FICTION (Pages 6–13)

Love-Infused Revisions | Ioana Barbulescu

Monday 8:00 am - 9:50 am, Dodge Hall 407

Playing with Time in Fiction | Regan Mies

Monday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

Writing Like You | Nadine Gilmer Aguilera

Monday 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Zoom

Science Fiction Lab | Nikki Wolin

Monday 6:10 pm - 8:00 pm, Dodge Hall 512

Workshop as Carpentry | Melissa Jenks

Tuesday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 409

Making the Normal Seem Strange | Nick Farriella

Tuesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411

Fleshed Out: Writing the Body on the Page | Pascale Kahn

Wednesday 8:00 am - 9:50 am, Dodge Hall 407

On the Clock | Aimee Clemens

Wednesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 403

Mapping Disneyland | Yiwei Liu

Wednesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

Charging the Mountain: Beginning Your Novel | Sofi Ippolito

Friday 8:00 am - 9:50 am, Dodge Hall 407

There's No Place Like Home | Gabriela Sabogal

Friday 12:10 pm - 2:00 pm, Dodge Hall 407

POETRY (Pages 14–16)

Fruit and Flower: Writing With Sylvia Plath | Natasha Wolkwitz

Monday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 409

Do You Want To Be Happy? Depictions of Joy in Contemporary Poetry | Michael Indovina

Friday 3:10 pm - 5:00 pm, Dodge Hall 409

Poetic Form, Re-Formed | Rose duCharme

Friday 3:20 pm - 5:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411

Open Texts: Writing With the Women of the Avant-Garde | Emily Hollander

Friday 3:40 pm - 5:30 pm, Dodge Hall 413

NONFICTION (Pages 17–18)

Substack Attack | Maija Fiedelholz

Tuesday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 407

Person Versus Profile: Writing Selfhood in the Digital Age | Payton Selby

Friday 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, Zoom

Writing Place | Aleksandra Kučinar

Friday 2:10 pm - 4:00 pm, Dodge Hall 407

CROSS-GENRE (Pages 19–26)

The Agony of Eros | Tania Veltchev

Monday 4:15 pm - 6:05 pm, Dodge Hall 512

Translating Literature: A Beginner's Workshop | Daniela Ordoñez Delgado

Monday 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Zoom

(Un)Invited Intimacy | Hannah Wederquist-Keller

Monday 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Zoom

Reading Film, Writing the Camera: How to Craft Cinematic Sentences | Alex Chasteen

Tuesday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 403

Attention Exercises | Esther Eunsuh Park

Wednesday 5:10 pm - 7:00 pm, Dodge Hall 512

Steal Like an Artist | Anshool Pradhan

Thursday 9:00 am - 10:50 am, Dodge Hall 411

Emotional Overload! | Nevin Nahar Haque

Thursday 3:15 pm - 5:05 pm, Dodge Hall 413

The Art of Exophony: Learning Language Through Writing | Olubunmi Adeloye

Thursday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 407

Writing the Writer | Fleur Van Woerkom

Friday 8:00 am - 9:50am, Dodge Hall 411

The Myth of Sisyphus: Writing the Absurd and the Existential | Rong Wang

Friday 4:10 pm - 6:00 pm, Dodge Hall 407

Writing for Self-Exploration | Shriya Prasad Kotta

Friday 5:20 pm - 7:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411

FICTION

Love-Infused Revisions

Ioana Barbulescu

Monday 8:00 am - 9:50 am, Dodge Hall 407

This is an intro-level workshop for anxious (gender non-descriptive) girlies who want to test the waters on getting their work read and discussed by others. Part generative writing space, part feedback lab, this course aims to gather a group of trusted readers who want to see each other's work blossom into its most updated self. Holding historically marginalized stories and characters with care will be central to our endeavors. Fighting personal resistance to criticism will hopefully flow from there!

