

The Creative Moment

English 2099F / Arthum 3391

Fall 2023

Department of English and Writing Studies &
The School for Advanced Studies in the Arts & Humanities
Western University

Course Description

The Creative Moment is an experimental, improvisational course in artistic creation and the development of the creative personality. Students will produce creative writing and learn to connect in a more natural and exciting and open ways to their own creative process. This will be matched with the reading of four novels and a book of non-fiction, and class discussion of these texts. We will analyse these texts to try to understand the techniques the writer used to create various effects, and we will talk about themes that preoccupied the writer—socially, politically, philosophically and personally. These texts will inspire creative writing exercises, and will help us think about how our experiences of the world are transformed into art. Rigour, curiosity, thoughtfulness, and a sense of play will be encouraged in completion of the writing assignments, and in the exercises, games and conversations we will engage in during class.

Prerequisites

None.

Learning Outcomes / Course Objectives

Ideally, students will deepen their appreciation for the intricacies of the creative process, the difficulties and the chance genius events that go into making a work of art. Students should come out of this class with a deeper feeling for their own voice as a writer and creative person, and a keener sense of what they are interested in, artistically. The course will hope to sharpen one's critical skills towards one's own work, and increase one's sensitivity towards the different forces within a person and within a society and culture that produce a text. This should also lead to a heightened awareness of the time one is presently living in, and the forces that are at work in making us what we are, and the world what it is.

Timetable

Week 1, September 12 – Introduction

Week 2, September 19 – *The Pillow Book*, Sei **Shonagon** (1002).

Week 3, September 26 – *The Pillow Book*.

Week 4, October 3 – *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*, Samuel R. **Delaney** (1999).

Week 5, October 10 – *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*.

Week 6, October 17 - *The Ladies' Paradise*, Emile **Zola**, novel (1883).

Week 7, October 24 – *The Ladies' Paradise*.

Reading Week

Week 8, November 7 – *Secondhand Time*, Svetlana **Alexeivich** (2013).

Week 9, November 14 – *Secondhand Time*.

Week 10, November 21 – *The Wall*, Marlen **Haushofer** (1963).

Week 11, November 28 – *The Wall*.

Week 12 – December 5, Conclusion

Course Texts:

The Pillow Book by Sei Shonagon (trans. Meredith McKinney; Penguin).

Times Square Red, Times Square Blue by Samuel R. Delaney (20th Anniversary Edition; NYU Press).

The Ladies' Paradise by Emile Zola (trans. Brian Nelson; Oxford World Classics).

Secondhand Time by Svetlana Alexeivich (trans. Bela Shayevich; Random House).

The Wall by Marlen Haushofer (trans. Shaun Whiteside; New Directions).

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Being on time is mandatory. Being on time means being in class one minute before class begins. Attendance (and being on time) will be part of your grade. There will be a break in the middle of class (for 10-15 mins) and we will officially end at 9:20 pm.

Methods of Evaluation

In-Class Participation	25%		
Assignment 1	10%	Length: 1000 words	Due: October 10
Final Paper Proposal	5%	Length: 500 words	Due: October 17
Assignment 2	10%	Length: 1000 words	Due: November 14
Assignment 3	10%	Length: 500 words	Due November 28
In-Class Portfolio	20%	Length: N/A	Due: December 12
Final Paper	20%	Length: 2000 words	Due: December 12

In-Class Participation refers to showing up on time and participating in class discussions.

Assignment 1 will be a creative, personal paper based on your reading of *The Pillow Book* and *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue*. Further details to come in class.

Assignment 2 will be a creative, personal paper based on your reading of *The Ladies' Paradise* and *Secondhand Time*. Further details to come in class.

Assignment 3 will be a creative, personal paper based on your reading of *The Wall*.

Your **In-Class Portfolio** will be a collection of all the written exercises that we will do in class and outside of class; keep these, as they will be handed in at the end of term.

Your **Final Paper** will be determined in consultation with the professor and can take many forms. It will be based on the proposal you submit on November 21st in the form of your **Final Paper Proposal**, which will outline what you hope your final paper to be (an essay, a series of poems, short stories, part of a memoir, criticism, etc).

OWL

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with OWL, they can seek support on the OWL Help page or they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk (<https://wts.uwo.ca/helpdesk>).

Chat GPT

AI is very exciting, and Chat GPT and related software can be used in creative and interesting ways. You are welcome to request permission to use AI, if you have a good reason to think that it will help your own creative thinking and writing. But unless permission is requested of the professor in advance (and permission is granted!) then any assignment that is found to be written with the aid of Chat GPT or any other AI technology will receive a grade of zero.

Plagiarism

The purpose of school is to develop your own style of writing and thinking, and to learn by thinking and writing; plagiarism is unacceptable. If you think someone has said it better than you can, and you wish to use their words, then you have to indicate that these certain words are not your own, and cite the person whose words they are. Plagiarism is a major academic offense and those who plagiarize will receive a grade of zero for the assignment and may be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies.

Religious Accommodation

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday which requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, you must request accommodation for your absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the Academic Counselling office of your Faculty of Registration, and notify the professor at the same time of your future absence. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays, updated annually (<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>).

Support Services

Students who are in emotional or mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western (<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Medical Accommodation

If you are unable to meet a course requirement (such as regular attendance, assignments, and the final paper) due to illness or other serious circumstances, then you must request an exception from your Faculty of Registration. You will be asked to provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible.

For further information, please consult the University's medical illness policy at https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf.

The Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.