

# Department of Creative Writing—FALL 2019

The University of Texas at El Paso  
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## UNDERGRADUATE COURSES FALL 2019

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### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (001)

CRN 11852—QUINN 103 9:00AM—10:20AM—MW—ALESSANDRA NARVAEZ-VARELA

### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (002)

CRN 11853—EDUC 108 9:00AM—10:20AM—TR—TBA

### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (004)

CRN 11854—LART 210 10:30AM—11:50AM—MW—ALESSANDRA NARVAEZ-VARELA

### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (005)

CRN 12880—EDUC 108 10:30AM—11:50AM—TR—DAVID HIRIART

### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (007)

CRN 15580—SCI 1.0204 12:00PM—1:20PM—MW—TBA

### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (008)

CRN 15581—SCI 1.0204 12:00PM—1:20PM—TR—TBA

### CRW 3362 INTRO TO CREATIVE WRITING (009)

CRN 15582—MGYM 123 1:30PM—2:50PM—TR—DANIEL CHACON

### CRW 3363 FOUNDATIONAL TECHNIQUES (001)

CRN 17017—EDUC 301 10:30AM—11:50AM—TR—SYLVIA AGUILAR

#### DESCRIPTION

This course examines the foundational forms, techniques, and ideas that provide the context for contemporary practices of creative writing, in both Fiction and Poetry. Beginning with poetry, we will study the traditional forms and the ideas that animated this genre in the past. We will also learn about the techniques and related terminology used in discussions of poetry. We will then turn our attention to forms of fiction; from the XIX Century short story and novel to the many variations of the forms and techniques we find in the XX century, to examine the evolution of this genre. We will learn and practice some of the most useful techniques for crafting fiction.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Gain a perspective on the genres of poetry and fiction to see and understand how and why a writer chooses to employ different techniques and forms.
2. Through our intense study of significant texts, we will hone our reading skills, learning to read deeply and acknowledge the available forms and techniques for varying purposes.

#### MATERIALS

- Hamilton Sharon. *Essential Literary Terms: A Brief Norton Guide with Exercises*. Norton, 2017.
- Abani, Chris. *The Face: Cartography of the Void*. Restless Books, 2016.

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### CRW 3371 READING AND WRITING FICTION (001)

CRN 16459—EDUC 110 10:30AM—11:50AM—MW—TBA

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### CRW 3373 WRITING IN SOCIETY (003)

#### DOCUMENTARY POETICS

CRN 15203—EDUC 110 12:00PM—1:20PM—TR—ROSA ALCALA

#### DESCRIPTION

In this course, students will read poetry that employs investigative techniques in order to interrogate, document, or revisit a particular concern, place, or time. In some of these books, the research proceeds from a personal quest or query, such as Eleni Sikelianos' *You Animal Machine*, which attempts to examine the colorful life of the author's grandmother. In others, the research is a means to explore a societal issue or historical event, as we'll see in Mark Nowak's insightful look into the mining industry in *Coal Mountain Elementary*. Whether proceeding from the personal or not, these books demonstrate that the main ethical and aesthetic challenge in this type of approach is in opening the way—by delving into archives, conducting interviews, etc.—for a new understanding and presentation of the subject matter. In doing so, documentary poetry is a means to recovering undocumented histories, and also troubling master narratives. On a more practical level, it allows research, rather than inspiration or memory, to generate and drive the poetic material. In addition to reading and discussing books and essays that engage this poetic genre, students will initiate their own documentary poetry project.

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### CRW 3374 NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES (001)

#### REALITY AND OTHER FICTIONS

CRN 18176—CBA 330 1:30PM—2:50PM—MW—JEFFREY SIRKIN

#### DESCRIPTION

What is reality, what is fantasy, and can we distinguish between them? In this class we will explore what is often referred to as "speculative fiction"—a sub-genre of science fiction exploring the blurry lines between reality and unreality, history and fiction, the present and the past, memory and the future, and the ways in which technology might alter our perception of the world. We will read novels by authors such as Philip K. Dick, Ursula K. LeGuin, Neal Stephenson, Samuel R. Delaney, and Margaret Atwood. Assignments will include weekly writing responses, a midterm essay exam, and a final project.

