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Rethinking Creative Writing Pedagogies in the Era of Generative AI

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In addition to being an end in itself, recent years have seen an increasing use of creative writing as a tool across higher education disciplines and pedagogical practices that offers various reflective, analytical, linguistic, and assessment-related affordances; see e.g. Clifton, 2022; Illingworth & Jack, 2025; Martin, 2021; see also Mars, 2025). Through creative writing, students can engage in reflective learning and develop their critical and analytical thinking skills, and explore language use for different purposes and contexts. Creative writing assignments also provide teachers with valuable insights into students' understanding, interpretation, and meaning-making processes.

The rapid emergence of generative AI complicates this pedagogical landscape, however, prompting a re-examination of questions about creativity, authenticity, authorship, and assessment (see e.g. Fu, 2025; Guo et al., 2025; Li et al., 2026; Thurlow, 2023). We might ask what pedagogical purpose is served by creative writing when students can near instantaneously generate poems, short stories, and other seemingly creative texts. What does the advent of GenAI mean for the inclusion of creative writing in the classroom? And how might we need to adapt and rethink praxis?

This round table aims to bring together participants from a range of disciplinary contexts to discuss the opportunities and challenges of integrating creative writing into their pedagogical practices in the age of GenAI. Drawing on our ongoing work on creative writing pedagogies in English teacher education, as well as research on GenAI in educational contexts, the session explores how teachers can navigate the rapidly changing landscape while fostering meaningful and engaging pedagogical practices.

The session will begin with a short presentation by the hosts, introducing key issues related to creative writing pedagogy and the growing presence of GenAI in educational settings. A central point of departure is the distinction between human creativity and algorithmically generated text. While GenAI can produce sophisticated writing by drawing on patterns that emerge in data sets of existing texts, the patterns on which GenAI relies are also what constrain it. Creative writing is valued for its connection to authentic lived experience, emotions, perspectives, imagination, and identity. GenAI cannot, at least at the moment, be as innovative as a human writer can: it cannot push the envelope or make radical formal departures, instead reproducing conventions in the existing dataset. This raises important questions: What does authentic creative expression mean when AI can generate stories, poems, and characters within seconds? How can creative writing be used as a tool to help students critically examine GenAI and foster critical GenAI literacy? How can teachers support students in developing their own creative voices and identities in this landscape? What roles, if any, should GenAI play in the creative writing classroom? How can teachers navigate questions of authorship and ownership in potentially AI-assisted creative work?

The presentation will serve as a starting point for an open round table discussion in which participants are invited to engage critically with these questions and reflect on how creative writing can remain a meaningful educational practice in a world permeated by GenAI.

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