

# Experimental Writing || Bizarro Fiction to Flarf Poetry

ENGL 3314.001 || Spring 2026

FACULTY: Dr. Anett Jessop

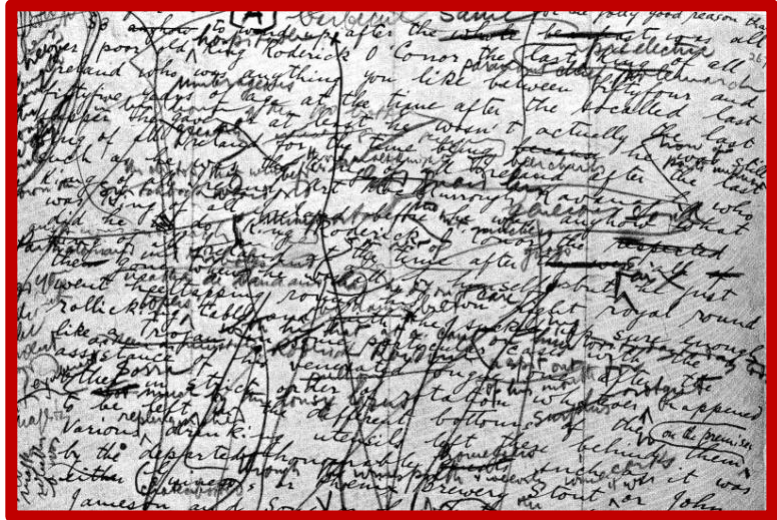
SCHEDULE: W 6:00 – 8:45pm

ROOM: CAS 258

OFFICE: CAS 248

OFFICE HOURS: W 8:45-9:45pm; R - 5:00-6:00pm & by appointment

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"Experimental writers have reinvigorated literature by reconceiving the arrangement of the material forms of texts and the attitudes or methodologies of reading they afford."

— Experimental Writing (2)

## Welcome Brave Writers!

This course will be an adventure into innovative 'writing practices' and emerging genres. We will consider **creative writing, methodologies, and experimental poetics** as material and immaterial; conventional and nonconforming; ergodic and prescriptive; expertise and artlessness; blending-mixing- and/or -breaking conventional literary genres. We will investigate Meaning-Making in language and through visual, sound, tactile, performed, projected, and/or other media and means. Our larger engagements with readers, audiences, viewers, and culture will necessarily poke literary 'elitism' and "American anti-intellectualism" (see Fredric Jameson, p. 4). In order to understand experimentation's foregrounding we will survey historical vanguard precursors. In the words of our textbook's authors:

The self-interrogating nature of experimentation allows innovative works to confront myriad problems, forge new connections, and access ideas or feelings that other literature may leave out. The interpretive demands of experimental writing may create more active, energized, or socially responsible readerships, expanding literature's reach. And the process of remaking conventions, forms, and institutions has kept experimental writing—and by extension, the rest of literature—a living organism ready to meet the exigencies of its evolving audiences and ecosystems. (6)

Heady stuff! Creative writing IS serious play and this class will ask for your patience, indulgence, courage, and willingness to explore new forms of expression and new ways of engaging with your own habits and our literary tradition. *Avant!*

## ■ REQUIRED TEXTS & SUPPLIES

- 🔗 Lenhart, Lawrence & Will Cordeiro. *Experimental Writing*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2024.\*\*
- 🔗 Creative Writing Journal of your choice

**\*\*** *Our textbook is available in free e-textbook format under Library Resources*

## ■ DIGITAL ARCHIVES

Textbook link:

<http://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/experimental-writing-a-writers-guide-and-anthology>

## ■ POLICIES & PROCEDURES

**Attendance & Participation** || My teaching methods emphasize discussion and collaborative learning, including small group work and writing workshops. Class members will be expected to share thoughts and to encourage others to do so. This course is both reading- and writing-intensive and students will engage in varied writing assignments—both graded and ungraded—as a means to making discoveries and articulating insights about the literary works we read and those you and your colleagues write. Participation is crucial to your success in this class, which operates on the basis of a thoughtful interaction between teacher and student and between students.

