

# Creative Writing Certificate

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 Website: <https://caps.wustl.edu/programs/certificates/creative-writing>

## Courses

### CAPS-ECOMP 3000 Exposition

Online version of the course U11 304, and fulfils the same program requirements. This advanced composition course considers style in relationship to audience and purpose, asking the writer to engage more consciously with writing conventions and to explore strategies appropriate to various writing situations, from the more experimental and performative to the more formal and scholarly. The course will involve frequent practice in analyzing and critiquing, with special attention to techniques of organization, argument, and emphasis. Prerequisite: U11 203 or U11 203M (Critical and Researched Writing). Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Spring

### CAPS-ECOMP 3010 Writing for Public Speaking

A course in organizational communications drawing upon the means of persuasion from classical rhetoric to PowerPoint. Practice in writing, speaking, and listening in the various formats: paper, oral presentations, and Internet. Comparative analysis of what works best with varying topics, situations, audiences, and purposes. Prerequisite: U11 203 or 203M. Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Spring, Summer

### CAPS-ECOMP 3020 Argumentation

This advanced writing course examines the strategies of argumentation, exploring such elements of argument as the enthymeme, the three appeals, claim types, and fallacies.

Credit 3 units. A&S IQ: HUM Arch: HUM Art: HUM BU: HUM EN: H

Typical periods offered: Summer 4, Summer 3, Summer 2, Summer 1, Summer, Spring, Fall

### CAPS-ECOMP 3030 Technical Writing

For those whose professions require them to present complex information precisely, logically, and efficiently. Examination of the audiences for technical writing and effective methods of organizing information to meet their needs. Variety of formats: letters, memos, trip reports, progress reports, proposals, and informal reports. Prerequisite: U11 203 or 203M.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall

### CAPS-ECOMP 3040 Exposition

In this advanced composition course, students will craft thoughtful and stylistically engaging essays that explore St. Louis—its history, culture, politics, arts, industry, challenges, and opportunities. Our pieces will range from the formal and scholarly to the creative, experimental, and

professional, allowing us to consider how audience and purpose shape our writing. Students will engage in regular critique of their own and others' writing, with attention to issues such as organization, clarity, sentence structure, and tone.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer 4, Summer 3, Summer 2, Summer 1, Summer, Spring, Fall

### CAPS-ECOMP 3100 Genre Writing

This course is a creative writing workshop dedicated to genre fiction. With a primary focus on the contemporary genre story, the course will cover new and classic science fiction, fantasy, crime writing, and much more. Through a series of readings and writing workshops, we will discuss the craft of genre writing from the traditional to the contemporary, including long-standing genre conventions, recent cross-genre trends, and the current role of genre fiction in the literary landscape. This course can count toward the major in English for day students.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Spring

### CAPS-ECOMP 3110 Poetry Writing

This course is an open-level poetry workshop for writers interested in exploring the craft of poetry. We will discuss uses of imagery, language, and rhythm in the context of creating experience and meaning in poetic form. Students will share original work—often generated from class activities and exercises—for discussion with the class. This course can count toward the major in English for day students.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Spring

### CAPS-ECOMP 3130 Fiction Writing: The Moral of the Story: Writing Fiction About Ethics, Philosophy, and Morality

Why do stories matter? How do stories help us grow? How do they challenge us? And how do they help us explore issues and ideas both new and old? This course is a fiction writing workshop with a focus on stories that deal in complex and meaningful ways with the world we live in. We read, write, and discuss stories that complicate the way we think and open new doors for considering what we believe, value, desire, and fear. In addition to reading a diverse group of authors with varying perspectives and styles, including queer writers, Latinx writers, and writers of color, our main goals are to write and share new original fiction writing and to discuss how elements of craft can help reveal the issues and ideas that our stories explore.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Spring

### CAPS-ECOMP 3150 Fiction Writing: Young Adult Fiction

This is a workshop in writing in the wildly popular genre of Young Adult fiction. Through readings in a variety of recent YA novels, we'll discover how the pros negotiate the particular challenges (and joys) of writing for this age group; through a series of coordinated writing exercises, we'll practice crafting the building blocks of the solid YA story/novel (plot, character, setting, etc.); then, through workshop discussion, students will draft and submit their own YA story or novel sample chapter(s) for constructive response and critique. Writers of all (or no!) levels of prior practice or accomplishment are invited.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Spring

