



ELL 024:
Interdisciplinary
Collaboration
Ipek University
Spring 2016

M 16:00-17:50 - GRAD 312
TH 09:00-09:50 - LIB 120

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Office Hours:
TH 10:00-11:00
GRAD 310

No one says a novel has to be one thing. It can be anything it wants to be, a vaudeville show, the six o'clock news, the mumblings of wild men saddled by demons.

– Ishmael Reed, *Yellow Back Radio Broke-Down*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will provide students an opportunity to explore creative writing across the disciplines and to develop an independent creative project. We will examine other innovative artistic works for inspiration, and design our own collaborations that combine poetry or fiction with literature, visual arts, film, history, psychology, political science, or any other interdisciplinary theme(s). In the first part of the course, students will work in teams to realize a collaborative creative work. In the second part of the course, we will shift our focus to individual projects: a short story, poem series, novel, or film script. Students will have ample time to develop and refine their own unique artistic vision through in-class exercises, assigned prompts, instructor feedback, and peer workshops. Students from any level of writing ability and creative writing experience are encouraged to join.

COURSEWORK

Texts. Readings will consist of short stories, poems, novel excerpts, film viewings, and other creative works from a diverse range of contemporary writers. These will be either given out in class or posted on Blackboard. Some we'll read or view in class, and some you'll take home or download. As this is a seminar, you will be expected to complete these assigned materials and be ready to discuss them thoughtfully in class.

Process Report. Throughout the course, you will be expected to report regular, detailed updates and reflections on your works in process: both the collaborative and the individual projects. This report will be maintained online as a WordPress blog, and may include text as well as photos. If privacy is important to you, feel free to password protect it—just be sure I can access it.

Writing Journal. Buy a notebook. Keep it with you. Scribble in your thoughts throughout the day. Jot down ideas and images. Record your dreams when you wake up. Transcribe lines of overhead dialogue. Copy out beautiful passages you've read. Think of this journal as the garden of your ideas: a place to toss down seeds, some of which may bloom into poems or stories. I'll ask to see this journal twice during the semester.

Collaborative Project. Your collaborative project will represent the synthesis of a collective artistic endeavor, spanning the themes, disciplines, and approaches you choose as a team, realized in any creative co-authored form: a photo essay, a short film, a manga, a short story, an epic poem, a stage play, and so on. You will be expected to submit this project for workshop and to revise it based on peer and instructor feedback.

Individual Project. Your individual project includes the same interdisciplinary aim and scope of your collaborative project, except that you will pursue this vision individually. You will be expected to submit this project for workshop and to revise it based on peer and instructor feedback.

Peer Workshop. Giving and receiving feedback will play a huge role in the course. All students are expected to have their collaborative and individual projects workshopped and to give weekly feedback to their peers. Toward this, you are required to prepare and distribute hardcopies of the piece to be workshopped at least one week in advance of your scheduled workshop.

In Peer Workshop, you'll provide feedback in two ways: you'll mark up your copy of the piece, and you'll also type and print your feedback in a brief (½ to 1 page) letter. You'll turn in one copy to the author and one copy to me. Peer Workshop grades will be based on your **Feedback Portfolio**.

► **Feedback Portfolio.** Being a good peer reviewer is an acquired skill; it takes time and practice. I'll score your feedback sheets on a check +/- scale to help guide your progress. At the end of the semester, you'll collect these sheets into a portfolio with a reflection on your strengths, challenges, and learning as a peer reviewer.

Remember: this class is your tribe. Although the semester will eventually end, your relationships don't have to—you could still be reading and giving feedback on each other's work years from now. Take care of these relationships. They are precious for writers.

Participation. This is not a class to doze in or update Facebook. Each student’s contribution to the class is extremely important. You are expected to be actively engaged and present: to speak, to listen, to encourage, and to show sincere effort and good will always. Participation will be scored based on your engagement and presence in class.

Final Portfolio. Your Final Portfolio will showcase your writing in this course—and you’ll be doing a lot of it. I’m expecting you to extensively revise your collaborative project (which will be graded collectively) and your individual project (graded individually), based on the feedback you’ll receive during workshop and also our one-on-one meeting. Your Final Portfolio will present the final, polished revisions of these projects (along with all previous drafts and comments), plus a selection of writing from your writing journal that you’re the most proud of, and a self-reflection on your growth in this course overall.

