

Spring 1-15-2019

ENG 2000-001: Introduction to Creative Writing

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ENG 2000: Intro to Creative Writing

Coleman Hall 3159 : MWF 2:00-2:50 : Spring 2019

Instructor

Dr. Woody Skinner

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Office: Coleman Hal 3040

Office Hours: Mondays—9:00-10:00 and 1:00-2:00

Wednesdays—9:00-10:00 and 1:00-2:00

Fridays—1:00-2:00

Required Texts & Materials

- Janet Burroway, *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft*
- Selected readings on D2L

Course Description

This course will provide an overview of the styles and techniques of contemporary literature in four genres—fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and drama—while also offering you the chance to share your own creative work. We will begin each of our three major units—prose, poetry, and playwriting—by studying a range of published pieces, focusing on different elements of creative craft every week. Then we'll conclude each unit with a dedicated workshop; *your* work will become our focus and will, therefore, serve as a vehicle for deepening your awareness of craft concepts.

Objectives

The goals of this course are as follows:

- To introduce you to the discipline of creative writing
- To provide you with a vocabulary of creative craft
- To help you analyze the decisions writers make
- To sharpen your decision-making process during the drafting and revision of your own work
- To familiarize you with workshop practices and etiquette

Course Requirements

Readings

You will have regular readings on craft to accompany selected short stories, essays, poems, plays, and/or student work.

Craft Responses

You will post regular responses to the assigned pieces to our D2L discussion board. These responses should be 1-2 pages in length and should be viewed as an opportunity to hone your critiquing skills before workshop.

In-Class Exercises

As a way of applying the craft concepts we examine, you will complete in-class writing exercises designed help you generate new work and expand your awareness of creative techniques.

Workshop Submissions

You will be required to turn in a workshop submission for two of the three units—prose, poetry, and playwriting. Prose submissions must be between four and ten pages—either a single story/essay or several pieces of flash fiction/nonfiction. Workshop packets for our poetry unit should include three to four poems. For our scriptwriting unit, you'll workshop 10-minute plays.

Workshop Critiques

Once we begin workshop, you will post half-page critiques of your classmates' work to the D2L discussion board before each workshop session. These critiques should combine your overall impressions of the piece with an analysis of its craft elements. To receive full credit, workshop critiques must meet the length requirement (150 words) and must insightfully explore relevant craft concepts.

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will turn in a portfolio that includes creative work from all three units—prose, poetry, and playwriting. You'll submit revised versions of your two workshop submissions, as well as new work in the genre that you did not workshop. For instance, if you participated in fiction and playwriting workshops, then your final portfolio would include the following: 1) A revised short story 2) A revised play and 3) A poetry packet (3-4 poems).

Final revisions should be based on workshop feedback, and they should display significant development of the original drafts. In other words, successful revisions will be structural—new stanzas, scenes, characters, perspectives, plot points, etc.—rather than superficial.

Writer's Statement

Your final portfolio should be accompanied by a 2-3 page statement which illuminates the decisions you made during the revision process. To receive full credit, this statement must thoroughly explain the reasoning behind your revisions while also drawing on the language of craft.

Course Policies

Attendance

It will be very difficult to succeed in this class if you do not regularly attend. You are allowed up to five unexcused absences; however, absences strongly correlate with lower final grades. After five unexcused absences, I may deduct fifty points, or half of a letter grade, for each missed class.

Tardiness

Please make every attempt to come to class on time. Four instances of tardiness will qualify as one unexcused absence.

Classroom Decorum

Constructive university classrooms require professors and students to respect differences—of background, thought, opinion, and belief. This notion holds special significance in our writing classroom, where you will be asked to routinely engage with your classmates' perspectives and experiences. Therefore, respect will serve as the guiding principle and bedrock expectation of our work together this semester.

On a daily basis, you will be required to bring the appropriate materials to class and to have completed assigned tasks. Focused classroom discussion plays a vital role in the development of critical thinking skills, so you will be expected to participate. Please remember to turn off cell phones and remove headphones before class, as inappropriate use of electronics may result in the loss of participation points. If you must leave early, please let me know at the beginning of class.

Late Work and Make-Up Work

Unless otherwise specified, assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the assigned dates. I do not accept late work unless qualifying circumstances are discussed with me beforehand.

Policy on Plagiarism

Here is the English department's plagiarism policy: "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 Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources."

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.

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

D2L

You will use D2L to view the syllabus, access supplemental readings, and turn in major assignments, so it will be important for you to familiarize yourself with the D2L platform. If, at any time, you have questions about our online resources or encounter a course-specific problem with D2L, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Additional Support

Office Hours

Students who take responsibility for their progress have the greatest chance for success—not only in this class but in all university courses. For that reason, I urge you to visit me during office hours. If the demands of your schedule prevent you from meeting during office hours, please contact me to make other arrangements—we will find a time that works well for both of us.

The Writing Center

I encourage you to use EIU's Writing Center located at 3110 Coleman Hall. This free service provides one-to-one conferences with writing center consultants who can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support, documenting your papers, and working with sentence-level concerns. The writing center is open to help any student from any major at any stage of his or her writing process, and its system of one-to-one conferences demonstrates value and respect for individual writers, all of whom can benefit from feedback about their works in progress.

To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the center (3110 Coleman Hall) or you can call 581-5929. The writing center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. On Friday hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Student Success Center

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, text 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.

