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ENG 2000-001: Introduction to Creative Writing

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English 2000 | Spring 2018
Introduction to Creative Writing
(overview and policies; full syllabus to be distributed during 1st week)

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Office Hours:
MW 10-12, W 2-3 in 3345 Coleman;
TR by appointment in 2nd floor south,
Pemberton Hall; and F by appointment

If you write often, congratulations—you're a writer. But "being a writer" is the beginning of a story, not an ending. Writing as a lifelong vocation demands growth, exploration, learning and change. Courses, workshops, and writing groups can encourage you to stretch as a writer by helping you try out multiple ways of reading, thinking, generating ideas, working with the elements of craft, and revising, some of which will probably be new to you. Formal coursework can also help you understand the tradition that serves as the background for your writing, so that you don't fall into the pit of solipsism.

As the introductory course in the creative writing emphasis or minor, English 2000 won't be the last word for you on any of these goals, but it will introduce you to all of them, as well as the four major genres of creative writing: fiction, creative nonfiction, drama, and poetry.

Textbooks from TRS

Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft (Burroway)
Bird by Bird (Lamott)
Writing Down the Bones (Goldberg)

Other Required Materials

A writer's notebook of your choice, to be brought to every class session
Access to and use of MSWord (available online to EIU students if needed)

Official University Course Description

This introductory creative writing course will introduce students to reading for craft and writing creatively across poetry, fiction, nonfiction and dramatic genres. Students will participate in workshops of their creative work and read writing in each genre.

Official Course Learning Objectives

- Students will develop skills in craft analysis by discussing, reading and writing across poetry, fiction, nonfiction and dramatic genres.
- Students will develop the ability to produce and revise original creative work across poetry, fiction, nonfiction and dramatic genres.
- Students will develop the ability to analyze their creative work in the context of a tradition across poetry, fiction, nonfiction and dramatic genres.
- Students will hone their ability to critique creative work in a creative writing workshop.
- Students will develop skills to effectively present their creative work produced for this course.

Students with disabilities

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Cell Phones

Turn off your cell phone and put it away inside a book bag or purse as soon as you come into class. If you think a cell phone would be helpful during class, ask first.

Attendance

The policy: You have four “free” unexcused absences (think of these as vacation or personal days, which you might take for a variety of reasons, say to attend a wedding or stay home with a minor illness). Unexcused absences beyond 4 will reduce your final grade by half a letter grade each. Also note: Being absent for any reason doesn’t excuse you from meeting deadlines. If work was due, it must still be turned in on time. Moreover, if you take an unexcused absence on a day when you have a piece scheduled for workshop, you will lose your workshop spot and receive a 10% penalty to your final participation grade. *To count an absence as excused, you must provide documentation in writing from a credible third party* that you were sick enough to seek medical treatment; had a true, unexpected and serious emergency that prevented you from attending; or were participating in an official University event.

Why: Class time is essential in a creative writing class. Our conversations, especially but not only workshops, are central to our work. When you’re absent, the rest of us miss out on your insights and contributions to discussion, and you miss ours.

The Student Success Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (<http://www.eiu.edu/~success>) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

The English Department Statement on Plagiarism

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—“The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work” (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Office of Student Standards. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

English Teacher Education Majors

Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should provide each of their English Department professors with a copy of the yellow "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester. These forms are available in a rack outside the office of Dr. Melissa Ames (3821 Coleman Hall).

Grade Breakdown

Writing Exercises (in and out of class)	30%
Participation (includes written workshop comments, reading quizzes if necessary, in-class contributions, and participation in at least one out-of-class event)	20%
Revised Poem	5%
Revised Play	5%
Revised Short Story	10%
Revised Creative Essay	10%
Final Portfolio (substitutes for final exam)	20%

Important Dates

Saturday, Jan. 27	Lions in Winter, featuring CM Burroughs, Vu Tran, and Rachel Hanel (full schedule and link to registration provided in D2L)
Thursday, Mar. 22	Luisa Igloria poetry reading, 5 pm in Doudna Lecture Hall
Friday, Mar. 23	Student Research & Creative Activity Day
Monday, Apr. 9	We Need Diverse Books (student conference kick-off), 4 pm, 4440 Booth Library
Tuesday, Apr. 10	English Student Conference
Wednesday, May 2	Final Portfolio due