Playing with Time in Fiction

Regan Mies

Monday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

How does it feel to speed through a lifetime in just a few pages? Is it possible to extend a single, brief moment to the length of a novel? In this 5-week course, we'll engage with short stories and excerpts across genres in which narrative timelines stretch and condense, push and pull, ebb and flow. We'll use in-class generative techniques and exercises to begin writing our own pieces that play with time. In the final weeks of class, students will have the (optional) opportunity to share rough work and receive feedback from peers.

No experience necessary; writers of all backgrounds and genres are welcome!

Writing Like You

Nadine Gilmer Aguilera

Monday 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Zoom

What makes an author unique? How do you know if you're really being you on the page? In this class we will delve into the concept of authorial voice and authenticity in fiction. We will expand our personal style beyond the lens of "good vs. bad" writing, and instead explore writing for truth, energy, and joy.

Each week, we'll read and discuss fiction excerpts or craft essays that uncover some aspect of authorial voice. Then we'll use these discoveries to do in-class writing assignments that allow you to experiment with new concepts, techniques, or ideas. By the end of the class, you should have a portfolio of experiments, a working description of your voice, and a toolkit of strategies for implementing it in your work. On the last day, there will be a short reflection and an opportunity to workshop a longer piece through the lens of voice.

This is a class for anyone who wants a low-stakes way to experiment with new kinds of writing, go deeper into their own passion projects, or simply understand their own taste.

Science Fiction Lab

Nikki Wolin

Monday 6:10 pm - 8:00 pm, Dodge Hall 512

Do you love time travel, technology, or aliens? Are you interested in expanding your knowledge of science fiction beyond "the classics" written by dead white men? Then Science Fiction Lab is the class for you!

This class is designed to explore the potential of science fiction to reflect our current social realities and predict the shared future of humanity. What are the common tropes in science fiction, and why have they endured from the genre's inception in 1818 with Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*? What is the difference between "soft" and

"hard" science fiction, and how does this affect one's reading experience? Finally, if science fiction is supposed to be so universal, where are all the minorities?!

Our readings and viewings will include short stories by Octavia E. Butler, Izumi Suzuki, and Ted Chiang, as well as episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and *Black Mirror*. Class time will be devoted to discussing readings and completing writing exercises, as students will develop their own 3-10-page short story to submit for a mini workshop the fifth week.

In the spirit of science fiction, this class is meant to encourage all possibilities, so our emphasis will be on creativity rather than technical mastery. As groups who have been historically underrepresented in the science fiction genre, women and BIPOC are especially encouraged to enroll.

Workshop as Carpentry

Melissa Jenks

Tuesday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 409

This class thinks of the traditional writers "workshop" as one that leaves shavings on the floor. We will focus on in-class and out-of-class individual and group writing exercises, and we will share that work with each other, questing after that joyful feeling of engagement we all felt when we fell in love with books the first time.

The first three weeks will explore generative exercises; the final three weeks will focus on revision. We will read widely, including short fiction published during the course of the class itself, in order to engage with contemporary fiction being published today. We will read classic essays on craft, including those written by John Gardner, Octavia Butler, and others. The final requirement will be to submit at least one piece, revised in class, for publication. Literary journals that publish every genre and at every writerly level exist; the goal of this class is to confront the emotional barriers that keep us from sharing our work with that audience, using a more playful spirit.

Montessori and yoga principles will be used for body-based practices that can connect our writing brains with our physical bodies. Expect a different pedagogical approach than in many higher-education classrooms. Open to all levels interested in fiction.

Making the Normal Seem Strange

Nick Farriella

Tuesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411

In today's concerning trend where contemporary readers are faced with a constant stream of content engineered to feel immediate, accessible, and already understood, a challenge for fiction has become how to cut through mediated, ready-made perceptions and restore to ordinary life its depth, difficulty, and ineluctable strangeness.

This course explores how fiction can disrupt habitual perception and awaken deeper awareness of everyday life. Students will read and analyze two short stories per week to study techniques of defamiliarization, learning how shifts in point of view, structure, voice, and a heightened attention to language can transform ordinary experiences into moments of intensity and insight. Through close reading, discussion, and writing prompts, writers will practice crafting work that challenges automatic ways of seeing, making the quotidian, the mundane, and the normal feel strange, urgent, and newly alive.

