



Course	Creative Writing
Level and Field of study	Laurea Triennale in Comunicazione Digitale e Social Media (L-20)
Settore scientifico disciplinare (SSD)	L-ART/06
Academic Year	2024-2025
Year of study	2
Total number of credits	6
Prerequisite	-
Lecturer	Guido Bosticco Email: guido.bosticco@unicusano.it The lecturer is available for consultation via email and videocall, by appointment
Presentation	Where do stories originate? How is a character developed? Is it possible to create objective descriptions? Writing represents a mode of thought, a particular way of engaging with the world that aims to narrate, describe, and reimagine it. It is often stated that learning to write requires first mastering the ability to read. However, in the contemporary context, saturated with texts transmitted through countless communication platforms, it may prove beneficial to reverse this process: to learn how to write in order to better understand how to read. Acquiring knowledge of the principles underlying writing—its cognitive processes, structural elements, and technical strategies—can serve as a tool to refine observational skills, critical analysis, and creative capacity. Such an approach can be adapted and integrated into diverse professional domains, regardless of their specific nature.
Learning objectives for the discipline	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop the ability to focus on observation and interpretation. 2. Stimulate creativity in crafting descriptive texts, plots, characters, and dialogues. 3. Enhance sensitivity to the Italian language and its expressive functions.
Prerequisites	Proficiency in the Italian language
Expected Learning Outcomes	<p>Knowledge and Understanding Students will be guided toward the discovery of key mechanisms involved in the creation of creative texts: plot construction techniques, various descriptive approaches, character and persona design, dialogue construction, the use of flashbacks and flash-forwards, metaphors, synesthesia, and other rhetorical techniques.</p> <p>Ability to Apply Knowledge and Understanding Through dedicated exercises, students will be encouraged to apply the knowledge they acquire incrementally. These exercises are specifically designed for the practical application of narrative techniques or structures introduced during the theoretical sessions. The exercises are progressive, gradually incorporating previously learned techniques and expanding upon them.</p> <p>Autonomy in Judgment Interaction with classmates and the instructor will provide opportunities for evaluating one's work and making improvements. By observing the work of peers and participating in a progressive process of knowledge application, students will develop self-analysis skills for their texts and the ability to rewrite them effectively. The nature of writing and rewriting itself fosters the development of critical thinking.</p> <p>Communication Skills Communication skills are inherent to creative writing. Regardless of the individual levels achieved by students, they will represent progress from their starting point. Writing practice necessitates continuous engagement with the external world and one's personal communication style. Collaboration with classmates will once again play a key role in honing this skill.</p> <p>Learning Skills Writing exercises stimulate lateral thinking, the development of alternative narrative structures, and the construction of diverse discursive frameworks. When well-developed, these abilities enable students to "read" the narrative patterns embedded in the information they encounter daily.</p>

<p>Course structure</p>	<p>The course consists of 18 hours of pre-recorded audio-video lectures, which, together with the provided handouts, form the core study materials available on the platform. Additional recommended reading texts are also indicated.</p> <p>Interactive learning is facilitated through forums and includes five <i>Etivities</i>, which involve short writing exercises and opportunities for peer and instructor feedback. Participation in the first five <i>Etivities</i> is strongly encouraged as they complement the creative writing learning process. Sharing texts and engaging in discussions is essential for developing an appropriate approach to writing and identifying one's strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, reviewing others' work often serves as a source of inspiration.</p> <p>The course culminates in a sixth and final <i>Etivity</i>, which is mandatory. This task requires students to produce a short story that will be submitted to the instructor at least eight days prior to the oral exam session. The oral exam will involve the discussion and critique of the submitted text.</p> <p>The total workload for this 6-credit course is approximately 150 hours, distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 hours of pre-recorded video lectures. • 40 hours of interactive learning, including the completion and submission of six <i>Etivities</i> (including the mandatory one for the exam). • 90 hours of independent study and practice, which is highly encouraged to include collaborative exchanges with peers. <p>It is recommended to spread individual activities (independent practice) over an extended period (at least eight weeks) to allow sufficient time for texts to mature, be revised, and rewritten.</p>
