

# Independent Studies: Creative Writing Workshop

## 181:101:EXV Spr11 Independent Studies

Spring 2011

### Instructors:

Lauren Haldeman  
Bowman House  
Office phone: 335-3281  
[lauren-haldeman@yuiowa.edu](mailto:lauren-haldeman@yuiowa.edu)

### Office Hours:

by appointment only;  
send email

Kei Miller [k.miller.glasgow@googlemail.com](mailto:k.miller.glasgow@googlemail.com)

### Course Description

Welcome to Creative Writing Workshop, offered by the International Writing Program. In Spring 2010, this course will link a small group of undergraduate students who are interested in creative writing with a similar group of students located in Scotland. Co-instructors Lauren Haldeman (American poet) and Kei Miller (Jamaican poet) will lead both sides of this exchange, offering guidance and instruction on the creative writing. From January 24 to May 8, participants in the class will complete creative writing activities—such as writing original poems or prose pieces—as well as comment on each other's work. They will also contribute to a series of on-line discussions that will take place via the ICON website. Two or three video conferences will take place over the duration of the course via Skype or other web-based technology. At the end of the semester, the products of the creative writing activities will be collected into an electronic anthology or e-book. All course activities will be conducted in English.

This course does not meet in a regular classroom setting; rather, participants will communicate via email, ICON, and video conference calls. Grading for undergraduates is on a letter-grade basis.

Please note: It is your responsibility to read and follow this syllabus, which outlines all of the requirements for this course. You must also provide a valid email address and familiarize yourself with ICON. Email and ICON are the primary ways that you will learn about assignments and course deadlines. Please use e-mail to communicate with Lauren about your progress in the course. Students in this class are responsible for reviewing the material transmitted to them electronically. Likewise, students will be responsible for uploading all of their written assignments via ICON for grading/evaluation.

Participants who are taking the course for non-credit will still be responsible for the work if they want to be included in the end-of-semester anthology.

### Required Texts

The texts for this course will be posted online.

## **Course Requirements**

This course is an independent study opportunity, and so it will be conducted on a flexible schedule. Participants will be asked to read and discuss the writing material posted online, to contribute to discussion threads on ICON (<https://icon.uiowa.edu>), and to produce a small portfolio of original pieces of creative writing that engage the themes and questions raised in the reading.

By the end of this course, you will have submitted 7-8 poems (1 every two weeks) to the Online Cafe, contributed to at least 15 'Workshop' discussions on ICON, and participated in 1-2 video poetry readings. From those writings, you will select at least 1 finished piece for inclusion in the class anthology, which will be distributed electronically.

As co-Instructors, Lauren and Kei will confer together via e-mail to formulate discussion topics and writing activities to enrich and enhance the ongoing conversation. We have not orchestrated the writing activities in advance, because we would like these activities to arise organically from our discussions of the reading. You are encouraged to communicate your needs and interests, as this course is designed to provide opportunities for individualized guidance and mentorship.

Examples of creative writing activities may include:

1. Writing in the voice of a character you have encountered in your reading;
2. "Stealing" a line or image from the reading and using it as a point of departure for a new piece of your own writing;
3. Responding with a poem to the poems written by your fellow reader/writers;
4. Composing a short sequence of poems that explores one or more of the themes raised in the reading;

You will receive notification about the discussion topics and writing activities via e-mail. In general, you will have to do three things each month: 1) Read and comment on the posted Writing Prompt texts; 2) Contribute 1-2 comments to the 'Workshop' discussion board on ICON; and 3) Complete 1-2 creative writing activities.

## **Posting to the ICON discussion board**

In addition to working on your own writing, you will be asked to contribute substantive commentary to three different online chats on the ICON discussion board:

### *Topic Board*

Instructors will post a topic or writing prompt to this discussion board. Students are expected to read these topics and comment on how their work may be influenced by this posted information. Topics may include online resources, such as YouTube videos or poetry websites, as well as material uploaded to ICON.

### *The Online Café*

This board will be a place for you to share your poems with your classmates, and to discuss your influences and inspiration. You will be expected to post one poem to this board on specific dates (listed below). After you post your poem, you should include a brief paragraph about what your inspirations were in writing the piece, including how specific writing prompts may have influenced you.

All students are encouraged to use this discussion board as a casual space to discuss each other's work .

### *The Workshop Discussion Board*

Every two weeks, there will be two selected student poems that will be up for a 'workshop'. These poems will be posted to the Content area. After you have read these two poems carefully, you will give in-depth commentary to two poems on the *Workshop* discussion board. The *Workshop* discussion board will be open for a two week period and you will be expected to post constructive comments to the two poems chosen during those two weeks.

