

Eastern Illinois University

## The Keep

---

Spring 2021

2021

---

Spring 1-15-2021

### ENG 2000-600: Introduction to Creative Writing

Bess Kosinec Winter

*Eastern Illinois University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2021](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2021)



Part of the [English Language and Literature Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Kosinec Winter, Bess, "ENG 2000-600: Introduction to Creative Writing" (2021). *Spring 2021*. 44.  
[https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english\\_syllabi\\_spring2021/44](https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_spring2021/44)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2021 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2021 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

## **ENG 2000: Intro to Creative Writing—3 cr hrs**

**Online Synchronous \* T Th 2:00-3:15pm**

### **Instructor**

Dr. Bess Winter

[bwkosinec@eiu.edu](mailto:bwkosinec@eiu.edu)

Office: Online

Zoom Office Hours: MW 2pm-3pm, T Th 3:15-4:15 pm or by appointment – access office hours Zoom room through this link, or link on our d2l page: <https://eiu.zoom.us/j/2392840392>

If I'm in a conference with someone, you'll be placed in the waiting room.

### **Required Texts & Materials**

Janet Burroway, *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft*

Readings posted on d2l

A notebook you love

A pen you love

### **Course Description**

*Catalog description:* (3-0-3) F, S. This 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. WC

Think of this class as imagination boot camp. Here, you'll learn to tap into your innate creativity, and to give voice to ideas that excite you, intimidate you, even scare you. In short, you're in this class to undo much of the general-held wisdom passed down to us about what "normal" means or the idea of "fitting in" and to start down the path of the artist by training yourself to be observant, curious, and open to the world around you.

Through a tasting menu of different genres—poetry, playwriting, fiction and nonfiction (in the prose unit)—you'll learn the basic tools necessary to turn your fascinations into work written, or performed, for others. This means you'll learn both the habits of the artist—you're expected to write in your journal daily, and to read extensively—and the artist's tools in the form of writer's craft.

This course is designed to be fun, but also to be rigorous. It is a process-based class, meaning your success, grade-wise and otherwise, depends on your online attendance and participation, and your willingness to engage with the writing process. You are expected to take part in class discussion and workshops, to complete the assigned readings and exercises, and to turn in writing that you've spent considerable time drafting and revising, culminating in a revised final portfolio. You will share your work often, and contribute to the conversations we have in class. In short, you're expected to participate fully in this community of writers, and to support your fellow community members by being thoughtful and generous in your contributions.

*By the end of the course you will:*

- Have developed the beginnings of a consistent artistic practice;
- Possess a basic understanding of the writer's craft and the revision process;
- Possess a basic understanding of the generic characteristics of poetry, playwriting, nonfiction and fiction, and the beginning of a solid body of work.

### **If you are experiencing trauma or distress**

Please note that, while writing can be a very personal act, this class is not a therapeutic environment and should not be taken in place of therapy. If you are experiencing personal issues, depression, anxiety, trauma, etc, your best resource is always the EIU Counseling Clinic, 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Human Services Building, which takes walk-in appointment requests and can also be reached at 217-581-3413 during the day, and 1-866-567-2400 in case of after-hours emergency. Do not hesitate to take advantage of this resource—it's yours. As a State of Illinois employee, I'm a Mandated Reporter and must also report incidents of sexual assault or violence to our Title IX Coordinator.

### **Assignments & Grading (out of 1000 points)**

Workshop critiques (150-300 words) –300

Participation (class discussion, doing the reading, conferencing with me)—250

Review: Lions in Winter or Hennings Reading – 100

Revised portfolio—200

Artist's Statement—150

*\*I reserve the right to hold pop quizzes and minor writing assignments as the class's needs arise, as well as make minor changes to the syllabus in accordance with the class's needs. If any changes are made, you will be notified by email.*

### **On Grades**

Your grade in this class is based on the amount, and quality, of effort you put into the course. This is measured by how you've changed or grown as an artist and a student of writing (in short, how invested you are in the process—you tell me how much in your artist's statement and our own meeting), not by your talent or promise as a writer.

**However, your participation in workshop is crucial to receiving a passing grade in this class. Spend time on your workshop responses, as I will be looking at these and grading them closely.**

### **Journals**

Nearly all writers keep journals. Why keep a journal? To keep track of your ideas. To sketch out drafts. To take note of images you find interesting. To write down conversations you overhear. Maybe even to write down your dreams. You will be expected to keep a journal throughout the course of the semester, simply because that is what an observant writer does. It is private; it is yours; it won't be collected or graded—but I do expect to see you writing in it when we do in-class exercises and carrying it proudly in your bag.

## Assignments

### *Notebook Exercises/In-Class Writing*

I may ask you to complete writing exercises, in and outside of class, in your notebook. You may be asked to share this work with the class, or I may occasionally ask to collect it.