Readings will include: Ling Ma, Joy Williams, AM Homes, Garielle Lutz, Zac Smith, Sam Lipsyte, Christine Schutt, Donald Antrim, and more.

Fleshed Out: Writing the Body on the Page

Pascale Kahn

Wednesday 8:00 am - 9:50 am, Dodge Hall 407

What does it mean to write about the experience of having a body? How do we bring the body and all it encompasses—pleasure, desire, mortality, shame, and pain, to name a few—onto the plane of the page? In this 5-week course, we'll dive deep into texts by

writers such as Clarice Lispector, Deborah Levy, Garth Greenwell, and Han Kang, to explore how these visceral and complex narratives of the body come alive on the craft level. Each week will focus on a different text, followed by a generative exercise. In our final class, we'll each share our own writing in which the experience of embodiment takes center stage.

On the Clock

Aimee Clemens

Wednesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 403

Have you ever had a job you loved? How about one you hated? Between the two, did you feel like different people?

The workplace is an incredibly generative tool for building fiction. Characters' identities crack or clarify under the pressure of hierarchies and expectations. Decisions made on the job test their beliefs, and deeper desires are revealed, driving the story forward. Who would Don Draper be without advertising? Or Logan Roy without the need to control Waystar Royco?

In this course, we'll use professional systems as a concrete way of understanding voice, character, and plot. Each week, we'll pair short readings with writing exercises that approach these often-murky craft terms through the lens of work. Think of "On the Clock" as an experimental lab, where most reading and writing will happen in class. By the end of the course, students will leave with several scenes or story seeds, along with one polished 3–5 page piece.

Readings may include work by Lucia Berlin, Danielle Evans, Joshua Ferris, and Jim Shepard. No prior work—or creative writing—experience is required.

Mapping Disneyland

Yiwei Liu

Wednesday 7:20 pm - 9:10 pm, Dodge Hall 407

From Magic Kingdom to EPCOT, from "the Nine Hundred and Ninety Nine Happy Haunts" to the pineapple Dole Whip float, Disney parks are a cultural token lodged deep in our memory. We love them, we hate them, and we can't seem to get rid of them. We can't scroll through Instagram without seeing a friend posing in front of Cinderella Castle. We melt under the Florida sun but we wouldn't mind getting in a 3 hour line for a... Ratatouille ride? So how can writers respond to this never-ending craze of the happiest place on earth?

All aboard! Mapping Disneyland is a five-week seminar that blends reading, discussion, and writing exercises to take you to the Disney Parks. Using Disney parks as our anchor, we'll explore the art of place-based writing. Together, we will take on questions like: How do you write about human experience in a space built to be an escape? Can repetition and fantasy reveal something true about identity, culture, and desire? Can we form our own narrative in a place where the experience is already scripted by the corporation?

No prior creative writing experience is necessary. And no, you don't have to be a Disney adult. You can even resent Disney with your whole heart. Anyone with an interest in writing is welcomed to join. By the end, you'll have the tools to kickstart your own place-based writing, be it real or imaginary, magical or haunted, great, big, or beautiful.

Charging the Mountain: Beginning Your Novel

Sofi Ippolito

Friday 8:00 am - 9:50 am, Dodge Hall 407

Have you always wanted to write a novel but weren't sure where to begin? This course is designed for anyone ready to bring their book idea to life—whether you've been carrying a story around for years, have only written a few pages, or are simply curious about how the process works. With a focus on fiction, we'll break down the daunting

task of novel writing into approachable steps, giving you a solid foundation and the confidence to keep going long after the course ends.

