

CrCrTh 630, Creativity and Criticism in Literature and the Arts, Fall 2017
Students' Synthetic Statements, from the Final Course Evaluation

The synthetic statement is the fourth question on formal course evaluations for the Critical and Creative Thinking Graduate Program. See questions 1-3 listed on <http://bit.ly/CCTEval>

Question 4: "Building on your comments from Questions 1-3 in the formal evaluation, compose a synthetic statement (1 or 2 paragraphs) evaluating this course. (Imagine readers who might not be willing to wade through all the answers to Qs 1-3, but are willing to read more than simply the numerical averages of standard course evaluations.) Please make comments that help the instructor develop the course in the future and that enable some third party appreciate the course's strengths and weaknesses. Among other things you might comment on the overall content and progression of classes, the session activities, and the use of mentors to support the learning in the course."

Below are the Synthetic Statements from the respondents who gave permission for these comments to be shared on the web.

- This course was a very good introduction to the concept of creative thinking. It encourages students to study and analyze the media and literature they consume, as well as help them become more aware of the creative thinking skills they may have already been using. The meetings are informative, and we are always given accurate and helpful feedback. We always know what is due and when, and the instructor is always willing to advise us on how we can improve and grow.
- This course successfully challenges students to question the ways that creative thinking can be fostered via engagement with literature and the arts. Through the course, students engage in literary texts independently as well as conducting their own creative explorations that are scaffolded by course readings and discussions. The three themes are slightly disjointed from one another. That said, the first theme, which focused on freedom and creativity, was responsible for a large shift in my thinking.
- The course does an excellent job of expanding your creativity, and not so in a way you may normally define creativity. There is a friendly collaborative atmosphere to the class. Most of the assignments were practical and a nice sense of reward came with completion, as the expectations were placed on your personal creativity, not so much on guidelines. My only issue was the class sessions could take on a mood that was little too serious at times.
- This course will help students to find what is done in different areas of arts and literature that they might be interesting to incorporate in their academic work as well as defined what they are looking to accomplish as individuals. I am very happy and proud of what I achieved with this class because I helped me develop three products that I can use in my professional life in the future.
- Developing principles that incorporate both critical and creative thinking can be easier said than done. This course however serves as a reminder that with the support of literature and the art, the application of these principles are already within us. We were able to develop ideas into products, concepts into principles, and beliefs into facts. Course was able to fulfill both a personal need to better understand how to examine creative works and to further extend and incorporate those understandings in our lives.
- In no small way, this course has helped me feel empowered to initiate change in my personal and professional lives. In tackling ambiguous problems (sometimes the course itself), I've

found greater resources for my ongoing learning. Two things in particular were deeply resonant: the altering of the course to suit the needs of students; the direct participation of the instructor. The latter is twofold, as he was seemingly taking the class himself, and actively participating in/facilitating in the dialogue.

- Receiving feedback and presentations of images and thoughts from others in this program always helps me to further my understanding of what we are learning. I believe everyone has a voice, and everyone's voice was greatly heard through this course. If you are interesting in this course, and in this program you may find yourself struggle at first but believe me everyone is here for a reason. Everyone has a certain artistic ability deep below them. They may not discover it through their own ideas and projects but it is found within the whole person. It will be shown throughout your final days in this course and thereafter. My advice is to take it into consideration and you will see yourself praising all your hard work and thoughts from yourself and be a better student because of others projects and willpower.
- This course gives students the chance to examine how art has shaped us, our perception, and our expectations. It also allows students the opportunity to contribute their own thinking to that conversation in the form of creative products and journaling. There is a lot of writing and reading required, as is expected in a graduate course, though this course may also incline students to share more personal reflections that merely academic evaluations of others' works. The readings and videos that make up this course are not necessarily discussed in great detail, but used to facilitate students' thinking as they work through their own creative products. Students taking this course should be prepared to self-examine, to remain open to critique, and to reflect on the work offered by other creators, both peer and professional.
- Through the lens of three sequenced themes through the semester, each student applies their own interests in the somewhat open-ended process of Project Based Learning. The theme examination interleaves with assigned readings to enhance the student's imagining and designing of a product that can serve as a tool for personal insight, or maybe a program that will be realized. This is meant to be a beginning point for taking principles into practice, and practice based on gathered influences and inspiration rather than perfected practices. Because of the independent nature of the concept development, one may at times feel lost or overwhelmed to then discover that this is common among classmates and par for the course of discovery and creating one's own methods. While the pace of the class drives students to constantly immerse in wondering how the frameworks can be brought to life, the pace is also just right for "trying on" the frameworks and playing with the ideas.
- This CRCRTH 630 is a very interesting hybrid course. With a very compact writing part to the class. Some of its strength is the project on the themes that can be relatable to everyone. But one thing I would like to see more of is when you break the class up in small groups for the presentation as a whole instead of making us go one after another instead of us hearing every still one. One thing I liked about this class was that I was able to put my personal touch to all papers that I have written for this class.
- On the whole, I found this to be a very useful, informative, and insightful class. Although I consider myself open-minded, and leaned toward the experimental when it comes to creative expression, CRCRTH 630 introduced me to a variety of ways in which to articulate myself. I also learned to state complex and complicated ideas in a manner that allowed my thoughts to be shared with people who do not come from a creative background. Often times creative people have difficulty encapsulating and describing their impressions to people outside the artistic field; however, this course provided me with the opportunity to take risks with different modes of enlightening students and classmates. The opportunity to track and reflect upon my progress in the class was very fulfilling. Rather than starting in one place and ending up in another, I got

to see the progression of my thought processes. I saw that my assignments became easier to complete as I began to understand more about the connection between creative thought in the arts and literature and using it in more pedantic circumstances.