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3160 Fiction Writing**

Online version of the course U11 317. In this course, students will write, learn how to read like a writer, and write some more. Our focus will be on short fiction, and our approach will be to explore the stages linking inspiration to the final (or nearly final) draft -- in other words, we will explore how to find a story idea and how to grow it. The course will be run as a virtual workshop, which means that students will be actively engaged in meaningful online discussions about their classmates' original works-in-progress, and they will make their own compositions available for such discussions. Students will also be prompted -- via regular weekly reading responses and writing exercises -- to examine common craft-of-fiction elements, from the basic building blocks of stories such as details, characters, and dialogue to more slippery units of narrative design such as scene, summary, point of view, and theme. Along the way, we will also read a range of published short stories, from classics to works by contemporary masters.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3170 Creative Nonfiction**

This is a workshop for students interested in writing creative nonfiction and the personal essay. We examine the narrative techniques that writers use to shape their life experiences and observations. Students experiment with different approaches to writing process and have opportunities to complete work in various modes, such as memoir and the lyrical essay. We will also read published nonfiction essays that illuminate various aspects of style and craft.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3180 Advanced Writing**

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3190 Writing Historical Fiction**

This course is for writers working on short stories or novels of all genres. We will focus on preparing fiction for publication, presentation to an agent, or as part of an application portfolio for an MFA program or grant. Through assigned readings, craft discussions, and workshoping, we will hone the writer's craft. Additionally, we learn about the current literary marketplace, including magazines, small presses, self-publication and literary agencies. Each student will receive evaluation from the instructor as well as critique from fellow students.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Spring

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3200 The Art of the Personal Essay**

In this course we will study the structures, techniques, and boundaries of the personal essay in which the writer is observer, participant, and storyteller. We will examine traditional and experimental forms of the personal essay, as well as essays that discuss the craft of this genre of writing. We will use these works as models and guides for generating, workshoping, and revising our own personal essays.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3210 Persuasive Writing**

Methods of argumentation, ranging from those presented in Aristotle's Rhetoric to those found in the editorial pages of today's newspapers. Emphasis on persuasion as a writing skill useful in fields such as law, journalism, business, and government.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3213 Writing Horror Across the Globe**

Fear is a universal human experience. Yet the majority of the horror landscape is focused on American/English voices and experiences. This course will explore the breadth and depth of diversity in the horror genre, focusing on authors from across the world and from traditionally underrepresented and marginalized backgrounds and cultures in the genre industry. Readings will span the globe and different mediums, from short stories to novels, manga to poetry. Students will develop their skills as writers of horror, focusing on researching other cultures and folklore, and how to write diverse characters and voices in a respectful manner.

Credit 3 units. UColl: CD

Typical periods offered: Spring

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3220 Writing the Short-Short Story and Ten-Minute Play**

In this class we will concentrate on the short forms of microfiction and ten-minute plays, exploring what kinds of stories we can tell in a short space. We will examine a variety of creative writing techniques, including character development, conflict, voice, story arc, setting, images, and especially dialogue. The heart of this class is workshop, but we will read aloud and study models and examples in each genre.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3223 The Art of Nature and Travel Writing**

In this creative nonfiction course, students will discover the art of the essay in the realm of nature and travel writing and will write their own personally voiced narratives in which place plays a central role. Whether your journeys take you up the road, around the world, or more deeply into an environment you have experienced over time, attending to the sensory details, landscape, culture, and history of a place provides rich material for exploration. We will read and discuss essays by some of the many great writers who have worked in this genre, including traditionally underrepresented voices. Through an active learning approach, students will generate and share new work and provide each other feedback in a supportive, collaborative workshop setting. The writers we will focus on range from Rebecca Solnit, James Baldwin, Rahawa Haile, Barry Lopez, Annie Dillard, Terry Tempest Williams, and Pico Iyer, to Colson Whitehead, Leslie Jamison, John Jeremiah Sullivan, Patricia Hampl, and Ryan Knighton.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Spring

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3230 Topics in Composition: Writing and the Law**

An advanced writing course focusing on selected topics related to writing. Topics to be chosen by department/instructor. See section description for details about specific class emphases. (Note: In some cases, this course may be cross-listed with other programs/departments and may satisfy the writing-intensive requirement.) PREREQ: Writing 1 (L13 100) and junior standing.

