

Bio

Michelle Herman is the author of nine books—novels, collections of stories, collections of personal essays and memoirs, and a book of advice for children—the most recent of which (2022) is the novel [Close-Up](#), which was awarded the inaugural Donald L. Jordan Award for Literary Excellence. Her other honors and awards include grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Ohio Arts Council, the Copernicus Foundation, and many others. She writes a weekly advice column for [Slate](#), the natural extension of her growing interest in the relationship between the practice of creative writing and well-being, as well as her [2017 published book of advice](#). She is also an interdisciplinary artist who in recent years has performed with the contemporary dance company Flux and Flow, and writing on dance has been published widely in journals; a book on her dance practice, *Turn*, is currently in submission. She taught in the English department at the Ohio State University—where she co-founded the graduate program in creative writing and for many years directed it, and founded and directed the Graduate Interdisciplinary Specialization in the Fine Arts—for thirty-four years, until last spring.

Teaching Awards

Sphinx and Mortar Board Senior Class Honorary Societies Award, The Ohio State University, 2008
Rodica C. Botoman Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching and Mentoring, College of Humanities, The Ohio State University, 2007
Outstanding Teaching Award, Colleges of the Arts and Sciences, The Ohio State University, 2005
University Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching, The Ohio State University, 1999
Lilly Foundation Teaching Fellowship, The Ohio State University, 1990-1991
Teaching Writing Fellowship, The University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, 1985-1986

Undergraduate courses taught at OSU

English 5662 (662) Literary Publishing (mixed undergraduate and graduate lecture/discussion)
English 265 Introduction to the Writing of Fiction (undergraduate lecture/workshop/discussion)
English 4565 (565) Advanced Workshop in the Writing of Fiction (undergraduate workshop/discussion)
English 4568 (568) Advanced Workshop in the Writing of Creative Nonfiction (undergraduate workshop/discussion)
English 3465 Intermediate Workshop in the Writing of Fiction (undergraduate workshop/discussion)
English 398 Introduction to Critical Writing (the gateway to the major for undergraduates: a lecture/discussion class that introduces the art of thinking and writing about literature)
English 4591.01H (591H) Undergraduate Honors Seminar in Creative Writing (Special Topics: Art and Life: A Living Writers Seminar; The Art of Talking Back [Retellings & Responses]; Call and Response: Creative Writing and Music)
English 596 Studies in Literature and Other Arts (Special Topic: The Great American Book Musical)
First-Year Seminars (Special Topics: Life into Art: An Introduction to Artistic Process; Interdisciplinary Seminar for Young Artists; Why Do Fools Fall In Love? [Portrayals of Romantic Love in Song and Story]; An Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction, Poetry, and Creative Nonfiction)

Curriculum development

- Co-founder of the M.F.A. program in creative writing at Ohio State
- Redesigned the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences Freshman Common Book Program
- Full responsibility for the design and implementation of many new courses at Ohio State, including courses in literary publishing, undergraduate honors seminars for writers, and a graduate interdisciplinary course for artists in all disciplines; full responsibility for a new undergraduate creative writing curriculum and the creative writing concentration in the English major; shared responsibility for creating a certificate program in publishing

- Involved in the planning and proposal of a new multidisciplinary M.F.A. program in new entertainment arts and technologies at OSU through the University's Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design (ACCAD)
- Worked with faculty in Agriculture and Engineering to introduce the humanities and the arts into their undergraduates' academic experience in a more integrated way
- Created and developed a new graduate interdisciplinary program for artists in all fields at OSU

ARTS AND SCIENCES 1138.X CARE AND COUNSEL: Taking Care of Ourselves and Others

This seminar's focus is on a practice of self-care, problem-solving (including time-management and others challenges of college life), and exploring strategies to keep oneself on course—as well as learning best practices for helping others through difficulties.

Discussions and reading and writing assignments will all concern aspects of care and counsel—journal-keeping and other kinds of writing as a form of self-care, exercises in empathy and compassion, brainstorming solutions to problems, insight-based problem-solving, somatic practices, and better understanding the mind-body connection.

Texts:

[*Tiny Beautiful Things*](#) by Cheryl Strayed

Various Care and Feeding advice columns by Michelle Herman (e.g., [this one](#) and [this one](#))

Handouts and short online readings

We will meet weekly.

Week 1: Introduction to the course and its goals (will include in-class writing)

Week 2: Writing for yourself and others (will include in-class writing); short writing assignment will be given for next week

Week 3: Workshopping writing assignment

Week 4: Exploring somatic practices for self-care based on dance/movement fundamentals, including Bartenieff practice, breath practice, and meditation with movement. Guest lecturer, Christina Providence, Department of Dance. Written responses and discussion follow movement practice.

Week 5: Exploring somatic practices for self-care, cont'd. Guest lecturer TBD. Written responses and discussion follow movement practice.

Week 6: The mind-body connection, Part 1 (will include in-class writing); short writing assignment given for next week

Week 7: Workshopping writing assignment; the mind-body connection, Part 2

Week 8: Time management and other essential skills; reading assigned (TBD handouts and online)

Week 9: Empathy, compassion, and self-compassion (Strayed's book should be read by next week)

Week 10: Empathy and compassion cont'd, with discussion of Strayed

Week 11: What good advice (to yourself and to others) looks like, Part 1 (Herman's columns as assigned, TBD, should be read by next week)

Week 12: Good advice, Part 2

Week 13: Problem-solving workshop

Week 14: Trading problems, trading solutions, Part 1

Week 15: Trading problems, trading solutions, Part 2

Course Policies

- Your attendance at every class session is expected. If you cannot attend, you are expected to contact the instructor. Three unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.
- You are responsible for doing all of the reading and writing assignments; participation in in-class discussion and movement practice is expected.

Grading

This course will be graded S/U.

Movement/discussion participation: 50%

Written work: 50%

A total of 75% will be required for a Satisfactory grade.

Disability Services: The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's [request process](#), managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue."

Creating an environment free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct:

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false

pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Office of Institutional Equity:

1. Online reporting form at equity.osu.edu,
2. Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,
3. Or email equity@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Office of Institutional Equity to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

- All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.
- The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism (the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own, which includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas); collusion

(unauthorized collaboration); and copying the work of another student. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, ask me.

OSU's health and safety requirements:

All students, faculty and staff are required to comply with and stay up to date on all university safety and health guidance (<https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu>).