Reading Event. At the end of the semester, we’ll organize a public reading event for all the members of this class. Writing is too often a solitary activity; we spend immense amounts of time in our own heads, slogging away, and much of our work will never see daylight. Because of this, writers tend to congregate at events with other writers: book festivals, writing retreats, conferences, readings, and so on. These events are fun. It’s inspiring to hear other people read their work—and exciting to read your own. Even if you think you will COLLAPSE AND DIE if you have to get on stage and share your work aloud, please try it anyway. You’ll be glad you did.

COURSE EVALUATION

All of the tasks described above are intended to help you grow, challenge yourself, and discover new strengths and abilities. Prompts and exercises help you generate material; readings help you absorb new tools and approaches; and peer workshops help you become a better reader, writer, thinker, and communicator. In evaluating your work, the goal is to reinforce your learning and mentor your development in all of these areas.

TASK	WEIGHT
Process Report	10%
Writing Journal	10%
Participation	10%
Peer Workshop Feedback Portfolio	20%
Final Portfolio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaborative Project ● Individual Project ● Selected Works ● Self-Reflection 	50%

COURSE POLICIES

Written Work. All drafts of stories and poems must be typed. Except in very exceptional cases, emailed work will NOT be accepted. Please bring hardcopies to class.

One-on-one meetings. At least twice during the semester you will meet with me individually to talk about your writing—usually after Thursday’s workshop.

Deadlines. You are expected to meet deadlines and turn in work on time—especially when you’re being workshopped. Peer Workshops cannot be rescheduled or made up, except for medical or other urgent reasons.

Attendance Policy. Students are required to attend a minimum of 70% of total course hours. Attendance is counted from the first class. Those who exceed the attendance limit by missing 12 or more hours will automatically receive an ‘FX’ grade for the course. You are expected to keep track of your own absences and you are also responsible for any homework, exercises, or assignments you missed, as well as turning in any workshop drafts or peer feedback letters on the day they’re due.

Please keep in mind that missing more than 6 hours will negatively impact your Participation grade.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity. This is a creative writing class. All material you produce should be created by you. Any ideas or phrases that are not your own should be enclosed in quotation marks and attributed to their original owners. If you’re not sure how to do this properly, just ask me. You are responsible for not plagiarizing and will be held accountable if you do. Students who plagiarize will fail the course and may face disciplinary action.

Courtesy and Professionalism. Our classroom requires mutual respect from every member so that all may learn and explore ideas in a safe, optimal environment; therefore, the rights of others to express their views must be respected. I expect all students to show courtesy and tolerance, to honor confidentiality, and to never share outside of this class any personal information or writing from your colleagues without their permission. Anyone who fails to honor the professional, respectful behavior expected in this classroom may be asked to leave or face other disciplinary action. In addition, please show courtesy by avoiding the following:

- ▶ **Tardiness.** Arriving late or leaving early disrupts the class, derails conversations, and generally interrupts the work we’re doing. Please arrange to come to class on time. Chronic tardiness will harm your participation grade.

- ▶ **Inattention.** Similarly, whispering to a friend or playing with your phone while another person in class is speaking (including me) not only shows a glaring lack of respect for the other person, it’s also just plain rude. Don’t be rude.

Emails. Please note that you are expected to check your Ipek University email daily for information or news about the course.

Blackboard. Students are expected to read announcements, post online, download and print course materials, and respond to emails sent via Blackboard. Enrollment in the Blackboard Course is mandatory and students are responsible for ensuring they are properly registered for this course.

Extra Credit. No extra credit assignments will be given during or after the course. If you are concerned about your grades in this course—or having difficulty with the assignments—please come see me as early as possible

Open Door Policy. I encourage you to contact me (awatts@ipek.edu.tr) or visit my office (310) if you have any questions or concerns about your work in this course, about academic life, or other issues. I am always happy to meet with you or suggest referrals if your needs fall outside my professional scope.