Through a mix of lectures, guided writing experiments, and hands-on practice, you'll explore essential tools of craft—such as scene, summary, point of view, dialogue and strategies for revision—while also experimenting with the routines and methods of celebrated authors such Donna Tartt, Dan Brown, Sayaka Murata, and a few others. The class will culminate in a supportive workshop of your opening pages, where you'll share your work and receive constructive feedback. Think of this course as a tool depot: a place to stock up on strategies, insights, and practices you can return to throughout your writing journey.

There's No Place Like Home

Gabriela Sabogal

Friday 12:10 pm - 2:00 pm, Dodge Hall 407

What is the meaning of home? How can it be defined, and who defines it? How does displacement, cultural identity, and immigration play a role in defining the terms of belonging? What makes a character belong to a place? What makes a character a stranger to it?

In this course, we will study how writers convey both belonging and dis-belonging, and how their craft choices—tone, word choice, setting, and voice—shape those effects. We will ask how writers define home for themselves, and how we, in turn, can experiment with creating our own definitions on the page. Is there a formula, or does every writer do it differently? Are we able to create our own definitions for home, and how can we make them clear on the page? What does "home" mean for diasporic writers? How do displacement, cultural identity, and immigration shape senses of familiarity, strangeness, and the spaces in between?

We will explore how place, relationships, race, food, culture, and language all play a role in creating a home that is not fixed, that is rooted in constant change.

Writers we will look at include James Baldwin, Elena Ferrante, Betty Smith, Isabella Hammad, Jhumpa Lahiri, Sandra Cisneros, and Toni Morrison. The class will include writing prompts and a final writing assignment.

POETRY

Fruit and Flower: Writing With Sylvia Plath

Natasha Wolkwitz

Monday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 409

In this six-week workshop, we will immerse ourselves in the poetry of Sylvia Plath, reading closely and responding to weekly exercises designed to help us write in conversation with other poems. Each week, we will engage with the work produced in response, exploring ways to clarify voice, enliven description, and heighten potency on the page.

Alongside the workshop component, we will engage in close readings and discussions of Plath's life and writing, while considering related texts that expand and complicate our understanding of her work. This class welcomes anyone interested in reading and writing, especially poetry, and is particularly suited to those who are new to workshopping their poems.

By the end of the course, writers will leave with a "bouquet" of new poems or short writings, as well as a deeper understanding of some of Sylvia Plath's most resonant work.

Do You Want To Be Happy? Depictions of Joy in Contemporary Poetry

Michael Indovina

Friday 3:10 pm - 5:00 pm, Dodge Hall 409

"learn how / to live / so wilderness / never becomes / mythology" -CAConrad, from Listen to the Golden Boomerang Return (Wave Books, 2024)

Happiness is a daily practice. For many people, including myself, it doesn't always come naturally, or we lose the ability to trust in our joy as we get older and the world forces us to become cynical.

Thankfully, poets are here to remind us that joy is not only worth it, but essential to our lives. Over the course of five weeks, we will explore how 21st century poets reckon with both exuberance and darkness, embracing language's restorative powers of articulation and confession. Each week, we will lead in with a discussion of what is making us happy in the current moment, coupled with a brief writing exercise. Then we will dive into the poems of the week and complete a writing exercise based on them. Several prompt options will be available on a weekly basis, and time will be allotted for anyone who wishes to read their writing out loud. Some of the poets we will be reading are Gabrielle Calvocoressi, Victoria Chang, Diamond Forde, and CAConrad. No experience in creative writing is required.

Poetic Form, Re-Formed

Rose duCharme

Friday 3:20 pm - 5:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411

Poetic form often shapes the poem's meaning, and in this course you will invent your own. By examining a range of traditional and contemporary poetic approaches, you will develop your taste and begin to determine the structures and modes that best suit your style. Alongside your work, you will engage with and try out the forms established by your peers, practicing close reading and discussion of how form operates across different voices. We will each launch into the blank page with a blueprint uniquely our own, discover just how form can mirror and extend content, and question the hierarchies of traditional forms.

This course is best suited for anyone who feels overwhelmed by a blank page, wants a challenge, or is interested in formal poetry! This class will require no outside reading.