Everyone is expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, turn off cellphones and laptops (unless accessing the textbook and your writing) and store them in backpacks. **Attention to the cellphone instead of class and peers will be counted as an absence.** You will often work in small groups and are always expected to participate in discussions of the readings and shared writings.

I will allow **two in-class absences (equal to two weeks' attendance)**, excused or unexcused, during the semester, after which your participation grade may be compromised. I will keep track of late arrivals and these will also affect your grade. (A late arrival is defined as more than ten minutes after the beginning of the class start.) If you are late, assume you have been marked absent until you talk to me. If you are ill or have an emergency, please email me in order to turn in homework and to pick up the next assignment.

**Communication Policy** || Emails will be answered within 24-36 hours during the school week and occur between 10:00am and 9:00pm. Feedback on written assignments will be within 2 weeks of submission.

**Discussion Forum Policy** || Prompts, questions, and responses on the discussion board are to enable students to brainstorm about the readings and assignments. The postings on the discussion board must be focused on the assigned topic. All technical problems associated with Canvas, the internet, or library databases, including passwords and user IDs, should be directed to the respective departments. The course instructor cannot answer technical questions.

**Communication & Collegiality** || We are all responsible for creating a class that is intellectually and creatively questing and respectful.

**Conventions of Address** || Speaking to a professor, administrator, staff member, employer, manager, or colleague is different (at least initially) from speaking/texting with a friend, family member, or other familiar relation. In a professional academic environment like the University, it is conventional to refer to faculty, administrators, staff, and others by their titles (Doctor, Professor, Instructor, Coach, Ms./Mr.) unless explicitly instructed otherwise. You should also adopt the habit of including greetings, salutations, and language appropriate to such contexts (not, for example, “Hey,”). I will respectfully refer to you according to your stated preferences and expect that you’ll reciprocate in kind.

**Homework & Paper Format** || Complete all assigned readings and assignments by the due date so that you can participate in online and classroom discussion and writing activities. When noted, written assignments (not journal-based writing) should be typed, double-spaced, use normal margins and readable font. Paper headings should include your name, date, course title, and professor’s name. Each page should include page number and your last name. Use MLA documentation to cite materials when necessary.

**Due Date Policy** || Assignments must be submitted through Canvas on or before the due date or brought to class on the day due. Work turned in late without a compelling reason will be lowered one-third of a grade per day. DUE DATES are noted in the Course Schedule.

**AI POLICY** || AI is not permitted in this course at all. I expect all work students submit for this course to be their own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler’s Honor Code and academic honesty values.

## **ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECTS**

⌘ **Assigned READINGS** || Complete all readings in the textbook by our class session so that you can participate in discussions and learning activities.

⌘ **Creative Writing JOURNAL/Notebook/Sketchbook** || One of the objectives of this class is that you generate new writing—through homework assignments and in-class writing. **Please bring your journal to all class periods.**

⌘ **Weekly WRITING** || Each week you have two regular writing assignments. At the end of each chapter in the textbook, there are “**Discussion Questions**” and “**Writing Prompts**.” You will choose **one or more** options from each to respond to in your journal and/or to type up or compose in some other fashion. The “**Discussion Questions**” will set the stage for in-class writing and conversation (so be prepared). The “**Writing Prompts**” will allow you to generate new writing.

You may **submit** a photo from your journal to Canvas as evidence of completion or you can upload a document or some other evidence of your work. You are also welcome to hand in hard copies. These will be graded as **complete/incomplete. Assignments are due by our on-campus class starting time.**

⌘ **Weekly SCRIBE** || Across the semester, a student will be responsible for summarizing the week's readings and recapping in-class discussions in a Canvas post. Conclude with several thoughtful discussion questions/prompts for the class. I've made initial assignments; please let me know if you have a conflict with that date.

