

## **TITLE: CREATIVE WRITING: STORYTELLING THROUGH AN INTERCULTURAL LENS**

LANGUAGE: English

TOTAL HOURS: 45 hours

CREDIT: 3 credits

SIS Course Code: ENGL 212

JU Course Code (will appear on Jacksonville University transcript as): ENGL 212 - Special Topics:  
Creative Writing - Storytelling through an Intercultural Lens

### **DESCRIPTION**

This course aims to instruct the students in the techniques that professional writers and artists use to create and develop their writing projects. From a hands-on perspective, students will need to put theory into practice on a day-to-day basis. They will learn about the writing process from the very beginning, and will have to work on gathering ideas and stimulating creativity, character creation, setting, structure and point of view, among others.

This class will also use all these elements to reflect on the students' experience while abroad. All the assignments will be focused on how to use intercultural competences in order to create good writing pieces and, at the same time, will enable them to use literature and creativity to better understand and explain the challenges and takeaways of their study abroad experience. All field studies and activities will enhance students' critical thinking and will improve their cultural awareness.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

After completing this course students will be able to:

- Understand and analyze the literary pieces of others
- Gather information that can become material for future storytelling projects
- Create and develop their own literary projects
- Understand the points of view of varying cultures and reflect on the differences between their own culture and the local lifestyle.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This course will combine lectures and discussions based on readings that will be assigned for each class. Also, students will have to prepare a variety of writing pieces that will be analyzed and discussed by the other students. Readings will be a combination of Creative Writing Manuals with relevant books written by local authors such as Mercè Rodoreda, Eduardo Mendoza and Carlos Ruiz Zafón.

### **Requirements:**

Students will need a notebook or electronic device that they can use in class and field studies to take notes, complete exercises, and write up drafts and ideas. A notebook is encouraged and highly recommended.

## EVALUATION

Students will need to write a short story that revolves around their experience in Barcelona or Spain. They will also need to present an oral project that will explain what tools they have used to write it, and to justify the decisions they have made regarding point of view, narrative voice, setting and structure. This oral presentation will also have to include reflection on the study abroad experience and what they want to say to the world with the story that they have written.

Participation	15%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Written Project	30%
Final Oral Presentation	25%
Final Exam	15%

**Class participation:** Active class participation includes coming to class prepared, having read the material for that day, answering questions from the professor, asking questions and engaging in group activities. Students are encouraged to express their opinions in class with the professor and the other students. Participation also includes completing the writing pieces that the students may be asked to complete, in order to participate in the activities planned for the session.

## EXAMS

Both the midterm and the final exams may contain a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions aimed to test the students' full comprehension of facts and the ability to argue his/her opinions based on class material.

The guidelines for exams are as follows-

- Any student found cheating will automatically fail this examination. Additional sanctions may be imposed.
- Talking or communicating with other students during the examination is forbidden.
- Desks must be cleared of all books, notes and papers. All unauthorized materials must be put away and remain out of sight throughout the examination.
- All telephones and electronic devices must be turned completely off during the exam.
- Students arriving later than 15 minutes will not be allowed into the classroom to take the examination, subject to the decision of the instructor.
- At the end of the examination students will remain seated until their papers are collected. No one may leave the room until excused.
- Should assistance be required students will attract the attention of the instructor.
- Failure to follow these rules will automatically lead to failure of this examination.

## FIELD STUDIES

Each course will include a minimum of 2 field studies. These field studies will be directly related to the course work, and may include visits to monuments, companies, government buildings, or museums. Some examples of field studies for this course are a Tour in the Gracia Neighbourhood, a Scavenger Hunt in the Ciutadella Park, a visit to the UB Main Campus (the oldest university in Barcelona) and a variety of walks in the city center aimed to prepare writing exercises.



## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

SIS programs fosters critical thinking and intellectual development of its students. In doing so, SIS requires that students introduce their original thoughts, opinions, and ideas in all of their assignments with the support of cited sources. Any violations of academic integrity- such as cheating, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, academic misconduct, fabrication, misuse or misrepresentation of research, and noncompliance- may result in an automatic F or immediate dismissal from the program if the student falls below the minimum number of credits required for the term; 12 credits during the semester, or 3 hours during the summer.

**Cheating:** Any action that violates the rules and guidelines given by the instructor for submitting assignments or exams.

**Plagiarism:** Any action that presents the ideas, opinions, research, etc. of another as your own.

- Directly copying another's work without citing sources
- Submitting another person's work into your own without properly citing the source(s) used.
- Paraphrasing another person's work without providing appropriate citations

**Self-plagiarism:** Submitting a piece of one's own work to receive credit for multiple assignments in one or more classes.

**Academic Misconduct:** Any act that impedes or threatens the open exchange, expression, or flow of information or fair evaluation of students. This includes intimidation and complicity in any acts or attempts to interfere with the ethical and fair submission and evaluation of student work.

**Fabrication:** Providing inaccurate or false information, including research findings, quotes, and cited sources, etc.

**Non-compliance:** Failure to comply with the values, objectives, and procedures contained in this policy.

As SIS is accredited by Jacksonville University, students are held accountable to JU's [Academic Integrity and Code of Conduct](#) . You are expected to read and understand the JU terms and regulations of Academic Misconduct.

(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PyZmN0EAH1o4bKVZdzxVyKw-wdiwXewx/view>)

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Semester:** Students are allowed THREE absences throughout the semester without penalty. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

**Summer:** Students are allowed TWO absences throughout the summer without penalty. Starting with the third absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

*\*January Term students are allowed TWO absences as well.*

There are NO excused absences. If a student misses class because s/he is sick, that counts as one of the allowed absences. No excused absences and no excuses.

Students that arrive late 5 minutes or more will receive a 0 for participation for the day.

## COURSE CONTENT

Session	Content	Activities and Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>	<p><b>IDEAS 1: Truth and myth about inspiration</b></p> <p>Introduction to course Evaluation and assignments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to become a writer</li> <li>• Stimulating creativity and imagination</li> <li>• Develop a writing habit</li> <li>• Postponing perfection. Ruth Padel's sequence of stages</li> <li>• Freewriting</li> <li>• Clustering</li> <li>• How to avoid writer's block</li> </ul>	<p><b>Video:</b> Neil Gaiman: Where do you get your ideas from?</p> <p><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-C48jAkVII0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-C48jAkVII0</a></p>
<b>Week 2</b>	<p><b>IDEAS 2: Truth and myth about inspiration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping a writer's notebook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gathering. Record of daily events</li> <li>○ Record of reading</li> <li>○ A diary</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Writing what you know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The everyday</li> <li>○ The senses</li> <li>○ Memory and Narrative</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Writing what you come to know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Memory and association</li> <li>○ Daydreaming</li> <li>○ Cultural memory</li> <li>○ Research</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Field study:</b> The Flaneur. Las Ramblas. Clustering. Walk around the city center. What is different from your hometown? Why is it different? What might it say about the local culture?</p> <p><b>Writing Exercise:</b> Using your cluster, your freewriting pieces, and all the items discussed in the first two weeks, present a 500-1000 words essay about your first weeks in Barcelona.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rodoreda, Mercè. La Plaça del Diamant Chapter I to IV</li> <li>- Wood, James. <i>How Fiction Works</i>. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2008. p. 95-139</li> </ul>

