



CRW 2513 (CRN 1733)

# Creative Writing

SYLLABUS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT PROFESSOR'S DISCRETION)

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**Office:** [Zoom](#)  
**Office hours:** 12:30-1:30pm T  
**Semester:** Fall 2021  
**Class Time:** 2pm – 3:15pm MW  
**Class Location:** [Zoom](#) & Canvas

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	
Course Description & Intro	1
Objectives & Modules	2
Required Materials	3
Course Policies & Univ. Services	3-6
Grading System	6
Course Requirements	7-8
Course Schedule	8-11

**Email** is the best way to reach me. When emailing me, please include your course # and section # in the subject, a greeting, a sign-off, and your name.

## Catalogue Course Description

The application of creative writing techniques through various literary genres: poetry, fiction, drama, screenwriting, non-fiction, and critical evaluation. The following courses can be taken concurrently with this course: LLT 1213, LLT 1223.

## Introduction

This class explores various genres of “literature” in the cultural studies sense, which includes not only poetry and prose, but also visually-based work such as film, comic books, and video games—any cultural “text” we are able to consume, create, critique, and analyze. We begin our dive into the art of storytelling with mythologist Joseph Campbell’s theory of the “hero’s journey”—the idea that the same basic archetypes and plot have been repeated through time and space since the beginning of known time. We will look for iterations of this template in the texts we study this semester, as well as think through ways to adapt it for modern storytelling needs.

Because most students who enroll in the course are majoring in some aspect of video game production, our final project will be a game storyboard via Celtx software, including images and script. (If you are majoring in a different field, please feel free to reach out if you’d like a alternative final project options, e.g. screenplay or short story.) Leading up to the final project, we will consume, produce, and analyze various genres of literature to experiment in the disciplines of cultural studies and creative writing as well as gain inspiration for our final project.

## Warning

Because this course is meant to challenge the status quo and encourage critical thinking, it contains material that some students may find difficult to encounter. **Please let me know if you have any specific trigger warning (TW) requests** via email, in person, or on your introduction sheet, but please also realize that it would be impossible to warn you before every instance of potentially traumatizing material. For a discussion of these issues, see <https://trigwarnings.wordpress.com>

## Learning Objectives

1. **Produce** original, revised written work in the genres of poetry, prose, and screenplay via final draft writing assignments
2. **Create** an original, revised Video Game Storyboard (or alternative genre) for final project
3. **Show proficiency** in offering clear, substantial feedback to peers on their writing and visual work, both orally and in writing
4. **Show proficiency** in ability to revise written and visual work with the guidance of peer and instructor feedback, both in detail (e.g. grammar) and holistically (e.g. organization, character development)
5. **Develop** critical viewing and reading skills, including identifying formal & thematic elements of genres using literary and cultural studies vocabulary via Critical Reflection & Inspiration Posts and Perusall Annotations
6. **Show** understanding of the cultural and historical contexts of cultural texts via Critical Reflection & Inspiration Posts and Perusall Annotations
7. **Practice** oral communication skills via Elevator Pitch assignment, show and tell assignments, and class discussions

**Policy regarding circulation of course materials:** The materials presented in this class are copyright protected and may not be used without the express prior consent of the instructor. Intentional misuse of the intellectual property of another may subject the user to penalties up to and including dismissal.

## HOW THIS COURSE IS DELIVERED: Synchronous Zoom Meetings & Modules (on Canvas)

The Modules are as follows:

### **Semester-Long Assignments**

#### **Resources**

**Weeks 1 & 2:** The Hero's Journey

**Weeks 3 & 4:** Screenwriting

**Weeks 5 & 6:** Comics & Graphic Novels

**Weeks 7 & 8:** Free Verse Poetry

**Weeks 9 & 10:** Form Poems

**Weeks 11 & 12:** Prose: Fiction & Nonfiction

**Weeks 13 & 14:** Video Game Storytelling

**Weeks 15 & 16:** Video Games, cont.

**Each module will include:** Links to required & optional readings/viewings, formal assignments (with guidelines and due dates listed), discussion board forums and more. **Make sure to check Modules (rather than the Assignments tab) for all assignments and due dates!**

## **Required Materials**

There are no required texts that you must purchase for the course. Your required & recommending reading will be posted on [Canvas] as a PDF or hyperlink to website under “Modules” or on **Perusall**.