Credit 3 units. Arch: HUM Art: HUM EN: H

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3250 Introduction to Screenwriting**

In this screenwriting class students will learn the various components necessary for writing a motion picture screenplay. Students will conceive and write the first act of a full-length screenplay, complete a full-length story synopsis, and complete a few in-class and take-home exercises. During weekly table reads, students will read and critique each other's work. We also will view and evaluate films, and analyze excerpts from successful movie screenplays, looking closely at the elements of plot and structure, character, dialogue, theme, genre, style, and format. Previous screenwriting experience is not required.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3271 Nonfiction: Reading and Writing the Memoir**

In this generative writing workshop, we study the techniques of creative writing through both reading and writing memoir with a particular interest in combining personal experience with an awareness of cultural and historical place. To this end, we will read a selection of global memoirs with an eye toward understanding the ways in which they demonstrate the intersection of storytelling and voice within cultural and historical contexts, and we will use these works as models for generating, workshoping, and revising our own memoirs.

Credit 3 units. UColl: CD, HUM

Typical periods offered: Spring

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3280 Creative Nonfiction: Writing Ourselves, Writing the World**

In this course, we will explore memoirs, essay collections, and individual articles in which the writers have merged their observations and research of the natural world with their own personal experiences or philosophical inquiries. We will consider biologist David George Haskell's *The Forest Unseen* alongside essay collections by nonfiction writer Amy Leach (*Things that Are*), fiction writer Michael Martone (*The Flatness and Other Landscapes*), and poet Mary Oliver (*Long Life*), as well as excerpts from books by Eula Biss, Bill Holm, Barbara Hurd, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Lawrence Weschler. From these writers, we will learn how one might offer a view of the self through the lens of environment, place, biography, history, and reflection. Each student will also work on a manuscript of similar variety from idea to finished product.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer 4, Summer 3, Summer 2, Summer 1, Summer, Spring, Fall

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3290 Writing Adventure and Creating Action**

This course will study and practice the techniques necessary to write active and adventurous prose, both fiction and nonfiction. Topics include writing mechanics and style with the goal of mastering the diction and syntax of action while avoiding cliché or melodrama. We also examine broader craft elements such as pacing, scenes, setting, character development, adventure archetypes, suspense, and voice. Readings include adventure writers such as Elizabeth Gilbert, Ernest Hemingway, Pam Houston, Jon Krakauer, Herman Melville, Kira Salak, Gary Shteyngart, Cheryl Strayed, Mark Twain, and Jules Verne. Students will complete exercises and three stories of varying lengths, with at least one in each mode, to be shared in a workshop setting.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3300 Masters of Fantasy Writing**

As one of the most commonly read genres of literature, fantasy offers its readers an escape from the everyday mundane into worlds where anything is possible. For writers of fantasy, the genre is a space where no topic is off limits and where they can let their imaginations run wild. This course explores the craft of fantasy writing and the many worlds an author can create, with a focus on the short story and novella form. Weekly readings of novellas and short stories will span the masters of fantasy literature, including Stephen King, Terry Pratchett, Ursula K. LeGuin, Anne McCaffrey and many more. Academic texts and writing exercises will build on students' writing toolboxes, with a focus on emotion, dialogue, and description. Our goals are to explore the modern trends in fantasy and what makes successful fantasy literature; to understand the different process and style of writing a short story versus a novella in fantasy; to be able to develop an idea into a polished draft of a fantasy short story or the beginnings of a novella; and to improve the workshoping skills crucial to the development and revision process in creative writing.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3310 The Magazine Feature: Idea to Finished Product**

This course will explore the process of conceiving, reporting, drafting, revising, and placing a magazine feature story. We will read exemplary long-form magazine journalism - sometimes called literary journalism or narrative nonfiction - with an eye to process and craft. How do we find stories? What is the relationship between reporting and the published piece? How do we shed new light on common themes and approach storytelling in innovative ways? During the term, each student will develop a feature profile: securing a subject, devising a reporting strategy, incorporating research, and ultimately, exploring voice, theme, and structure through multiple drafts. The course will include literary analysis and discussion, writing exercises, workshop-style discussion of student work, and will prepare interested students to pitch their stories for publication.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3325 Writing for Children: Picture Books & Chapter Books**

This is a workshop in writing for the youngest readers. We will first examine the broad range of picture book styles and subjects, how writers manage relationships of text to art, and the requirements of writing in a form that combines the conciseness of poetry with the narrative dynamic of story. For chapter books, we will examine how the basic elements of fiction -- character, setting, plot, etc. -- are developed into a sustained, book-length narrative. Students will complete a series of directed writing exercises that culminates first in a completed picture book manuscript, then in a chapter book prospectus (an outline of the book and one or two sample chapters), with completed works presented and revised through workshop discussion. Finally, we will discuss the business of writing for children, the particulars of how manuscripts are prepared for submission to publishers, how they are ultimately selected and edited for publication. Writers of any -- or no -- level of prior writing experience are invited.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3360 Writing Creatively for Magazine and Online Publication**

