

Guidelines for Hybrid and Remote Course Design
English and Creative Writing Department

Creative Writing hybrid and web guidelines for undergraduates

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Literature hybrid guidelines

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Creative Writing Hybrid and web guidelines for undergraduate courses

Note: These guidelines are meant to offer a foundation as we prepare for the potentialities and possibilities of our fall semester 2020. Remember that we must be flexible in our preparation and expectations, even as we work to build a rigorous, inclusive, and vibrant curriculum. As things evolve, your individual expertise will help us all create a satisfying and effective experience for our students, for ourselves, and for the Columbia community.

Some overarching guidelines and considerations:

Whether classes are held on campus or remotely, in a face-to-face, hybrid, or web-based format, students whose schedules reflect a designated day and time for instruction should be able to expect a number of things from their courses and instructors.

Create a synchronous component. Different classes will make use of this in different ways, but be prepared to “meet” with your students during your scheduled class time. Please note that students will be informed if their classes are on campus or web-based, and because of the advance information, they are expected to make sure they have the technology and schedule that will allow them to “meet” during class time. It is important that you do, too. This might look like different things in different classrooms: Zoom meetings; Google group hangouts; Canvas connections; on-line, live discussions; individual conferences, etc. Make use of this scheduled class time to engage them and engage with them.

Create strategies and processes for regular feedback from the instructor. Because of our limited face time with our students, it is essential that you make sure they get timely feedback on assignments and on their class participation overall. This is always important, but even more so in these uncertain times.

Create strategies and processes for peer response and feedback. Recall and comment? Peer review? Discussion boards? Written feedback? Small group accountability activities? Live discussions?

Study of literary models. Use the study of published work to deepen and heighten a student’s understanding of their craft. There are many resources on-line, but be sure to put your book order in as well. Let students know your expectations and strategies for reading and responding.

Student-teacher conferences. We all know that students appreciate these specific, student-focused conversations about their work. Make time for this. You may use office hours (remote is best this fall), and/or you might take class or other time to schedule these individual meetings. Freshmen and new students may be timid or inexperienced at seeking these conversations on their own; consider making them part of your pedagogy and set the meetings yourself.

Office hours (full-time faculty). Designate times and ways for students to contact you outside of class (remotely or with proper social distance protocols followed). Make your response process clear to your students.

Process versus product. Consider using this time of apartness and isolation as a way to engage students with their writing process and creative practice as opposed to just writing to the assignments. Talk about the pursuit of writing, share ideas. A recent article suggested that young people and students have been writing more than ever during this shut down; encourage this continued work.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion. Be sure that your syllabus, reading, and assignments reflect the broad diversity of our students and the population of our world.

Consider the potential of multi-media in your on-line components of the class. Toni Morrison on YouTube talking about writing? A Zoom meeting with a writer or editor? A live broadcast of a poetry reading? A virtual field trip? When we are in class, it is our individual dynamism that helps keep us all engaged. These multi-modal resources can create other dynamic opportunities for engagement.

Be compassionate while maintaining standards and policies. During this time of illness and unease, your attendance policies may need to be flexible, but your expectations for the assignments and engagement with the work can still be high. Set your guidelines, but also be prepared to take things on a case-by-case basis. If a student misses an in-person session, they should be able to access the information on-line, just as the on-line students for that session can.

Feel free to check in with other faculty members, with program directors, and/or with our chair and associate chair if you have questions or concerns about your students. Make use of the resources provided through the school; file Student Success (EASE) reports/Alerts when appropriate, make sure to complete mandated academic progress reports, etc.

Be careful not to diminish your own work in and with these classes. Talk about the opportunities provided with this delivery more so than those missed. You are dedicated educators; you know how to teach. The energy and commitment you bring to the class can be infectious. The good kind of infectious.

Be aware of your own needs and limitations. It is important that we all stay healthy. Set guidelines and schedules for student contact and your response, set boundaries. Consider doing more with less, meaning, these methods of delivery and our fluid situation will be taxing for students and faculty. What if you assigned fewer and/or shorter books and literary models than in a “normal semester” and studied them more deeply? What if you assigned fewer individual writing assignments, but spent more time with each?