***Out-of-class film viewing:*** You will also be required to watch a couple of films outside of our class meetings. Please plan on renting these for about \$3.99 each. **ALSO NOTE:** Many public libraries offer **Hoopla** and/or **Kanopy** streaming. You may have access through your home library, but you can also **apply for a Southfield Library card** if you live on campus or in Southfield for school [here](#). I've noted in the schedule below the films that are available via Kanopy at the Southfield Public Library [**Kanopy**]**—**or where I have found them streaming for free, to rent, or via subscription. In addition, you may check [justwatch.com](http://justwatch.com) for where to find required and recommended films to stream (for free), rent, or buy. For more obscure foreign films, check [telescopefilm.com](http://telescopefilm.com).

## **Getting Help**

I'm here to facilitate your learning. I'm available during our Zoom lectures, by email, and via regular face-to-face online office hours to help you address any questions you have about the course and its material. I'm not, however, tech support. If you're having **technical difficulties** with the Canvas site or accessing any of the materials, please contact the [IT Helpdesk](#) at [helpdesk@ltu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ltu.edu). Are you new to **Canvas** or unfamiliar with its tools? Click here for [Welcome to Canvas](#) and [Canvas for Students](#).

## **COURSE POLICIES & UNIVERSITY SERVICES**

### **1. Academic Honesty & Plagiarism**

- a) I appreciate that most students are honest, but let's be clear on the policies. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. You are expected to be the author of your own work. Don't ask for or receive help from others on your individual work, don't represent someone else's work as your own, don't let your parent or friend re-write or “fix” your paper for you, and don't turn in work for this class that you turned in previously (either for a different class or this class) without first receiving permission from me.
- b) Many students assume they understand plagiarism when they really don't. Often, plagiarism is unintentional. Unintentional or not, all forms of plagiarism (e.g. print sources, Internet sources, fellow students, your professors, **your own work from this or another course**) will be grounds for receiving an 'F' on the assignment and/or for the course, and students who plagiarize will be reported to the university.
- c) The Department of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Communications requires students to submit all final copies of expository essays to VeriCite, anti-plagiarism software. The following pledge is required on all academic work submitted by undergraduate students at Lawrence Technological University:

***"I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in completing this work, nor have I presented someone else's work as my own." ~Your Name***

- d) Note that plagiarism is an insult to me as your instructor and to your peers. If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please don't hesitate to ask me or a librarian. **When in doubt, cite your source in the Works Cited and in-text (author page)—and cite as you research and write!**
- e) For more information on how LTU defines and deals with cases of plagiarism, see: <https://www.ltu.edu/current-students/honor-code.asp>

## 2. Zoom Meetings: Synchronous Communication Expectations

- a) This course will meet in “real time” via Zoom meetings during our normal class times. You are expected to show up consistently and on time to these meetings; **treat them as in-seat meetings.**
- b) **Your classmates and I are making ourselves vulnerable by turning our cameras on during Zoom meetings; you are expected to do the same.** Facing the camera will show us that you are invested in the course. You are free to use a fake background, but your real-time face should be in the frame. If you have concerns about this, please email me.
- c) Feel free to mute yourself if there is too much background noise in your space, but also try to remember to unmute yourself when you are speaking.
- d) **Please be respectful to everyone in class. Practice active listening.** Criticism should always be constructive and class discussions should be a place to respectfully talk through ideas. Any comments or actions that instigate or contribute to a hostile environment in the classroom will be discussed with the professor and resolved with the help of university support services if needed.
- e) **Please physically raise your hand OR (especially when I am lecturing) digitally ‘raise your hand’ via the icon on Zoom—and wait for me to acknowledge you before speaking.** This will encourage an organized online space where as many voices as possible can be heard.
- f) Arriving late is disruptive and inconsiderate. Please be respectful to your classmates and me by **arriving to our Zoom meetings on time.**

