

**CA/T Community Classes (CCC)
Columbia Artist/Teacher
Writing Program, School of the Arts**



Alumna Xuan Juliana Wang '11, *SOURCE*: <https://cdn.i-scmp.com/sites/default/files/styles/landscape/public/d8/images/2019/05/17/cover.jpg?itok=Y0rXm4Pb>

**COURSEBOOK
SPRING 2024**

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

INFORMATION

CA/T Community Classes are free, non-credit creative writing seminars taught by MFA Writing Program students in Columbia University's School of the Arts. These classes, studying fiction, non-fiction, 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 receive feedback on their writing.

These courses are open to **all** current Columbia and Barnard students, staff, and affiliates, as well as all School of the Arts alumni.

Classes meet once weekly for five to six weeks, beginning on Monday, March 18th, through Friday, April 26th. This semester, courses will be offered in-person, in Columbia University's Dodge Hall and on Zoom.

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 8th. Classes are capped at 12 students. Those that fill up will be specified as **waitlist only**.

To choose your classes, please fill out the Spring 2024 [Registration Form](#). The CCC coordinator, Alexandra Banach, will contact you by Monday, March 11th, 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 CCC coordinator, Alexandra Banach, at soa-writing-ccc@columbia.edu. If your question pertains to a specific course, please reach out to the instructor.

COURSE LIST

FICTION

FLASH IN A FLASH | Gabrielle McAree
Mon. 7:30-9:15pm Dodge Hall 512

REVISION | Mattie Govan
Tues. 9:00-10:50am Dodge Hall 413

OBSESSIONS | Ang Xu
Wed. 12:00-2:00pm Dodge Hall 407

POETRY

MAKE IT NEW | Ashni Mathuria
Mon. 12:00-1:50pm Dodge Hall 409

SAPPHO: THE MORTAL MUSE | Bems James
Tues. 6:20-8:15pm Dodge Hall 407

THE MANY GARDENS OF [QUEER] DESIRE | ofi davis
Wed. 12:00-2:00pm Dodge Hall 409

NON - FICTION

WRITING THE CITY | Sofia Rodrigues Bolina
Mon. 7:15-9:15pm Dodge Hall 413

CULTURAL CRITICISM: YOU DO IT ALREADY | Eunsuh "Esther" Park
Fri. 3:00-5:00pm Dodge Hall 413

CROSS-GENRE

~~THE ART OF~~ BREVITY | Rob Kelly

Mon. 12:00-1:50pm Dodge Hall 407

HOW TO HANG OUT | Oana Nicola

Tues. 6:15-8:15pm Dodge Hall 403

PLAY! | Dhruv Bhatia

Wed. 12:00-2:00pm Dodge Hall 403

WRITING FROM PERSONAL ARCHIVES | Lydia DeFusto

Wed. 5:00-7:00pm on Zoom

FINDING COMMUNITY THROUGH AUTOFICTION | Haley Glover

Thurs. 1:00-3:00pm Dodge Hall 411

THE REVOLTING AND THE PIQUANT: A VITAL SPARK IN POETRY

AND PROSE | Roxane Van Winkle

Fri. 5:00 -7:00pm Dodge Hall 407

FICTION

FLASH IN A FLASH

Gabrielle McAree

Mon. 7:30-9:15pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 512

Flash fiction can stand alone, or it can be the gateway to longer fiction. Want to write a piece in under 1,000 words? 500 words? Want to expand a flash? In this four-week class, we'll study flash in a flash. We'll take a look at flash fiction pieces from online literary magazines, write our own flash pieces, and see where and how to expand a piece and where and how to end one. Every word, every sentence, counts, but especially with flash.

REVISION

Mattie Govan

Tues. 9:00-10:50am

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 413

“And what a pleasure that is; to be, on the page, less of a dope than usual.” - George Saunders

How can we revise a work in progress to move as close to our intentions as possible? In this course, we will explore how accomplished writers revise. Through in-class exercises, and considering writers such as Toni Morrison, George Saunders, and Ling Ma, we will examine different revision methods to identify what approaches can enable us to achieve our unique writing ambitions.

All backgrounds and experience levels in writing fiction are welcome.

OBSESSIONS

Ang Xu

Wed. 12:00-2:00pm

Dodge Hall 407

Admit it: we write because we're obsessed. Obsession is what turns a string of words into art, but it's also what so often blindsides us—a gift and a curse. In this class, we're going to relish what we are obsessed with while focusing on how we approach these obsessions.

This is a class on exploring and shaping obsession through craft, and craft through obsession. We'll read (a little bit). We'll write (a lot). We'll vote on the first day to decide if there will be a mini-workshop component.

You can write about absolutely anything (quirks, kinks, sins, malice, grief, shame, despair, failed crushes, crushed roses or rats, etc. etc.).

There will be writing exercises in class, but sharing aloud will always be entirely optional.

