

Seminar in Creativity
Inside the Creative Process: Exploring Blocks and Finding Creative Ground

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Course description:

The creative process is a journey through your inner world, where sights along the way are channeled into a product and eventually are shared with the outer world. Because it is a process that relies on self-perceptions, self-truths, beliefs and values, it implies that a system be in place in order to acquire, express and ultimately share this self-knowledge. The personal nature of this process can give rise to creative works, yet at the same time, it can become the weight that causes a fracture in the process. The Seminar in Creativity will examine the tensions that exist in artistic creation and the blocks they can give rise to. The course will be broken down into three parts: Creative Fundamentals, Creative Blocks and Creative Ground. The first, Creative Fundamentals, will examine creativity in general, from defining it to exploring its history. We will look at the creative process and the artistic personality as a means to then move into part two, Creative Blocks. Through a number of perspectives, and a look at specific artists, we will examine the how, why and where of creative blocks. In part three, Creative Ground, we will examine self-inquiry techniques as a means for finding ground and holding one's place while engaging in creative work. Through the use of reflective practice, students will identify creative processes and obstacles within the process as well as learn a number of tools to work through such blocks. By the end of the semester you will have gained enough knowledge and experience to be able to better navigate your own creative engagement and be able to demonstrate to others ways for them to find creative ground in their own endeavors.

Required textbook(s) or materials:

The Captive Muse, Susan Kolodny
Writer's Block and How To Use It, Victoria Nelson
Moving Into Balance, Barbara Larrivee
Various Articles

Homework: Weekly research and readings as well as assessments and peer discussion.

First Third Project: Research project, paper and presentation on a creative artist of choice. Focus is on the person's creative process and product.

Second Third Project: Research project, paper and presentation based on creative blocks.

Grading: This course is process-related and will grade students on comprehension as well as product.

A (90 – 100): Superior; demonstrates mastery of course material.

B (80 – 89): Good; demonstrates above-average comprehension of course material.

C (70 – 79): Average; demonstrates adequate comprehension of course material.

D (60 – 69): Below average; demonstrates poor comprehension of course material.

F (below 60): Not passing; demonstrates insufficient assimilation of course material.

Final Grade Determination:

Participation:	25%
Assignments:	20%
First Third Project:	25%
Second Third Project:	30%

Topical Outline:

- Wk 01 - What is Creativity?
- Wk 02 - The Creative Process
- Wk 03 - The Creative Personality
- Wk 04 - Blocked Phases
- Wk 05 - Creativity Applied: First Third Project (Wimba)
- Wk 06 – Deeper Meaning
- Wk 07 - Perfect Expectations
- Wk 08 - The Mind: Help or Hindrance?
- Wk 09 - The Body: Help or Hindrance?
- Wk 10 – Creative Blocks: Second Third Project (Wimba)
- Wk 11 - Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment
- Wk 12 - Change Your Mind and All Else Follows
- Wk 13 - Creating Ground and Future Vision

Course Design:

This class will start each Wednesday at 12:00pm, EST. At this time the weekly module will become available on the course home page. All assignments will be included in the module.

You should log on to the course web site at the start of each week to read the notes and assignments and plan your schedule accordingly. You are expected to log onto this course web site 4-8 times each week and spend 6-8 hours each week on course work.

Learning about Blackboard Vista

Helpful resources including a Student Quick Start Guide, Blackboard Vista Student FAQ, Technical Specs, and other helpful information can be found at <http://www.umb.edu/it/tech/lms/>. The student

handout for online courses is located at
http://www.umb.edu/it/tech/lms/documents/quick_fact_sheet_000.pdf.

Communicating With Me

Instead of sending me email with general questions regarding this course, please post them in the Q & A folder found in the Blackboard Vista Discussions section. I will respond to any questions posted within 48 hours (except on weekends). Posting all non-private questions allows other members of the class to benefit from the answers as well. Always feel free to contact me via email.