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**CRW 3375 POETICS (001)**

CRN 16457—CBA 330 10:30AM—11:50AM—TR—ANDREA COTE-BOTERO

**DESCRIPTION**

This course studies the foundational forms, techniques, and concepts that inform the practice of writing poetry. Through the reading of selected literary and texts, we will review essential elements of literary tradition while building a critical language to discuss the art of reading and writing poetry. We will study the development of structure and aesthetic ideas from traditional closed forms such as Sestina, Villanelle, and Sonnet, to open

Forms such as free verse and prose poem. The creative writing component of this class consists in the elaboration of a creative writing portfolio based on specific writing exercises, from imitation of classical form, toward the composition of experimental text, prose poetry, and confessional poems, among others.

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**CRW 3376 TEACHING CREATIVE WRITING (001)**

CRN 18177—NURS 219 1:30PM—2:50PM—TR—SYLVIA AGUILAR

**DESCRIPTION**

At some point all writers get to teach, either in high schools, community colleges, or independent literary workshops, but not all writers know how to help the writing of others. This course will provide you with the resources, strategies, and ideas to design successful creative writing courses. This is a practical class that will help you develop skills to create higher quality classes that generate higher quality writing, you will learn that there are different styles of teaching writing creatively and in this course you will learn to build and share your own.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To understand the particularities of teaching creative writing
2. To gain experience in designing and teaching.
3. To produce a writing activity or workshop that involves the community of El Paso.

**MATERIALS**

- Stockton, Helen. *Teaching Creative Writing: Ideas, exercises, resources and lesson plans for teachers of creative-writing classes*. How To Books, 2009.

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**CRW 4302 SCREENWRITING (001)**

CRN 16458—CBA 330 12:00PM—1:20PM—TR—LEX WILLIFORD

**DESCRIPTION**

Intensive study and practice in various forms and approaches of screenwriting, including workshop discussion of individual student screenwriting. This course will be an intensive study of screenplay format for the feature film, screenplay structure and screenwriting, including a workshop of student pitches and Ackerman Scenograms, treatments, screenplays and synopses. Students will write half a feature-length script or a short script (45-60 minutes/pages).

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# GRADUATE COURSES

## FALL 2019

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**CRW 5321 NARRATIVE THEORY AND POETICS (001)**

CRN 11980—ONLINE—TIM Z HERNANDEZ

**DESCRIPTION**

This course will explore a variety of narrative techniques and theoretical topics which are at play in the works we read, and in our own creative process. Topics such as Jerome Rothenberg's *Polemics and Poetics*, to German philosopher, Herta Muller's concepts of Auto-fiction, and a variety of others will be explored. Students will engage in intensive readings in literary criticism and other provocative texts, as they deconstruct the aesthetics, form, and the act of writing, in both poetry and prose. This course will provide a broad overview of critical reflection by philosophers, theorists, and authors.

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**CRW 5321 NARRATIVE THEORY AND POETICS (002)**

CRN 17018—CCSB 1.0204 3:00PM—5:50PM—W—JOSE DE PIEROLA

**DESCRIPTION**

The main aim of this course is twofold: 1. To give students a solid background on poetics, including narrative theory; and 2. To help students develop, understand and write about their own poetics. Therefore, in this seminar we will explore the meaning of *poetics*, and read the most influential texts in the field.

Students registered in this class should have a basic understanding of the elements of poetry and fiction, should be able to write at the graduate level, and should be able to read analytically both theory and literature. As an intensive course on the subject, this class will require students to read an average of twenty pages per week and participate in each week's discussions.

