

English 2310: 501 (CRN: 53379)  
**Intro.to Creative Writing**  
Spring 2025 (Online)  
Assoc. Professor Justin Bendell

Email: [jbendell@unm.edu](mailto:jbendell@unm.edu)  
Zoom Office Hours  
<https://unm.zoom.us/j/9782161262>  
Mon: 11-12; Tues: 12-1, or by appt

### **Welcome to Introduction to Creative Writing!**

This course will introduce students to the basic elements of creative writing, including short fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction.

Students will read and study published works as models, but the focus of this course is on students revising and reflecting on their own writing.

Throughout this course, students will be expected to read poetry, fiction, and non-fiction closely, and analyze the craft features employed. You will be expected to write in each of these genres.

A large part of this course, much like all writing, will be experimentation. After reading and analyzing examples, we will create our own poems and short stories. When writing poems, we will experiment with crafting images, sounds, rhythms, and metaphors. In fiction, we will develop characters, make settings, and create plots.

We will do weekly writing experiments to generate ideas that we can then develop into poems or stories. Some weeks will be dedicated to workshops where we will share our work and gain feedback from classmates. This is also part of the experimentation process, as it will help you learn how your writing affects other readers.

We will spend time revising our work in class and for homework. A key to good writing is recognizing the importance of revising drafts. The final portfolio will include revisions of two poems, a flash memoir, and a short story.

A typical week will include approximately 25-30 pages of reading, 1-2 writing activities, and at least one online peer engagement via Canvas, online video, or chat forums.

### **Some important stuff to keep in mind:**

- The assignment syllabus is a tentative schedule. Any changes will be announced and/or posted on the Canvas calendar.
- All weekly assignments are due Monday at 11:59 pm.
- Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.
- Students who do not log in in the first week will be dropped.

## Course Objectives:

In English 2310, you will progress toward the following student learning outcomes:

1. Participate in a constructive conversation and community about creative writing.
2. Read and critically engage with a variety of texts.
3. Compose creative works in various genres of creative writing.
4. Provide respectful, honest, and critical feedback to peers about their work.
5. Revise creative work based on peer feedback and critique.
6. Develop thoughtful workshop reflection on students' own writing and writing process.
7. Evaluate and engage with publication process.

## Required Work and Grading

All formal writing assignments must follow MLA format and be typewritten, double-spaced in a 12pt. Times New Roman font. Grades will be determined on a traditional percentage system, with the appropriate plus or minus sign: 100-90% = A (1000-900 points); 89-80% = B (899-800 points); 79-70% = C (799-700 points); 69-60% = D (699-600); and below = F.

*Labor-based Grading:* I am a practitioner of labor-based grading. I believe that if students do the work, they should receive credit. Thus, we will negotiate a labor-based grading contract at the start of the semester. “A labor-based grading contract is essentially a set of social agreements with the entire class about how final course grades will be determined for everyone. These agreements are articulated in a contract, a document, that is negotiated at the beginning of the term or semester, then reexamined at midpoint to make sure it is still fair enough for everyone” (Inoue 130).

## Points Breakdown

**Class Participation is 300 points**, broken into Discussions (100 points), Writing Workshops (100 points for two workshops), and Peer Reviews (100 points for two peer reviews).

**Homework is 500 points**, broken into Journal entries (100 points), drafts & process work (200 points), and Major Drafts (200 points for six drafts).

**Final Portfolio is 200 points**, broken into Revised Poems & Memoir (100 points), and Revised short story (100 points).

**1000 points total!**

## Course Calendar

### **UNIT 1: FICTION (Weeks 1-7)**

#### **Week 1 (Jan 20-27): Intro to Narrative Craft**

##### Readings

- (1) Read Syllabus
- (2) Professor Video #1
- (3) Readings - Canvas & WF

##### Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Canvas; videos; student contract
- (2) Discussion 1
- (3) Writing Activity 1

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#### **Week 2 (Jan 28-Feb 3): Fiction (Showing & Telling)**

##### Readings

- (1) Professor Video #2
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

##### Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 2
- (2) Writing Activity 2

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#### **Week 3 (Feb 4-10): Fiction (Characters / Point of View)**

##### Readings

- (1) Professor Video #3
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

##### Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 3
- (2) Writing Activity 3

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**Week 4 (Feb 11-17): Fiction (Setting /Workshop)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #4
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 4 (Workshop)
- (2) Writing Activity 4

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**Week 5 (Feb 18-24): Fiction (Plot)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #5
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 5
- (2) Writing Activity 5

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**Week 6 (Feb 25-Mar 3): Fiction (Ending your story)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #6
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 6
- (2) Fiction Drafts Due!