This course is a writing workshop focused on a wide variety of nonfiction for both print and online venues. We will read and discuss forms of writing such as magazine feature stories, short- and long-form narrative reporting, informative personal and opinion writing, and much more. Our goal will be to produce smart, entertaining writing that can gain a reader's interest and inform readers at the same time. Whether you are interested in publishing magazine features or more informal, personal writing online, we will study and practice how to use research, storytelling, and your own original voice to make topics both fascinating and easy to read. Students will design and write their own projects, write and share a variety of short exercises, and workshop material from the class. We will also read a wide variety of published writing from different publishing venues and platforms. The course will provide a positive, engaging space for you to improve your writing skills and produce polished, high quality writing of your own.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3997 Fiction Seminar**

Topic changes per semester--see section listing for current term's topic. Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer 4, Summer 3, Summer 2, Summer 1, Summer, Spring, Fall

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**CAPS-ECOMP 3999 Independent Study: English Composition**

Credit 4 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall, Spring, Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4010 Humor Writing**

This course will analyze and put into practice what makes good humor writing both good and humorous, from subject matter to the mechanics of setting up a punchline, from crafting an unexpected metaphor to perfecting the reversal. We will write and workshop humorous personal essays, commentary, satire, and parody, using as models examples from humorists and humorous writers from the past decade.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4020 Summer Writers Institute: Screenplay Writing**

In this workshop we will explore the techniques, dramatic elements, industry format, and structure typically used in crafting a motion picture screenplay. Our focus will be threefold: we will develop strategies to navigate the idea generation and selection process, we will analyze and apply the three-act dramatic structure, and we will learn how to develop credible characters and fitting dialogue. Participants will apply this workshop's lessons to constructing the first act of a script. Through a combination of lectures, discussions, writing exercises, and table readings and peer critiques, participants will cultivate the skills needed to plan and develop a professionally formatted and structured full feature screenplay.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4050 Summer Writers Institute: Fiction: Rise of the Genre Benders**

In this course we will review, analyze, compare, and create definitions of literary traditions and popular genres in efforts to isolate specific craft techniques and moods that could be applied or repurposed in unorthodox ways. Our aim is to use conventions in unconventional ways and render concrete practice from the theoretical and experimental. To this end, we will read a wide swath of foundational and rising contemporary writers, from Edward P. Jones and Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah to Lorrie Moore and Karen Russell.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4060 Summer Writers Institute: Creative Nonfiction: Personal Narrative**

In this generative writing workshop, we study the ways in which some of our most contemporary memoirists and essayists combine observation, memory, scene, and reflection to compose personal narratives that represent the changing natural world around them. Alongside these model writings, we read craft essays that discuss narrative distance and voice. We look to both the craft and creative readings to help us draft, workshop, and revise our own observational and reflective essays on what we are experiencing in our changing natural world.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4070 Summer Writers Institute: Advanced Fiction: The Craft of Time**

This is an advanced workshop in writing literary fiction for students who have taken at least one introductory level fiction course and thus have experience with the workshop process. This course seeks to approach (without re-introducing) familiar craft-of-fiction elements such as dialogue, point of view, and scene/summary from new angles, but we will focus on our attention on the craft of time in fiction. In

The Art of Time in Fiction, writer Joan Silber asserts that all fiction has to contend with the experience of time passing.... This parade of events is what distinguishes the narrative impulse from the purely lyrical one. In this class, we will examine how fiction writers represent, compress, elongate, spotlight, mask, or otherwise manipulate the passing of time in their stories-how, that is, they gain control of a reader's sense of how much (or how little) time is passing for the characters within the story. Specifically, we will focus on the categories that Silber offers for examining time spans in fiction: classic time, long time, switchback time, slowed time, and fabulous time. We will read contemporary and classic short stories (as well as a long story) that manipulate time in innovative ways. Authors will include (but are not limited to): Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Angela Carter, Deborah Eisenberg, Faulkner, Alice Munro. Summer Writers Institute courses are embedded within a robust series of programs (including readings, workshops, and panel discussions) that SWI students will also engage in. For more information, including a full list of programs, please visit the SWI website: [summerwriters.wustl.edu](http://summerwriters.wustl.edu).