The Scribe's post will be **letter-graded** according to the concision of the summary, insights captured from the week's discussions, depth of thought brought to the discussion prompts and questions, and the grammatical correctness and polish of the writing (This is an English class, after all!). *You are welcome to consult with me as you draft your posting.*

**Format: 300+ words. POST by Thursday (midnight).**

⌘ **Weekly Scribe RESPONSES** || Each class member is responsible for a thoughtful response to the week's Scribe's posting. Once you've posted for the week, feel free to respond more briefly to colleagues' comments. **Graded 'complete/incomplete.'**

**Format: 200+ words. POST by Sunday (midnight).**

**\*\*NOTE** || The English major Senior Portfolio requires examples of the student's ability to give evidence of "extended written critical debate with classmates in interactive forums on larger thematic topics when prompted." Keep copies of posts that you are particularly proud of as you prepare material for your graduation portfolio!

⌘ **Timed REFLECTION Writing** || Our creative writing textbook includes information about theories, movements, writers and thinkers that offer challenging new ideas for us to consider. At the start of most class periods I will hand out a question or prompt related to the week's required readings (open book) for your consideration; students will have about **15** minutes to respond.

I am looking for evidence of your active preparation for class and formulation of new insights, connections across texts, and creative questions as we move forward in our course. The reflection writing will also serve as launch points for class discussion. Written responses will be **graded on a rising 1-4 point scale**. If you arrive late to class you will not be given additional time. Responses cannot be made up.

⌘ **Avant-Garde Mini-REPORTS + Writing WORKSHOPS** || Students will research and then design a PowerPoint report on an historical movement or creative concept relevant to our study. The report will be followed by an in-class creative writing workshop with prompts arising from the report topic. This will be due for presentation in class on the calendared date then later uploaded to Canvas. Assignments will be made during the first week of classes. **Letter-graded.**

⌘ **Final PROJECT** || At semester's end, you will submit for a grade a revised and formatted creative writing project/performance/installation of work composed over the semester. More information will be forthcoming.

## ■ GRADES & FINAL EVALUATION

Course grades will be based on the weighted average grades based on the following percentages. The final grade will include my assessment of your overall contribution and progress in the class:

Reflection Essays	15%
Scribe Leadership	5%
Discussion Responses	15%
Mini Report + Workshop	15%
Weekly Writing	25%
Final Project	25%

## ■ PAPER GRADING STANDARDS

**Excellent (A)** papers have clear theses and soundly organized arguments that reflect detailed, nuanced understanding of the text. They are precisely and concisely written and have few if any mechanical problems—even minor ones. They weave quotations into their arguments smoothly and forcefully. A vital, graceful voice animates such essays; they say something compelling in a compelling way.

**Good (B)** papers have clear theses and are thoughtfully and reasonably organized. They may be marred by a few infelicities (inappropriateness) of style, but they will have no major mechanical problems—and not many minor ones either. These are solid, disciplined papers that make a definite point in a logical, coherent manner to a definite audience.

**Satisfactory (C)** papers have a thesis supported by evidence. The writing is clean and properly proofed, but not always compelling; it may be marred by some minor mechanical problems and one or two major ones (like fragments or run-ons). While their arguments may not be particularly cogent, these papers do say something interesting, and they say it in a comprehensible and responsible way.

**Poor (D)** papers, while giving evidence of effort on the part of the writer, lack a thesis, have major mechanical problems, poor organization, betray serious misreading of the text, and show little sense of subject or audience.

**Failing (F)** papers have weaknesses even graver than those indicated for poor papers. They usually betray a lack of effort on the part of the writer. Any evidence of plagiarism (intentional or otherwise) will result in a failing grade—and referral to the Academic Conduct Committee.

## ■ Illustrations

**Page 1 :** image from “A First Draft Version of *Finnegans Wake*,” Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1963, p. 206.

**Page 5 :** “*Forsythia*” by Mary Ellen Solt



