

Introduction to Creative Writing: “From Where You Dream” Spring 2026

1. Course Info

Duration, 15 weeks
Credits, 4

Instructor Info

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2. Course Description

Where does art come from? Pulitzer Prize-winning author Robert Olen Butler says that art "does not come from the mind" but from "the place where you dream."

We will in equal respects make use of and challenge the above notion: the critical and the creative are often interlinked in the writer's process. Students will both produce their own creative texts and critically examine peer and published work in order to expose the inner mechanisms of the text.

Overall, this class will focus on laying a foundation for beginning writers on some of the essentials of the creative writing process. In a sense, we will re-envision the processes of “reading” and “writing” as they specially relate to Creative Writing. We will practice what Butler calls "Method Writing," and learn how to: 1) Get "into the zone" as a writer; 2) Understand the five ways we feel emotions, and the five ways to express them; and 3) Use film techniques in writing. We will cover three forms: short stories, poetry, and creative non-fiction.

This is mainly a workshop-based course--meaning students typically submit work in advance, which is then “workshopped” in class by the group. We will also discuss published work in this way—as in you should come to class having read the pieces assigned to you the previous week.

3. Learning Objectives (Aims)

Learning Outcomes	Teaching and Learning	Assessment/Activities
<p><i>After successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</i></p> <p>Understand and focus on writing as process, not product, regardless of genre</p> <p>Begin to write clearly and concisely in a range of styles and modes appropriate to a</p>	<p>Class work includes written assignments and projects, including relevant presentations.</p> <p><i>Public Nature of Work and Sharing:</i> All work in this class is public, so don't write about anything you don't want to share. It's important to share</p>	<p><i>Class Discussion:</i> As this is a process-based class, student discussion, participation and intelligent responses to assigned material is doubly important. This class simply will not work if I stand in front of the room and lecture at you for the entire period. In other words, <i>your active</i></p>

<p>variety of settings and genres within creative writing</p> <p>Demonstrate understanding and awareness of a range of real-world genres</p> <p>Use conventions of expression appropriate to situation and audience</p> <p>Effectively revise and provide substantive oral and written critiques to peers on their writing</p>	<p>what we have learned from our individual reading and writing to the class as a whole. As a result, you may be required to share your work with the class as a whole or in small groups. As everyone will do this, please do not feel singled out, and remember that no one will judge you personally. While you will receive discussion and critique of your writing, please take this as an opportunity to gain plenty of free advice, which you may use to improve your work in the future.</p> <p>Further, given writing is a form of social interaction as we've said, you will be encouraged to read work out loud (both yours and from published work) and/or speak to the group.</p>	<p><i>role is "part of the deal."</i></p> <p>In fact, if you have not prepared adequately for workshop beforehand, you will be unable to appreciate and properly take part in class discussions.</p> <p>I reserve the right to mark students absent who have clearly not done the prep work and are unable to meaningfully contribute to class discussions in any shape or form.</p> <p><i>Group work:</i> Team-building and learning to work with a group is a key skill for professional success, so we will incorporate several group assignments, workshops, and in-class exercises/activities that help you develop and build on this essential ability.</p>
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4. Scheme of Evaluation and Grading

Class work will include:

- Weekly reading/writing/in-class assignments
- Short creative projects: Fiction, 4-7 pp; Poetry, 2-3 poems.
- Peer workshop responses (written=about ½ page each; oral=consistent contribution to discussion during peer workshops throughout the semester)
- Portfolio, 10-15 pp, consisting of a compendium of your best revised work plus a 2-page self-reflection.

In-class Writing/Creative Non-fiction.....	10%
Fiction.....	10%
Poetry.....	10%
Peer workshop responses (written).....	10%
Peer workshop responses (oral).....	10%
Other participation.....	10%
Portfolio.....	10%
End-term.....	30%

Grade Definition: As in the academic rule book (see below).

Grade	Grade Definitions	
O	Outstanding	Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation.
A+	Excellent	Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability.
A	Good	Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills.
B+	Adequate	Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
B	Sufficient	
B-	Marginal	Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills.
F	Failure	Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials.

Note:

- You will receive Advisory Grades for Fiction 1 & Fiction 2 submissions.
- The advisory grades are meant to serve as a guideline of your progress. Keep in mind I particularly look at your Portfolio and Participation while determining final grades.
- Grades will not be marked on any other assignment. Relevant in-class writing/other assignments will be acknowledged in the grade book with a check (acceptable), check-minus (if deficient or marred by poor grammar and/or punctuation) or check-plus (if particularly original, accomplished or astute).

Because this is a workshop, not merely a format for manuscript evaluation, the overall quality of your participation will be measured against the yardstick of general classroom etiquette.