Blackboard Vista Mail

The Mail tool is for use in Blackboard Vista only. It isn't your UMB or outside email account. You can ONLY send messages to your instructor and other students enrolled in your course. You can forward all of your Blackboard Vista email to an outside account by clicking the Mail Forwarding icon (to the left of "Search this tool"). But you will not be able to reply to messages from your outside account.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Blackboard Vista Browser Check

You will have problems using Vista if you are not using a supported browser, a specific version of java, have multiple versions of java on your computer and your pop-ups are not enabled. After logging into Blackboard Vista, run *Check Browser* from the My UMassOnline Boston web page. This will let you know if your browser is ready. If not you will find information on how to configure it correctly. *You should run Check Browser every time you log in.*

PDF Files/Adobe Acrobat Reader:

This course contains PDF files. To view them, you need Adobe Acrobat Reader. You can download this software free from <http://www.adobe.com>. Click the Download button under "Solutions and Products" and follow the directions on your screen for downloading and installing the software. Depending on the speed of your Internet connection (dial-up modem, cable modem, DSL/broadband), downloading the software could take several minutes.

Powerpoint:

Students will be expected to create a short presentation to be forwarded to the instructor, which will then be uploaded for the class Wimba session. Presentations do not need to be fancy, and, in fact, will not run animation when uploaded. Each slide should be static, but used in addition to your own dialogue to communicate your research to the group.

LIBRARY:

Using eReserves:

Please note that additional readings will be available on the course site in PDF form; therefore, they will not be housed on the library eReserves.

Accessing the UMB Library Virtually

Students enrolled in a UMB online course are eligible to receive a barcode for access to Healey Library resources located at <http://www.lib.umb.edu>. The UMB library is a rich and valuable academic online resource which allows you to do most of your research work off-campus. To access these resources off campus, you will need the barcode number found on the reverse of your Student ID Card. If you don't have a Student ID Card or are unable to read the bar code number you can send an e-mail request to: Library.circulation@umb.edu. Your request should include your first and last name, Student ID number, course name, course number, and semester. You will receive the address of the library website. Barcode access terminates at the end of the semester. (**Note:** This service is available Monday – Friday, 9 - 5 PM)

SUGGESTED PRACTICES:

Best Practice for Composing Text

When composing any text-based information (answering essay questions, posting discussion replies, etc.) compose your text with your word processor, spell check it and save it on your computer. Then copy and paste your text by toggling to Blackboard Vista. This way you'll have a copy of what you composed if necessary.

MEDIA:

Streaming Media

This course contains streaming video and/or audio clips. To view or listen to them, you must have a media program loaded on your machine. The most widely used programs are RealPlayer, Windows Media and Quick Time. Many computers come with at least one of these software programs already loaded. If you do not have these installed on your computer, you will be prompted to download and install it when you click the audio or video link in the course. Free versions of each of these programs are available for download. Just be sure that you are choosing the download option that is clearly marked "FREE" on the site from which you are downloading. Some "enhanced" versions of these programs require payment. Here are the links for the downloads:

RealPlayer: <http://www.real.com>

Windows Media Player: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia>

Quick Time: <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/win.html>

HORIZON WIMBA:

Synchronous Meetings

We will be meeting synchronously online two times over the semester. We will never meet as a class in an actual location. Please try to arrange your schedule so you can participate in these meetings. If you are unable to participate you will be able to access an archived recording of the session.

The dates and times of these meetings are:

- Thursday, June 25 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. EST
- Tuesday, July 28 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. EST

Both of these sessions are arranged for student presentations and discussion. Please be aware that the true session length will be determined by the class size. If necessary, a second session will be set up after the course has gotten underway.

Horizon Wimba

Horizon Wimba is synchronous online tool available within Blackboard Vista. Wimba allows the instructor and students to meet in a virtual classroom where you can share applications and talk to each other in real time. An Open Wimba Session can be accessed from the home page for online class sessions and small group meetings.

Horizon Wimba Hardware Requirements

The only additional hardware necessary for participation in the Wimba sessions is a computer headset, a combination of headphones and a microphone. These can be purchased at stores such as Best Buy for between \$20 and \$30. You should not use computer speakers during a Wimba session.

Computer Configuration for Horizon Wimba

Prior to participation in your first Wimba Session be sure to run the Setup Wizard. Do not wait until the session itself to run this. The setup Wizard performs a series of tests to determine if your computer is properly configured for use with Wimba. If the tests indicate a problem with your configuration, you will be instructed how to remedy this situation.

Technical Support:

Help for Blackboard Vista and Horizon Wimba is available 24/7 via e-mail or phone. Send e-mail to: bostonsupport@umassonline.net or call 1-800-569-6505. For live text chat, see the link on the User Login Page <http://boston.umassonline.net/>. In addition, IT will be available in week 4 for a test run of Wimba to guide you through and make sure everything is running before our first Wimba session.