**READINGS****Nonfiction**

- Reading Packet, available at: Paper Chase (915-541-7072)
- Aristotle: *Poetics* (ebook)
- Horace: *Ars Poetica* (ebook)
- Henry James: *The Art of Fiction* (ebook)
- Mary Oliver: *A Poetry Handbook* (Mariner Books ISBN 978-0156724005)
- Deborah Brown, Annie Finch & Maxine Kumin (Editors): *Lofty Dogmas: Poets on Poetics* (University of Arkansas Press ISBN 978-1557287922)

**Fiction & Poetry**

- Shakespeare: *Hamlet* (play)
- Hans Christian Andersen: *Three Tales* (ebook)
- María de Zayas: *Novelas Ejemplares* (ebook)
- Gustave Flaubert: *Madame Bovary* (ebook)
- Michael Curtiz: *Casablanca* (film)
- Michael Ondaatje: *Coming Through Slaughter* (Vintage ISBN 978-0679767855)
- Alejandra Pizarnik: *Extracting the Stone of Madness* (New Dimensions ISBN 978-0811223966)

- Eavan Boland and Mark Strand: *The Making of a Poem* (W.W. Norton & Co. ISBN 978-0393321784)

#### ASSIGNMENTS

- Weekly Response (≈600 words)
- Presentation (20 minutes)
- Writer's Statement 5–7 pages (≈1,500 words)
- Research Project of about 15 pages (≈4,500 words)

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#### CRW 5364 FORMS & TECHNIQUES OF FICTION (004)

CRN 13988—UGLC 338 6:00PM—8:50PM—T—LEX WILLIFORD

#### DESCRIPTION

This course will be an intensive study of the history of the short story, including the modern and contemporary. The course will include three short critical analysis papers (2 pages) and a longer critical analysis paper (8-10 pages). We'll also use the free Adobe Acrobat Reader for the entire class to make comments on each other's exercises, short-shorts, stories, and/or novel chapters.

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#### CRW 5364 FORMS & TECHNIQUES OF FICTION (005)

CRN 16461—ONLINE—SYLVIA AGUILAR

#### DESCRIPTION

This course examines the foundational forms and techniques, which provide the context for the practice of Fiction, a genre that requires skills such as vision, creativity, and research. The class is divided into three main activities, discussion, reading, and writing. First, we will turn our attention to the most important forms of Fiction: the short-story, the novella, and the novel. Second, we will review elements such as: characters, narrator, setting, and plot by reading essays, interviews and stories by various authors. We will finally turn to writing; students will put into practice some of the techniques learned during the semester and work on a narrative project.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Gain a perspective on the craft of Fiction.
2. Provide students with the fundamental forms and tools for their own writing.
3. Hone reading and analysis skills, to provide and receive feedback that will help in the improvement of writing.

#### MATERIALS

- LaPlante, Alice. *Method and Madness: The Making of a Story*. NY: Norton, 2009.
- Groff, Lauren. *Florida*. Riverhead, 2018.

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#### CRW 5366 ADVANCED FICTION WRITING (001)

##### COMING OF AGE NOVEL

CRN 18180—ONLINE—TIM Z HERNANDEZ

#### DESCRIPTION

Marking passage from childhood to adulthood provides great fodder for fiction. Often, the initiation involves a journey away from home, into new realities, a life shift, a sexual awakening, or very simply, a recognition that a larger world exists beyond that of the child's. Using our own *bildungsroman* as a springboard for fiction, we will analyze, deconstruct, and engage in our own stories, guided by an array of diverse literary works from writers such as Sherwood

Anderson, Norma Cantu, Toni Morrison, John Steinbeck, and others. In the end, students will come away with a broad overview of masters in the genre, and a working understanding of how various fictional concepts and techniques work, as well as some of the theoretical elements at play.