- Are you making regular, constructive contributions to discussions?
- Are you attending regularly and on time? (More than 2 late arrivals will count as 1 absence.) Have you missed more than 2 weeks of classes?
- Are you spending enough time reading/responding to peer submissions? Were you prepared for your own workshop?

5. Academic Integrity (Course Policies)

ATTENDANCE

Given this is a workshop-based course, your regular presence is crucial: the attendance policy is that there is no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. As we will do a significant amount of work in class, including reading checks and various in-class activities

including workshops, failure to attend regularly will drastically count against your final grade. Also be aware of tardiness: more than 2 late arrivals count as 1 absence.

DIGITAL ETIQUETTE

To ensure responsible and attentive participation, unless you are specifically told otherwise, the use of any and all electronic devices is prohibited in class, and such devices should be turned off and placed in your bag and/or out of sight under your desk.

Therefore:

- No Insta/Facebook/Whatsapp/Texting During Class
- No Email/Non-Sanctioned Internet Browsing In Class

In other words, you may not use a laptop/tablet/other electronic device in class to follow a game, go on social media, respond to email, post a message, etc. Such activities not only distract you but they distract anyone around or behind you. Infractions will result in dismissal from the class session, which will count as an absence.

PLAGIARISM

All members of the academic community at Jindal Global University are expected to take responsibility for academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism—the willful copying/presenting of another person’s work as if it were your own—and other forms of cheating are unacceptable. Any instance of plagiarism, regardless of extent of material involved, will result in expulsion from the course with a failing grade and could lead to further disciplinary procedures. If you have any doubts as to what constitutes plagiarism, please refer to your student handbook or come talk to me.

POLICY ON DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

The University seeks to promote a teaching and learning environment free from material and substantial classroom disruptions. Any activities or behaviors that disrupt the learning environment can be considered as interfering with the learning process. The instructor reserves the right to remove disruptive students from class, including lack of in-class discipline, discourtesy towards peers or instructor, or lack of cooperation in class activities. Such dismissals will count as an absence.

DISABILITY SUPPORT

JGU endeavours to make all its courses accessible to students. All students with a known disability needing academic accommodations are required to register with the Disability Support Committee (DSC). The registrations for the DSC are open throughout the year. However, the students with long-standing conditions should register with the Committee in the first week of the academic year as disability accommodation requires early planning and implementation. For more information on Disability Support or for an appointment, please contact knakray@jgu.edu.in

6. **Keyword Syllabus** (An indication of some key topics of the course)

Creative Writing Process; Method Writing; Writing as a Form of Social Interaction; Analyzing Rhetorical Situations Based on Audience and Context; Oral and Written Critiques of Creative Work; Awareness of Various Genres/Forms; Revision Strategies.

7. Course Materials

Among others, selections and excerpts from the following will be made available online or distributed/presented in class:

- Janet Burroway, *Imaginative Writing*, 3/e.
- Ann Charters, Ed., *The Story and Its Writer*.
- Mueenuddin, Daniyal. *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders*.
- Li, Yiyun. *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers*.

8. Session Plan

	General topic	Readings	Approach/pedagogy
Week 1→	Course intro	Go through syllabus	Community introductions: “find the person”
	Creative process	Burroway, “Image”	Image exercise
Week 2→	Method writing	Mitra, “Ras”	Place exercise
	Cont’d		
Week 3→	Anatomy of a story	Joyce, “Araby”	Fiction workshop dates assigned
	Manuscript format		
Week 4→	Building a character: flat vs round characters	Mueenuddin, “Nawabdin Electrician”	
	Dialog, narrative voice, POV		
Week 5→	Fiction workshop	Come to class having read and prepared to discuss pre-submitted work	Fiction workshops begin: in-class workshopping of pre-submitted stories
	Cont’d		
Week 6→	Fiction workshop	Chekhov, “The Kiss”	
	Cont’d		
Week 7→	Fiction workshop		
	Cont’d		
Week 8→	Fiction workshop		
	Cont’d		
Week 9→	Intro to Poetry:	Burroway, “Poetry”	Poetry workshop dates assigned

	lyric, narrative		
	Structure; enjambment; end-stopped lines	Sound: rhyme, off-rhyme, alliteration, meter, scansion	Free verse
Week 10→	Poetry workshop		Poetry workshops begin
	Cont'd		
Week 11→	Poetry workshop		
	Cont'd		
Week 12→	Poetry workshop		
	Cont'd		
Week 13→	Poetry workshop		
	Cont'd		
Week 14→	Creative Writing Vocabulary Review		Creative Process Revisited
			Cont'd
Week 15→	W Wrap	DUE: Portfolio	
		End-term	

Note: Due to an exam office mandate, you are required to appear for a sit-down exam as the end-term comprising 30 marks. More details later in the semester.