How to View Your Grade for This Course

Currently students taking courses at UMass Boston use the campus WISER system to access secure information on their grades. To enter the WISER system go to <http://wiser.umb.edu> and enter your

UMS number and your PIN number. If you do not have a PIN number, contact the Registrar's Office at registrar@umb.edu giving your name, course, semester, student ID (UMS#), and current mailing address. The information will be mailed to you. Note that for security reasons your browser may not be able to print your grades. For other WISER questions including having your password reset please email the helpdesk at helpdesk@umb.edu.

CCDE REGISTRATION:

Registration Questions: Please contact Katharine Galaitis katharine.galaitis@umb.edu at the Continuing Education office.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic Integrity #1:

All students are expected to treat each other and the instructor respectfully so as to maintain an environment conducive to online collaborative learning. This includes a commitment not to engage in dishonest acts such as copying another student's work, plagiarizing, using Internet sources without citation, fabricating data, etc.

The Distance Learning program operates on the assumption that students in class are thoroughly familiar with the UMass Boston Code of Student Conduct, available at:

http://www.management.umb.edu/undergrad/undergrad_code_of_conduct.php .

An online tutorial from the Healy library will help you to avoid plagiarism and provides reference material related to proper citation of material from other sources in your work. It is available at

<http://www.lib.umb.edu/newtutorial/module6.cfm> .

Academic Integrity #2 (If Using Plagiarism software):

Students should be aware that, at the discretion of the instructor, assignments may be submitted to plagiarism detection software programs for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism. Students in this course must be prepared to submit an electronic version of any written assignment upon request of the instructor.

ONLINE LEARNING TIPS:

How can I be an effective online learner?

Manage your time wisely. Online courses are similar to face-to-face courses in that there are fixed work requirements and deadlines. However, because there are few live classes to attend, some participants find that due dates fall off their radar screens. The best way to avoid this pitfall is to read the course requirements carefully. At the beginning of the course, record deadlines on your calendar, even deadlines for informal assignments like posting discussion comments. Budget how much time you can afford to spend on each assignment. Then schedule exactly when that time will be spent.

Schedule a regular time for your coursework. Decide what time of day and which days of the week are optimal times for doing your coursework. Keep your time slots realistic—don't plan to start your coursework at midnight if you have to get up at five a.m., and don't pick two p.m. if sitting at the computer after lunch makes you sleepy. Once you've decided on a time slot in which you generally have energy, schedule it into your calendar and stick to it! Consider it a weekly investment in your future.

Expect the unexpected, and reward yourself. Even the most organized students encounter events they haven't planned for, so it's healthy to expect the unexpected and not get frustrated by technical or scheduling problems. However, it's also important to stick to your work schedule as much as you can.

One way to stay motivated is to give yourself small rewards for finishing projects on time. Whether it's time spent shooting hoops, playing scrabble, or reading for pleasure, small incentives can make finishing your work a little more inspiring.

How much technology knowledge do I need to feel at ease in an online course? You do not have to be a technological wizard to excel in an online learning environment! Even novices in the field of computer technology can be star students as long as they understand a few core concepts, including how to use plug-ins, how to access streaming video, how to participate in synchronous and asynchronous discussions, and how to send email attachments. Also, don't be intimidated by the jargon. These concepts sound more complicated than they really are.

STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES:

Students with Documented Disabilities:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 offers guidelines for curriculum modifications and adaptations for students with documented disabilities. If applicable, students may obtain adaptation recommendations from UMass Boston's Ross Center for Disability Services <http://www.rosscenter.umb.edu>/<http://www.rosscenter.umb.edu> (617-287-7430). The student must present and discuss these recommendations with each professor within a reasonable period, preferably by the end of the Drop/Add period.

Part 1: Creative Fundamentals

- Wk 01 - What is Creativity?
 - Creative birth and Creativity defined
 - J.P. Guilford
 - The Creative Spirit video

- Wk 02 - The Creative Process
 - What is process
 - Graham Wallas
 - Koberg and Bagnell
 - Dilts and Disney
 - Models for the Creative Process by Paul E. Plsek
 - The Walt Disney Circle, adapted from R. Dilts
 - Turning on the Creative Genius Inside of You by Paul E. Dunn

