

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

APPROVAL PAGE

Proposal Title: New Creative Writing Class for Core Curriculum: Writing in the Contemporary World

College: LART Department: CREATIVE WRITING

DEPARTMENT CHAIR- Prof. Daniel Chacón

I have read the enclosed proposal and approve this proposal on behalf of the department.



2/12/2025

Signature

Date

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHAIR – Dr. Selfa Chew-Melendez

I have read the enclosed documents and approve the proposal on behalf of the college curriculum committee.

Signature

Date

COLLEGE DEAN – Dr. Anadeli Bencomo

I have read the enclosed documents and approve the proposal on behalf of the college. I certify that the necessary funds will be allocated by the college in support of this proposal.

Signature

Date

CURRICULUM CHANGE MEMO

Date: Febr. 26, 2025

From: Professor Sylvia Aguilar and Dr. Jeffrey Sirkin, Department of Creative Writing

Through: Professor Daniel Chacon, Chair, Department of Creative Writing

Through: Dr. Anadeli Bencomo, Dean, College of Liberal Arts

Through: Dr. Selfa Chew, Chair, LART College Curriculum Committee

To: Dr. Alexander Friedman, Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

Proposal Title: **New CRW Class for Core Curriculum: Writing in the Contemporary World**

Select the proposal content (select as many as apply) and provide the rationale.

Content

- New program or Program Change
- Bachelor's
 - Master's
 - Doctoral/Professional
 - Certificate
 - Fast Track
 - Minor
 - Concentration/Track
- New Course**
- Closure (program, certificate, minor, concentration)
- Change
- CIP Code
 - Program/certificate SCH
 - Course Title
 - Course Description
 - Graduate Program Admission Requirements

Rationale

CRW 2373 Writing in the Contemporary World will introduce students to the vast array of writing in and about the contemporary world. By reading and writing literary pieces in a variety of genres students will engage with the social, cultural, political, and economical circumstances in which we live. This class is intended for the Core Curriculum, to make creative writing available to the larger university's student body and especially to first or second year students outside of LART who may otherwise never get an opportunity to be introduced to the field and practice of creative writing.

UTEP Core Curriculum Course Addition Proposal

Course Prefix and Number: CRW 2373

Course Title: Writing in the Contemporary World

Course Description: This course introduces students to writing about the contemporary world in a variety of genres. Students will read, write, and engage with an array of themes and issues related to our everyday lives.

Credit hours: 3

Terms Offered (Fall, Spring, Fall & Spring): Fall & Spring

TCCN:

Prerequisites:

Foundational Component Area (Select one)

- Communication** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, TW, PR)
- Math** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, EQS)
- Life and Physical Sciences** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, EQS, TW)
- Language, Philosophy, and Culture** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, SR, PR)
- Creative Arts** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, TW, SR)
- American History** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, SR, PR)
- Government/Political Science** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, SR, PR)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, EQS, SR)
- Component Area** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, at least one additional objective)

Core Curriculum Objectives

Explain how the course addresses each objective if applicable as determined by the section above. ***All courses must include critical thinking and communication skills.***

Critical Thinking Skills (CT) creative thinking; innovation; inquiry; and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

Critical thinking will be necessary to read, analyze, respond, discuss and write (creatively and critically) in response to course texts of fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction.

Communication Skills (COM) effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication

Students will need to write critically and creatively in response to course materials and themes and will need to discuss and present (orally and visually) in response to course texts and themes.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS) manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions

Teamwork (TW) ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with other to support a shared purpose or goal

Students will work together in small groups to analyze, discuss, and present arguments and ideas to class, both informally and formally for their midterm project.

Personal Responsibility (PR) ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

Social Responsibility (SR) intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Course texts will engage with themes of civic responsibility; in a variety of assignments students will examine and rethink their roles (as citizens and as writers) in relation to regional, national, and global communities.

Course Assessment Plan

Provide examples of the major assignments referenced for each category below, if applicable as determined by the section above. All courses must include critical thinking and communication skills.

Critical Thinking

- **Mid-Term Group Presentation:** Students will read and evaluate and present on three texts from different genres and how they address a specific theme.
- **Final Project:** Students will write 2000 words of creative writing that synthesizes and thinks through themes and strategies discussed in class preceded by a critical intro that explains and argues for their process with a works cited.

Communication Skills

- **Mid-Term Presentation** (in a group, students will need to present orally and through a slideshow on a theme uniting several course texts); and **Final Project** (students will need to write a 2000-word creative narrative preceded by a critical intro explaining the composition process and the way the intended themes are carried through the creative piece.)

Empirical and Quantitative Skills

Teamwork

- **Mid-Term** is a team project and will require group interaction and participation. Although the **Final Project** is individual, it will be evaluated in a group workshop setting as part of the writing and revision process.

Personal Responsibility

Social Responsibility

- **Mid-Term Presentation and Final Project:** Major assignments asking students to interact and analyze texts in relation to course themes will encourage students to place themselves in relation to issues of social responsibility as encountered in course texts and discussions.