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4080 Summer Writers Institute: Creative Writing for Educators**

The Summer Writers Institute brings together many of St. Louis' finest writers to share their expertise with those who are serious about developing their writing skills. The Institute offers two weeks of intensive workshops in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction as well as readings, craft talks, and individual conferences with faculty. Classes are small and writers receive personalized attention. Application required.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4090 Summer Writers Institute: Nonfiction: The Self as Story**

From personal narratives and family histories to observations in nature and philosophical inquiry, we write to tell the stories of our own experiences as well as the story of humanity. In this beginning creative nonfiction class, we read and write with, therefore, an ear for story, for the intersection of experience and reflection. We write ourselves as character and narrator, as one who seeks, discovers, and interprets, all the while guided by the narrative form. We supplement this creative side of the course with readings about craft, about how to build character, how to narrate a scene, and how to reflect on experience. We produce several beginnings, middles, and perhaps even ends. In live group sessions on Zoom, we discuss readings and generate and share our writings. Each student also composes one new piece of creative nonfiction to be workshopped among the class. Readings include personal and craft essays as well as excerpts from memoirs by authors such as Diane Ackerman, James Baldwin, Corinna Cook, Vivian Gornick, David Haskell, Barbara Hurd, Michael Martone, José Orduña, Joni Tevis, and Claudia Rankine. Summer Writers Institute courses are embedded within a robust series of programs (including readings, workshops, and panel discussions) that SWI students will also engage in. For more information, including a full list of programs, please visit the SWI website: [summerwriters.wustl.edu](http://summerwriters.wustl.edu).

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4119 Summer Writers Institute: Creative Nonfiction: Personal Narrative**

Online version of U11 4104/SWI: Personal Narrative. A single life story can change the world. By writing about ourselves and our communities, we act as mirrors for others. In this course, we'll explore our subjective stances and ask how we've been shaped by the world. Why do we obsess over certain memories and events? What stories do we believe about ourselves and our society? When and how do we use myth to imbue our lives with meaning? Is it possible to engage our readers

despite rather than because of the topics we choose? The reading assignments in this class are meant to inspire. A writer hones her understanding of human nature by reading. Reading teaches us how to write, and gives us confidence to embark on our own journey of self-discovery. Whether we draft from memory to better understand the past, or address conflict in our lives today, writing celebrates our impulse to record, save, examine, clarify, testify, discover, and engage in moral inquiry. Students will write three short essays and one long essay, and engage in assigned readings, discussion threads, audiovisual material, and miscellaneous creative exercises. Selected authors include journalists, memoirists, lyric essayists, and personal essayists in order to cover nonfiction sub genres.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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#### **CAPS-ECOMP 4120 Summer Writers Institute: Humor Writing**

This course will analyze and put into practice what makes good humor writing both good and humorous, from subject matter to the mechanics of setting up a punchline, from crafting an unexpected metaphor to perfecting the reversal. We will write and workshop humorous personal essays, commentary, satire, and parody, using as models examples from humorists and humorous writers from the past decade.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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#### **CAPS-ECOMP 4121 Summer Writers Institute: The Filmmaker On the Page: A Documentary Poetry Workshop**

A documentary poem is the poetic equivalent of a documentary film, which often does the work of educating its audience. These poems might bring to the forefront social justice issues or lesser-known historical events of importance, such as Juliana Spahr's documentary poetry about ecological decline or Emily Jungmin Yoon's poems that give voice to the experiences of Korea's comfort women. As documentary films rely on interviews and personal testimony from a range of subjects, the documentary poem relies on legal documents, news articles, factual data, testimonies, and other source texts integral to the poem-making process. In this workshop, we will discuss the ways in which the poet becomes a filmmaker on the page when writing a documentary poem and the various points of orientation (think POV) these poems can take. We will read and discuss a variety of poems written in the genre—including those by Muriel Rukeyser, Mark Nowak, Solmaz Sharif, and Tarfia Faizullah, among others. Most importantly, the majority of our time will be spent engaged in writing and workshoping the poems created during our three weeks.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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#### **CAPS-ECOMP 4130 Summer Writers Institute: Creative Nonfiction: Literary Journalism**

In this workshop, we will discuss and develop long-form narrative nonfiction, including magazine and newspaper features, human interest stories, essays on science and culture, and personal reportage. We will study the contrast between journalism, which seeks to convey facts and information, and literary journalism, which seeks to tell the stories that can bring this information to life. We will examine the narrative techniques that literary journalists use to transform knowledge and research on a topic into compelling, accessible writing. Through exercises and short assignments designed to help gather and shape your material, students will engage with craft topics such as reporting for narrative, conducting interviews and research, writing from direct observation, and balancing scene and digression. Each student will complete one publishable-quality article to be turned in to, and discussed by, students in the workshop.