<b>Week 3</b>	<p><b>CHARACTER 1: Who is your hero?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Character creation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finding your characters</li> <li>○ Flat and round characters</li> <li>○ Developing your characters</li> <li>○ Character Checklist</li> <li>○ Credibility and Complexity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Times of the Dove Example.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Writing Exercise:</b> Could you describe Colometa? How is she? How does she look like? What is her background? Does she have a job? What are her thoughts about politics? and religion?</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> Reading each other's work</p> <p><b>Field study:</b> Gracia Neighbourhood. Plaça del Diamant Tour.</p>
<b>Week 4</b>	<p><b>CHARACTER 2: Who is your hero?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portraying your characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Interpretation</li> <li>○ Appearance</li> <li>○ Action</li> <li>○ Thought</li> <li>○ Speech</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Character and plot</li> </ul>	<p><b>Field Study &amp; Writing Exercise:</b> Go outside and find your main character. Write about him or her. Could you describe your character just as you described Colometa?</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ruiz Zafón, Carlos. <i>The Shadow of the wind</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 5</b>	<p><b>SETTING: Painting with words</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Setting and character</li> <li>○ Setting and emotion</li> <li>○ Setting and senses</li> <li>○ Setting and plot</li> <li>○ Antagonism</li> <li>○ Defamiliarizing the known</li> <li>○ Setting as symbolic power</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Discussion:</b> Reading each other's work about character</p> <p><b>Field Study:</b> UB Edifici Històric. Can you recognize the setting from the book? Take notes and use it to describe the setting. Painting with words.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wood, James. <i>How Fiction Works</i>. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2008. p 3-39</li> </ul>
<b>Week 6</b>	<p><b>THE VOICE 1: Who's talking?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point of view: Trying on voices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ First person narration</li> <li>○ The reminiscent narrator</li> <li>○ The unreliable narrator</li> <li>○ Alternating first-person narrators</li> <li>○ Form of narration</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Discussion:</b> Reading each other's work about setting</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rodoreda, Mercè. <i>The Time of the Doves</i>. Chapter V to Chapter IX</li> <li>- Mendoza, Eduardo. <i>The city of marvels</i>. Chapter I to III</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Choosing a form</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 7</b>	<p><b>THE VOICE 2: Who's talking?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Point of view: degrees of knowing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Third-person narration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Limited omniscient</li> <li>■ Omniscience</li> <li>■ Objective Point of view</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Consistency of point of view</li> <li>○ Some unusual points of view</li> <li>○ Stream of consciousness</li> <li>○ Voice: Tone and attitude</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Exercise:</b> Can you find the point of view in the readings from past week?</p> <p><b>Field study:</b> Arc de Triomf and Ciutadella Scavenger Hunt. Find the buildings described by Mendoza and take a photo. How did you recognize them?</p> <p><b>Writing exercise:</b> look at the story you have been writing up until now. Did you use the most suitable voice for the story? Can you try another one and see if it works better? Take notes, reflecting on which one works better and why.</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mendoza, Eduardo. <i>The city of marvels</i>. Chapter IV to VI</li> </ul>
<b>Week 8</b>	<p><b>STYLE 1: tell me how you write and I'll tell you who you are</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Showing and telling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are showing and telling? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Showing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Avoid Abstractions</li> <li>● The role of your reader</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Telling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exposition</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Dialogue and Stories</li> <li>■ Mixing drama and summary</li> <li>■ Dialogue and subtext</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Exercise:</b> What parts of the City of Marvels chapters IV and V would you say are showing and which ones are telling?</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- King, Stephen. <i>On Writing</i>. p. 111-135</li> <li>- Wood, James. <i>How Fiction Works</i>. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2008. p. 59-95</li> <li>- Wood, James. <i>How Fiction Works</i>. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2008. p. 181-213</li> </ul>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>STYLE 2: tell me how you write and I'll</b>	<b>Discussion:</b> Read each other's work