Hybrid Rationale:

Hybrid models will allow us to create an on-campus experience while taking into consideration guidelines for social distancing as mandated by the state and our college. Please note that each classroom has been thoroughly surveyed in order to determine the maximum number of students allowed in the space at any given time. Other guidelines regarding masks, distancing, coming and going, health surveys, etc., will be set by our administration and forwarded to the entire community.

In Creative Writing, only a few courses have been designated as hybrid for the fall semester. These courses are ones that attract a significant number of incoming and first-year students who have expressed a great interest in engaging with an on-campus experience. Know that we cannot replicate what that would normally be, but we can make this experience worthwhile and effective in its own right.

Hybrid Delivery:

Hybrid courses are held both on campus, and through internet, self-directed study. (Approximately 50/50.)

The hybrid class will be divided into two groups. Each group will meet on campus every other week; the weeks they are not receiving on-campus instruction, students will be expected to engage with your on line lesson plan. (Please note, there may be occasions when you determine other effective ways to

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deliver your course work. These might include synchronous, on-line delivery for the entire class, small group work on-line and/or in-person, etc.)

As you plan your course for the semester, consider how you can create a continuous learning experience, as well as a continuous teaching experience that builds on each week—just as you would for in-person or fully remote classes. While you might use two weeks (or more) to teach one form, concept, or topic, you will want to avoid teaching the same lesson twice, to two weeks of class meetings. Perhaps you have in-class demonstrations, discussions, and prompts/activities each week, but consider using different models in-class from the ones you provide on-line for each group.

Example: Class topic, the letter story. Week One

- In-class, read two examples out-loud from the text, discuss. Writing activity.
- On-line, prepare a brief overview of the form (five-minute video? Written summary? Etc.) and assign the two examples used in class to be read individually. Have students respond via Canvas discussion group or the like.

Example: Class topic, the letter story. Week Two

- In-class, read other examples. In-person discussion.
- On-line, provide brief summary of assignment/topic, assign other examples (as used in class) to be read. On-line discussion.

Assignments for each group can be the same (or similar). Determine hand-in dates. (You might find it useful to have the same hand-in dates for everyone, or you might stagger them.)

Some things to remember for in-person activities:

- Students (and teachers) will not be able to share books, papers, etc. If you are using a text and want students to read from it, they will need to have their own copy.
- Students will likely not be able to hand in work on paper. If you want them to read from one another's work, they will need to do so on-line or print their own copies from a shared file.
- You will likely not be able to use physical handouts.
- While we are accommodating a variety of things that will help to promote everyone's safety and wellness, you should feel free to set up your own guidelines in terms of electronic devices, hand-writing or computer work in the class, texts brought by students, etc.

Before class begins:

You should reach out to your students ahead of time to let them each know when they will be expected to attend. You might consider dividing your first class into two meeting times (half class each), and use that time to introduce them to the format, syllabus, etc. Or you can just start right in with half the class. You will not be able to meet with your full class in-person; there is not room for that in your classroom. It is up to you to determine your schedule for class meetings and student contact hours, but you must make it clear to your students and remind them regularly (e.g., first four weeks: Group A, Group B, Group B, Group A – or – five weeks: Group A, Group B, Zoom A&B, Group B, Group A, etc.)

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Your syllabus is essential. Be sure to post on Canvas in advance of your class. You might consider sending an email or video to your students to let them know how to find it—especially helpful for in-coming freshmen.

Build out as much of your class calendar and lesson plans ahead of time as you can on Canvas so that students can be informed and keep up as they move between in-person and self-directed on-line work. Be aware that their fall semester schedules will likely be a combination of in-person and on-line instruction, and that is something we and they need to take into consideration in terms of time management, transportation, etc.

Special note for Hybrid courses:

In some cases, there may be an opportunity for your class to be live-streamed; however, this has not been determined yet. Some of you might be interested in creating a Zoom-like space even when you are in the classroom teaching in-person, or record some of the class in-progress. If you do record a class, remember that you must have permission from everyone who participates in the recording to do so.