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#### CRW 5367 ADVANCED POETRY WRITING (002)

CRN 17178—CBA 330 6:00PM—8:50PM—R—SASHA ROQUE PIMENTEL

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In order to begin writing a poem writes Richard Wilbur, "there has to be a sudden, confident sense that there is an exploitable and interesting relationship between something perceived out there and something in the way of incipient meaning within you." In this graduate workshop, we'll work through your poems to mine that territory between the external and the internal, wrenching language down to rhythm and measure to arrive at what Denise Levertov says in a poem is not an approximation of an experience, "but the feeling of an experience, its emotional tone, its texture." In this graduate writing seminar, I'll ask you to learn advanced skills in poetry by workshopping working poems written by you and your classmates. We will focus on: finding a poem's *organic form*; creating complex meanings through line, language and whitespace; and on developing rhythm and tension through syntax, punctuation, perspective and repetition. We'll talk too about accessing poetic *duende*, using form and text to arrive at what is truly "at risk" in art, in a poem, so that we may write as closely as possible to that which is ultimately unsayable. In addition, we will focus much, throughout the semester, on publishing culture, and I'll require you to send out poems to literary journals, write literary reviews, and send out conference abstracts, all towards the goal of publishing (and working) professionally.

#### COURSE READINGS

Because this is a workshop course, the majority of the readings will comprise of your own or your classmates' poems. There are no textbooks for this class, though I will give you regular supplemental readings via handouts.

#### COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

- New poems, culminating in a final portfolio of publishable-quality poems.
- A final aesthetic statement (5-6pgs). on your developing poetics.
- Attendance and engaged participation in regularly scheduled in-class workshops.
- Presentations on literary journals, literary reviews and a formal publishing calendar.
- Attendance of 3 literary presentations in the community.

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#### CRW 5368 VAR TOPICS IN CREATIVE WRITING (001)

##### TIME, WEIGHT, AND LIGHTNESS IN POETRY AND PROSE

CRN 13970—NURS 216 6:00PM—8:50PM—M—SASHA ROQUE PIMENTEL

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through our readings and discussions, we'll explore narrative problems (and techniques) related to space and time in both contemporary poetry and prose, including: how to speak from a piece's "own" exigent present when the dramatic action has already occurred; how to braid together competing verb tenses through syntactical creativity and sonic momentum; how to collapse space and time through

imagery and rhythm; how to construct tension through sequential and stanzaic order; how to sing in “trustable” voices of prescience; how to practice poetic plasticity; how to wrestle narrative momentum with lyrical intensity; how to make visible and impel to be heard that which is not immediately visible or audible; how to attempt to trespass spaces which we may feel to be un-breacheable; and how to speak against, and into, our own borders of language, genre, culture and form.

#### COURSE ACTIVITIES

- A peer teaching presentation (on a “problem” or a technique).
- A final paper analyzing, in-depth, a narrative technique (or multiple techniques) manifested in both poetry and prose.
- Midterm and/or final conference(s) about a current writing project, including a self-assessment of difficulties and goals.
- Smaller creative writing projects. (Please note that while there will be opportunities to workshop prompted prose scenes in small-group formats and full poems in whole-class workshops this semester, that this class is conceptualized as a literature course, not as a workshop course, so the majority of our work this semester will be spent through reading published literature and analyzing that literature together in the interest of furthering our individual and collective understanding of literary craft.)
- Attendance of 3 literary presentations in the community.

#### COURSE BOOKS

Course Books (other books/texts may be assigned, and in some cases, excerpts from the following works will be used. There may be changes to this reading list according to my discretion):

- José de Pierola, *Fabulations*
- Tracy K. Smith, *Wade in Water* (translation by Andrea Cote, *Atravesar el agua*)
- José Saramago, *Blindness*
- Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
- Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*
- Anna Badkhen, *Walking with Abel*
- Colson Whitehead, *The Underground Railroad*
- Sara Uribe, *Antígona González*
- Edward Hirsch, *Gabriel*
- Aracelis Girmay, *The Black Maria*
- Hilton Als, *White Girls*
- Patricia Smith, *Incendiary Art*

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#### CRW 5368 VAR TOPICS IN CREATIVE WRITING (003)