Open Texts: Writing With the Women of the Avant-Garde

Emily Hollander

Friday 3:40 pm - 5:30 pm, Dodge Hall 413

"The 'open text,' by definition, is open to the world and particularly to the reader. It invites participation, rejects the authority of the writer over the reader and thus, by

analogy, the authority implicit in other (social, economic, cultural) hierarchies." – Lyn Hejinian, "The Rejection of Closure"

In this course, taking Hejinian's "open text" as a guide, we will explore and create poems* that question, play with, and reactivate language as a collaboration with the world. Each week, we will open up a text; our correspondents will include writers such as Hejinian, Mei-mei Berssenbrugge, Harryette Mullen, and Renee Gladman. Through writing experiments inspired by their work, and a fluid mixture of reading, discussion, writing, and sharing, we'll develop generative approaches to writing that resist closure. The only prerequisite is curiosity—hopefully about language, poetry, and the women who emerged from the white male dominated avant-garde of the 1970s-90s. Most reading and writing will take place during class, with additional resources available for those who wish to go deeper.

We will be reading plenty of prose poetry and experimental prose! If you wish to experiment in prose, that is entirely welcome.

NONFICTION

Substack Attack

Maija Fiedelholz

Tuesday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 407

In the past few years, Substack has largely taken off as a pathway to publishing; it has been a place for authors to develop intimacy with their readers and appear in their personal inboxes. This course will explore the Substack platform and how it can be leveraged to promote and generate creative material. While the Substack interface is easy to use, maintaining a writing schedule, a posting schedule, and framing the material you post under a cohesive theme can be elusive. We will look at the components of building a strong platform including SEO best practices, theme, layout, writer's voice, and even use Canva to create visual and promotional materials. We will analyze popular Substack platforms including (but not limited to) *The Audacity* by Roxane Gay, Joy Sullivan's *Necessary Salt*, and Julia Harrison's *Sal00n Newsletter*. Students will bring in their own favorites to share with the class, and we will spend time discussing what we think qualifies Substack success. The goal is that by the end of the class, students will have designed a Substack platform, will have the tools to promote the platform, and to stick to a posting schedule.

Person Versus Profile: Writing Selfhood in the Digital Age

Payton Selby

Friday 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, Zoom

The effects of capitalism have commodified nearly every good known to man; selfhood is the last free resource. In the age of social media, we have become both consumers and products, curating identities for public display while feeding data into platforms that shape our behaviors and desires. This course explores the complex relationship between digital media and personal identity, asking what it means to write honestly about the self in a world where authenticity is constantly mediated by screens, algorithms, and performance. In Jia Tolentino's "The I in Internet," she

argues, "with the internet, it's so easy to stop trying to be decent or reasonable or politically engaged—and start trying merely to seem so."

In this class, we will examine how we perceive our personal and political identities in the era of digital media. We will examine several questions on media and identity: Does our online behavior represent a false self, or does our search history and user data reveal our most raw, unedited selves? What do niche internet aesthetics tell us about our social, political, and economic divides? What does the algorithm know that we don't know about ourselves? In this class, we will explore identity, morality, and what it means to make art in the age of an entertainment-based media machine.

We will read excerpts from *The Medium is the Massage* by Marshall McLuhan, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* by Neil Postman, *Glitch Feminism* by Legacy Russell, and *Trick Mirror* by Jia Tolentino, among other essays and poems. In each class, we'll experiment with creative essay forms and prompts, and our work will culminate in a researched or reported personal essay investigating the relationship between a specific iteration of digital media and our own personal development, sense of self, or experience with technology.

