

Fall 2024

COM 325-003: ST: Creative Writing and the Moving Image

Rebekah Rutkoff

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COM325
Creative Writing and the Moving Image
10-11.20am / CKB 215/Face-to-Face

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Office hrs: M 11.30-12.30 + by appt.

Creative Writing and the Moving Image

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This workshop-based course will focus on the rich crossroads between creative writing and moving images. As we learn from visiting practitioners, explore the model of a hybrid (writer/media-maker) practice, and examine the ways in which disparate media establish dialogue and trade places, students will produce their own screen-writing experiments in poetic, essayistic, and narrative modes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Practice writing for screen in multiple genres and moving image types
- Acquire or improve the fundamentals of film/media literacy
- Apply theoretical models to the production of creative work
- Acquire the skills to effectively critique peer-produced creative writing and productively participate in a creative writing workshop

MATERIALS

Most course materials are available on Canvas. You'll have to buy or rent several films, but do not purchase them all at the start of the semester—the later weeks of the syllabus might change. If you don't already have one, please sign up for a Newark Public Library card (available to all NJIT students) so that you can access films via Kanopy.

PREREQUISITES

HUM102 (grade of C or higher) + one HIST and HUM GER 200-level course (grade of C or higher).

REQUIREMENTS

The course will combine discussions of assigned readings and moving image works with weekly workshopping of student writing. Instigating prompts for student writing will spring from the models and techniques encountered in the assigned material.

Participation - 30%
Short Assignments - 35%
Final Project - 35%

Participation

Thorough reading/screening of the selected texts/films is essential for engaged classroom discussion and workshopping. Please come to class ready to share insights, ideas and questions and to engage in

thoughtful workshop participation. Participation also includes in-class writing, group work, pop quizzes and forum posts.

Creative writing workshops: Each Wednesday, three students will workshop their own texts, which must be shared with the class by the preceding Monday at 5pm. To prepare for the workshop, you will make comments according to provided guidelines and submit them to the writer.

Short Texts

Each student will produce three short screen-texts; one will be revised. All writing assignments are due by class start-time on the designated day.

Final Projects

Students will produce final projects in the form of an extended screen-writing or a hybrid media object/text.

GRADING

Evaluation will follow the university's grading scale:

A = 100-90 (superior) B = 86-80 (very good) C = 76-70 (acceptable) F = 59-0 (inadequate)
B+ = 89-87 (excellent) C+ = 79-77 (good) D = 69-60 (minimum)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Every unexcused absence after the second one will reduce your participation grade. More than six unexcused absences can result in automatic failure of the course; excessive unexcused lateness of 15 minutes or more throughout the course will be considered as one absence. According to university policy, students who expect to miss classes or exams because of religious observance must submit to their instructors, by the end of the second week of classes, a written list of dates that will be missed. Similarly, athletes should submit a list of events. If you can't make a class—due to illness, an academic commitment, an interview, or a major extracurricular event—and you wish to have the absence excused, please ask the Dean of Students to review the request.

NJIT SUPPORT SERVICES

You will find links to NJIT services for students, including technical support, [here](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at dos@njit.edu. Unacknowledged use of ChatGPT or similar generative artificial software to produce writing is a violation of academic integrity.

LATE WORK

If you know in advance that you are having trouble completing a formal assignment, contact me as soon as possible. Extensions require 24 hr. notice; without an extension, the grade of late work will go down by five points per day. Late Canvas posts will receive partial credit for two weeks after the due date.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you need an accommodation due to a disability, please contact the [Office of Accessibility Resources and Services](#) to discuss your specific needs or to request a Letter of Accommodation Eligibility.

WRITING CENTER

The NJIT Writing Center offers one-on-one appointments. They are equipped to work with both creative and scholarly forms of writing. Please visit <https://www.njit.edu/writingcenter/>.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Please note: the syllabus is subject to change; changes will be announced in advance.

Sept. 4 **Introduction**

Sept. 9/11 **The Craft of Memory**

Bontoc Eulogy, Marlon Fuentes

“Marlon Fuentes. Ethnography and Primitivism - The ‘Other’ Speaks Back,”

Margo Machida

“*Bontoc Eulogy*, History, and the Craft of Memory: An Extended Conversation with Marlon E. Fuentes,” Mia Blumentritt

Sept. 16/18 **Screen Writings**

“Introduction,” *Screen Writings: Texts and Scripts from Independent Films*, Scott MacDonald

College Chums, Edwin Porter

“Yoko Ono: Ideas on Film, An Interview with Scott MacDonald”

“Film Scripts,” Yoko Ono

Practice Workshop

Sept. 23/25

Letters, Notes, Fragments

Measures of Distance, Mona Hatoum
How to Fix the World, Jackie Goss
From Alex to Alex, Alison Kobayashi
“An Conversation with Mona Hatoum,” Janine Antoni
Workshops 1/2 /3

Sept. 30/Oct. 2

Broken English

The Universal Language (La Universala Lingvo), Sam Green
“English is Spoken Here / English is Broken Here,” Lynne Sachs,
Christopher Harris, Sky Hopinka, Jeanne C. Finley, and Naeem
Mohaiemen
Workshops 4/5/6
+ Asst. 1 due Sept. 30

Oct. 7/9

Unseen Voices

Phantom of the Operator, Caroline Martel
“Unseen Voices: Caroline Martel With Jim Supanick”
Workshops 7/8/9

Oct. 14/16

Short Stories

Sink or Swim, Su Friedrich
script, *Sink or Swim*, Su Friedrich
Workshops 10/11/12

Oct. 21/23

**Into the Field: Bony Ramirez at the Newark
Museum of Art and the Robeson Gallery network**

+ Asst. 2 due Oct. 21

Oct. 28/30

Artist visit: Tamara Berger /Novel to Screen

Film and reading TBA
Workshops 13/14/15

Nov. 4/6

The Plot Thickens

Anatomy of a Fall, Justine Triet
On Film-making: An Introduction to the Craft of the Director, part 2, Alexander
McKendrick
“What a Screenplay Isn’t,” “What a Screenplay Is,” Hal Ackerman
Workshops 16/17/18

Nov. 11/13

A Marriage of Media

Losing Ground, Kathleen Collins
from *Whatever Happened to Interracial Love?* Kathleen Collins
Workshops 19/20/21
+ Asst. 3 due Nov. 11

Nov. 18/20

Inner and Outer Atmospheres

Reservation Dogs, Season 1, Episode 1
The Bear, Season 2, Episode 1 (with script)
Workshops 22/23/24

Nov. 25

Final Project Workshop

Films TBA
+ Revisions due Nov. 26
+ Friday classes meet on Wed. Nov. 27

Dec. 2/4

Works-In-Process Final Project Presentations

Dec. 9/11

Works-In-Process Final Project Presentations

Final Projects due by Dec. 14 at 11.59pm