## 3. Netiquette: Asynchronous Communication Expectations

- a) The student/instructor relationship is a professional one. Make sure that your emails name your concern and address your instructor with respect. Be sure to include openings and closings, and to sign your name. See: <http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html>
- b) We will be using the course **Canvas** website, so please make sure to check it regularly for course updates and grades.
- c) You will also submit all written work through **VeriCite** on Canvas, a program that helps me determine if you’ve plagiarized.
- d) The online space has etiquette—social and professional codes of polite, professional behavior—the same way the face-to-face classroom does. This is particularly important because your audience isn’t in front of you, likely doesn’t know you, and therefore is not always able to infer your tone. What might sound hilarious to you when you’re writing (because you know the inflection of your wording), might not come across the same way to your reader.
- e) The first rule of netiquette is: **Remember the human.**
- f) **See “Discussion Board Tips: TRUST” on Canvas Modules → “Semester-Long Assignments”**
- g) **Email Guidelines:**
  - i. An email address should be reflective of your professionalism
  - ii. Remember to identify the course and the name of the relevant assignment in the subject line
  - iii. Include a formal salutation
  - iv. Avoid informal phrases or language that is best used in social relationships
  - v. Treat the body of the email as you would a formal business letter, beginning with a clear statement of the main idea, followed by necessary information
  - vi. End with a clear request for next steps if relevant
  - vii. Avoid “text” and DM shorthand
  - viii. Utilize spell check and proofread your email prior to pressing send

h) **Just so you know:**

- I will try to answer your emails within 24 hours on weekdays, and I will not be available on weekends
- **Due to FERPA regulations, I will only respond to emails sent using an LTU student account.**

4. **Late Work**

- a) Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day they are late, **but only up to 5 days past the deadline**; e.g. if the assignment is due 11:59pm on the 10<sup>th</sup> and you turn it in at 12:01am on the 11<sup>th</sup>, your grade on that assignment will automatically drop 10%; if you turn it in on the 15<sup>th</sup>, you will earn a zero.
- b) *I will NOT accept papers five days past the deadline*, except for the following reasons: 1) physical or mental health illness, only if you email me to let me know *before* the assignment is due & provide proper documentation; and 2) an immediate family emergency, only if certified by an official document. In either case, such documentation must be provided **within one week of the deadline**.
- c) **NOTE: Each student gets one free “late pass” per semester, but only up to 5 days past the deadline, and you must email me before the assignment is due to receive it. Please remind me that you’ve used your late pass when you submit your assignment in the notes section on Canvas. (The late pass should be used only on formal assignments and FINAL DRAFTS submitted through VeriCite on Canvas.)**

5. **Attendance & Absences**

- a) You cannot learn or participate if you do not come to class. Absences will affect your grade to be determined by the outcome of your performance in class. Per LTU guidelines, I will take attendance and will report to the university if you have been absent for **two consecutive weeks**. I will verify your attendance ONLY via your showing up \*on time\* to our synchronous Zoom meetings at regular class times. That is, I will report your absence to the university even if you turn in an official assignment but have not ‘shown up’ to class via Zoom.
- b) Further, if you miss more than 2 weeks of our course sessions **total** (with or without email communication or documentation), your grade may be at risk. If this is the case for you, please email me as soon as possible so we can go over your options. Excessive tardiness to Zoom meetings, or leaving Zoom meetings early or too often, will reduce participation points at the instructor’s discretion. “Leaving” Zoom meetings includes keeping your computer on and logged into Zoom but leaving our discussion; be sure to keep your face in the frame whenever possible to illustrate your commitment to the lecture, materials, and conversation.
  - a. **Last day to withdraw from class is Nov. 19.**
  - b. If you fail the course **and** if you have been absent from our Zoom meetings more than 8 times, I will submit a “WF” (Failure due to non-attendance) rather than an “F.” The WF grade distinguishes students who fail due to non-attendance from those earning an “F” grade due to substandard academic performance. **Note:** It holds the same GPA value of an “F”: 0 (zero). See <https://www.ltu.edu/registrar/office/general-policies.asp>
- c) **Meaningful and thoughtful participation is an integral part of this course.** When you are absent you are responsible for any material covered in class and for arranging to submit any materials due on that day. Please do not contact me about what you will have missed because of your absence; instead, **contact one of your classmates**. I recommend you **exchange email addresses** for this purpose and for proofreading each other’s written work.

## 6. **Services & Accomodations**

- a) The Zaven Margosian Academic Achievement Center (AAC) is an academic support hub for LTU students. You may stop in to meet with study groups, study alone, or get tutoring help for classes or to improve notetaking and study habits. Tutoring is offered for many core classes, including writing. You can schedule a tutoring session online at <http://aac.ltu.edu>.
  - i. **AAC location:** lowest level of the A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center in C201
  - ii. **AAC contact:** [aac@ltu.edu](mailto:aac@ltu.edu) / 248-204-4120
- b) The Horltdt Family Writing Center offers tutoring sessions to help you improve your writing skills! Fill out the form on their site to make a Zoom appointment: <https://www.ltu.edu/onestop/hwc.asp>
  - i. **Writing Center contact:** [writingcenter@ltu.edu](mailto:writingcenter@ltu.edu)
- c) Please let me know if you need an accommodation for this course. I will work with [Disability Services](#) to provide what you require. I am willing to take suggestions specific to this class to meet your needs.
  - i. **Disability Services location:** Office of the Dean of Students, Suite C405, A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center, 4<sup>th</sup> floor.
  - ii. **Disability Services contact:** [disability@ltu.edu](mailto:disability@ltu.edu) / 248-204-4100
- d) LTU currently offers counseling via zoom or phone from Monday through Friday for LTU students.
  - i. **Counseling contact:** [clinicalcounseling@ltu.edu](mailto:clinicalcounseling@ltu.edu)
  - ii. More info: [https://www.ltu.edu/student\\_affairs/student-counseling.asp](https://www.ltu.edu/student_affairs/student-counseling.asp)

## 7. **LTU Academic Policies:** <https://www.ltu.edu/advising/academic-policies.asp>

### **Grading System:**

A: 95-100	B-: 80-83.99	D: 60-69.99
A-: 90-94.99	C+: 77-79.99	F: 0-59.99
B+: 87-89.99	C: 74-76.99	
B: 84-86.99	C-: 70-73.99	

### **General Definitions:**

[ A ] Outstanding. Work displays thorough mastery of material, exceptional writing, and genuine engagement with, and dedication to, the subject matter.

[ B ] Good. Work displays accurate understanding of the material.

[ C ] Fair. Work displays basic grasp of material with occasional misunderstandings or inaccuracies.

[ D ] Marginal. Work displays grasp of material adequate for credit, but quality of work indicates lack of effort.

[ F ] Unacceptable. Excessive absences, assignments not completed, or assignments unworthy of credit.

## **Course Requirements:**

**1% Introduction Sheet:** Submit intro/syllabus agreement to me via Canvas

- Find the sheet under Canvas Modules
- **Due Aug. 26 by 11:59pm**

**14% Peer Review & Participation:** Active, respectful, professional participation is crucial for your learning experience. Active participation includes coming to Zoom meetings **with your camera on** and with **relevant text(s) in hand**, being prepared, **actively listening** to your peers and me, speaking up when it is your turn to do so, participating in in-class writing and oral assignments, and fully participating in peer review assignments—both in-class and on Canvas. **This includes both submitting your work for peer review by the deadline AND offering careful, substantial feedback on your peers' work by the peer review deadline or in class, depending on the assignment.**

- Your classmates and I are making ourselves vulnerable by turning our cameras on during Zoom meetings; **you are expected to join us in this commitment.** **Facing the camera** will show us that you are invested in the course. You are free to use a fake background, but your real-time face should be in the frame. If you have concerns about this, please email me.
- I am looking for **quality** rather than quantity:
  - **Your verbal & written participation in this course should reflect that you've done the readings & peer review work**
- This grade will be divided into two: a score out of 7 for the first half of the semester, and a score out of 7 for the second half of the semester
- If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate (or two) what you missed and making up the work; if, after this, you have specific questions about course content, email me
  - **See Canvas → Modules → Semester-Long Assignments → "Participation Guidelines"**