POETRY

MAKE IT NEW

Ashni Mathuria

Mon. 12:00-1:50pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 409

Make It New! is a novel, dynamic space in which we will confront any and all of the standard expectations of writing. We'll banish cliché, and play with diction, form, and imagery, pulling inspiration from writers like Gertrude Stein, Sylvia Plath, and Frank O'Hara. Our goal is to generate fresh, innovative, and surprising writing, and we will attempt this endeavor through various angles: toying with the thesaurus, entering an abstract realm of mental associations, breaking forms, and more.

THE MANY GARDENS OF [QUEER] DESIRE

ofi davis

Wed. 12:00-2:00pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 409

Let me call my anxiety, desire, then.
Let me call it, a garden.

from "From The Desire Field" by Natalie Diaz

This course is interested in discussing and emulating poems about/of/in desire; understanding just what it is that makes a love poem (or a lust poem, or both!) work and woo the reader. Half seminar, half writing workshop, we will focus on queer desire poems beyond and on the fringes of the traditional canon. Think along the

lines of Natalie Diaz, torrin a. greathouse, Cameron Awkward-Rich, JJJJJerome Ellis, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Imogen Xtian Smith, etc., with particular focus on trans, Two-Spirit, and Black queer writers. What liberations are possible when we conceptualize desire as a queer field? When we see the world as full of queer love? When we write poems that are unafraid to be queer and love(ly)? Let's find out together.

SAPPHO: THE MORTAL MUSE

Bems James

Tues. 6:20-8:15pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 407

Who was Sappho? Why did Plato call her "the Tenth Muse"? Did she invent confessional poetry, queer yearning, and the guitar pick? All this and more!

This course will be centered around "If Not, Winter," Anne Carson's translations of Sappho, with an emphasis on what we, as modern writers, can learn from this ancient poet. Topics will include (but are not limited to) love, violence, desire, sexuality, mythology, religion, and their many intersections. To contextualize our reading, we will examine the traditions and cultures that influenced Sappho and her contemporaries. We will look at both modern and ancient writers in conversation with Sappho to develop a sense of her legacy. We will discuss the impact and importance of her gender, both in her time and our own, as well as what her work means to those of us in the LGBTQIA+ community.

First and foremost, this class will be a space to explore and experiment with our writing. Students will participate in writing exercises, using Sappho to prompt our work. There will be opportunities for students to informally share their work with the class, but doing so will not be mandatory.

We may read excerpts of other works by other ancient writers, as well as short essays about Sappho. No prior knowledge of Sappho, mythology, or any other ancient Mediterranean literature is necessary; nerds and novices welcome!

NON - FICTION

WRITING THE CITY

Sofia Rodrigues Bolina

Mon. 7:15-9:15pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 413

In this seminar, we'll engage with and think through writing about the urban space: what are the different ways we can look at the city? How can we portray it? What are the strategies we can use to do so? What kind of materials can be integrated into our writing about the city?

Each week, we'll read and discuss excerpts from authors like Clarice Lispector, Christopher Isherwood, Valeria Luiselli, Aisha Sabatini Sloan, Annie Ernaux. We'll consider the city through an intersectional lens, and practice writing from different perspectives with the help of short weekly prompts.

CULTURAL CRITICISM: YOU DO IT ALREADY

Eunsuh "Esther" Park

Fri. 3:00-5:00pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 413

This nonfiction seminar will better acquaint students with criticism, which at its core is simply writing about the things that excite, captivate, or perplex you: music, films, social phenomena, and more. Why do we write about media? How can we translate the passionate everyday conversations we have about Tyla, Drag Race, or OnlyFans into a successful essay? How is criticism affected by the presence, or absence, of the critic's voice, academic theory, and/or lived experience?

“Cultural critic” is a title that undeniably feels weighty. Having a certified, worthy-of-reading opinion on the world may feel out of reach for many of us. However, I see criticism as an exciting horizon, where anyone can explore various narrative forms, and tell our most personal stories.

We will read from authors and critics such as Hanif Abdurraqib, John Green, and Carmen Maria Machado. We will also expand our learning beyond established voices in traditional publishing, discussing works by "internet princess" Rayne Fisher-Quann, and incarcerated journalist Joe Garcia.

We will work towards one final project, a 6-9 page cultural criticism essay on any topic, and in any structure of your choosing. All Columbia community members—first-time writers or working vets—are welcome to join. Weekly assignments will take no more than 30 minutes.

CROSS-GENRE

~~THE ART OF BREVITY~~

Rob Kelly

Mon. 12:00-1:50pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 407

What happens when brevity is not viewed as a constraint, but instead as a tool for telling a specific kind of story? In this course, we will read and write the shortest possible works of poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction.

The first three weeks will focus on in-class reading, discussion, and writing prompts. In the final three weeks, everyone will get a turn to share and workshop their own short work developed through this class.

The kinds of work we will be engaging with include haikus, instructional poems, flash fiction, one-sentence stories, Tweets, and micro-memoir.

Both new and experienced writers are welcome.

