



JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY
COURSE CODE: "EN 285"
COURSE NAME: "Literature and Creative Writing: How to Read Like a Writer"
SEMESTER & YEAR: Fall 2023
SYLLABUS
INSTRUCTOR: Carlos Dew s

EMAIL: cdew s@johncabot.edu

HOURS: MW 6:00 PM 7:15 PM

TOTAL NO. OF CONTACT HOURS: 45

CREDITS: 3

PREREQUISITES: Prerequisite: EN 110 with a grade of C or above

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

To supplement their traditional university study of composition and literary analysis, this course provides students with the opportunity to develop skills at reading literature as a source of help in improving their own writing. Designed primarily for students interested in creative writing, this course focuses on the reading of literature from the point of view of the practice, or craft, of fiction writing. This is a reading and writing intensive course. Students in 200-level literature classes are required to produce 4-5,000 words of critical writing.

SUMMARY OF COURSE CONTENT:
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Students will study Francine Prose's Reading Like a Writer to develop their skills as readers of literary fiction with an eye to emulating the skills of accomplished writers. This course is based on the assumption that writers, out of necessity, read literature differently from critics. While critics, scholars, and students of literature typically read to understand or interpret a text, writers read with an eye to emulation of craft. Writers, to learn from their successful predecessors, read meticulously--letter by letter, word by word, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, line of dialogue by line of dialogue, page by page.

Promotional text that accompanied Francine Prose's 2007 book Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them, the primary text for this course, summarized Prose's aim in writing the book:

Long before there were creative-writing workshops and degrees, how did aspiring writers learn to write? By reading the work of their predecessors and contemporaries, says Francine Prose. In Reading Like a Writer, Prose invites you to sit by her side and take a guided tour of the tools and the tricks of the masters. She reads the work of the very best writers—Dostoyevsky, Flaubert, Kafka, Austen, Dickens, Woolf, Chekhov—and discovers why their work has endured. She takes pleasure in the long and magnificent sentences of Philip Roth and the breathtaking paragraphs of Isaac Babel; she is deeply moved by the brilliant characterization in George Eliot's Middlemarch. She looks to John Le Carré for a lesson in how to advance plot through dialogue, to Flannery O'Connor for the cunning use of the telling detail, and to James Joyce and Katherine Mansfield for clever examples of how to employ gesture to create character. She cautions readers to slow down and pay attention to words, the raw material out of which literature is crafted.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:
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Through the study of Francine Prose's technique of slow, meticulous reading, students completing this course will have developed the reading skills necessary to learn how to improve their own creative writing by the analysis of literary fiction and be able to describe the unique stylistic and craft characteristics of the fiction they read.

TEXTBOOK:

REQUIRED RESERVED READING:

RECOMMENDED RESERVED READING:

GRADING POLICY**-ASSESSMENT METHODS:**

Assignment	Guidelines	Weight
Attendance	Students are required to attend all scheduled class meetings and to participate in all classroom activities. In addition to this weighting of attendance, students are allowed only two absences (no questions asked, no excuses needed). However, each additional absence beyond the two allowed will result in the reduction of the final grade for the course by 5%. Students with more than five absences will fail the course. Please refer to the university catalog for the attendance and absence policy.	0
Participation		20
Presentation		20
Term Paper (2500-3000 words)		40
Midterm Paper (1000-1500 words)		20

-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

A Work of this quality directly addresses the question or problem raised and provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information or content. This type of work demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate concepts and theory and has an element of novelty and originality. There is clear evidence of a significant amount of reading beyond that required for the course.

B This is a highly competent level of performance and directly addresses the question or problem raised. There is a demonstration of some ability to critically evaluate theory and concepts and relate them to practice. Discussions reflect the student's own arguments and are not simply a repetition of standard lecture and reference material. The work does not suffer from any major errors or omissions and provides evidence of reading beyond the required assignments.

C This is an acceptable level of performance and provides answers that are clear but limited, reflecting the information offered in the lectures and reference readings.

D This level of performance demonstrates that the student lacks a coherent grasp of the material. Important information is omitted and irrelevant points included. In effect, the student has barely done enough to persuade the instructor that s/he should not fail.

F This work fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question. Most of the material in the answer is irrelevant.

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ACADEMIC HONESTY

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES

John Cabot University does not discriminate on the basis of disability or handicap. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

SCHEDULE

Note: This is an example schedule. The actual schedule for the term will be provided via Moodle during the first week of the term.

Week 1

Introduction: How to read like a writer.

Week 2

"Close Reading"

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 3

"Words"

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 4

“Sentences”

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 5

“Paragraphs”

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 6

“Narration”

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 7

“Character”

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 8

“Dialogue”

Selected supplemental reading.

Midterm Paper Due.

Week 9

“Details”

Selected supplemental reading.

Week 10

Reading in Practice

Class Presentations.

Week 11

Reading in Practice

Class Presentations.

Week 12

Reading in Practice

Class Presentations.

Week 12

Reading in Practice

Class Presentations.

Week 13

Reading in Practice

Class Presentations.

Week 14

Reading in Practice

Week 15

Reading in Practice
Term Paper Workshop