**ARTSCI 1138.XX: The Creative Habit**

Thursdays at TBA, Location TBA

**Professor:** Ashley Hope Pérez

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**Office:** Hagerty 225

**Office Hours**: T/Th, 12:45-2:00 and by appointment

**Course Description.** Creativity is central to innovation across the arts and sciences and in society more broadly. Still, many of us ignore our own creativity or fall prey to myths that some people are creative while others are not. This seminar is founded on two principles:

1. **Creativity is a habit.** It grows stronger through practice. The repetition of the process matters more than the outcome of any particular exercise. We all have what it takes to be creative.
2. **Creative practice is a form of inquiry.** It leads to insights and discoveries that we would not arrive at through more straightforward means.

This course explores evolving theories of creativity and its place in the worlds of art, technology, academia, and everyday life. It also offers opportunities to awaken and explore creativity. Each class blends discussion of ideas about creativity with hands-on experimentation, and we will draw on a range of tactics for cultivating creativity and harnessing its possibilities. Seminar members will gain new understandings of creativity and will uncover habits that nourish their creativity in multiple areas of life. You will also discover how creative practice can support academic success and personal wellbeing.

**Course Goals.**

1. To examine major theories of creativity and its sources,
2. To explore alternative modes of reflection, analysis, and expression, and
3. To form a supportive community of learners.

**Course Grading.** This course is graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Here’s what “satisfactory” looks like:

* **You always show up.** Come to *every* class and be on time. 🡪🡪🡪
* **You are prepared and sincere.** Take your time and dig into the reading, exercises, and homework. During each class, we will discuss a text that discusses or embodies a form of creativity, and we will do some on-site experimenting.
* **You participate in the classroom community.** Give your best to your fellow learners by being attentive, speaking up, and listening.
* **You deliver the goods.** Homework tasks will not be onerous, but they will require faithfulness. You will produce an epilogue at the end of the course.

**Ongoing Course Assignments.** There will be a number of small (5-20 minute) assignments that you will complete in your course notebook. Notebooks will be evaluated for completeness and sincerity at the end of the course.

**3-Minute Presentation.** There will be a symposium at the end of the course for brief presentations of a method of eliciting creativity or a piece of work from the semester.

**End-of-Course Epilogue.** In a narrative essay of about 500 words *or an alternative format of your choosing*, reflect on your experiences in the course. This is a place to consider changes in your understanding of creativity. It’s also a place for you to include any thoughts about your experiences as a member of this learning community. Process is central to the work in this course; what have you learned through the process of being among these texts and these colleagues? Some questions you might consider:

* As you revisit your course writings, what do you recognize as turning points?
* How has your thinking about creativity changed?
* What aspects of the reading had the most impact on you and why?
* What forms of discomfort did you experience as you moved through the course? Can you see the value of that discomfort now?
* How have your experiences interacting with your colleagues shaped your thinking?
* What has changed in your reading, writing, or thinking process?
* What lingering questions do you have about the topics of the course? Where might these questions lead you?

These questions are intended to spark your thinking; you do not need to answer them all. Nor should you simply answer the questions in succession. Instead, your epilogue should be a developed piece that reflects the evolution of your thinking. Experimentation with form (e.g., alternate genres such as collages, notes, diaries, letters, comics) is welcome and, if well executed, can come with freedom from length requirements.

**Teaching Philosophy.** My goal is to facilitate this class in a way that enables you to create a community and make discoveries together. Ultimately, however, you are responsible for making the course a success through your presence, preparation, good will, and insight. I’ll be glad to help you along the way.

**Required Materials.** You will need a composition notebook, crayons, a pack of index cards, and a few pens.

**Required Text (available at SBX, at other bookstores, or online).**

*What It Is* by Lynda Barry, ISBN: 1897299354

\*All other texts will be posted on Carmen.

**Supplemental Materials (short excerpts on Carmen).**

*Explaining Creativity: The Science of Human Innovation* (Sawyer, 2012)

*How Creativity Works in the Brain* (National Endowment for the Arts, 2014) <https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/how-creativity-works-in-the-brain-report.pdf>

*Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning* (Brown, 2014)

*Originals: How Non-Conformists Move the World* (Grant & Sandberg, 2016)

*Wired to Create: Unraveling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind* (Kaufman & Gregoire, 2015)

*Zig Zag: The Surprising Path to Greater Creativity* (Sawyer, 2013)

**TED talks on the creative process:**

Steven Johnson: Where Good Ideas Come From

<https://www.ted.com/talks/steven_johnson_where_good_ideas_come_from>

Adam Grant: The Surprising Habits of Original Thinkers

<https://www.ted.com/talks/adam_grant_the_surprising_habits_of_original_thinkers>

Elizabeth Gilbert: Do All of Us Possess Genius?