HOW TO HANG OUT

Oana Nicola

Tues. 6:15-8:15pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 403

Why was Robert Lowell so down bad for Elizabeth Bishop? Did Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac ever “do it”?

Though we may think of writing as a solitary act, some of the most important poetry and artistic movements of the 20th century came from writers hanging out with each other. “The greatest minds of (that) generation” got together in New York City to create, converse, and develop shared ideas about what art means and what it can do for the world. They partied, fought, and fell in love with each other, all while making time to write about the whole experience.

In this course, we will learn about the writing, ideas, and relationships born from movements like Confessionalism, The Harlem Renaissance, The Beats, New York School (1st and 2nd gen). We will study the interplay between writers’ personal connections and their work by examining two pieces in conversation with each other every week, and since we’re the greatest minds of our generation, we will build on these conversations by writing our own poems in response. After spending six beautiful and intimate weeks together, we will even write poems in conversation with each other, establishing our own little writing community.

By the end of this course, we will know all about five literary movements that were crucial to 20th century New York culture. We will be able to answer juicy questions

about these writers' interpersonal lives and understand how their shared histories connect to their beliefs and writing. We will produce six original poems in conversation with past writers as well as our contemporaries. Most importantly, we will have learned the value of developing and nurturing creative relationships and communities throughout our lives, a.k.a. Hanging Out.

PLAY!

Dhruv Bhatia

Wed. 12:00-2:00pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 403

To hell with it all! We've come here to play! We detest what Césaire called the “flunkies of order and the cockchafers of hope!” Julio Cortázar, that long-haired Argentinian cat, says that “a writer plays with words, but plays seriously.” We've taken — or we're lucky not to have taken — those courses that enforce, consciously or subconsciously, a type of rigor that is unbecoming of a joyous writer, and especially of a writer who's just starting out.

Using Cortázar's *Literature Class, Berkeley 1980* as our Pole Star, we'll learn about the role of the 'ludic' and 'nonsense' in literature and their far-reaching transgressive consequences. We will read *Cronopios and Famas*, one of the most playful books to come out of Latin America, over the course of our six weeks, while excerpts from kindred spirits such as Gombrowicz, Monterroso, Queneau, Carroll, Calvino, Swift, and Gladman will inform our writing exercises. We'll listen to hip-hop, read pamphlets, and learn how to engage with play on a literary level, and more practically, we will learn how best to begin our stories and poems with an openness which makes ourselves more magnetic to our highest fancies.

There will be a writing component to this course. However, writers of all skill levels are welcome to join.

FINDING COMMUNITY THROUGH AUTOFICTION

Haley Glover

Thurs. 1:00-3:00pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 411

How do communities find each other? In this course we will consider this question and the writer's role in finding an answer through autofiction, a genre that combines autobiography and fiction. From knitting circles to celebrity fandoms, every community is unique, and as humans we all have some place of belonging, whether from our past or present. Autofiction merges our experiences and the craft of fiction to help share these stories in a new and creative light. As a class, we will explore the process of community formation through op-eds, magazine interest pieces, and these fictional/ non-fictional stories from authors like James Frey, Toni Morrison, Zadie Smith, Karen Russell and Paul Beatty.

The definition of community will be fluid for this course, encompassing either a physical group of people, online forums, social justice groups, a particular time or place, or even a cultural bandwagon/ fandom that has brought people together. In our final class sessions, students will be asked to reflect on their own experiences and use them as a lens to study a community they belong to more closely through research and/ or interviews. The final project for this course will be an auto-fiction short story about a community a student belongs to. All writing levels are welcome!

WRITING FROM PERSONAL ARCHIVES

Lydia DeFusto

Wed. 5:00-7:00pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Zoom

We're all curators of our own personal archives. Some of these archives are physical—boxes of birthday cards, medical records, childhood toys, half-filled notebooks, recipes, calendars. Others are digital—our phones and laptops are filled with pictures, screenshots, memes, social media posts, emails, text messages, and

PDFs. Our personal archives capture moments in time. They guard secrets about who we once were and how the world once was.

In this course, we will explore how our own personal archives can enhance all stages of the writing process. We'll read work about and inspired by personal archives, including pieces by Leslie Jamison, Clint Smith, Justin Torres. During each class, we'll utilize our own archives for writing prompts and activities. Writers from all genres are welcome.

THE REVOLTING AND THE PIQUANT: A VITAL SPARK IN POETRY AND PROSE (GENRE)

Roxane Van Winkle

Fri. 5:00 -7:00pm

Dates: March 18th - April 26th

Dodge Hall 407

This course is an exploration into the various literary devices that conspire to give relentlessly gloomy literature its pleasantly sharp sourness. Think of the vital spark as a galvanization, a current that animates the words on the page. The vital spark is ubiquitous across most all good writing, but we will be zeroing in on the grim and the gross.

We will read from H.P. Lovecraft, Emily Bronte, Georg Trakl, Georg Heym, Kim Hyesoon, Pablo Neruda and others. We will together write two poems and two flash fiction pieces by the end of the class.