Web classes rationale:

The majority of our Creative Writing classes (and all of our upper-level ones) will be held as Web classes. This is in part to help the school maintain its capacity guidelines and social distancing and health protocols. It is also because much of the work we do, while hands-on, can be adjusted to a web format more easily than other classes can or should be, thereby allowing our students the opportunity to stay away from campus some of the time while not missing out on instruction and learning. Further, some of what we do electronically will prepare them for their futures in publishing and other professional endeavors.

Web delivery:

Know that “Web” does not mean “on-line” and asynchronous. Web classes are taught remotely, often through virtual or live streamed engagement. Students have been given a designated time and day for these classes, and you should make sure to meet them during that time (this has some flexibility; see above overarching guidelines and concerns.)

Students who have accepted their schedule with web-based courses are expected to have access to the technology and be able to “meet” during their scheduled time. Unlike the emergency circumstances of last semester, we all should be as prepared as possible to work within these circumstances. Make sure students know your expectations; consider theirs as well.

As with any Zoom or virtual class meeting, if you intend to record the session for whatever reason, know that you need permission from every participant in the class to do so.

Just as in hybrid classes, it is essential you reach out to your students before the first class session to let them know your expectations for “attendance,” etc. How, where, and when will they find you on-line? What should they bring to the first meeting, etc.

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Our working groups are meant to consider options and potential practices for our web classes, with specific attention to learning outcomes for the classes and outcomes for the major. Their work and findings will be conveyed to our community in advance of the semester.

Everyone: when you can, make sure to read and respond in a timely fashion to all missives, emails, and memos from Columbia, the department, your students, and one another. Communication is our best friend during this ever-shifting time. Ask questions when they arise, share solutions when you find them.

Creative Writing web guidelines for graduate courses

Creative Writing web guidelines for graduate courses

The suggestions below outline several different models for teaching online. Adapt these suggestions as needed to serve your students.

General Guidelines

1. Be responsive to students' needs. While we cannot plan for every eventuality, remember that students' schedules have been disrupted as all the courses they signed up for as regular face-to-face classes have been changed to online. In particular, students who depend on Internet access at home might face challenges balancing synchronous online activities with the needs of other family members for computer time, data allowances, etc.
2. Be aware of Zoom fatigue, especially for students with more than one graduate class in one day, as is frequently the case. Also, all of our GSIs are teaching their undergraduate class online as well. While every grad class should have a synchronous component for at least some of the time—I propose that at least 50% of the course should be synchronous, across the semester, with logistics variable (suggestions below)—we should also allow for nonsynchronous class time in various ways.
3. Our graduate students will appreciate a strong sense that we appreciate their fortitude in starting or continuing their largely unfunded MFA program online. Not all of them will be relieved (although many, if not most, are so) about the College's decision to prioritize public health and have most graduate programs online. The suggestion here is a general one, basically emphasizing the other program directors' first sentence in #1: to be especially supportive and engaged. All of us will have different ways of imparting that to our students; teach to your strengths and don't be afraid to try things you're not sure about, especially if you can be candid with them about your own risk-taking and spirit of exploration/experimentation in this new mode.
4. Do more with less. You can always extend existing assignments or add new ones as needed, but keeping the assignments and overall workload streamlined will facilitate retention and help you respond to the needs of individual students as they arise.
5. Maintain flexibility. While we hope the direct impact of covid-19 will be minimal, students' lives might be disrupted by the pandemic whether or not they themselves are sick. Design your courses so that students who have to miss activities can make up missing work and be integrated back into the flow of the course when they return. We may need to have unusually permissive attendance policies, flexible due dates, and accept late work.

Nuts and Bolts Guidelines (variable as instructor sees fit in accordance with the needs of the students and faculty workload)

1. All graduate CW classes need to have at least some synchronicity (meeting all at the same time with a video component such as Zoom, during scheduled class time). I think our goal should be at least 50% of the semester's overall class time. For example, you might aim to teach synchronously each week, but for only half of the class period, if the other half is used to meet one-on-one with students. Or, you might aim to teach synchronously every other week, with alternate weeks intended for everyone to provide written feedback on each other's work, or for one-on-one meetings, etc. Or some combination or other format(s); possibilities abound.