### *Workshop Critiques*

Prepare for every workshop class by doing the following:

- 1) Write comments in the margins of the piece up for discussion. You can do so in Microsoft Word by using the “comment” function.
- 2) Write a 150-300 word critique for each peer-written piece we read this semester, and post it to the relevant message board in d2l by copying and pasting the text into the body of the post. This critique should be considerate in its tone, and use writers’ craft to address both what the piece is doing well and where it can improve.

### *Revised Portfolio and Artist’s Statement*

You will use your workshop comments and the revision techniques you learned in class to revise your two workshopped submissions for a final grade. The portfolio will include a 600-word artist’s statement that tells the story of your piece(s) from first draft to final submission, touching on how you used workshop comments and elements of craft to guide your revision choices. You can refer back to that unit’s reflection in your Artist’s Statement. Your portfolio must also include

## Course Policies

### **Technical Requirements**

To take this course, you must be able to do the following:

- Regularly access the Internet, using a laptop or desktop computer
- Download and upload email attachments
- Use Microsoft Word
- Use Collaborate Ultra and Kaltura for audio/video communications
- Use Adobe Reader (free download) or Preview (for Mac) to read PDF files
- Install software
- Stream online video
- Use a webcam and microphone

## **Attendance & Late Assignments**

Classes will be conducted synchronously, via Collaborate Ultra. This means that you will arrive in our online “classroom” at the designated class time, and be ready to participate via Collaborate—ideally using a webcam and audio, but chat will suffice if you can’t access these technologies. Just as you’d be expected to contribute to classroom discussion in an intimate class like this one, you will be expected to contribute to our Collaborate discussion, as well.

If you are unable to access Collaborate Ultra during our 10-10:50am time slot, you may use a computer at Gregg Triad. Be sure to take your headphones with you. Should you wish to do this on a regular basis, let me know and I can arrange a reservation at Gregg Triad for you.

Missing class happens, particularly under our current circumstances. Should you miss a class, please don’t send reasons for your absence after the fact unless you anticipate missing a number of classes (ie. in the case of extended illness), and please do not send emails asking if we did anything important (we did) or for extra make-up work, as this class relies heavily on participating in scheduled sessions.

Do, however, let me know ASAP beforehand if you need to request an emergency extension on an assignment per EIU’s policy, otherwise late assignments will receive a deduction of 50 points per day. This is particularly important when it comes to workshop pieces.

## **Classroom/Collaborate Ultra 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 wherever you’re accessing the class from, 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. **Though you are not required to turn on your camera, you are strongly encouraged to do so, as it helps develop trust and a sense of community in the creative writing classroom.**

## **Email**

*This policy is borrowed from Dr. Tim Taylor’s ENG 1001 syllabus.*

I welcome emails if you have questions or concerns about your work in this class. However, I expect you to write emails in a professional manner—not like you are texting a close friend. I do my best to reply to all emails within 24 hours of receipt, but you’re not likely to receive an instant reply, particularly if you’re emailing within an hour of class. In that case, please speak to me directly after class.

## **Plagiarism**

*EIU English Department's 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 Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

**Please note that submitting work you have completed/are completing for another class counts as self-plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and will be treated as such unless you get permission from me first. Permission is granted on a case-by-case basis.**

## **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 Student Success Center**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (<https://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 McAfee 1301.

## **Accommodation for Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and are 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. Stop by McAfee 1210 or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

Once you have received your accommodations letter, please meet with me immediately, during office hours, in order for us to plan on arrangements specific to your needs and this course's assignments.

## ***Schedule***

### *Unit 1 (mini-unit): Universal Elements of Craft*

*Tues Jan 12– Becoming a Writer*

**Read for today:** Burroway chapter 1 pgs. 1-4 (end of “and reading”) and 6-11 (journal section)

*Thurs Jan 14 – Image, Metaphor and Simile*

**Read for today:** Burroway pgs. 16-27, Kooser excerpt “Neighbors” and “Cosmetics Department” (d2l), and excerpt from Doyle *The Wet Engine* (d2l)

*Tues Jan 19— Voice and Character*

**Read for today:** Burroway pgs. 48-55 (to “Point of View”), Amelia Gray “Snake Farm” (d2l), Jorge Luis Borges “The Book of Sand” pgs. 82-85, Burroway “Character as Desire” pgs. 95-97 and “Character as Action” pgs. 102-104

*Thurs Jan 21 – Point of View*

**Read for today:** Burroway pgs. 55-61, George Saunders “Victory Lap” pgs. 69-82

### *Unit 2: Poetry*

*--THIS CLASS A NO-RHYME ZONE UNTIL FEB 4--*

*Tues Jan 26– A New Way of Looking (and reading), Parts of a Poem: Lines and Stanzas, Beginnings and Endings*