	<p><b>tell you who you are</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About copying and stealing</li> <li>Detail</li> <li>Words and phrases</li> <li>Sentences and paragraphs</li> <li>Beginnings and Setups</li> <li>Narrative Stance</li> <li>Dialogue</li> <li>Metaphor</li> <li>Beginning and Ending</li> </ul> <p>Midterm Exam</p>	<p>from past week and discuss which voice and point of view works better. Why?</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wood, James. <i>How Fiction Works</i>. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2008. p. 213-223</li> <li>Ruiz Zafón, Carlos. <i>The Shadow of the wind</i> p.7-38</li> <li>Rodoreda, Mercè. <i>The Time of the Doves</i> Chapter X to Chapter XIV</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10</b>	<p><b>DIALOGUE: How to say something without actually saying it</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What makes a good dialogue? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back story</li> <li>Plot moves forward</li> <li>Tells something about how a specific character behaves.</li> <li>Sounds natural and yet it is interesting</li> </ul> </li> <li>Direct and indirect speech</li> <li>How not to write a dialogue</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading Exercise and Discussion:</b> Compare <i>The Shadow of the Wind</i> and <i>The Time of the Doves</i> dialogues. Is there direct speech? Indirect? Both?</p> <p><b>Reading Exercise and Discussion:</b> We will discuss a variety of dialogues. Are they good dialogues? Are they bad? Why?</p>
<b>Week 11</b>	<p><b>PLOT 1: What is this story about?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is structure?</li> <li>What types of structures are there?</li> <li>Dramatic Action</li> <li>Story, plot and action</li> <li>Time</li> <li>Starting in the middle of the action</li> <li>flashback and repetition</li> <li>bringing the parts together</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Guest Speaker:</b> Questions to a professional writer. Where do they get their inspiration from? How do they develop characters? What is a day in their life? Where do they get ideas from? How can they get into other people's minds?</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>King, Stephen. <i>On Writing</i>. p. 189-195</li> </ul> <p><b>Youtube video:</b> Brandon Sanderson on Plot  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrl0gch5DBU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrl0gch5DBU</a></p>

<b>Week 12</b>	<p><b>PLOT 2: What is this story about?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plot and emotion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning VS Discovering</li> <li>Promising</li> <li>A sense of progress</li> <li>About conflict and Plot Twists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction</li> <li>Conflict</li> <li>Rising action</li> <li>Climax</li> <li>Falling action</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity:</b> Q&amp;A Questions about final project. Where are you having difficulties? Is it really reflecting on cultural differences? Are your dialogues moving the story forward? Does it have a structure?</p> <p><b>Readings:</b> - King, Stephen. <i>On Writing</i>. p. 208-227</p>
<b>Week 13</b>	<p><b>REWRITING: Did I really write this?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Editing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying theme and how to reinforce it</li> <li>Adding or deleting scenes</li> <li>Style in editing</li> <li>Get rid of your darlings</li> <li>First and second draft</li> <li>Showing and telling balance</li> </ul> </li> <li>How not to write a novel (or a short story) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Common mistakes you need to avoid</li> </ul> </li> <li>Bad writing or unedited work?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading and Discussion:</b> Distinguishing bad writing and good writing. Distinguishing edited writing and non-edited.</p>
<b>Week 14</b>	<p>Readings of final projects and Oral Presentations</p> <p>Discussion: Analyzing each others' work</p>	
<b>Week 15</b>	<p>Readings of final projects and Oral Presentations</p> <p>Discussion: Analyzing each others' work</p>	



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- WOOD, James. *How Fiction Works*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2008.
- ANDERSON, Linda. *Creative Writing: A Workbook with Readings*. Routledge in association with The Open University. Oxfordshire, 2006.
- KING, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. Scribner, New York, 2000.
- MITTELMARK, Howard and NEWMAN, Sandra. *How Not to Write a Novel: 200 Classic Mistakes and How to Avoid Them. A Misstep-by-Misstep Guide*. HarperCollins, 2008.
- GOTHAM WRITERS WORKSHOP. *Writing friction: The Practical Guide from New York's Acclaimed Creative Writing School*. Bloomsbury
- RODOREDA, Mercè. *The Time of the Doves*. Graywolf Press, 1989
- MENDOZA, Eduardo. *The City of Marvels*. Thomson Learning, 1988
- RUIZ ZAFÓN, Carlos. *The Shadow of the Wind*. Orion Publishing Group, 2018.