Writing Place

Aleksandra Kučinar

Friday 2:10 pm - 4:00 pm, Dodge Hall 407

In this class, we'll move through place within its multiplicity. Through writing exercises inside and outside the classroom, we'll observe and take note of familiar and unfamiliar surroundings. We'll think through our personal relationships with the spaces we engage with and their diverse inhabitants: the living, the dead, and the inanimate. Our readings may take us on a hike into northern Japan, a commute through Parisian city streets, a plane out of Cape Town, and a bike ride through Mexico City in order to explore how writers have taken up place as a core subject of their work. By examining the political and aesthetic elements of each text and its geography, students will ultimately get to experiment with their own writing. By the end of the course, each student will write a short piece of any genre that explores a unique point of view of a place. While the majority of readings will be creative nonfiction, writers of all genres, backgrounds, and levels are welcome!

CROSS-GENRE

The Agony of Eros

Tania Veltchev

Monday 4:15 pm - 6:05 pm, Dodge Hall 512

What threatens love today? We've all heard the same ideas: dating apps, too much choice, instant gratification. But what are the deeper psychological and cultural forces reshaping intimacy? In this seminar, Byung-Chul Han's book of philosophical essays "The Agony of Eros" provides a framework for examining love (and its failures) in contemporary literature. Readings in poetry, fiction, and non-fiction may include works by Tony Tulathimutte, Garth Greenwell, Ada Limon, Brandon Taylor, Maggie Nelson, Katie Kitamura, and Catherine Lacey, as well as multidisciplinary work by artist-writers like Sophia Giovannitti and Legacy Russell. All readings will be done in class.

Translating Literature: A Beginner's Workshop

Daniela Ordoñez Delgado

Monday 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, [Zoom](#)

Have you ever fallen in love with a book that hasn't been translated into English? Have you wanted to press it into a friend's hands and say, you need to read this — but couldn't? What if you were the one to bring it across?

Literary translators introduce new voices, stories, and ideas into our conversations. They expand what we read, discuss, and imagine. They carry stories across languages and borders, expanding the literary landscape in the process.

In this six-week workshop, we'll explore translation as both close reading and as a craft, a creative writing practice, focusing on how translators approach voice, tone, rhythm, and cultural context while making thoughtful decisions to bring the text into English. In this course, you will translate a short piece of prose or poetry (up to three pages). Each week during class, we'll examine translation—and mistranslation—techniques, read and analyze work by recognized translators. Then

we'll workshop selections from your own project. Line edits and written feedback letters are not required; the workshop will function as an engaged, in-class conversation. Alongside craft, we'll also discuss the professional side of literary translation—how to pitch translations to editors, literary journals, and prepare your submission.

Reading comprehension in a second language is preferred but not required. Writers and readers of all experience levels are welcome. No prior translation experience necessary.

(Un)Invited Intimacy

Hannah Wederquist-Keller

Monday 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm, [Zoom](#)

It's in sex that I become most aware of my own impulse to tenderness, but also to cruelty, my own daring, but also my failures of nerve, my own lack of daring, my own timidity. And I'm aware of these things in myself and also in my partner. In that sense, sex lays us bare.

—Garth Greenwell

Have you ever taken a class on how to write sex? A class about the erotic in literature? Whether this is new or familiar terrain, you may have noticed that most conversations center around writing pleasure – basking in the linguistic and stylistic challenges of describing intimacy without cliché, without evasion. But where are the classes that widen that aperture to include the array of sexual experience? From pleasurable to uncomfortable to coerced?

Here is such a class. We will be reading both fiction and non-fiction – discussing excerpts from authors such as Raven Leilani, Lidia Yuknavitch, Eimear McBride, and James Salter. Reading closely, we'll discuss how these writers treat time, embodiment (disembodiment), and syntax to convey the complexity of sexual encounters.

Each week, there will be a free-writing exercise and an opportunity to share the experience of trying to write such scenes. Please come prepared willing to take risks and create a compassionate atmosphere for a difficult subject.

Students will turn in one short assignment at the end of the course.