**16% Critical Reflection & Inspiration Responses (4 total, 4 points each):**

- For each 4-point assignment, you will:
  - Respond to prompts that stem from specific texts, lectures and/or discussions in 250-300 words (2 points); then,
  - You will use these texts and prompts to brainstorm ideas for your own end-of-semester project—an original Video Game Storyboard—in 250-300 words (2 points)
  - Make sure your writing is organized in paragraphs, each with its own topic sentence
- *This assignment is meant to help you understand the course materials and inspire your own creativity and writing*
  - Guidelines & prompts posted under relevant Discussions in Canvas **Modules**
  - **See Course Schedule Below for due dates**

**20% Final Draft Writing Assignments**

- Guidelines posted under relevant Assignments in Canvas **Modules**
- Beginning-of-Semester Writing Reflection & Self-Assessment due **Aug. 26, 11:59pm (1 point)**
- Screenplay due via Canvas **Sept. 25 by 11:59pm (8 points)**
- Poem due **Oct. 30 by 11:59pm (5 points)**
- Fiction OR Non-Fiction Prose assignment due **Nov. 13 by 11:59pm (5 points)**
- End-of-Semester Writing Self-Assessment due at **exam time (1 point)**

**9% Perusall Annotation (3 total, 3 points each):** Each student will participate in Perusall annotation (any reading with **Perusall** after it under “Course Schedule” below):

- Guidelines posted under relevant assignment in Canvas **Modules**
- **Due 2 hours before relevant class begins**

**40% Video Game Storyboard (4 parts):** Solo or in pairs, you will create an original storyboard with images and script for a video game.

**5% Show & Tell:** Inspire our video game storyboarding by introducing your favorite video game to us

- Explain how it follows the hero’s journey & use plenty of images
- Guidelines posted under relevant assignment in Canvas **Modules**
- **Send your PowerPoint or Google slides to me the night before you present**
- **Due as oral presentation in class—see course schedule below for possible dates**

**8% Elevator Pitch:** Sell your video game story idea to us!

- We’ll offer feedback before you begin creating your storyboard
- Guidelines posted under relevant assignment in Canvas **Modules**
- **Due as oral presentation in class on Nov. 17**

**12% Draft for Peer Review:** *Your Draft must show understanding of my feedback on your previous work, including your Elevator Pitch*

- Guidelines posted under relevant assignment in Canvas **Modules**
- **Due to peer reviewers via Celtx Dec. 12 by 11:59pm**
- **Your review of peers’ Analyses will occur via Zoom during our final exam period**

**15% Final Draft:** *Your Final Draft must show understanding of my feedback on your previous work and your peers’ feedback on your Video Game Draft*

- Guidelines posted under relevant assignment in Canvas **Modules**
- **Due via Celtx AND Canvas Dec. 15 by 11:59pm**

### **COURSE SCHEDULE<sup>1</sup>**

*Unless otherwise noted, you are responsible for reading/viewing course material by the time the day’s session begins.*

#### **Weeks 1 & 2: The Hero’s Journey**

- Aug. 23: Syllabus review; **submit introduction sheet via Canvas by Aug. 27**
- Aug. 25: In-class: **Writing Reflection & Self-Assessment (due Aug. 26)** & freewriting exercises
- Aug. 30: View: *Black Panther*
- Sept. 1: In-class: *Joseph Campbell & The Power of Myth*, “The Hero’s Adventure” (1988) [Amazon]  
**Critical Reflection & Inspiration Response 1 due Sept. 5 by 11:59pm**

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<sup>1</sup> The schedule and/or materials covered are subject to change. Please check Canvas “Announcements” & your LTU email regularly for updates.

### **Weeks 3 & 4: Screenwriting**

- Sept. 6:       **No Classes** (LTU Break)
- Sept. 8:       Read: [Black Panther script](#)
- Sept. 13:      Read excerpts: Hueth, Alan C. *Scriptwriting for Film, Television, and New Media*.  
                    Routledge, 2019. [Canvas]  
                    In-class: In pairs—Write a scene that could come directly after the film’s ending
- Sept. 15:      In-class: In pairs—screenplay, cont.