The discussion format will allow you to ask questions, communicate your thoughts about the reading you have done, and (most important) respond to the comments of your peers in the U.S. and Scotland. Lauren and Kei will announce the workshop schedule at the beginning of the class. Students who are up for workshop will email their poems to Lauren. The poems will then be posted in the 'Content' section, labeled "Wokshop Poems, Week # (with respective dates)". You are expected to read these poems and then post your in-depth comments to the discussion board session for that two week period. Over the course of the semester, the co-Instructors reserve the right to judge the substance of your responses and to pose follow-up questions. There is no required word count for your discussion postings, but they must be thoughtful and substantive.

At the final deadline, May 14, 2010, all discussions must be completed on ICON and your portfolio submitted to Lauren via e-mail. Your participation in the online discussion forums will be assessed as each discussion takes place.

### **Online Discussion/Assignment Schedule**

Jan 24: Post a poem to the ***Online Caf ***

Read and comment on the ***Topics*** board and the ***Online Caf ***

Jan 31: Post a poem to the ***Online Caf ***

Read and comment on the ***Topics*** board and the ***Online Caf ***

Monday, Feb 7 – Feb 18: First ***Workshop*** discussion board open

*(Submit your comments to two workshop poems during this period)*

Feb 7: Post a poem to the ***Online Caf ***

Read and comment on the ***Topics*** board and the ***Online Caf ***

Feb 14: Post a poem to the ***Online Caf ***

Submit comment on the ***Topics*** board and the ***Online Caf ***

Monday, Feb 21 – March 4: Second ***Workshop*** discussion board open

*Submit your comments to two workshop poems during this period*

Feb 21: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Read and comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Feb 28: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Submit comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Monday, Mar 7 – Mar 25: (Spring Break will fall in the middle)  
 Third **Workshop** discussion board open  
*Submit your comments to two workshop poems during this period*

Mar 7: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Read and comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Mar 28: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Submit comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Monday, Mar 28 – Apr 8: Fourth **Workshop** discussion board open  
*Submit your comments to two workshop poems during this period*

Apr 4: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Read and comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Apr 11: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Submit comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Monday, Apr 11 – Apr 22: Fifth **Workshop** discussion board open  
*Submit your comments to two workshop poems during this period*

Apr 18: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Read and comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Apr 25: Post a poem to the **Online Café**  
 Submit comment on the **Topics** board and the **Online Café**

Monday, Apr 25 – May 6: Sixth **Workshop** discussion board open  
*Submit your comments to two workshop poems during this period.*

### **Grading and Feedback**

Grading for undergraduates is given on a letter-grade basis. You will be evaluated on the strength of your participation in the ICON discussions, your level of engagement with the other students in the U.S. group

and Scotland, and your final portfolio, which will collect the creative writing work you will have completed throughout the semester.

You will receive individualized comments on your creative writing work from Lauren ad Kei throughout the semester. These comments will be designed to help you revise and finalize your drafts.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students with physical, mental or learning disabilities. Students with disabilities that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements should visit their instructor during his or her office hours so that appropriate arrangements may be made. It is the student's responsibility to contact Student Disability Services, 3100 Burge Hall (335-1462), and obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request form (SAAR). This form specifies what course accommodations are judged reasonable for a given student. An instructor who cannot provide the accommodations specified, or has concerns about the accommodations, must contact the Student Disability Services counselor who signed the request form within 48 hours of receiving the form from the student.

### **Academic Fraud**

You are expected to be honest and honorable in your fulfillment of assignments and in test-taking situations. Academic fraud is a serious form of misconduct. A full explanation is given in the Student Academic Handbook:

<http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/x/#2>.

An instructor who suspects a student of academic fraud must inform the student (in writing) as soon as possible after the incident has been observed or discovered. Instructors who detect cheating or plagiarism may decide, in consultation with the departmental executive officer, to reduce the student's grade on the assignment or the course, even to assign an F. In either case, the instructor will write an account of the chronology of the plagiarism or cheating incident for the departmental chair, who will send an endorsement of the written report of the case to University. A copy of the report will be sent to the student, who has the right to request a hearing within the Department and/or within the College.

### **Cancelled: Flu-Like Symptoms Absence Policy**

Based on recommendations from the CDC and the Johnson County Public Health Department, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education has announced that The University of Iowa will return to standard policies for students who miss class due to flu-like symptoms.

The College will return **immediately** to its standard [absence policy](#):

“University policy requires that students be permitted to make up [examinations](#) missed because of illness, [mandatory religious obligations](#), certain University activities, or [unavoidable circumstances](#). All instructors must comply with this policy. The attendance policy should provide options for making up work missed due to an excused absence. **Instructors may**

**request that students provide documentation for any absence before the student is allowed to make up missed work.”**

NOTE: I do reserve the right to request documentation from you if you miss a substantial number of assignments due to illness.