Credit 3 units.

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#### **CAPS-ECOMP 4140 Summer Writers Institute: Advanced Personal Narrative**

A single life story can change the world. By writing about ourselves and our communities, we act as mirrors for others. In this course, we'll explore our subjective stances and ask how we've been shaped by the world. Why do we obsess over certain memories and events? What stories do we believe about ourselves and our society? When and how do we use myth to imbue our lives with meaning? Is it possible to engage our readers despite rather than because of the topics we choose? The reading assignments in this class are meant to inspire. A writer hones her understanding of human nature by reading. Reading teaches us how to write, and gives us confidence to embark on our own journey of self-discovery. Whether we draft from memory to better understand the past, or address conflict in our lives today, writing celebrates our impulse to record, save, examine, clarify, testify, discover, and engage in moral inquiry. Students will write three short essays and one long essay, and engage in assigned readings, discussion threads, audiovisual material, and miscellaneous creative exercises. Selected authors include: Ryan Van Meter, Melissa Febos, Kiese Laymon, Wendy Ortiz, Colson Whitehead, Ali Eckerman, Jamaica Kincaid, Bruce Shapiro, Meghan Daum, Elissa Washuta Summer Writers Institute courses are embedded within a robust series of programs (including readings, workshops, and panel discussions) that SWI students will also engage in. For more information, including a full list of programs, please visit the SWI website: [summerwriters.wustl.edu](http://summerwriters.wustl.edu).

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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#### **CAPS-ECOMP 4150 Summer Writers Institute: Microfiction: Get Into Shape! Narrative Forms That Energize Writing**

The Onion. Last Lap. The Gathering. The Bear at the Door. Stories often come in shapes—reliable structures that organize the action, details, characters, and therefore the drama. In *Making Shapely Fiction*, the writer Jerome Stern identifies the workings of various shapes that one often finds in narrative writing—and he gives them nifty names. You can see these shapes in operation in stories of different sizes and genres (from novels to short fiction, from tv to film), and it's quite likely that you've already put them to use in your own writing. In this course, we will use narrative shapes not just to structure story material but also to find it, generate it, and revise it. We will focus on literary microfiction (flash fiction), but you're welcome to use shape-sense to experiment with other short forms (prose poems, micro essays). Knowing the shapes of narrative can help you tune up your writing at every level, from overall structure down to individual sentence. Some familiarity with the craft of fiction writing, as well as some workshoping experience, is recommended.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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#### **CAPS-ECOMP 4155 Summer Writer's Institute: Playwriting**

This course will explore the essential components of playwriting including character development, story, structure, and dialogue. We will focus on the difference between writing for live stage performances and writing prose for the page. We will read work by classical and contemporary playwrights, including *Trifles* and *Poof* by Lynn Nottage, *Black Comedy* by Peter Shaffer, *Mud* by Maria Irene Fornes, and Anton Chekov's *A Marriage Proposal*. Students will each workshop a ten-minute and a one-act play.

Credit 3 units.



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**CAPS-ECOMP 4160 Summer Writers Institute: Culture Writing: Travel, Food, and Media**

In this workshop we will read and write across creative, journalistic, and investigative nonfiction with respect to food, travel, and media, exploring a robust array of styles and perspectives while honing our own distinct voices in a workshop environment. Our reasons for being here may vary widely, as do our backgrounds, yet collude in workshop as we work together as a team. By this I mean that we will be not only writing for ourselves, but for an audience of our peers. We each have a responsibility to contribute to class not only through our writing, but in detailed verbal commentary, honing our expectations of what writing can be.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4161 Summer Writers Institute: Autobiography & Poetry: Revenge On Circumstance**

Out of the quarrel with others we make rhetoric, writes W.B. Yeats. Out of the quarrel with ourselves we make poetry. Poems, therefore, are art objects we make from wrestling with who we were, who we are, who we want to be, and who we can't even imagine being yet. This generative poetry writing workshop, open to students at all levels, will introduce poems by a diverse range of poets. We will read and analyze these poems to unlock the magic and mystery of their form, content, and meaning. We will learn foundational approaches to prosody, versification, detail, image, figuration, and what John Keats calls negative capability. Most importantly, we will write and revise six original poems that engage with material drawn from our lives, from our triumphs and tragedies, and consider how poetry and the making of a poem can be our revenge on circumstance. Selected poets include: Edgar Kunz, Emily Moore, Aram Saroyan, Solmaz Sharif, Suji Kwock Kim, Rick Barot, Li-Young Lee, Ocean Vuong, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Robert Hayden, Natasha Trethewey, Elizabeth Bishop. Patricia Smith, Sharon Olds, Randall Jarrell, Marie Howe, Linda Gregg, Jean Valentine.