Reading Film, Writing the Camera: How to Craft Cinematic Sentences

Alex Chasteen

Tuesday 6:20 pm - 8:10 pm, Dodge Hall 403

Can you "see" scenes in your head, but struggle to translate them to the page? Do you love movies, but don't want your writing to read "like a screenplay?" All of us, to some degree, speak the language of movies and TV. How, then, do we write great prose that feels like great prose, and doesn't feel like a description of the movie we're watching in our heads? How do we break down what makes a great scene, a great shot, and steal it for our own writing?

In this course, we will practice identifying camera movements, editing techniques, and other cinematic moves you might recognize but not know the name for. We will also close-read dynamic, vivid, explosive sentences from literature and discuss how to use those grammatical, rhetorical, or stylistic moves to "translate" cinematic effects into writing. In this class we will NOT be writing screenplays — instead, we are exploring how to steal from the language of movies and add to our style toolbox. Together we will learn how to make our sentences zoom in and out, track, pan, cross-cut, cross-fade, and more. No prior background in film is necessary (or expected).

Expect to watch scenes from Kenzaburō Ōe, Virginia Woolf, Paul Beatty, Charles Dickens, Charles Yu, Gaston Bachelard, Marguerite Young, and others. We may also read sentences from *Mulholland Drive*, *Yi Yi*, *Point Break*, *Uncut Gems*, *Man with a Movie Camera*, *Goodfellas*, *The Parallax View*, and others. We will focus on in-class exercises, practicing new techniques each week. By the end of the course, students will have the opportunity to expand one passage into a short scene to share in an informal workshop.

Attention Exercises

Esther Eunsuh Park

Wednesday 5:10 pm - 7:00 pm, Dodge Hall 512

Reality today is muddy, rapidly morphing before our eyes. Who do we owe our attention to? How does the quality of our attention relate to our place in the social order? How can we seek to meaningfully experience and create art in an era of endless political tragedies and rampant AI automation?

In this cross-genre seminar, we will read short pieces from writers such as Elaine Castillo, Patricia Lockwood, T Kira Madden, and others. More importantly though, we'll have live discussions with peers wrestling with the same questions, and attempt a variety of reading & writing exercises to slow down—and refine our attention.

This course will not require a final writing project; weekly assignments will take less than an hour (or longer, only if you wish to sink into them).

Steal Like an Artist

Anshool Pradhan

Thursday 9:00 am - 10:50 am, Dodge Hall 411

Good artists borrow, great artists steal.

You've heard this before, yet rarely does anyone teach us how to steal. The secret to doing so? Pattern recognition.

In this class we will train the skill of pattern recognition by looking across different art forms. Film, music, visual arts... they all utilize hidden structures which create emotional responses in the audience. So, ultimately, this is a class in how structure evokes emotional responses. And, while we will discuss structure in terms of plot and character, we will primarily focus on the "intangible" elements of structure through craft: rhythm, expectations and subversions, content mirroring form, and more.

By the end of this class, you will be able to better identify how and why certain artworks move us, and then adapt this to your own writing.

In the first week, we will vote as a class if there will be a workshop component in the final session. Readings/viewings/listenings may include works by: Michelangelo, Rodin, Kendrick Lamar, Laufey, Frank O'Hara, Sylvia Plath, Zhang Zeduan, Kenji Mizoguchi, Ryunosuke Akutagawa, and more!

It is said that the best film directors are great readers. So, let us ask ourselves: why not vice versa?

Emotional Overload!

Nevin Nahar Haque

Thursday 3:15 pm - 5:05 pm, Dodge Hall 413

Have you ever been told you are "too sensitive"? Have you ever held overwhelming, contradictory emotions together? Have people invalidated your (very valid) traumas? The answer, at some point or another, is unfortunately yes. As life happens to us, cruelty may isolate us as we process, thinking we are the only ones who live our experiences.

But when we look to literature, we can sometimes find exactly, or close to, what we have experienced—in fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. And if we are bold enough to take another step forward, we can tell our own stories, in hopes of reaching one more person who is looking to feel a little more loved, seen, and accepted.