**Read for today:** Kooser “Being of Service” (d2l), Gwendolyn McEwen “Jewellery” (d2l), Pablo Neruda “Ode to a Large Tuna in the Market” (d2l), Ada Limón, “Wife” (d2l), David Berman, “If There Was a Book About this Hallway” (d2l) and Kooser “The Imaginary Reader” and “Selecting a Reader” (d2l), Burroway “Working with Sound” pgs. 302-304, “The Poetic Line” pgs. 305-306

*Thurs Jan 28— Collaging, Borrowing, Digging In, Stealing*

**Read for today:** Ocean Vuong “Aubade with Burning City” (d2l), David Lehman “POEM; These Fragments I Have Shored” (d2l), Terrance Hayes “The Golden Shovel” (d2l) and Doris Cross “Bolt” (d2l)

**Write for today:** Gather materials that inspire you: one song, at least 3 visual elements, at least one written piece, and additional things of importance: items of clothing, household items, etc. You’re only limited by your imagination. Bring these materials with you to class, if possible. If not, take pictures.

- *OK, YOU CAN RHYME NOW* -

*Thurs Feb 4— Rhyme, Meter, Form*

**Read for today:** Edgar Allan Poe “The Ballad of Annabel Lee” (d2l) and Gwendolyn Brooks “the vacant lot” (d2l); Dylan Thomas “do not go gentle into that good night” (d2l) and Elizabeth Bishop “One Art” (d2l)

- **WORKSHOP POEM PACKET SUBMITTED TO D2L DROPBOX by 11:59PM  
FRIDAY FEB 5**

*Tues Feb 9— Non-Western Forms*

**Read for today:** Tanka Journal, “What is Tanka?” (d2l), Sadakichi Hartmann “Tanka” (d2l), Description, “Renga” (d2l), “Pantoum: Poetic Form” and Randall Mann “September Elegies” (d2l)

*Thurs Feb 11 –Poetry workshop*

*Tues Feb 16 — Poetry workshop*

*Thurs Feb 18— Poetry workshop*

*Tues Feb 23— Poetry workshop*

### Unit 3: Drama

*Thurs Feb 25— Character and Conflict, Motivation, Objectives, Beats*

**Read for today:** Chekhov “The Proposal” pgs. 341-352, “The Invisible Three-Act Structure” (d2l), “Playwriting Terms” (d2l), possibly another reading TBA

*Tues Mar 2— Dialogue, Monologue, and Soliloquy*

**Read for today:** Burroway pgs. 336-338, Rivera, “Gas,” pgs. 353-356, possible other reading TBA

*Thurs Mar 4— Setting the Scene, Writing for Non-Traditional Spaces*

**Read for today:** Burroway pgs 330-333, Excerpt, “How the Colds Were Razed” (d2l), and “The Moors” opening stage directions (d2l).

- **10 MIN PLAY (FOR WORKSHOP) SUBMITTED TO D2L DROPBOX by 11:59PM  
FRIDAY MAR 5**

*Tues Mar 9— Drama Workshop*

*Thurs Mar 11— Drama workshop*

*Tues Mar 16 - Drama workshop*

*Tues Mar 23* — Drama workshop

*Thurs Mar 25* — Drama workshop

*Unit 4: Prose*

*Tues Mar 30*— *Scene and Summary, Time*

**Read for today:** Burroway “Scene and Summary” pgs 263-266, Jesmyn Ward, “Cattle Haul” (d2l)

*Thurs Apr 1*— *Crafting plot & dialogue in prose*

**Read for today:** Burroway pgs. 260-263, Thomas King, “Borders” (d2l), additional readings TBA

*Tues Apr 6*— *Flash Fiction, Micro-Fiction, Short-Shorts*

**Read for today:** Selection from *The Rose Metal Press Field Guide to Writing Flash Fiction* (d2l), other selections posted on d2l

*Thurs Apr 8*— *Place & World-Building: Writing Horror, Sci-Fi, and Fantasy*

**Read for today:** Brian Evenson, “A Collapse of Horses” (d2l), Ursula LeGuin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” pgs. 280-285, other d2l readings TBD

- **PROSE OR FLASH FICTION (FOR WORKSHOP) UPLOADED TO D2L BY 11:59PM FRI APR 9**

*Tues Apr 13*-- Prose workshop

*Thurs Apr 15*-- Prose workshop

*Tues Apr 20* – Prose workshop

*Tues Apr 27*— Prose workshop

*Thurs Apr 29* -- Revision & wrap-up

**FINAL PORTFOLIO AND ARTIST’S STATEMENT DUE VIA D2L DROPBOX BY WED MAY 5 AT 11:55 PM**