Creative Writing web guidelines for graduate courses

2. Every class should have clearly stated mechanisms for instructor response and feedback. Accommodations and equity issues behoove us to not rely strictly on oral comments; all students should receive the instructor's written feedback for some portion of their work during the semester. Apart from accommodations concerns, some students in general find it easier to retain suggestions and advice when it's written down. This need not (cannot and ought not) be the case for every piece of writing.
3. Another Accommodations issue: We may have visually impaired students for whom material provided on the screen requires an alternate delivery method. Be aware that showing images or sharing screens is not necessarily equally viewable for everyone. I'll remind students of the necessity to provide instructors with Accommodations information from Jeanne Kelly's office before the semester starts.
4. Every class should allow for at least one one-on-one conference or tutorial with each student. I suggest building this component in to classtime at least to some extent, with office hours also a partial resource, time-wise.
5. Virtual office hours need to be clearly delineated and accessible to students. To prevent our having to sit in front of a Zoom session that no one shows up to, we can require that a Zoom office visit be scheduled in advance. However, we should still state what those normally available office hours are. (Of course, we can also state "and by appointment" in addition to official office hours.)
6. Each CW workshop should include clearly stated mechanisms for peer response to student work, both oral and written. (Per Accommodations and equity issues, students can't rely strictly on providing oral comments to each other.) I used the Canvas Discussion rubric for written comments by all of us, but it's awkward and visually unwieldy. Suggestions from others?
8. Campus access is provisional and depends on city and state directives (per the use of the library, bookstore, and computer labs).
9. By Illinois state law, no conversation can be recorded without the permission of all participants. If you envision using recordings of class activities, you should prepare an alternate plan in case any members of the class withhold permission to record. Note that this does not conflict with Accommodations requiring that each class session be simultaneously streaming to a transcriber for a hearing-impaired student, per Jeanne Kelly's office.

Creative Practice/Pedagogy Suggestions

1. Our CW courses can be centered on a *practice* and on creating the conditions that support the students' daily or otherwise regular writing/making practice. An online format can actually serve this emphasis well—and an emphasis on practice tends to shift the focus away from "product" and more toward process. Instead of trying to replicate a workshop model founded on people being in a room together, give prompts and assignments that give students a structure for working with language from day to day, and a space for providing or presenting that work in formation, in process, not necessarily "finished." Of course, if it's a daily practice or alternate-daily practice, only some of what they write can be engaged via discussion/ critique/workshop. This helps demonstrate that our art-making exists beyond the classroom parameters and that instructor or peer approval isn't the reason for the writing.

Creative Writing web guidelines for graduate courses

2. Collaboration and in-class writing can work well on Zoom, as long as the prompts are not overly long and work can be shared (read aloud) after it's done.
3. Collaboration can also be fostered outside of class, which may be especially good to pursue in the interest of community-building and cohesion, as well as for their writing. Think of projects for partners or small groups for which they'll get together with each other either within or outside of allotted classtime.
4. Students might be especially appreciative of suggested readings to pursue on their own, whether provided personally or to the class at large.

Literature hybrid guidelines

Literature hybrid guidelines

General Reminders: regardless of how you structure your hybrid courses, please keep the following guidelines in mind:

1. By Illinois state law, no conversation can be recorded without the permission of all participants. If you envision using recordings of class activities, you should prepare an alternate plan in case any members of the class withhold permission to record.
2. Campus access is provisional and depends upon city and state directives. Design your hybrid courses so that you can transition readily to fully online instruction if necessary.
3. Do more with less. Tie core activities and assignments to the learning outcomes. You can always extend existing assignments or add new ones as needed, but keeping the assignments and overall workload streamlined will facilitate retention and help you respond to the needs of individual students as they arise.
4. Maintain modularity and flexibility. While we hope the direct impact of covid-19 will be minimal, students' lives might be disrupted by the pandemic whether or not they themselves are sick. Design your courses so that students who have to miss activities can make up missing work and integrate back into the flow of the course when they return.
5. Be responsive to students' needs. While we cannot plan for every eventuality, remember that students' schedules are being disrupted as all the courses they signed up for as regular face-to-face classes have been changed to hybrid and online classes. In particular, commuter students who depend on Internet access at home might face challenges balancing synchronous online activities at home with classroom-based learning on campus, especially if they have both kinds of classes on the same day.