In each week of this six-week CCC course, we will explore from a craft standpoint, characters who feel deeply. Who express loudly. Who are afraid to speak up. Characters who are shy, grieving, obsessive, outlandish, and vexing. Each week, we will follow one of the five themes of grief, as modeled by Dr. Elizabeth Kübler-Ross: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. We will focus on narrative subjectivity, interiority—specifically other people's interiority—structure, and more literary devices that writers may utilize to express themselves, their voices, and their experiences.

We will be reading works by Jamaica Kincaid, Annie Ernaux, Maggie Nelson, Jerry Spinelli, Khaled Hosseini, Patrick Ness, and more. In every class, we will work on writing prompts that may spark something within us to lengthen and revise our short stories, essays, or poetry collections. As a final assignment, students may hand in a piece inspired by the class for feedback.

The Art of Exophony: Learning Language Through Writing

Olubunmi Adeloje

Thursday 6:30 pm - 8:20 pm, Dodge Hall 407

Writing is daunting enough, but writing in a language you're not a native speaker can feel even more intimidating. It doesn't have to be. Writers like Joseph Conrad, Kazuo Ishiguro, Chinua Achebe, Yiyun Li, and Vladimir Nabokov are well known as exophonic writers: those who write in a language not regarded as their native one. This class is for anyone who wants to practice exophony through reading and writing. Using classical education as a model, each student will develop a writing project in a target language to develop over the six weeks of class using the methods of polyglots such as Kato Iomb and Gabriel Wynet. Students will pick and study writers in their target language and write in a language of their choice through imitation. All languages are welcome!

Writing the Writer

Fleur Van Woerkom

Friday 8:00 am - 9:50am, Dodge Hall 411

Have you ever felt like you had nothing to write about, but needed to write something? Do you spend so much time writing that you don't have much life to write about? In this class we will turn to writing as a subject that merits being written about, using language and process and the untouchableness of duende as our muse. We will discuss the *Ars Poetica*, read essays and memoir excerpts by writers who write about their identity as writers, and examine the rituals and desires that center and decenter writing in our lives. When do you feel stuck writing? When do you feel enlightened

and inspired? How does emotional weight and physical tiredness affect your ability to write? Does physicality of writing tools and environment affect your creative ability? You might find this class most helpful if you have already spent time dedicated to crafting language and establishing a practice, but do not hesitate to join if you are new to writing! You will leave this class with greater knowledge of the processes practiced by seasoned writers and artists of other mediums, ideas for enhancing your own craft, and a collection of prompts to use whenever you feel stagnant.

The Myth of Sisyphus: Writing the Absurd and the Existential

Rong Wang

Friday 4:10 pm - 6:00 pm, Dodge Hall 407

What does it mean to grapple with the conditions that we live in? What does it mean to live in a world where all seems to be futile? What does it mean to exist? Camus famously compares existence and its absurd conditions to Sisyphus's act of pushing a rock uphill without an ultimate goal or ending. Grounding on Camus' philosophical texts, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, this course invites you to think with/think against the philosophical material at hand, coming up with your own concept, story, and poetic expression on the notion of existence. In conjunction with the philosophical text, we will read short excerpts from modern and contemporary writers who explore the theme of existence. The writers we will be reading include Franz Kafka, Charles Bukowski, Jacqueline Harpman, Haruki Murakami, Yiyun Li, Katherine Lacey, and Chris Kraus. Investigating the notion of existence from different angles, the course invites you to explore the articulation of your own idea of "existence" through various intentional craft techniques.

Writing for Self-Exploration

Shriya Prasad Kotta

Friday 5:20 pm - 7:10 pm, Dodge Hall 411

This course explores writing as a tool for self-reflection and personal growth. Students will practice writing exercises that transform experience into creative expression, with an emphasis on process over product. Working in a supportive space

for experimentation, vulnerability, and insight, students will explore multiple writing forms, including journaling, poetry, narrative reflection, and letters to observe their thoughts, emotions, and memories, and to recognize patterns in their own lives. By the end of the course, students will have developed a personal writing practice that fosters self-awareness and creative confidence.