<p>Course Content</p>	<p>The course is divided into six modules, each comprising three hours of video lectures (equivalent to approximately 15 hours of study). Each module corresponds to one <i>Etivity</i>. The workload for the <i>Etivities</i> varies depending on the number and complexity of the exercises, which progressively increase in intensity. The total workload for the <i>Etivities</i> amounts to approximately 40 hours.</p> <p>The sixth <i>Etivity</i> is mandatory for all participants and consists of the written work to be submitted prior to the oral exam.</p> <p>Module 1: The Starting Blocks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture 1: Introduction to the course • Lecture 2: Where we begin: key words • Lecture 3: Emotion vs. rationality • Lecture 4: Creativity #1 • Lecture 5: Creativity #2 • Lecture 6: The creative process <p>Etivity 1: Basic exercises to confront one's resistance to creativity (2-hour workload).</p> <p>Module 2: Propelling Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture 7: Tips for starting a scene • Lecture 8: The right approach • Lecture 9: The right style • Lecture 10: Activators #1 • Lecture 11: Activators #2 • Lecture 12: Transformations <p>Etivity 2: Three basic exercises on description (6-hour workload).</p> <p>Module 3: Plot Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture 13: Where stories come from • Lecture 14: Ideas for starting • Lecture 15: From idea to concept • Lecture 16: From concept to treatment • Lecture 17: Moving the story forward • Lecture 18: Developing the plot <p>Etivity 3: Three progressively complex exercises for inventing narrative ideas, concepts, and plots (6-hour workload).</p> <p>Module 4: Characters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture 19: The power of characters • Lecture 20: Characters in a few lines • Lecture 21: Characters and encounters • Lecture 22: Character checklists • Lecture 23: Notable examples • Lecture 24: The inside and the outside <p>Etivity 4: Two exercises on creating the physical and psychological traits of characters and a critical reading of excerpts provided in the handouts (6-hour workload).</p> <p>Module 5: Dynamics and Setting</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture 25: Dialogue #1 • Lecture 26: Dialogue #2 • Lecture 27: Dialogue #3 • Lecture 28: Description • Lecture 29: Synesthesia #1 • Lecture 30: Synesthesia #2 <p>Etivity 5: Ten exercises: five on dialogue, four on advanced description, and one on sensory perception (8-hour workload).</p> <p>Module 6: Techniques and Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture 31: Use of first and third person • Lecture 32: Use of details • Lecture 33: Flashbacks and flash-forwards • Lecture 34: Interiority and exteriority • Lecture 35: Memory • Lecture 36: The writer's trinity <p>Etivity 6: Writing a short story following specific instructions (12-hour workload).</p>
<p>Study Materials</p>	<p>The course platform provides a single comprehensive handout (in Italian) that follows the sequence of the 18 topics covered across the modules. This handout fully covers the program, including the reading passages referenced in the video lectures. However, participation in the <i>Etivities</i> is strongly recommended. Due to the specific nature of the course, the <i>Etivities</i> provide a crucial opportunity for peer and instructor interaction. The exercises and works produced by fellow students are also to be considered essential study materials, as they offer valuable insights and inspiration.</p> <p>Recommended Texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen King, <i>On Writing: Autobiografia di un mestiere</i>, Frassinelli, 2015. • Raymond Carver, <i>Niente trucchi da quattro soldi</i>, Minimum Fax, 2002. • Andrea Bocconi and Guido Bosticco, <i>Raccontare il viaggio</i>, Touring, 2017.
<p>Evaluation Criteria</p>	<p>The creative writing exam consists of composing a short story (in Italian), corresponding to <i>Etivity 6</i>.</p> <p>Story Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story must be original. While it can draw inspiration from real events, it should demonstrate originality in its narrative structure, language, and the reworking of its plot. • Length: The story should be between 7,000 and 10,000 characters, including spaces. Submission: The completed story must be submitted to the instructor at least 8 days prior to the scheduled exam date. • NOTE: Upload the file (.doc or .pdf) to the dedicated module forum. Avoid writing the story directly in the forum text field—attach the file instead. <p>The story is the culmination of the progressive writing exercises completed throughout the course. While it can build upon one of the earlier exercises, the final story must demonstrate greater depth, reflection, and development.</p> <p>The key elements of assessment include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Originality of the subject 2. Effectiveness of the narrative structure 3. Mastery of language and registers <p>The oral exam consists of a discussion about the story, focusing on its features and the choices made during its composition.</p> <p>The evaluation will balance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective elements: Linguistic accuracy, logical coherence, and adherence to the required format. • Subjective elements: Personal interpretation and perspective of the instructor as the reader. <p>The course will introduce universally recognized evaluation standards for creative writing, which students will practice and refine through their exercises. These standards will form the basis of the assessment framework.</p>
<p>Criteria for Assigning the Thesis</p>	<p>Choosing to write the thesis in the field of creative writing is not recommended. However, the course can still be useful in terms of its compositional aspects, particularly when it comes to structuring the thesis text. It remains possible to propose a thesis idea to the instructor in order to evaluate its feasibility together.</p>