Grading

Assignment	Value
Craft Responses (1 page x 5 = 5 pages)	15% (3% x 5)
Workshop Submissions (x2)	20% (10% x 2)
Workshop Critiques (½ page x 20 = 10 pages)	20% (1% x 20)
Final Portfolio (Revised versions of 2 workshop submissions)	25%

Writer's Statement (2-3 pages)	10%
Participation (attendance, class discussion, in-class writing, peer support, and quizzes)	10%
Total	100%

Schedule

The dates below are tentative; I reserve the right to make adjustments for the benefit of the class.

Unit One: The Elements of Craft

Week 1	1/7/2019	1/9/2019	1/11/2019
The Elements of Craft	--Intro to course --Creative Writing at EIU	--Setting as World (137-140) --"The Werewolf" (153-154)	--Character as Desire (96-97) --"Me vs. The Animals" (112-118)
Setting	--The elements of craft	--"Nobody Dies in the Spring" (Pp. 156-157)	-- <i>Telephone Bob</i> (131-134)
Character			

Week 2	1/14/2019	1/16/2019	1/18/2019
Story	--Story as Journey (167-168)	--Story as Power Struggle (168-171)	--Your Voice (48-50)
Voice	--"The Hammock" (189-190)	--"Columbine High School/Littleton, CO" (188)	--Character Voice (53-55)
Point of View	--"202 Checkmates" (D2L)	--"Red Sky in the Morning" (176-179)	--"The Butch and the Bathroom" (D2L) --"We were talking about guns" (D2L)

Unit Two: Prose

Week 3	1/21/2019	1/23/2019	1/25/2019
Point of View	Class Canceled: Martin Luther King Jr. Day	--Point of View (55-61)	--Character as Action (102-104)
Voice		--Character Voice (99-102)	--"Black Jesus" (D2L)
Character		--"Victory Lap" (69-82)	

Week 4	1/28/2019	1/30/2019	2/1/2019
Plot	Craft Response #1 Due --Story and Plot (260-263) --"Everything That Rises Must Converge" (D2L)	--Scene and Summary (263-266) --"Cattle Haul" (D2L)	--Backstory and Flashback (266-268) --"Bullet in the Brain" (D2L)
Story Structure			
Form and Time			
Week 5	2/4/2019	2/6/2019	2/8/2019
Creative Nonfiction	Craft Response #2 Due --The Essay and Creative Nonfiction (226-228) --"Killing Like They Do in the Movies" (D2L)	--"Girl" (D2L)	Prose Workshop Submission Due --Fact and Truth (234-236) --"The Female Body" (245-247)
Memoir			
Fact and Truth			

Week 6	2/11/2019	2/13/2019	2/15/2019
Workshop	Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due	Class Canceled: Lincoln's Birthday

Week 7	2/18/2019	2/20/2019	2/22/2019
Workshop	Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due	Class Canceled

Unit Three: Poetry

Week 8	2/25/2019	2/27/2019	3/1/2019
Image	--Image and Imagination (16-20) --"The Wooden Overcoat" (D2L) --"There Are Birds Here" (D2L) --"Snow Day"	--Imagery, Connotation, and Metaphor (307-310) --"Facing it" (43) --"A Display of Mackerel" (D2L) --"What Do Women Want?" (D2L)	--Density and Intensity --"Scavenging the Wall" (D2L) --"Drift-Raft" (D2L) --"Thread" (D2L)
Metaphor			
Language			

Week 9	3/4/2019	3/6/2019	3/8/2019
Form Line Breaks	Craft Response #3 Due --Formal and Free Verse (298-302; 305-306) --"Epithalamium" (325-326) --"The Song of Wandering Aengus" (D2L) --"His and Hers" (D2L)	--The Poetic Line (305-307) --"The Crow" (D2L) --"Ode to the Clothesline" (D2L) --"Stillborn"	--Finding the Poem (315-318) --"The Language of the Brag" (324) --"There Is No Word" (320) ----"It's Not Like Nikola Tesla" (D2L)

Week 10	3/11/2019	3/13/2019	3/15/2019
Spring Break	Class Canceled	Class Canceled	Class Canceled

Week 11	3/18/2019	3/20/2019	3/22/2019
Workshop	Poetry Workshop Submissions Due Craft Response #4 Due Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due

Week 12	3/25/2019	3/27/2019	3/29/2019
Workshop	Workshop Critiques Due	Class Canceled	Class Canceled

Unit Three: Playwriting

Week 13	4/1/2019	4/3/2019	4/5/2019
Playwriting Sight Sound	--The Difference Between Drama and Fiction (329-330) -- <i>The Proposal</i> (341-352)	--Sight: Sets, Actions, Costumes, Props (331-334) -- <i>Gas</i> (353-355)	--Sound: Verbal and Nonverbal (335-338) -- <i>The Philadelphia</i> (158-64)

Week 14	4/8/2019	4/10/2019	4/12/2019
Building Scenes	Craft Response #5 Due --The Ten-Minute Play (340) -- <i>Executive Dance</i>	--Structure: Making a Scene (339) -- <i>Eukiah</i> (190-193)	--Excerpt from <i>The Scene Book</i> (D2L) -- <i>French Fries</i> (44-45)

Week 15	4/15/2019	4/17/2019	4/19/2019
Workshop	Workshop Submission #3 Due	Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due

Week 16	4/22/2019	4/24/2019	4/26/2019
Workshop	Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due	Workshop Critiques Due

Finals Week	Thursday, May 2nd		
	Final Portfolio and Writer's Statement Due by 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 2nd		