

Summer, 2012, May 29-July 12
CR-CR-TH-612 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.

Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will:

- 1) Have a strong basis in historical aspects of the field of creativity
- 2) Be able to identify the stages involved in their own creative process
- 3) More clearly understand blocks to creativity
- 4) Gain understanding of and experience in reflective practice
- 5) Gain knowledge in navigating their own creative engagement more fully
- 6) Have a firm foundation in creative exploration which they can use to guide others in their creative endeavors

Required textbook(s) or materials:

Kolodny, Susan. *The Captive Muse*. Psychological Press, 2000. ISBN-10: 188784127X. ISBN-13: 9781887841276

Nelson, Victoria. *On Writer's Block and How To Use It*. New York, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993. ISBN: 0395647274

Various Articles

Homework: Weekly research and readings as well as assessments and peer discussion. An assignment from week 5 will be appropriate for inclusion in the Reflective Practitioner's Portfolio required by all CCT students.

Project 1: Research project and Wimba presentation on a creative artist of choice. The main points to address are the person's creative process, creative personality and creative product.

Project 2: Research paper and static presentation based on creative blocks.

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

A (95 – 100)

A- (87.5 – 95)

B+ (80 – 87.5)

B (72.5 – 80)

B- (65 – 72.5)

C+ (57.5 – 65)

Final Grade Determination:

Participation/Discussions: 30%

Assessments: 15%

Project 1: 25%

Project 2: 30%

Topical Outline:

- Wk 01 – A. What is Creativity? B. The Creative Process
- Wk 02 – A. The Creative Personality B. Blocked Phases
- Wk 03 – A. Creativity Applied: Project 1 (Wimba) B. Deeper Meaning
- Wk 04 – A. Perfect Expectations B. The Mind: Help or Hindrance?
- Wk 05 – A. The Body: Help or Hindrance? B. Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment
- Wk 06 – A. Change Your Mind and All Else Follows B. Creating Ground and Future Vision

Course Design:

This class will start each Tuesday 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

A Blackboard Guide for Students is located at <http://bbstudents.wikispaces.umb.edu/>. Other resources and helpful information can be found at the UMass Information Technology site located at <http://www.umb.edu/it/tech/lms/>.

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 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 Mail

The Mail tool is for use in Blackboard 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 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 Browser Check

You will have problems using Blackboard 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, 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.* The Blackboard Guide for Students is located at: <http://bbstudents.wikispaces.umb.edu/>

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. 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>

WIMBA:

Synchronous Meetings

We will be meeting synchronously online three times over the semester regarding the first project. We will never meet as a class in an actual location. Please arrange your schedule so you can participate in these meetings. These sessions will be archived and accessible on the course site.

The dates and times of these meetings are:

- Tuesday, June 12 (time to be determined)
- Wednesday, June 13 (time to be determined)
- Thursday, June 14 (time to be determined)

These sessions are arranged for student presentations and discussion. Depending on the class size, sessions may be added or subtracted, although students are only required to attend two sessions. Expect sessions to run 1.5 – 2 hours. Further details will be available closer to the start of the course.

In addition, IT will be available in week 2 for a test run of Wimba to guide you through and make sure everything is running before our first Wimba session. The session is slated to run at the same time and day as the Wimba session, but in the week before the actual session. Further information will be released after the course has started and with confirmation from the Wimba staff.

Wimba

Wimba is synchronous online tool available within Blackboard. 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. Below is a short overview about Wimba, but more detailed information can be found at: <http://www.dlvpc.umb.edu/wimbasupport.htm>

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 or at a similar retail facility for between \$20 and \$30. You should not use computer speakers during a Wimba session. More information on a headset can be found on the Wimba support site at: <http://www.dlvpc.umb.edu/wimbasupport.htm>. Also, you should not use a wireless signal for the

session, but instead, use a wired connection using an Ethernet cable between your computer and router.

Computer Configuration for 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 and 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/>.

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.

Course Evaluations

Course evaluations will be available during the last session of this course. The following link will take you to the course evaluation where you can fill out the evaluation anonymously.

<http://bit.ly/CCTEval>

CCDE REGISTRATION:

Registration Questions: Please contact University College: uc@umb.edu

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.

For more tips and pointers, please see:

<http://cct.wikispaces.umb.edu/Pointers>

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/> (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.