

Eastern Illinois University

The Keep

Fall 2020

2020

Fall 2-23-2021

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_fall2020



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

Recommended Citation

Kosinec Winter, Bess, "ENG 2000-600: Introduction to Creative Writing" (2021). *Fall 2020*. 55.
https://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2020/55

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2020 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fall 2020 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

ENG 2000: Intro to Creative Writing—3 cr hrs

Online—Collaborate Ultra * MWF 10-10:50am

Instructor

Dr. Bess Winter

bwkosinec@eiu.edu

Office: Online (Collaborate Ultra)

Office Hours: M 11am-1pm, W 11am-12pm, F 11am-12pm or by appointment. **Please sign up for office hours on my “Office Hours Sign-Up Sheet” by the night before at the latest so I can schedule a private conferencing room for us.**

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, 1st 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)

Craft responses (4)—150

Workshop critiques (150-300 words) -250

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

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.

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. A real, physical notebook is key, here, even though we'll meet online.

Craft Responses

You will complete four responses over the course of the semester, in response to questions I will give you that relate to our readings and discussions. These responses should be 1-2 pages in length and should be viewed as an opportunity to hone your critiquing skills before workshop, as well as to hone your creative voice. You may, if you wish, respond creatively to the prompts (comics, fiction, etc). Responses will be graded on a rubric (available via d2l) that takes into account their engagement with craft, engagement with class texts, and the overall quality of the writing.

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. 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 workshoped 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.

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 (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.

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 Ninth Street Hall, room 2022, 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

Mon Aug 24—Intros

Wed Aug 26— Becoming a Writer

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

Fri Aug 28— Image

Read for today: Burroway pgs. 16-27, Kooser excerpt “Neighbors” and “Cosmetics Department” (d2l)

Write for today: Get a notebook and pen you like. Go out to a public place and notice as much as you can. Write it down: what you see, feel, hear, smell, touch. Be sure to use as many concrete images and details as possible.

Mon Aug 31— Metaphor and Simile

Read for today: Burroway pgs. 24-27, and excerpt from Doyle *The Wet Engine* (d2l)

Wed Sep 2— Setting

Read for today: Burroway “Setting as the World” pgs. 137-140 and “Setting as Mood and Symbol” pgs. 144-146, Angela Carter “The Werewolf” pgs. 153-154

Write for today: Do Burroway’s “Try This” exercise on pg 154 and write a short modern fairytale.

Fri Sep 4— Voice

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

--Craft response 1 due, via d2l, by 5pm on Friday Sep 4--

Mon Sep 7—LABOR DAY—NO CLASS

Wed Sep 9— Character

Read for today: Burroway “Character as Desire” pgs. 95-97 and “Character as Action” pgs. 102-104, Aleksander Hemon “The Book of My Life” pgs. 109-111

Write for today: Do Burroway “Try This 4.16” pg. 134

Fri Sep 11—Point of View

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

Write for today: “Try This” 3.6 in Burroway (pg. 58)

Unit 2: Poetry

--THIS CLASS A NO-RHYME ZONE UNTIL SEP 25--

Mon Sep 14—A New Way of Looking (and reading)

Read for today: Kooser “Being of Service” (d2l), Gwendolyn McEwen “Jewellery” (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).

Write for today: Write a poem describing your imaginary reader. You may wish to place them in a scene, describe their gestures, describe their dress, etc. Further examples of “imaginary reader” poems available on d2l.

Wed Sep 16— Parts of a Poem: Lines and Stanzas

Read for today: Burroway “Working with Sound” pgs. 302-304, “The Poetic Line” pgs. 305-306

Fri Sep 18— Beginnings and Endings

Read for today: Kooser “First Impressions” pgs. 25-26, Brad Aaron Modlin “What You Missed that Day You Were Absent from Fourth Grade” (d2l), and Eve L. Ewing “to the notebook kid” (d2l)

Mon Sep 21— 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—audio, visual, written, even items of clothing, household items, etc. You’re only limited by your imagination. Collage or weave them together into a poem. Bring these materials with you to class, if possible, or have pictures at hand.

--OK, YOU CAN RHYME NOW --

Wed Sep 23— 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)

--Craft response 2 due, via d2l, by 5pm on Wednesday Sep 23--

Fri Sep 25—Form, Continued

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)

WORKSHOP POEM PACKET UPLOADED TO D2L by 11:59PM FRIDAY SEP 25

Mon Sep 28—No Class

Wed Sep 30—Poetry Workshop

Fri Oct 2—Poetry Workshop

Mon Oct 5—Poetry Workshop

Wed Oct 7—Poetry Workshop

Fri Oct 9—Poetry Workshop

Unit 3: Drama

Mon Oct 12— 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

Wed Oct 14— Dialogue, Monologue, and Soliloquy

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

Fri Oct 16— FALL BREAK—NO CLASS

Mon Oct 19— Setting the Scene, Writing for Non-Traditional Spaces

Read for today: Burroway pgs 330-333, Excerpt, “How the Colds Were Razed” (d2l), possibly another reading TBA

--Craft response 3 due, via d2l, by 5pm on Tuesday Oct 20 —

Wed Oct 21— Dramatic Reading Roundtable

Read for today: Read the one-act you’re working on and select a section or scene you’d like your groupmates to read aloud.

Write for today: Make sure anything you share with the class is readable and edited—ie. that you’re ready to show it to other people.

Fri Oct 23—Dramatic Reading Roundtable cont.

- **UPLOAD 10-MINUTE PLAY TO D2L dropbox by 11:59PM FRIDAY OCT 23**

Mon Oct 26—Playwriting Workshop

Wed Oct 28—Playwriting Workshop

Fri Oct 30—Playwriting Workshop

Mon Nov 2—Playwriting Workshop

Wed Nov 4—Playwriting Workshop

Unit 4: Prose

Fri Nov 6— Scene and Summary, Time

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

Mon Nov 9— Crafting plot & dialogue in prose

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

Wed Nov 11— 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

Fri Nov 13— 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

UPLOAD WORKSHOP STORY TO D2L dropbox by 11:59PM FRIDAY NOV 13

--Craft response 4 due by 5pm Fri Nov 13--

Mon Nov 16—Prose Workshop

Wed Nov 18—Prose Workshop

Fri Nov 20—Prose Workshop

Mon Nov 23-Fri Nov 27—THANKSGIVING BREAK—NO CLASS

Mon Nov 30—Prose Workshop

Wed Dec 2—Prose Workshop

Fri Dec 4—Prose Workshop

Mon Dec 7—Revision

Wed Dec 9—Revision

Fri Dec 11—Revision

**FINAL PORTFOLIO AND ARTIST'S STATEMENT DUE VIA d2I DROPBOX by Mon Dec 9,
12pm**