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4162 Summer Writers Institute 2020: Art, Poetry, and the Imagination**

In this workshop, students will explore the imaginative connections between visual art and poetry. In particular, the course will explore poetics works that have already shown the imaginative potential available to poems when they interact with and respond to visual art. Can a poem emulate the contours of a sculpture? Can poems provide a layered experience like a gallery installation? How does the composition of a poem translate to a painting's composition? The workshop is designed for both the beginning and advanced writing student, as many writing prompts will be based on visits to Washington University's Kemper Art Museum. All students will benefit from multiple workshop sessions, which will result in a final portfolio of artistically inspired and personally inventive poems.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4163 Summer Writers Institute: Writing St. Louis: Provenance, Place, & Perspective**

New to the Lou? Born and bred? Curious about the city's rich array of authors past and present? In this fully online course, we will read and write across genres and creative disciplines to explore the dynamic history and enduring relevance of St. Louis as a literary cultural center. Engaging with a diversity of poets, fiction writers, journalists, songwriters, and cultural critics, we will experiment with a variety of forms in both verse and prose in a generative, supportive writing environment. After a first week of rigorous discussion of seminal St. Louis authors--the term author often broadly defined--our second and third weeks will be largely devoted to workshoping student work,

wherein each student will be expected to complete and submit two separate pieces in two different genres. Class readings will be anchored in the 2018 volume *The St. Louis Anthology*, published by Belt Press, but also include selections of downloadable PDFs of seminal literary works, along with new work from emerging St. Louis voices. The course will culminate in a reading of our work as part of the Summer Writers Institute's open mic event. Summer Writers Institute courses are embedded within a robust series of programs (including readings, workshops, and panel discussions) that SWI students will also engage in. For more information, including a full list of programs, please visit the SWI website: [summerwriters.wustl.edu](http://summerwriters.wustl.edu).

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Summer

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4169 Summer Writers Institute: Creative Nonfiction: Personal Narrative - MATL**

In this generative writing workshop, we study the ways in which some of our most contemporary memoirists and essayists combine observation, memory, scene, and reflection to compose personal narratives that represent the changing natural world around them. Alongside these model writings, we read craft essays that discuss narrative distance and voice. We look to both the craft and creative readings to help us draft, workshop, and revise our own observational and reflective essays on what we are experiencing in our changing natural world.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4193 Creative Nonfiction: Writing Ourselves, Writing the World - MATL**

In this course, we will explore memoirs, essay collections, and individual articles in which the writers have merged their observations and research of the natural world with their own personal experiences or philosophical inquiries. We will consider biologist David George Haskell's *The Forest Unseen* alongside essay collections by nonfiction writer Amy Leach (*Things that Are*), fiction writer Michael Martone (*The Flatness and Other Landscapes*), and poet Mary Oliver (*Long Life*), as well as excerpts from books by Eula Biss, Bill Holm, Barbara Hurd, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Lawrence Weschler. From these writers, we will learn how one might offer a view of the self through the lens of environment, place, biography, history, and reflection. Each student will also work on a manuscript of similar variety from idea to finished product.

Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4500 Fundamentals of Novel Writing**

This course is for students seriously interested in the art and process of writing novel length fiction, including both Genre Fiction and Literary Fiction. The course will explore the process of developing a story idea, fleshing out the world the story is set in, creating full three dimensional characters, plotting stories, and developing writing habits necessary to complete a full-length novel. Students will complete the 90-day Novel approach created by Alan Watt and are expected to write the first third of a first draft novel by the end of the semester, approximately 20k words or 80 pages. While students will write their novels individually, they will present outlines to the class and participate in regular discussion with classmates and the instructor to ensure the process moves along smoothly. Readings will revolve around improving the students' writing skills and the early stages of novel writing, as well as examples of published novels. Class time will be spent building the toolkit necessary to prepare and sustain writing a full-length novel. Writing exercises will allow students to spend time practicing the lessons as well as working on their novels. Students should enter the course with an idea for a novel they'd like to write and be ready to commit to daily writing in order to accomplish the goal of a third of a novel by the end of the semester. Prerequisite: At least one class in creative writing, preferably fiction or nonfiction

Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Fall

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4515 Summer Writers Institute: Nonfiction: The Self as Story - MATL**