<https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_gilbert_on_genius>

Amy Tan: Where does creativity hide? <http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_tan_on_creativity.html>

Julie Bernstein: Four lessons in creativity <http://www.ted.com/talks/julie_burstein_4_lessons_in_creativity.html>

Isaac Mizrahi: Fashion and creativity <http://www.ted.com/talks/isaac_mizrahi_on_fashion_and_creativity.html>

Janet Echelman: Taking imagination seriously <http://www.ted.com/talks/janet_echelman.html>

Kirby Ferguson: Embrace the remix <http://www.ted.com/talks/kirby_ferguson_embrace_the_remix.html>

Tim Brown: Tales of creativity and play <http://www.ted.com/talks/tim_brown_on_creativity_and_play.html>

Charles Limb: Your brain on improv <http://www.ted.com/talks/charles_limb_your_brain_on_improv.html>

Thelma Golden: How art gives shape to cultural change [http://www.ted.com/talks/thelma\_golden\_how\_art\_gives\_shape\_to\_cultural\_change .html](http://www.ted.com/talks/thelma_golden_how_art_gives_shape_to_cultural_change%20.html)

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct**

The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with essays and tests. **All assignments must be your own original work for this course.** Without proper citation, the direct or indirect borrowing of words or ideas from any source (e.g., website, book, another student, your past writing for another class) constitutes plagiarism regardless of your intention. As dictated by the College of Arts and Sciences:

“It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.”

**Learning needs.** The **Office for Disability Services**, located in 150 Pomerene Hall offers services for students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

If you have any other special circumstances of which I should be aware, please let me know as soon as you can. And please feel free to come see me with any questions or concerns not addressed in class. Welcome to the course!

**Course Schedule**

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| **Week** | **Class Focus** | **Preparation** |
| 1 | **Introduction**. How the community will work; what to expect. | Watch Ken Robinson’s “Changing Education Paradigms”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>; |
| 2 | **Myths of Creativity.** How we have thought about creativity; where these ideas come from; changing our thinking through practice. | Watch Johnson, Grant, and Gilbert. Bring materials to class (composition notebook, crayons, pen) |
| 3 | **Personal Histories.** How our experiences shape our relationship to creativity | Read *Artist’s Way* excerpt and complete creativity inventory (Carmen). Read Lynda Barry 85-93. |
| 4 | **Noticing.** Moving beyond the two questions to a sense of neutral observation and curiosity about what we create. | Read “Two Questions” by Lynda Barry (123-136); Browse *What It Is*, choose 1 page to use for in-class “noticing” practice. |
| 5 | **Playing.** Exploring disorder and possibility when we create. Working around the censor. | Watch Tim Brown TED talk. Watch Charles Limb TED talk. |
| 6 | **Showing Up.** Reassessing the impact of consistency (habit); creating an artist’s date | Read *Zig Zag* excerpt (Carmen)*.* Read *Artist’s Way* excerpt (“The Artist’s Date,” Carmen) |
| 7 | **Finding Inspiration.** | Watch Bernstein and Echelman. Harvest a poem or a passage from a book that you find inspiring. |
| 8 | **The Element of Surprise.** Inviting chance and discovery. | Read Twyla Tharp essay (Carmen) |
| 9 | **Learning to Be Alone.** Creativity and solitude. | Read *Wired to Create* excerpt (Carmen). |
| 10 | **Learning to Be with Others.** Creativity and collaboration. | Read *Powers of Two* excerpt (Carmen). |
| 11 | **Using Structure.** Secret spines, patterns, and form as they relate to creativity. | Read “Back to the Source” by Alejo Carpentier (Carmen) |
| 12 | **Creativity and Academic Success.** The role of creativity in effective studying and learning. | Read *Make It Stick* excerpt. |
| 13 | **Epilogue Workshop.** | Bring epilogue ideas; begin preparing mini-presentations. |
| 14 | **Symposium.** | 3-minute mini-presentations |
| 15 | **Class Celebration**. Circle discussion of experience, sort 2-minute portraits, plans for making space for creativity in the future. | Turn in epilogue. |

**Professor Bio.** Professor Ashley Hope Pérez earned her PhD in comparative literature and is an assistant professor in the Department of Comparative Studies where she coordinates the World Literatures program. She regularly teaches Introduction to World Literatures (CS 2301), Love in World Literature (CS 3603), Film and Literature (CS 3607) and Literature and the Self. Pérez is also the author of three novels including *Out of Darkness*, which won a 2016 Printz honor for excellence and the 2016 Tomás Rivera Book Award. *The New York Times* praised it as a “layered tale of color lines, love and struggle.” This course on the creative habit brings together Pérez’s passion for student engagement and her fascination with cultivating creativity.