CRN 17019—ONLINE—PAULA CUCURELLA LAVIN

#### DESCRIPTION

What is poetry? I am not convinced we can short answer this question. The concern with the “essence” of poetry has been a lifelong affair for philosophers, poets, and writers at large, and there is probably no literary movement or aesthetic project that has not asked the question and offered an answer, thereby mapping the literary field as a whole. In this class, we will read and discuss a variety of texts that pose the question and attempt to answer it with the aim of gaining a general understanding of the existing aesthetic theories of poetry and poetics. By the end of this class, writers should be better positioned for entering this debate and, perhaps, for determining the line of thought and aesthetics in which they inscribe their own work, as well as the extent to which they intervene this field.

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#### CRW 5371 WRITING THE NOVEL (001)

#### THE ART OF THE BURNING PATIENCE

CRN 18178—CBA 330 6:00PM—8:50PM—W—JOSE DE PIEROLA

#### DESCRIPTION

The main goal of this class is to provide students with the fundamental tools to tackle the long narrative form of the novel, as well as help them develop a resilient creative practice that will sustain the effort required.

Though there are no “rules” for writing fiction, this class will cover the basic principles—used by published, successful writers—identifying them in the novels we will read. The writing exercises are designed to master these principles by allowing students to see how they work when put at the service of concrete narrative needs.

To help students develop a resilient creative practice, the class will use assignments and in-class exercises that will use the two modes of writing necessary to create fiction. Special emphasis will be placed on practices that consistently tap into the subconscious.

This class is conceived for novel writing, but it can also be useful for short story writers planning a book-length project. Students will be required to participate in every meeting, prepare a presentation on one of the suggested novels, write a weekly response, and produce a manuscript of at least forty-five pages (≈12,000–14,000 words), submitted in three installments. Students writing a short story collection will need to submit three short stories of around ten pages each (≈2,800–3,200 words each).

#### READINGS

##### Fiction

- Patricia Highsmith: *The Tremor of Forgery* (Grove Press ISBN 978-0802145642)
- W.G. Sebald: *The Rings of Saturn* (New Directions ISBN 978-0811213783)
- Francine Prose: *Lovers at the Chameleon Club, Paris 1932* (Harper ISBN 978-0061713781)
- Yoko Ogawa: *The Housekeeper and the Professor* (Picadors ISBN 978-0312427801)
- José Saramago: *The Year of the Death of Ricardo Reis* (Harvest in Translation ISBN 978-0156996938)

##### On Fiction Writing

- Dorothea Brande: *Becoming a Writer* (Harcourt, Brace & Co. ISBN 0-87477-164-1)
- Joyce Carol Oates: *The Faith of a Writer* (Harper Perennial ISBN 978-0060565541)
- John Gardner: *The Art of Fiction* (Vintage ISBN 978-0679734031)
- Milan Kundera: *The Art of the Novel* (Harper Perennial ISBN 978-0060093747)
- Mario Vargas Llosa: *Letters to a Young Novelist* (Picador ISBN 978-0312421724)
- Robert Olen Butler: *From Where You Dream* (Grove Press ISBN 978-0802142573)
- Orhan Pamuk: *The Naive and Sentimental Novelist* (Vintage International ISBN 978-0307745248)
- Hazel Smith: *The Writing Experiment: Strategies for Innovative Creative Writing* (Allen & Unwin ISBN 1-74114015-3)

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**CRW 5372 ADVANCED SCREENWRITING (001)**

CRN 17184—ONLINE—NELSON CARDENAS

**DESCRIPTION**

In this course, we will examine and practice screenwriting. We will study screenplay format and conventions. We will also discuss the critical elements of filmic storytelling such as structure, plot, scene development, character development, theme, genre, and dialogue. As the course progresses, we will learn how to use them to convey your intention and to provoke audience's emotions. We will pay particular attention to creating compelling scenes, fleshing out primary and secondary characters, conflict presentation and resolution and your story visual implications. In addition to the script, students will workshop student's outlines, treatment, loglines, pitching, and synopsis. The final work will be a script for a short to medium length film (up to 60 pages), but students are welcome to present a feature-length film script (90-120 pages). Students are welcome to submit their work in English or Spanish.