### **Weeks 5 & 6: Comics & Graphic Novels**

- Sept. 20:      In-class: In pairs—screenplay, cont.  
*Black Panther Scene First Draft (for peers) due via Celtx Sept. 21 by 11:59pm*
- Sept. 22:      In-class: Screenplay Peer Review on Celtx  
*Black Panther Scene Final Draft (for Dr. Schaefer) due via Canvas Sept. 25, 11:59pm*
- Sept. 27:      Read: *Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet Vol. 1* [[ComiXology free trial](#)]  
                    Bring your fave comic or GN to share (see Canvas for guidelines). Activities to ensue!
- Sept. 29:      Comics activities, cont.  
*Critical Reflection & Inspiration Response 2 due Oct. 3 by 11:59pm*

### **Weeks 7 & 8: Free Verse Poetry**

- Oct. 4:        View & read: Regie Gibson, “[Eulogy of Jimi Christ](#)” (2003) [hyperlink & canvas]  
                    In-class: Childish Gambino, “[This is America](#)” (2018) and other music videos TBA
- Oct. 6:        Read & listen: Adrienne Rich, “[Diving into the Wreck](#)” (1973) [hyperlink]  
*Bring **printed** copy of Rich’s poem & a pen/pencil to Zoom session*
- Oct. 11:       Read: Audre Lorde, “Meet” & other poems from *The Black Unicorn* (1978) **Perusall**  
                    Recommended: Amanda Gorman’s [inaugural poem](#) (2021)
- Oct. 13:       In-class: Free Verse Writing

### **Weeks 9 & 10: Form Poems**

- Oct. 18: Read & listen: Andrew Marvell, "[To His Coy Mistress](#)" (1861) AND  
Read: John Keats, "[Ode to a Nightingale](#)" (1819)  
**Bring printed copy of both poems & a pen/pencil to Zoom session**
- Oct. 20: No class (Dr. Schaefer @[Cine-Excess Conference](#))  
Read and listen to 3 "[Golden Shovel](#)" poems: [Brooks](#), [Hayes](#), [Harjo](#)  
**Critical Reflection & Inspiration Response 3 due Oct. 24 by 11:59pm**
- Oct. 25: In-class: Poetry Writing!  
**Poem (free verse OR form) First Draft for peer review due Oct. 26 by 11:59pm**
- Oct. 27: In-class: Poetry Peer Review  
**Poem (free verse OR form) Final Draft due Oct. 30 by 11:59pm**

### **Weeks 11-12: Prose: Nonfiction & Fiction**

- Nov. 1: Read: Cherríe Moraga's essay, "La Güera" **Perusall**  
In-class: Rupi Kaur's poem, "[Broken English](#)" (2017)
- Nov. 3: Read: [Guardian article](#) on Anita Sarkeesian & #GamerGate (2017)  
In-class: Prose Writing  
**Critical Reflection & Inspiration Response 4 due Nov. 7 by 11:59pm**
- Nov. 8: Read: Sandra Cisneros, "Woman Hollering Creek" (1991) **Perusall**  
In-class: Prose Writing  
**Prose First Draft due by Nov. 9 by 11:59pm**
- Nov. 10: In-class: Prose Peer Review; **Prose Final Draft due Nov. 13 by 11:59pm**

### **Weeks 13-14: Video Game Storytelling**

- Nov. 15: In-class: Video game show & tell (see Canvas for guidelines);  
In pairs: Organize ideas, brainstorm video game story, setting, characters, etc.
- Nov. 17: In-class: Video game show & tell (see Canvas for guidelines);  
In pairs: Organize ideas, brainstorm video game story, setting, characters, etc.
- Nov. 22: **Elevator Pitch due in class**
- Nov. 24: **No Classes** (LTU Break)

**Weeks 15-16: Video Games, cont.**

Nov. 29: In-class: Video game show & tell (see Canvas for guidelines); Storyboarding via Celtx

Dec. 1: In-class: Storyboarding via Celtx

Dec. 6: In-class: Video game show & tell (see Canvas for guidelines); Storyboarding via Celtx

Dec. 8: In-class: Storyboarding via Celtx

**Video Game Storyboard First Draft for peer review due via Celtx Dec. 12 by 11:59pm**

**Exam period:** Monday, Dec. 13 from 1:45-3:15: Video Game Storyboard peer review

**Video Game Storyboard Final Draft due via Celtx AND Canvas Dec. 15 by 11:59pm**