Our aim is to provide all students in a course with reasonably similar learning experiences. Those learning experiences need not be identical: the students who are learning online in a given week do not have to have the same experience as those students you meet with in the classroom. Over the course of the semester, all students will have roughly equivalent overall experiences in the class.

The suggestions below outline several different models for structuring online activities in relation to the work you do in the classroom. Adapt these suggestions as needed to serve your classes. And remember that these are just suggestions for you to consider as you develop your classes. You might end up using some, all, or none of them.

Parallel Discussion Assignments: One approach to hybrid courses is to have both the online and classroom students each week work on the same materials. You might ask your online students each week to participate in group discussion assignments that target key elements of the material you'll cover in your campus meeting with the other half of the class. One or more group assignments might be appropriate, depending on the size of the class and the nature of the material being addressed. There are a variety of models for these assignments. For instance, you might provide several passages from the assigned reading and ask the online students to use them to debate concerns you'll be covering with the classroom students. Or you might identify concerns you'll cover in class and ask the online students to identify and discuss passages from the reading that help them explore those concerns. Or some combination of the two: you might provide some passages and concerns for students to work with and

Literature hybrid guidelines

ask them to identify additional passages and issues to discuss as their group conversations develop. Whatever approach you use, the framework you provide for the online activities should assure a degree of correspondence between the online work and the classroom work for the week. You can participate in these discussions yourself through the week and/or provide comprehensive, summary feedback to the full class, drawing upon both the online discussion assignments and the classroom experience. Such feedback can help to integrate the online and classroom-based learning for the week.

Scaffolded Online Activities: Rather than ask the online students to work on the same material being covered in the classroom that week, you can ask them to work with material that either follows up on your prior classroom meeting with those students the week before or that sets a foundation for the classroom work you'll be doing with those students the following week. These activities could be discussion assignments about supplemental readings required for online students that week but optional or the rest of the class. They could be focused on research: online students might read, annotate, and debate critical material that will provide a framework for their discussion in class the next week, for instance. In an introductory class, you might provide all or part of an article for students to work with, while in a more advanced class, you might ask students to identify relevant critical material themselves. It is not necessary that the two halves of the class all end up working with the same supplemental readings or critical sources. All that matters is that over the semester, all of the students are afforded similar opportunities to undertake the same kinds of learning activities so that they can all meet the same course learning outcomes. The exact content of those activities can vary, just as they might in a more normal semester. If useful, you can integrate the work being done by the two halves of the class by having the online group review the research work conducted by the other half of the class the previous week and situate their own research work in relation to the work of the rest of the class.

Separate Online Projects: You might ask the online students to complete work on course projects. For example, you might set up a template for online peer review and discussion of paper drafts. Online students might work in small groups to develop presentations for their classroom meeting the next week. Or they might contribute material to shared class resources such as an annotated bibliography.

Symbiotic Online / Classroom Work: By setting an early deadline for online work (for instance, 24 or 48 hours before the scheduled classroom meeting), you can ask the online students to prepare materials for the classroom component of the course that week. For example, you might have two or three online groups prepare recorded presentations that the classroom students can then work with in class. Or you might create groups comprised of some students who are online for the week and some who are in the classroom for the week. Each group could investigate supplemental or contextual material to inform the classroom conversation that week.

