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Fall 2023

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ENG 5025-600 Creative Writing Professional Development

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Eastern Illinois University

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ENGLISH 5025

Creative Writing Professional Development

Fall 2023: Online

Assignments and Readings Posted Mondays,

Assignments/Discussion Comments Due by 5pm CT on Following Monday

Instructor: Dr. Mike McClelland (He/Him)

Office: Coleman Hall 3365

Email: mbmcclelland@eiu.edu

Office Hours:

MWF 12:00pm to 1:00pm in office and 1:00pm to 2pm online (or by appointment)

Welcome to Professionalization!

“It takes a lot of time and money to look this cheap, honey.” - Dolly Parton

Required Texts:

All course reading materials will be distributed on D2L.

Required materials:

- Access to the Internet; a computer with word-processing capabilities
- Your imagination!

Course Description:

“I can always live by my pen.” – Jane Austen

This an asynchronous online class designed to aid students in the professionalization of their writing lives. This includes (but is not limited to): publishing, conferences and residencies, volunteer opportunities, job opportunities, further study at both universities and independent institutions, and reading/performance best practices. You will leave this course knowing how to submit work to or edit literary magazines, how to look for and apply to conferences and residencies, how to apply to further graduate school/independent workshops, and how to find and apply to literary careers.

Reading and Assignments:

All reading and assignments for this course will be posted and turned in via D2L. If for some reason D2L isn't working, we will communicate via email. Readings and assignments for each week will be posted on Mondays and responses/assignments will be due on Friday unless otherwise specified.

Grading

- Assignments 50%
- Discussion/Participation 50%

Plagiarism and Copyright

Just don't plagiarize! If you have any issue completing your assignments within the assigned timeframe, please contact me directly before you even consider plagiarizing an assignment. I will work with you on a timeframe for completion.

Eastern Illinois University considers plagiarism a serious offense under its student conduct code, and the penalty can be as serious as expulsion from school.

The English Department's policy 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 original work' (Random House Dictionary)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

A.I.

The use of artificial intelligence to produce work for this course is not appropriate and will result in a grade of 0 on that assignment.

Late and Make-up Work

- Please get your work in on time. I also understand, however, that life happens. If you need an extension, please do your best to contact me **before** the assignment is due.

Methods of Evaluation:

The grades for this class will be determined by points earned (1000 total points possible) and will be reported based on the standard grading scale. However, per IAI standards, a grade of C or higher is required for advancement to higher level English courses.

- 100% to 90%: A
- 89% to 80%: B
- 79 to 70%: C
- 69% to 0%: NC

Conduct and Kindness Policy:

Participants in this course **must** be course compliant with the University's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, which prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person

because of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis of discrimination precluded by federal and state statutes is strictly prohibited.

In addition, as we will be discussing and investigating aspects of each other's cultures, it is important for members of this class to not only "tolerate" each other's unique and different qualities but to celebrate them. It is a requirement of this class that all we treat each other with kindness, respect, and compassion.

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

You are welcome here and are an equal member of this classroom. Please advocate for your rights and allow me to help point you in the right direction for exercising those rights! 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 McAfee, Room 1210, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

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, 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 McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

The Writing Center

"The Writing Center of Eastern Illinois University is a place where students can develop as writers and thinkers. We recognize that student writers come to the center with individual needs and individual writing processes, and we are committed to working with students from all disciplines, majors, and academic backgrounds at any stage of the writing process." I highly recommend you visit the Writing Center in the first three weeks of class with low stakes assignment, so you are comfortable in the environment and familiar with their processes when you go in for a more challenging one. <https://www.eiu.edu/writing/index.php>.

English Education/Teacher Certification

Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should request each of their English Department professors to complete the "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester. This online evaluation form is available here: <https://www.eiu.edu/english/machform/view.php?id=19831>.

Resources for Student Well-Being

Life is hard, especially when you're in college. Please check out the university's extensive options for assisting your emotional/physical/spiritual wellbeing: [https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20 Well-Being_26-July-2022.pdf](https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20Well-Being_26-July-2022.pdf)

Commitment to Diversity:

I have chosen the readings for this course in an effort to reflect writers whose races, genders, nationalities, sexual orientations, and religious backgrounds are typically underrepresented in university classrooms and in the established literary canon. This class will celebrate and investigate diverse work.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments/readings are due ON the date they are listed below.