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**Week 7 (Mar 4-10): Fiction (Workshop)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #7
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 7 (Workshop)
- (2) Writing Activity 7

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## **UNIT 2: NONFICTION (Weeks 8-11)**

### **Week 8 (Mar 11-17): Nonfiction (Generative)**

Readings

- (1) Professor Video #8
- (2) Readings - Canvas & WF

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 8
- (2) Writing Activity 8

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### **Week 9 (Mar 19-24): SPRING BREAK -- RECHARGE**

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### **Week 10 (Mar 25-31): Nonfiction (Draft 1)**

Readings

- (1) Professor Video #10
- (2) Readings - Canvas

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 10
- (2) Writing Activity 10

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### **Week 11 (Apr 1-7): Nonfiction (Concision)**

Readings

- (1) Professor Video #11
- (2) Readings - Canvas

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 11
- (2) Writing Activity 11

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**UNIT 3: POETRY (Weeks 12-15)****Week 12 (Apr 8-14): Poetry (Introduction/Choose Your Own Adventure)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #12
- (2) Readings - Canvas & PC

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 12
- (2) Writing Activity 12

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**Week 13 (Apr 15-21): Poetry (Rhythm & Rhyme)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #13
- (2) Readings - Canvas & PC

Assignments Due Monday Night

- (1) Discussion 13
- (2) Writing Activity 13

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**Week 14 (Apr 22-28): Poetry (Lines & Meter)**Readings

- (1) Professor Video #14

(2) Readings - Canvas & PC

Assignments Due Monday Night

(1) Discussion 14

(2) Writing Activity 14

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**Week 15 (Apr 29-May 5): Poetry (Workshop/Publishing)**

Readings

(1) Professor Video #15

(2) Readings - Canvas & PC

Assignments Due Monday Night

(1) Discussion 15 (Workshop)

(2) Course Evaluation

(3) Writing Activity 15

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**Week 16 (May 6-12): Portfolio (Revision)**

Readings

(1) Professor Video #16

Assignments Due Monday Night

(1) Portfolio Due

(2) Reflection Exercise 16

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**Important Dates:**

Monday, Jan. 20	First day of classes
Friday, Jan. 30	Last day to Add or Change Sections
Friday, Feb. 6	Last Day to Drop with 100% refund
Thur.-Fri. Mar. 17-21	Spring Break – no classes
Friday, Apr. 15	Last Day to Withdraw w/o approval of Student Services
Friday, May 11	Last Day to Withdraw w/ approval of Student Services
Friday, May 11	Last Day of Instruction (before finals)

## Navigating this Online Course

Because this class is administered fully online, it is important to have a high level of skill in operating computers. It is not recommended for students with limited computer skills to take an online course. The following tips will help students navigate the course. If you have computer problems, including log in or technical issues call 505-277-5757. For issues with Canvas, tutors in the Learning Center can advise you at 505-925-8907.

*Please:*

- Become familiar with Canvas software. You may want to visit The Learning Center at UNM Valencia Campus if you need additional help learning how to navigate.
- Keep copies of all your work. Saving all writing is necessary. Learn how to save Word or RTF files to your desktop or a flash drive. If you do not know how to save files, go to The Learning Center or call 505-277-5757.
- To send me a message, do the following: click on “Inbox” in Canvas and write me a message. Or send me an email at [jbendell@unm.edu](mailto:jbendell@unm.edu).
- Create a routine—here is a suggested routine to help you get started.
  1. Log on! Lessons open on Monday morning and close the following Monday night at midnight. On Monday, log in and read the list of assignments for the week. Make sure you have all materials you need to complete the assignments, such as page numbers or links. Jot down due dates and print out assignments.
  2. Read the assignments actively, highlighting important ideas. Use any resources (dictionaries, asking questions, etc.) to help you acquire the information the session is trying to relay. Be pro-active and disciplined in your study habits.
  3. Log on periodically throughout the week to check course e-mails and review new threaded discussions or blog responses. Watch for new announcements.
  4. Check Discussions. Read questions I have posted for the week, your classmates’ & my responses, and enter your own answers. Your responses are an important part of your grade, so please take these exercises seriously. In responses, respect others. Finally, run spell and grammar check on your postings.



5. Importantly, give yourself ample time to submit work before the deadline. I'm flexible with deadlines, but it's best for you & me when things are turned in in a timely manner.