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**CRW 5379 KAFKA AND THE ART OF FICTION (001)**

CRN 18182—ONLINE—PAULA CUCURELLA LAVIN

**DESCRIPTION**

When we reflect on the literary absurd, the historical context plays an important role in understanding its critical component. Either as a criticism of the devastating panorama left by the aftermath of two World Wars, or as an expression of the skepticism toward rationalism and the idea of progress already manifest on the first half of the XX century, writers such as Franz Kafka, Albert Camus, Samuel Beckett, and Clarice Lispector, among others, made of the absence of meaning the content and form of their work. In this seminar, we will study these authors in order to gain a better understanding of the style, techniques, ideas, and philosophies at stake in their different modulations of absurdism, as well as the subtle criticisms of social and literary structures and institutions that their works contain.

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**CRW 5382 STUDIES IN FORM (002)****DOCUMENTARY POETICS**

CRN 15586—EDUC 110 3:00PM—5:50PM—T—ROSA ALCALA

LITERATURE COURSE

**DESCRIPTION**

In this course students will read poetry that employs investigative techniques in order to interrogate, document, or revisit a particular concern, place, or time. In some of these books, the research proceeds from a personal quest or query, such as Eleni Sikelianos' *You Animal Machine*, which attempts to examine the colorful life of the author's grandmother. In others, the research is a means to explore a societal issue or historical event, as we'll see in Luis Felipe Fabre's *Sodomía en la Nueva España*, which sheds light on the

violent repression of non-hetero-normative sexual behavior during Mexico's colonial period. Whether proceeding from the personal or not, these books demonstrate that the main ethical and aesthetic challenge in this type of approach is in opening the way—by delving into archives, conducting interviews, etc.—for a new understanding and presentation of the subject matter. In doing so, documentary poetry is a means to recovering undocumented histories, and also troubling master narratives. On a more practical level, it allows research, rather than inspiration or memory, to generate and drive the poetic material. In addition to reading and discussing books and essays that engage this poetic genre, students will initiate their own documentary poetry project.

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**CRW 5382 STUDIES IN FORM (999)****REALITY AND OTHER FICTIONS**

CRN 99999—ONLINE—JEFF SIRKIN

LITERATURE COURSE

**DESCRIPTION**

What is reality, what is fantasy, and can we distinguish between them? In this class we will explore works of what is often referred to as "speculative fiction"—a sub-genre of science fiction exploring the blurry lines between reality and unreality, history and fiction, the present and the past, memory and the future, and the ways in which technology might alter our world and perception. We will read novels by authors such as Philip K. Dick, Ursula K. LeGuin, Neal Stephenson, Samuel R. Delaney, and Margaret Atwood, and we will read theory by writers such as Jean-Francois Lyotard, Guy Debord, and Frederic Jameson. Assignments will include weekly writing responses and a final critical/creative project.

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**CRW 5382 STUDIES IN FORM (003)****THE POET AND THE CITY**

CRN 17174—ONLINE—ANDREA COTE-BOTERO

LITERATURE COURSE

**DESCRIPTION**

When Plato expelled poets from the ideal republic, he opened up the question for an always changing and stimulating relationship between the poet and the city. This graduate seminar will explore some determining points of that connection in modern and contemporary poetry. Beginning with the dawn of urban poetry with the writing of Charles Baudelaire, we will study different expressions of the relationship between the poet and the polis. Some of the topics we will cover are: urban landscapes, poetics of exile, the city and the outsider, post-war suburban American poetry and contemporary troubadours. Some of the readings will include: Baudelaire, Whitman, Borges, Lorca, Calvino, Frank O'hara, contemporary poets such as Natasha Trethewey, Barbara Jane-Fernandez, Natalie Sceners Zapico and more. Some theoretical readings will include Walter Benjamin and W.H Auden.