ENG 2007-001: Creative Writing: Fiction

Lania Knight
Eastern Illinois University

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ENG 2007: Creative Writing: Fiction
Fall 2013, T/Th 12:30-1:45pm, Coleman Hall 2120

Professor Lania Knight, PhD
Office Hours: T 11am–12pm and 1-2pm, W 1–2pm, Th 11am–12pm
Office: Coleman Hall 3751 Email: ldknight@eiu.edu

This course is an introduction to the reading and writing of short fiction. Students will read lots of short stories, discuss the basic mechanics of writing short stories, and write their own short stories and discuss them in a workshop format.

Required Texts:
One current issue of a literary magazine (TBA)

Grades:
Weekly Responses 300
Workshop Submission I 100
Workshop Submission II 100
Workshop Responses 200
Lit Mag Presentation 100
Final Portfolio 200

Total 1000 points

Be Prepared for Class
To prepare for each class, please do the following:
1. Be ready to participate in activities
2. Bring your textbooks and a notebook with you to class
3. Read the assigned material before class
4. Respond via Dropbox on Desire2Learn to the assigned reading before class

Reading Responses
You’ll write responses to the readings from our textbooks for each class, which may or may not be shared during class (depends on time available). These responses are due the day before class via Dropbox on Desire2Learn by 12pm. Each response is worth around 20 points.

For chapter readings from Kardos’ *The Art and Craft of Fiction*, respond by writing either
1) a List of Ten, which means ten of anything about the reading, such as words you needed to look up, items you found interesting or confusing, or phrases you had questions about. ANYTHING GOES. Write page and paragraph numbers, 450–500 words per list, OR
2) good, old-fashioned notes of 450–500 words (with page and paragraph numbers).
For short story selections, answer at least five of the questions from “checklist: read like a writer” on pp.5–6 in *The Art and Craft of Fiction*. Please alternate which questions you answer according to what makes sense for the story selection. Your response to each short story should be 450–500 words long.

**Attendance**
I keep attendance. You may miss up to four classes. If you miss a fifth class, you will fail the course. Two late arrivals = one absence. Exceptions will be made only for documented emergencies and documented school activities.

**Workshop Submissions**
For each workshop, submit one complete short story. Each submission should be 10–15 pages (2,500–3,750 words) in length. Please do not go below or beyond the word count. You are free to write about any topic, but the material must be new and created for this class. Submissions will be graded for originality and risk. Does your story say something interesting? Is the writing elegant? Does it pull the reader in? Workshop sign up will take place early in the semester. Your stories will be due before workshop and will be sent to classmates and the instructor via Desire2Learn.

**Workshop Responses**
For each workshop submission, type a one-page single-spaced letter (450–500 words) to the writer. Email this response to the writer and to the instructor by 12pm the day of workshop. Your letter should address what you see happening on the page (describe the content and form), as well as questions for the author. The most important task of this letter is to reflect back to the writer what you see happening on the page and to pose questions and predictions so the writer can begin to see if you, the reader, have understood what they have attempted. Please send one copy of the letter to the writer via Panthermail and one copy to the instructor via Desire2Learn.

**Literary Magazine Presentation**
Each student will obtain one current issue of a literary magazine (either through purchase or through Booth Library) and give a presentation to the class to describe what the magazine is about. Topics to cover include format/layout, descriptions of content, analysis of editorial choices, and what is appealing (or not) about this magazine as a reader and as a writer. Presentations should be 8–10 minutes and include A/V and/or handouts.

**Creative Writing Events**
Attendance at three creative writing events during the semester is required. After attending an event, please submit a 450-500-word response along with your Reading Responses before the class period immediately following the event.
1) **Jan 24–25**: Lions in Winter at the Doudna Fine Arts Center (attend at least 2 events/sessions)
2) **Feb 20**: Reading by Letitia Moffitt
3) Choose one of the following: 1) **Jan 30 OR Feb 1**: Elizabeth Wong Residency, 2) **Feb 4**: Reading by poet Roger Reeves, 3) **Apr 5**: Lecture by UIUC writer/professor Audrey Petty
Final Portfolio
The Final Portfolio consists of two elements:
1) a significant revision of one of your stories, and
2) a reflection essay. For this essay, write an 8–10-page (2,000–2,500) reflection on the course readings, the activities in class, the stories you wrote, your revision, and any other material relevant to your development as a writer. This essay should connect the course materials and activities with your understanding of writing, and it should also demonstrate your lively engagement with the class and the process of writing over the span of the semester.

Students with Documented Disabilities
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodation, you must make arrangements through the Office of Disability Services; you should contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Tentative Schedule (may be updated as needed throughout the semester)

Week One
Tuesday, 1/14: Intro and overview; workshop signup
Thursday, 1/16: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 1; 2) “Bullet in the Brain”

Week Two
Tuesday, 1/21: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 2; 2) “Magic Words”; 3) “A Fable with Slips of White Paper Spilling from the Pockets”
Thursday, 1/23: Reading: 1) “Fairy Tale is Form, Form is Fairy Tale” by Kate Bernheimer (pdf); 2) “Gardener” (pdf) 3) “St. Lucy’s Home for Girls Raised by Wolves”
Friday, 1/24–Saturday, 1/25: Lions in Winter at Doudna Fine Arts Center

Week Three
Tuesday, 1/28: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 3; 2) “A & P”
Thursday, 1/29: Reading: 1) “This is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona”; 2) On the Rainy River”; 3) “The Appropriation of Cultures”
Thursday 1/30 and Saturday 2/1: Elizabeth Wong Lecture/Workshop

Week Four
Tuesday, 2/4: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 4; 2) “Drinking Coffee Elsewhere”
Evening: Reading by poet Roger Reeves (Time/Place TBA)
Thursday, 2/6: Reading: 1) “Midnight, Licorice, Shadow”; 2) “Hills Like White Elephants” (Charters)

Week Five
Tuesday, 2/11: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 5; 2) “This BlessedHouse”
Thursday, 2/13: DUE: Story I; Reading: 1) “Knives” (pdf); “How to Become a Writer”
Week Six
Tuesday, 2/18: Workshop
Thursday, 2/20: Workshop
   Evening: Reading by Letitia Moffitt at Doudna Lecture Hall

Week Seven
Tuesday, 2/25: Workshop
Thursday, 2/27: Workshop (TBA)

Week Eight
Tuesday, 3/4: Workshop
Thursday, 3/6: Workshop

Week Nine: Spring Break

Week Ten
Tuesday, 3/18: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 6; 2) “Water Liars”
Thursday, 3/20: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 7; 2) “Tandolfo the Great”

Week Eleven
Tuesday, 3/25: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 8; 2) “CivilWarLand in Bad Decline”
Thursday, 3/27: Reading: 1) Kardos Ch. 9; Lit Mag Presentations

Week Twelve
Tuesday, 4/1: Lit Mag Presentations
Thursday, 4/3: DUE: Story II; Lit Mag Presentations
Saturday, 4/5: Lecture by Audrey Petty

Week Thirteen
Tuesday, 4/8: Workshop
Thursday, 4/10: Workshop

Week Fourteen
Tuesday, 4/15: Workshop
Thursday, 4/17: Workshop

Week Fifteen
Tuesday, 4/22: Workshop
Thursday, 4/24: Workshop

Week Sixteen
Tuesday, 4/29: Reading: Kardos Ch. 10
Thursday, 5/1: Lit Mag Presentations

Monday, 5/5: DUE by 3pm: Final Portfolio