**Instructor Biography:** My name is Justin Bendell. I am Associate Professor of English at UNM-Valencia and the Chair of the Humanities Division. I earned an MFA in Creative Writing from Florida International University, an MA from Northern Arizona University, and a BS from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A practicing writer, my prose and poems have been published in *Meridian*, *3:AM Magazine*, *Harper's Ferry Review*, *Washington Square Review*, *Thuglit*, and elsewhere. I like campfires, hot sauce, crime fiction, spaghetti westerns, the politics of decolonization & liberation, & music that is really fast (grindcore), really slow (dub reggae), and really weird (free jazz). I live in Albuquerque with my spouse and our new doggie. For more info: <https://www.justinbendell.com/>

### **Brass Tacks and Policy Stuff**

**COVID-19 Health and Awareness:** UNM is a mask friendly, but not a mask required community.

**Instructor Contract Info:** My online office hours are Mon. 11-12, Tues. 12-1, or by appt. I hold Office Hour via Zoom. <https://unm.zoom.us/j/96443194689>. Also, email me anytime. Often, I will answer quickly, but please give me 12-24 hours to respond, Monday through Friday. I do respond to weekend emails, but sometimes I am out of town and will not be able to respond until Monday morning.

### **Required Texts and Materials**

- Addonizio, Kim and Dorianne Laux. *The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. W.W. Norton, 1997 (ISBN: 9780226616698)
- Burroway, Janet. *Writing Fiction: A Guide to Narrative Craft*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. The University of Chicago Press, First Edition, 2019 (ISBN: 109780393316544)
- UNM email address and access to UNM Canvas
- Access to Internet and Microsoft Office (free download for UNM students)
- A desire to think critically and to deepen your writing and reading skills

**Tutoring:** Tutoring is available to you in math, science, writing, and other subjects through the Learning Commons: Learning and STEM Centers and Writing Center. In person tutoring is in these centers in the LRC (the building that also has the library). Tutoring in Zoom and, for writing, through email, is also available. Making use of tutoring is a fantastic way to use your resources and set yourself up to learn deeply and well in your courses. To schedule an appointment, please go to: [Learning Commons Bookings](#)

If you are making an email appointment with the Writing Center, email your draft to [tutor@unm.edu](mailto:tutor@unm.edu) after you fill out the form above. If you have difficulty with the scheduling link above, would like an appointment in a subject not listed at that link, or have a question, email [tutor@unm.edu](mailto:tutor@unm.edu). You'll get answers during business hours Monday through Friday.

The webpage, with more details about available hours, is here: [Learning Commons: Tutoring Services webpage](#). Resources to support study skills and time management are available through [Student Learning Assistance](#) at the Center for Teaching and Learning in Zimmerman Library or online.

**Attendance Policy and Overall Participation:** It is your responsibility to keep up with reading and assignments, and/or to contact me if you have questions about the material. Students who fail to log in in the first week or submit the diagnostic essay will be dropped.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism means using language and/or ideas without acknowledging their source. Plagiarism includes such activities as copying another student's papers or ideas, downloading, and turning in papers from the Internet, or copying passages from sources without proper documentation, or rephrasing an author's ideas and presenting them as the student's new, original thoughts. Plagiarism in this course may result in one or more of the following consequences: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, or disciplinary action by the University. To learn how to avoid plagiarism, students can speak to me, consult a tutor, or refer to <http://library.acadiau.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/>.

**Accommodations:** UNM is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact the [UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services](#). (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at [sjclawson@unm.edu](mailto:sjclawson@unm.edu). Or the UNM-Albuquerque Accessibility Resource Center (<https://arc.unm.edu/>) at [arcsrvs@unm.edu](mailto:arcsrvs@unm.edu) or by phone at 505-277-3506.

**Anti-Discrimination Policy:** To meet obligations under Title IX, UNM faculty, Teaching Assistants, and Graduate Assistants are considered "responsible employees" by the Department of Education (see page 15: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/qa-201404-title-ix.pdf>). This designation requires that any report of gender discrimination which includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at the Office of Equal Opportunity ([oeo.unm.edu](http://oeo.unm.edu)). For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct, see: <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html>.

**Canvas:** Students are responsible for posting responses to discussion questions/prompts that I have posted on our Canvas class site. These questions are designed to generate discussion, promote further inquiry into our topics, and scaffold the essays.

**Credit-hour statement:** This is a three credit-hour course delivered in an entirely asynchronous online modality over 8 weeks during the Fall 2024 semester. Please plan for a *minimum* of 9 hours per week to learn course materials and complete assignments.

**Citizenship and/or Immigration Status:** All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. UNM as an institution has made a core commitment to the success of all our students, including members of our undocumented community. The Administration's welcome is found on our website: <http://undocumented.unm.edu/>.

**Drafts:** You will be required to write at least three poems, one short memoir, and multiple drafts/scenes for a 2,500-word short story. I expect these drafts to be saved in .doc, .docx, .odt, or .pdf and formatted following the guidelines in the Formatting section below. I may comment on your drafts using Word *Comments* and *Track Changes*. Both editing tools are located under Insert on the Word Menu. If you're not familiar with these tools, you might want to take time to familiarize yourself.

**Equal Access:** Services located in Student Services provides academic support to students who have disabilities. If students think they need alternative formats for completing coursework, they should contact this service right away to ensure their needs are met in a timely manner. Students are responsible for getting all documented forms to me as soon as possible. I cannot accommodate any special needs without the proper authorization from UNM Valencia Accessibility Services. They are located at Advisement & Counseling Services, Student Services Building, 280 La Entrada Rd., Los Lunas, NM 87031, 505-925-8560. <http://www.unm.edu/~vcadvise/equalaccess.htm>. Pursuant to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), I accommodate documented special needs and encourage students to discuss their concerns with me.

**Final Portfolio:** No exam during the final exam period. You will be submitting your final portfolio the previous week. The final portfolio will contain the four final poems, one short story, along with other drafts and journals, reflecting the culmination of everything you have learned. You may revise the four poems and your short story for the final portfolio to make sure you are submitting the very best writing you are capable of at the end of the semester, while also making clear your progress.

**Formatting:** All work, unless otherwise noted, should be typed in 12-point Times New Roman or Garamond font with black ink. All prose should be double-spaced. Poetry should not be double-spaced. Pages should be numbered and should have standard one-inch margins on all sides.

**Late Policy:** I prefer not to accept stories or poems submitted more than a week after the assigned date, so make sure to turn in your essays in a timely manner.

**The Most Important Class Rule is *Respect*.** Our class is an inclusive environment where everyone is welcome. Derogatory remarks, name-calling, trolling, bullying, harassment, and bigotry are totally not cool nor are they tolerated. If you have a problem with me or another student, please reach out. I am a good listener.

**Participation:** Participation is mandatory in this course. Participation means actively participating in discussions and completing assignments on time; if you do not log-in to Learn and complete assignments on a regular basis you will likely be dropped. Reach out to me if you have struggles that get in the way of participation.

**Student Privacy:** Student privacy is strongly protected by professors at UNM-V. The federal FERPA strictly prohibits the instructor or administrators from talking to anyone but the student about his/her progress. If a student has questions about a grade on an assignment or about the final grade for the course, FERPA dictates that the student is the only one who may speak to the instructor regarding their grades. All other outside requests for information release must be sent to and approved by the UNM-V registrar: (505) 925-8580

**Student Support:** UNM has many resources and centers to help you thrive, including [opportunities to get involved](#) in campus life, [mental health resources](#), [academic support such as tutoring](#), [resource centers](#) for people like you, free food at [Valencia Campus Food Pantry](#), [jobs on campus](#) and [financial capability](#) support. Your advisor, staff at the [resource centers](#) and [Academic Affairs Office](#), and I can help you find the right opportunities for you. Confidential services for students are available at [LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center](#), [Women's Resource Center](#), and the [LGBTQ Resource Center](#). The [Women's Resource Center](#) supports all students, including those who are pregnant or are parents. UNM-Valencia has lactation stations located in LRC 112 (Tomé campus) and in the Workforce Training Center.

**Technical Support:** If you have questions about computer-related problems, call 277-5757, M-F, 8:00 am-12:00 noon and M-F, 1:00 pm-5:00 pm MST. Computer technicians are available and happy to help you solve those difficult problems.

**Title IX:** The University of New Mexico and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and providing an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. The University's programs and activities, including the classroom, should always provide a space of mutual respect, kindness, and support without fear of harassment, violence, or discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of sex includes discrimination on the basis of assigned sex at birth, sex characteristics, pregnancy and pregnancy related conditions, sexual orientation and gender identity. If you have encountered any form of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence, we encourage you to report this to the University. You can access the confidential resources available on campus at the LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center (<https://loborespect.unm.edu>), the Women's Resource Center (<https://women.unm.edu>), and the LGBTQ Resource Center (<https://lgbtqrc.unm.edu>). If you speak with an instructor regarding an incident connected to discrimination based on sex, they must notify UNM's Title IX Coordinator that you shared an experience relating to Title IX, even if you ask the instructor not to disclose it. The Title IX Coordinator is available to assist you in understanding your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct and reporting, please see <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html> and CEEO's [website](#).

**Tutorials:** If you do not know how to use Canvas, try one of the tutorials available on the information page at <https://canvasinfo.unm.edu/students/index.html>