Any reading assignment not from the textbook will be provided as a handout or electronically.

Week One – Introductions and Author Bios

Introductions and discussion of syllabus. Please have your “author bio” and writing interests posted on D2L by Friday.

Week Two – Literary Magazines

Introduction to literary magazines. Please have your literary magazine assignment posted to D2L by the following Monday.

Week Three – Literary Magazines, continued

More on literary magazines. Please have your cover letter assignment posted to D2L by the following Monday.

Week Four – Volunteering for Literary Magazines (and elsewhere)

For this week, we will discuss how (and how not) to approach literary magazines and publishers on a volunteer basis, and how to do so in a way that will be beneficial and not exploitative towards ourselves and other workers. Masthead Assignment due on D2L by following Monday.

Week Five – Conferences, Retreats, and Residencies

This week we will discuss the pros and cons of academic and literary conferences, artist residencies, and literary retreats. Please have your conference/residency assignment posted on D2L by following Monday.

Week Six – Academic Pursuits (as a student)

This week, we'll discuss pathways for further studies in academia, from MFA programs to PhD programs to certificates and more. Please have your "Nerd Wish List" posted on D2L by following Monday.

Week Seven – Academic Pursuits (as an instructor/professor)

For this week, we will discuss the jobs available for professional/creative writers in academia and the credentials/background you must in order to pursue those. Job Ad dissection due on D2L by following Monday.

Week Eight – Non-academic writing jobs

Many writers seek employment in the industry but outside of academia. What are those jobs and are they realistic? What kind of background do you need in order to pursue them? We will look at jobs in editing, publishing, agenting, advertising, and beyond. Job description assignment due on D2L by following Monday.

Week Nine – Non-Academic Study/Teaching/Tutoring/Workshopping

Many writers choose to further their studies without doing so through an academic instruction. Others form trusted workshop groups with their friends. We'll talk about the pros and cons, best practices, and scams/barriers to watch out for. Workshop Diagnostic Essay due by following Monday.

Week Ten – Opportunities and Best Practices for Editing Other People's Work

Many writers (myself included) stay involved in the literary world by editing for literary magazines or anthologies. We'll discuss how to find those opportunities and how to edit once we are there. Story Edit Assignment due by following Monday.

Week Eleven – On Rejection

To be a professional writer you absolutely must become comfortable with rejection. We'll talk about what is and is appropriate in a rejection, best practices for responding to rejection (**tip: don't respond!**), and tips for moving forward from rejection and even setting rejection goals. Rejection Letter Assignment due by following Monday.

Week Twelve – "Materials" Needed for School and Job Applications

If you apply for writing school or writing jobs, there are a number of materials that you'll likely need that you may have never even heard of. You'll need personal statements, references, sample work, and maybe even documents sharing your feelings on diversity and/or research goals. We'll look at all of those this week. Potential Job Materials List due on D2L by following Monday.

Week Thirteen – Social Media Best Practices

As a writer, do you need to be on social media? If so, what platforms? How do you get started and how should you behave? These questions are often different on a person-by-person basis, but we can discuss them all this week. Social media profile text assignment due **by Friday on D2L**.

Week Fourteen – Social Media, Continued

No class, Thanksgiving Break!

We're off this week, so don't work! But if you happen to be perusing social media while you're off school, I'd love for you to look for a writer's account that you really admire and briefly discuss on D2L why you love it.

Week Fifteen – On Professional Envy, Unfairness, and Disappointment

The writing world is not fair. And every writer, even the most successful, will see someone else get something they feel like they deserved. How do we cope with that? How and when are the best moments to stand up to an unfair system and make changes? What are the consequences of doing so? “The Hill I’ll Die On” assignment due by following Monday on D2L.

Week Sixteen – Agents, Editors, and Self-Publishing! Oh My!

If you want to work with one of the “big four” book publishers, 99% of the time you will need an agent. And even if you don't want to work with those publishers, you will need to work with an editor at those publishers. And if you don't want to do with them, you'll still need to figure out the best platform for self-publishing and also how to edit/promote yourself. Book Description due on D2L by **Friday**.

Week Seventeen

Academic/Professional Cover Letter (Final Assignment) due on D2L by **December 13th**.