From personal narratives and family histories to observations in nature and philosophical inquiry, we write to tell the stories of our own experiences as well as the story of humanity. In this beginning creative nonfiction class, we read and write with, therefore, an ear for story, for the intersection of experience and reflection. We write ourselves as character and narrator, as one who seeks, discovers, and interprets, all the while guided by the narrative form. We supplement this creative side of the course with readings about craft, about how to build character, how to narrate a scene, and how to reflect on experience. We produce several beginnings, middles, and perhaps even ends. In live group sessions on Zoom, we discuss readings and generate and share our writings. Each student also composes one new piece of creative nonfiction to be workshoped among the class. Readings include personal and craft essays as well as excerpts from memoirs by authors such as Diane Ackerman, James Baldwin, Corinna Cook, Vivian Gornick, David Haskell, Barbara Hurd, Michael Martone, José Orduña, Joni Tevis, and Claudia Rankine. Summer Writers Institute courses are embedded within a robust series of programs (including readings, workshops, and panel discussions) that SWI students will also engage in. For more information, including a full list of programs, please visit the SWI website: [summerwriters.wustl.edu](http://summerwriters.wustl.edu).  
Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4519 Summer Writers Institute 2021: Advanced Personal Narrative - MATL**

A single life story can change the world. By writing about ourselves and our communities, we act as mirrors for others. In this course, we'll explore our subjective stances and ask how we've been shaped by the world. Why do we obsess over certain memories and events? What stories do we believe about ourselves and our society? When and how do we use myth to imbue our lives with meaning? Is it possible to engage our readers despite rather than because of the topics we choose? The reading assignments in this class are meant to inspire. A writer hones her understanding of human nature by reading. Reading teaches us how to write, and gives us confidence to embark on our own journey of self-discovery. Whether we draft from memory to better understand the past, or address conflict in our lives today, writing celebrates our impulse to record, save, examine, clarify, testify, discover, and engage in moral inquiry. Students will write three short essays and one long essay, and engage in assigned readings, discussion threads, audiovisual material, and miscellaneous creative exercises. Selected authors include: Ryan Van Meter, Melissa Febos, Kiese Laymon, Wendy Ortiz, Colson Whitehead, Ali Eckerman, Jamaica Kincaid, Bruce Shapiro, Meghan Daum, Elissa Washuta. Summer Writers Institute courses are embedded within a robust series of programs (including readings, workshops, and panel discussions) that SWI students will also engage in. For more information, including a full list of programs, please visit the SWI website: [summerwriters.wustl.edu](http://summerwriters.wustl.edu).  
Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4523 Summer Writers Institute 2021: Autobiography & Poetry: Revenge On Circumstance - MATL**

Out of the quarrel with others we make rhetoric, writes W.B. Yeats. Out of the quarrel with ourselves we make poetry. Poems, therefore, are art objects we make from wrestling with who we were, who we are, who we want to be, and who we can't even imagine being yet. This generative poetry writing workshop, open to students at all levels, will introduce poems by a diverse range of poets. We will read and analyze these poems to unlock the magic and mystery of their form, content, and meaning. We will learn foundational approaches to prosody, versification, detail, image, figuration, and what John Keats calls negative capability. Most importantly, we will write and revise six

original poems that engage with material drawn from our lives, from our triumphs and tragedies, and consider how poetry and the making of a poem can be our revenge on circumstance. Selected poets include: Edgar Kunz, Emily Moore, Aram Saroyan, Solmaz Sharif, Suji Kwock Kim, Rick Barot, Li-Young Lee, Ocean Vuong, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Robert Hayden, Natasha Trethewey, Elizabeth Bishop. Patricia Smith, Sharon Olds, Randall Jarrell, Marie Howe, Linda Gregg, Jean Valentine.  
Credit 3 units.

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4600 Advanced Novel Writing**

This course will build on the foundation of Fundamentals of Novel Writing, with students working towards finishing the first draft of their novel. Lessons will focus on writing effective dialogue to develop characters and their relationships, show emotions in said characters, identify themes in the author's writing. Students will finish the first drafts of their novels and then give consideration to the revision process, crucial for the preparation of a novel for publication. Students will have craft readings but also be able to select a craft book from their chosen genre, as well as continue their study of novels already published in their chosen genre. Students will commit to writing 40k words of their first draft, bringing them to a completed first draft around 60k words. Prerequisite: Fundamentals of Novel Writing (U11 4500)  
Credit 3 units.

Typical periods offered: Spring

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**CAPS-ECOMP 4999 Independent Study**

Credit 3 units.

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