- Wk 03 - The Creative Personality
 - What is Personality, the Creative Personality and Creativity Tests
 - Gelb and da Vinci
 - John R. Hayes, Cognitive Processes in Creativity
 - Edwin C. Selby, Emily J. Shaw, and John C. Houtz: The Creative Personality
 - The Influence of Personality on Artistic and Scientific Creativity by: Gregory J. Feist
 - The Creative Personality: Ten paradoxical traits of the creative personality by: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Part 2: Creative Blocks

- Wk 04 - Blocked Phases
 - The Solitary Side of Creativity
 - Internal and External Environment
 - Starting and Ending Blocks
 - Resistance and The War of Art, by Steven Pressfield
 - On Writer's Block by Victoria Nelson

- Wk 05 - Creativity Applied: First Third Project (Wimba)
 - Overview: Choose a creative individual and create a presentation that connects that person to the topics covered thus far.
 - Creative Individual: Research a few creative individuals who capture your interest. Choose someone who is widely known to the public in order for you to be able to find the required content and also, so your classmates will be able to find further information on the person you choose.
 - Content Specifics: Here's the challenge. Try to emphasize the creative process as well as personality traits and life experiences, which have directly connected to the person's creative product. Thoughtful connection to course material in other areas will be acceptable if process information cannot be found. You do not need to present everything you can find on this person. Keep it short and to the point, perhaps focusing on just a couple of the aforementioned specifics, i.e. 1 relation to process, 2 traits, 3 life experiences, etc.

- Wk 06 – Deeper Meaning
 - Internal and external processes
 - Eysenck - Psychoticism, Creativity and Personality
 - Jenny Boyd: Musicians in Tune
 - David Bayles and Ted Orland: Art and Fear
 - Susan Kolodny, The Captive Muse

- Wk 07 - Perfect Expectations
 - Perfectionism
 - Perfectionistic Self-Presentation Scale
 - Tolkien and Perfectionism
 - Performance Anxiety and Perfectionism
 - Dr. Louise Montello, Musicians' Wellness, The Perils of Perfectionism

- Wk 08 - The Mind: Help or Hindrance?
 - Mindful Influences
 - Psychopathology and Creativity
 - Why We Sing the Blues by Verhaegen, Khan and Joorman
 - Trauma and Creativity
 - Understanding Writer's Block by Martin Cantor
 - Robert Schumann
 - The Midnight Disease by Alice Flaherty

- Wk 09 - The Body: Help or Hindrance?
 - The Mind-Body Connection
 - The Body Bears the Burden, Robert Scaer
 - Frida Kahlo
 - Creative Performance Blocks
 - Controversy of Drugs and Alcohol
 - When Walls Become Doorways: Creativity, Chaos Theory and Physical Illness by Toni Zausner
 - Chapter 10 *Addiction Block* from Understanding Writer's Block by Martin Cantor

- Wk 10 – Creative Blocks: Second Third Project (Wimba)
 - Overview: Write a 6 - 8 page paper with references on some aspect of creative blocks based on the choices below. Create a 5 slide PPT that highlights your theme, main points and conclusion. Think of the presentation as a synopsis of your paper. Presentations should stay within 7-10 minutes.
 - Topic Choice: Please send your topical choice to me by the release of week 8 material, with a brief outline of your premise and intended development
 1. Choose a public creative artist and outline his or her creative block and what was behind it, tying it in with course material.
 2. Write a self-reflective paper about your own creative block and what is behind it, tying it in with course material as well as including suggestions on how to move through the block.
 3. Choose an aspect of creative blocks you want to know more about and research it, tying it into course material.

Part 3: Creative Ground

- Wk 11 – Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment
 - Tying things together to find creative ground
 - Donald Schön
 - Back Talk Teaching Lost Selves to Speak, Joan Weimer
 - Reflecting on Self-Awareness
 - Moving Into Balance, Barbara Larrivee
 - A Kaleidoscopic View: Reflections on the Creative Self, Susan Daniels

Suzanne M. Clark
CR CR TH 612 Seminar in Creativity
Course Outline

- Wk 12 – Change Your Mind and All Else Follows
 - Cognitive restructuring
 - Albert Ellis and Aaron Beck
 - One process for restructuring
 - Red flags
 - Self-talk exercise
 - The Assessment and Treatment of Performance Anxiety in Musicians by Duncan B. Clark and W. Stuart Agras
 - Creative Visualization

- Wk 13 - Creating Ground and Future Vision
 - Creative ground
 - Meditation
 - Qigong
 - Narrative Means to a Therapeutic Ends, White and Epston
 - Intensive Journal Method of Self-Development, Ira Progoff