Writing and Rhetoric hybrid guidelines

Hybrid Rationale and Delivery

- Understanding our rationale for using a hybrid format is critical. The hybrid model allows us to practice social distancing while taking advantage of in-class and online learning experiences to enhance students' access to the curriculum.
- Typically, in a hybrid class in-class activities focus on introducing concepts (*brainstorming, connecting what students may already know to new experiences and ideas*), applying and practicing concepts and ideas (*guided practice, independent practice, problem solving, evaluating*), and collaborating (*peer review, group projects, dialogue and discussion*). Of course, these types of activities can be done online as well.
- In a hybrid class, online learning often focuses on students working individually (*reading, viewing, listening*), preparing for in-class activities (*composing reading responses, questions, prompts or notes for in-class discussion*), and reflecting on learning (*writer's memo, journaling, instructor feedback*). Of course, these types of activities can also be done in class.
- Logistics of hybrid: In our hybrid courses, you will need to divide students into two groups (A and B). The simplest way to do this is to divide students alphabetically using the first letter of their last name. For example, looking at your roster, you might determine that first ten students, last names ending in "A" through "M," will be Group A, and Group B will be made up of the second group of ten students, last names ending in "N" through "Z." This will make it possible for you to meet each group of students once a week in class (for example, Group A meets in class Tuesday and Group B meets in class Thursday), and the other course work will be completed using Canvas. Generally, think of the face-to-face meeting in class as the synchronous part of the course and the online portion of the class as asynchronous. The course blueprints we're creating in Canvas for your use have activities and assignments students can work on synchronously (in class) or asynchronously (outside of class). **Because of college's COVID-19 policies, instructors may not exceed room capacity limits. Please do not admit students who show up for class on the wrong day.**
- We encourage you to use the course guides and blueprints to help you design your course. Since our course guides have stressed scaffolded activities and assignments, you'll see that our blueprints do the same. For example, in week one of Writing and Rhetoric II, you might lead an in-class activity for each groups of students that reviews concepts like ethos and genre to prepare them for reading/viewing/listening to the first group of shared texts online. The in-class activity prepares students for the texts they will read/view/listen to online via Canvas. Students might complete the reading/viewing/listening and then compose a response to be submitted via Canvas before their class meets in Week Two (Group A students submit before Tuesday's class and Group B submits before Thursday's class). The responses could form the basis for a discussion in class about the shared texts of unit one. These kinds of smaller activities and assignments would help students prepare for the Project One assignment at the end of the unit. In this approach, students work mostly within their group. Another approach would be to select some texts from unit one that students work with online only. You could create a Canvas discussion in which the whole class could consider questions or prompts you pose. In this kind of approach, students are working with the whole class online, and in class with their groups they can focus on one or two key texts that you use as guided practice. Ultimately, it will be up to you how the groups in your class work. Groups A and B may be integrated to the extent that you think most benefits students. We hope that all the blueprint activities can be adapted and used in the way you think would be most effective in achieving the course learning outcomes.

Writing and Rhetoric hybrid guidelines

- Everyone teaching Writing and Rhetoric should have a robust Canvas page in the event we need to move all instruction online.
- Since we don't know how COVID 19 will impact our semester or the lives and learning of individual students, we want to encourage you to design courses that allow students who fall behind the chance to catch up to the rest of the class. It's also important to recognize the possible challenges students will face as result of the college moving courses to hybrid and online models. This change may mean some students will struggle working online at home or adjusting their work schedule to their new class schedule. It's just too hard to anticipate all the ways students could be impacted, but we need to do our best to help them engage with our courses.
- Generally, the hybrid format should enable students more flexibility to pace themselves and engage with the course.
- Be aware of students who present you with accommodation letters from Services for Students with Disabilities. Depending on the accommodations required, you may need to work with the program directors to make sure the student can access your face-to-face and online components.

Before the first day of class, help students be successful in your hybrid course by doing the following:

- Approximately a week before your course begins, divide the class in half (one half is Group A and the second half is Group B). Send an email and post an announcement in Canvas that introduces students to the hybrid model and includes an explanation of group assignments and meeting days (see course blueprint in August for example).
- Provide students with an overview of course goals and major assignments

On the first day of class do all the things you usually do, but also make sure you include the following:

- Explain when they are in class and when they are online
- Explain how they can contact you and how soon you will respond
- Discuss the format of the hybrid course, including the schedule
- Review the course goals, major assignments, and grading
- Review other elements of your syllabus as you normally would
- Walk students through the Canvas interface and navigation
- Walk students through your course on Canvas and the areas you are using (Modules, Assignments, Pages, etc.)
- Provide point-of-contact information for technical help, questions about the course, and academic support (Canvas).

For the remainder of the semester:

- Maintain flexibility and be prepared to move your course(s) fully online
- Please do not shut your classroom door. The first weeks of the semester will undoubtedly be confusing for first-semester students. You may see more than the usual later arrivals, students in the wrong classroom, or students attending class on the wrong day. We want to mitigate the need to knock on doors and touch doorknobs. Open doors also promote air circulation.
- Please consider avoiding any exchanges of paper. Canvas can be used to submit all work.