

**FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY: DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED NEW COURSE or  
MODIFICATION OF AN EXISTING COURSE**

**Department/School:** English, Modern Languages, and Philosophy

**Date:** September 5, 2023

**Course No. or level:** English 490

**Title:** Creative Writing Capstone

**Semester hours:** 1      **Clock hours:** 1      **Lecture:** 1      **Laboratory:**

**Prerequisites:** Creative writing majors must have at least 18 hours in English above the 250 level or take the class in the semester they complete the major. Creative writing minors must have at least 12 hours completed towards the minor or take the class in the semester they complete the minor.

**Enrollment expectation:** 10

Indicate any course for which this course is a (an)

modification None

(proposed change in course title, course description, course content or method of instruction)

substitute None

(The proposed new course replaces a deleted course as a General Education or program requirement.)

alternate None

(The proposed new course can be taken as an alternate to an existing course.)

Name of person preparing course description: Meredith A. Love-Steinmetz

Department Chairperson's/Dean's Signature M. Love-Steinmetz

Provost's Signature L. H. Steinmetz

Date of Implementation Fall 2024

Date of School/Department approval 9/5/2023

### Catalog description

**490 Capstone in Creative Writing (1)** (Prerequisite: Creative writing majors must have at least 18 hours in English above the 250 level or take the class in the semester they complete the major. Creative writing minors must have at least 12 hours completed towards the minor or take the class in the semester they complete the minor.) Includes professional portfolio development, reflection on craft, and instruction in career and graduate school search skills.

### Purpose:

#### For Whom (generally?):

English 490 is for Creative Writing majors and minors.

#### What should the course do for the student?

This course will support creative writing majors and minors as they produce a polished portfolio of both creative and scholarly work for potential publication, applications to graduate school, writing samples for professional opportunities.

**Teaching method planned:** SEE SAMPLE SYLLABUS

**Textbook and/or materials planned** (including electronic/multimedia): SEE SAMPLE SYLLABUS

**Course Content:** SEE SAMPLE SYLLABUS

**Course Rationale:** Both the Liberal Arts and Professional Writing major programs include a capstone course. This course will provide an instructional space for students to compile their work and reflect on how their skills and knowledge may be applicable to professional and graduate school contexts.

Francis Marion University  
English 490: Creative Writing Capstone  
Fall 2024

Professor: Dr. Adam Houle

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Office and Hours: FH 150; MWF: 2-3 pm; TR: 11-12 pm; by appointment if possible

**Required Texts and Course Materials:**

In addition to handouts provided by your instructor, we will read Anne Lamott's *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*, exploring this text as a manual for continuing our writing life past undergraduate work and into your careers or graduate studies.

Aside from our texts, you should have access to your creative works up to this point, including draft work from creative writing and literature courses. These documents will serve as the foundation for your portfolio's creative work and traditions/aesthetic essay.

You should also have a working knowledge of the Rogers Library databases, a running reading list of mentor texts (more on this in a bit), and a willingness to explore in detail opportunities beyond graduation from FMU.

**Course Description:**

This course offers creative writing majors the space to significantly revise their creative work, write a scholarly aesthetic/traditions essay, and research career and graduate school opportunities with other creative writing majors.

The first component, the creative work, will showcase your revised and thoughtfully edited pieces with attention to how those pieces will work in a professional portfolio for employment or graduate school committees. As such, these pieces should be publishable and/or ready for graduate selection committees.



The second component is a scholarly essay where you explore the traditions and aesthetics in which your work engages. This essay will be between 12-16 pages, discussing mentor texts, traditions and methods in your chosen genre, and your prevailing interests in the genre's potential forms and subject matters.

And, finally, you will gather resources on potential career and graduate school options and present on your findings to your classmates in an informal but in-depth panel discussion.

### **Course Goals:**

By the end of your capstone experience, you will have:

1. Revised and polished several creative works
2. Researched writers and traditions that your work engages with, resulting in a traditions/aesthetic essay
3. Joined a community of writers and participated in thoughtful conversations surrounding opportunities and issues in our fields
4. Researched careers in writing and communications and graduate schools
5. Prepared yourself for sustained attention to your writing life

### **Grading Policies and Expectations:**

As I mentioned above, there are three main assignments for this class: the revised, polished creative portfolio, the academic traditions/aesthetic essay, and the panel discussion with relevant documentation.

I will provide you with specific details for each of these assignments in class, and it is enough for now to give you the breakdown of your grade:

1. Portfolio: 35%
2. Traditions/aesthetic essay: 35%
3. Panel and documentation: 20%
4. Workshop letters: 10%

### **Attendance Policies:**

Since this course requires effort outside class that will build on our work in class, attendance is mandatory. You may miss one scheduled meeting

without penalty. After that, a letter grade penalty per subsequent absence is in effect.

Further, please make every effort to be on time and to stay for our whole class period. Chronic lateness may be treated as an absence, as may leaving early.

Most importantly, though: showing up ready to go is a commitment to yourself and your fellow writers. We are lucky to have the potential for a caring, committed, and invested community, and it is our responsibility to be a member in good standing, to recognize the efforts of our classmates as worth our attention and to recognize, too, that they will see your efforts with the same attentiveness and care.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Any student who plagiarizes will receive an automatic zero on the assignment. I also expect all creative and academic work to be free of any AI-aided language.

We are often tempted to cheat or plagiarize when we are unprepared, uncertain or confused about an assignment, or when we are in danger of not meeting a deadline. If you find yourself in such a situation, make the right choice and see me so that we can make a good plan together.

For more information about cheating, plagiarism, and the FMU Honor Code, please see your student handbook.

### **Order of Operations:**

(Oddities and strangeness and schedule tweaks are the purview of your professor. I'll note any changes in class and give you all plenty of warning)

Week One: Introduction; syllabus; expectations you have for me; expectations you have for yourself.

Week Two: B-by-B chapters discussion; workshop etiquette; sign-up sheets for creative workshops

Week Three: B-by-B chapters discussion; workshop group

Week Four: B-by-B chapters discussion; workshop group, continued

Week Five: B-by-B chapters discussion; workshop group, continued

Week Six: Scholarly traditions/aesthetic assignment introduction and models

Week Seven: Finding our people and finding our form; library sources; am I just bragging?

Week Eight: Workshop traditions/aesthetic essay

Week Nine: Workshop traditions/aesthetic essay

Week Ten: Workshop traditions/aesthetic essay

Week Eleven: individual meetings

Week Twelve: Rolling on out; careers and graduate school and the writing life

Week Thirteen: In class troubleshooting

Week Fourteen: Panel One

Week Fifteen: Panel Two

Final exam session: TBA and with cookies