

Disclaimer: This is an indicative syllabus only and may be subject to changes. The final and official syllabus will be distributed by the Instructor during the first day of class.

The American University of Rome
English Writing, Literature and Publishing Program

Department or degree program mission statement, student learning objectives, as appropriate

Course Title: Writing Fiction for Children and Young Adults
Course Number: ENG 317
Credits & hours: 3 credits – 3 hours
Pre/Co-Requisites: ENG 102

Course description

This advanced writing course is designed to develop students' skills in writing fiction expressly for children and young adults. The course will focus on the writing process and the approaches to writing for various age groups within the genre, specifically examining story structure, character, plot, and theme. In addition to writing and work-shopping their own work, students will read and analyse texts from classic and contemporary children's and YA literature.

Required Textbook (subject to change)

- Custom Reader compiled by instructor
- Various handouts

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. develop critical reading and creative fiction writing skills.
2. engage with the elements of writing fiction: structure, character, plot, style, language, and theme, and apply them creatively in writing for children and young adults.
3. develop skills in re-writing and editing.
4. participate effectively workshop style writing environment, offering assistance and suggestions for helping others to improve their writing skills.

Course Learning Activities

- Participation in discussions and writing workshops (LO 1, 2, & 4).
- Writing and revision exercises (LO 1, 2, 3, & 4).
- Four writing assignments based on reading (LO 1, 2, 3, & 4).
- A three-chapter (30 pages) final short story manuscript (LO 1, 2, & 3).

Assessment tools

Participation in class	10%
Two literature response papers (analysis of literature excerpts, 10% each, 1000 words)	20%
Four creative assignments (building blocks to final short story, 10% each, 2000 words)	40%
Final short story (25-30 pages)	30%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Reading
Week 1	Introduction. Why we write. Relationship writer-reader. Finding ideas.	Handout # 1 (Excerpts from L. Carroll's "ALICE IN WODERLAND", R. Kipling's "THE JUNGLE BOOK")
Week 2	The theme. The premise. The thesis. The logline.	
Week 3	Story structure. Planning. Point of view of narration.	Writing assignment # 1 Idea. Theme. Premise. Thesis. Logline.
Week 4	Setting. Plot.	Handout # 2 (Excerpts from W. Golding's "LORD OF THE FLIES", J.R.R. Tolkien's "THE LORD OF THE RINGS")
Week 5	Developing characters. Biography. Motivations. Goals.	
Week 6	Identify the source of conflict in the story.	Writing assignment #2 Structure. Plot. Characters. Motivations.
Week 7	Character arc. Narrative trajectory. Super objectives.	Handout # 3 (Excerpts from J.K. Rowling's "HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE", R. Riordan's "PERCY JACKSON AND THE OLYMPIANS") Literature Response paper # 1 (Excerpts 1,2)
Week 8	Writing style	
Week 9	Scene. Objectives. Dialogue. Subtext.	Writing assignment# 3 Conflict. Arc. Narrative. Superobjectives.
Week 10	Rhythm. Pace. The ending.	Handout # 4 (Excerpts from S. Collins' "THE UNDERLAND CHRONICLES", J. Kinney's "DIARY OF A WIMPY KID").
Week 11	Putting it all together. Rewriting. Self-editing.	Writing assignment #4 Scene. Dialogue. Subtext. Rhythm. Pace. The ending.
Week 12	The publisher. Market issues and concerns.	Literature Response paper # 2 (Excerpts 3, 4)
Week 13	Final review. Q & A sessions.	
Week 14	Final manuscripts due. Final: manuscript pitch/analysis.	

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

1.0. Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

1.1. Automatically Accepted Absences

Students will not be penalized for one absence from classes meeting once a week;
Students will not be penalized for three absences from classes meeting twice a week;
Students will not be penalized for four absences from classes meeting more than twice a week, as in the case of some intensive courses.

1.2. If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the Instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus, and following the institutional parameters given in the Note* below.

1.2.1. If the Instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement, and any penalized absences recorded above the basic 70% attendance requirement for the course will be invalidated.

1.3. During Summer sessions where courses are taught more intensively over a shorter period the following applies:

- Students will not be penalized for two absences from class.

2.0. Tolerated Absences

Certain categories of absence will not be penalized but they will be counted as an absence (for a 3-credit course meeting twice a week). These absences are:

- The Model United Nations (MUN);
- Permit to Stay,
- SG's "Ambassador Program" (Student Government initiative)
- Religious Holidays

The American University of Rome makes all reasonable efforts to accommodate students who must be absent from classes to observe religious holidays. (Please verify with the Dean's Office for the list of accepted absences for religious holidays)

Not attending a class due to the observance of a religious holiday will not be penalized but will be counted as an absence. Students who will need to miss class in order to observe religious holidays must notify their Instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (first week of classes), and must make prior arrangements with their Instructors to make up any work missed.

2.1. The list does NOT include academic field trips because these (including arrangements for travel) must not overlap with other classes.

3.0. Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

*Note: No instructor may penalize a student more than one-third of a letter grade for each absence beyond the tolerated limit (e.g. from A- to B+).

Grade Point Average

A student's grade point average (GPA) is computed by multiplying the quality points achieved by the number of credits for each course. The result is then divided by the total number of credit hours taken. The Cumulative or Career Total Grade Point Average (CGPA) is the grade point average for all credit hours taken at the University and at approved study abroad programs. The GPA and CGPA are calculated by truncating after the second digit after the decimal point. Transfer credits have no effect on the CGPA at The American University of Rome.

Grades

Grades are posted on a secure area of the University's official website and are mailed to AUR degree students only upon written request. Grades are mailed to the various study abroad programs. Grades computed in the (GPA) reflect the following grade equivalents:

GRADE		GPA	
A	Excellent	4.00	94 – 100 points
A-		3.70	90 – 93.99 pts
B+	Very Good	3.30	87 – 89.99
B	Good	3.00	83 – 86.99
B-		2.70	80 – 82.99
C+		2.30	77 – 79.99
C	Satisfactory	2.00	73 – 76.99
C-	Less than Satisfactory	1.70	70 – 72.99
D	Poor	1.00	60 – 69.99
F	Failing	0.00	59.99 – 0
WU	Unofficial withdrawal counts as an F	0.00	
P	Applicable to development courses	0.00	
<i>Grades not computed into the grade point average are:</i>			
W	Withdrawal		
AUDIT (AU)	Only possible when the student registers for a course at the beginning of the semester as an audit student		
I	Incomplete work must be completed within the ensuing semester. Failure to do so results in automatically converting the I grade to the default grade, which is then computed into the grade point average		
P	Pass grade is applicable to courses as indicated in the catalog.		
WIP	Work in progress		