Contact

Name: Dr. Jeffrey Sirkin, Prof. Sylvia Aguilar

Department: Creative Writing

Email: jsirkin@utep.edu

Phone: (915) 747-5713

Course Syllabus

See Below

CRW 2373

Writing in the Contemporary World

Spring 2026

Professor:

E-Mail:

Office Hours:

Overview

This course introduces students to the vast array of writing in and about the contemporary world. By reading literary pieces in a variety of genres—fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and more—students will engage with the social, cultural, political, and economical circumstances in which we live, and will learn the ways in which contemporary writers think about and respond to issues that affect our lives. Through lecture, discussion, and writing the class will investigate both literary craft and the way writers use literature as a way to reflect on the human condition.

Goals

At the end of the course the students should be able to:

1. Understand creative writing as a vehicle for social and cultural thought.
2. Read and discuss the works of contemporary writers.
3. Write critically about contemporary creative writing and events.
4. Respond creatively to issues of social and cultural relevance.
5. Work in groups to develop creative projects engaged with contemporary issues and/or personal concerns.

Course Expectations

Reading and discussion are the two main activities of the course, therefore students should expect to:

- ❖ Write analytically and creatively in response to the readings.
- ❖ Prepare questions for discussion.
- ❖ Work in groups to gain deeper understanding of the material read in class.

Evaluation

This course will evaluate three main activities: questions for discussion, participation, and creative assignments. The Final Grade will be determined as follows:

20% Creative Exercises. To be written in class or as homework.

20% Participation. Be present and engaged each session.

20% Midterm Presentation. Group presentation of assigned theme.

30% Final Project. A paper that includes both creative and critical writing.

10% Questions. Based on our readings

Methodology

This course is part lecture, part practice, and part discussion. Critical thinking strategies will be utilized.

Themes

- ❖ Immigration and the Borderlands
- ❖ Popular Culture
- ❖ Working Lives
- ❖ Writing the Self

Readings

Students can expect to read work by the following writers:

- ❖ Ben Sáenz, Alfredo Corchado, Eileen Trouax, Juan Felipe Herrera, Gabriel Dozal
- ❖ Hanif Abdurraqib, Natalie Díaz, Kendrick Lamar, Hua Hsu
- ❖ Lucia Berlin, Daniel Orozco, Mark Novak, Martín Espada
- ❖ Rosa Alcalá, Sonya Renee Taylor, Carmen Gimenez Smith, Phillip Lopate

Midterm Presentation

You will prepare a presentation in groups regarding one of the themes/authors discussed in class. Details are forthcoming.

Final Project

As a final project you will submit a piece (1800-2000 words) that includes creative and critical writing addressing one of the themes of the course and establishing a conversation with the exercises, discussions, and readings in class. Because part of our class is the idea of writing in community, you will work with one partner.

You will: 1) present a proposal, 2) find three news sources related to your topic 3) submit a final version.

Preferred Mode of Address

The Department of Creative Writing at UTEP supports students' right to define their identity in terms of name, pronoun, and mode of address. This class will provide each student the opportunity to let their preference be known, and will support and respect that preference. Should you need to discuss this issue with your instructor, make an appointment early in the semester.

Accommodations Statement:

I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations. Please, email me during the first two weeks or make an appointment to discuss any special needs you

might have.

Disabilities and Protection for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University.

The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal. <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/>

Texas Senate Bill 17

The recent law that outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Expectations and academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered post-SB 17, and students should not feel the need to censor their speech pertaining to topics including race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Generative AI

As this is a Creative Writing course, where one of our fundamental goals is to develop our own writing skills and strengthen our creative imaginations, the use of generative AI tools such as Chat GPT are NOT PERMITTED in this course, unless otherwise noted for specific assignments.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on

laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline.

I encourage all students to familiarize themselves with the Office of Student Life tutorial on Academic Integrity (borrowed from the University of Maryland):
<https://www.umgc.edu/current-students/learning-resources/academic-integrity/tutorial>

For more, see the UTEP Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution website:
<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/osccr/>

Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [UTEP Technology Support](#)
- [UTEP Blackboard Help](#)
- [Purdue University Online Writing Lab](#)
- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.
- [CRW Department Undergraduate Advising and Resources](#)

Individual Resources

- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.

- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments

CALENDAR

(tentative)

Week 1	Introduction to course. Writing in the Contemporary World, why, how? Ben Sáenz
Week 2	Immigration and the Borderlands Reading and Discussion: Gabriel Dozal, Alfredo Corchado
Week 3	Immigration and the Borderlands Reading and Discussion: Eileen Trouax, Juan Felipe Herrera
Week 4	Immigration and the Borderlands Writing and Discussion
Week 5	Popular Culture Reading and Discussion: Hanif Abdurraqib, Natalie Díaz Instructions for Midterm presentation
Week 6	Popular Culture Writing and Discussion: Kendrick Lamar, Hua Hsu
Week 7	Popular Culture Writing and Discussion
Week 8	Midterm Presentations
Week 9	SPRING BREAK
Week 10	Working Lives Reading and Discussion: Lucía Berlin and Martín Espada Instructions for Final Project
Week 11	Working Lives Reading and Discussion: Daniel Orozco and Mark Novak
Week 12	Working Lives Writing and Discussion: Submit proposal for final project

Week 13	Writing the Self Reading and Discussion: Rosa Alcalá and Phillip Lopate
Week 14	Writing the Self Reading and Discussion: Sonya Renee Taylor and Carmen Gimenez Smith
Week 15	Writing the Self Writing and Discussion
Week 16	Final Project Presentations
	Final Submission: