ENG 2007-001: Fiction Writing

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English 2007: Fiction Writing

To be a successful writer of stories, you must be a good reader of stories. Anthony Trollope, author of over 40 best sellers, notes: "the first thing a writer must do is read." Part of your work for the class will include reading works by the author you admire most. You will then be presenting a study of that author's craft to the class: plot, characterization, prose style, and narrative form. We will also be studying the craft of selected short stories. From there you will begin shaping your own stories and critiquing others. By the time you complete the workshop, you will have produced a portfolio of either three short stories, three chapters of a novel, or something of equal length.

Course Description & Reading Schedule

Goals of Course Requirements Workshop Critiques Attendance Policy
Requirements Participation
Participation Stories

Professor Gregg A. Hecimovich Office Hours
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Phone: 581-5614 by appointment
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Homepage: www.eiu.edu/~multilit

Texts

- The World According to Garp. John Irving

http://www.eiu.edu/~multilit/english2007-f00/syllabus.htm 8/21/00
Goals. This course has three primary goals. The first goal is to write good fiction. Proceeding from this first goal, the second aim is to understand how good fiction works, the craft that one must practice at the revision stage. Finally, the course should help you improve your reading abilities. To write well you must read well.

Requirements.

- Journal and Musebox / Class Participation 10%
- Author Presentation 10%
- Writing Exercizes / Workshop Critiques 30%
- Fiction Portfolio 50%

Please Note!! You must complete the story portfolio (three stories or chapters), author presentation, and all writing exercises to complete the course. Failure to complete these components represents incomplete work for the semester and any one with incomplete work will not receive a passing grade for the course.

Course Participation. This is not a lecture course. The format of the course and its overall success depend upon your active and informed contributions. Much of the course will be run as a workshop. During these sessions we will be discussing each others work.

Stories. You will write three stories or chapters of about 1200-2500 words, the first two stories or chapters will be distributed for class discussion. These are to be revised in light of our workshop and included with a final story or chapter in your Fiction Portfolio due on the last day of class. Writing exercises may serve "double duty"--i.e., be revised and handed in as stories.

All assignments must be typewritten. Workshop stories and chapters should be SINGLE-SPACED (to save copying expense), and you must provide multiple copies--one for each member of the class. Skip an extra space between paragraphs when single spacing. The final story or chapter will not go into workshop, so it should be DOUBLE SPACED, and no extra copies will be necessary. Your revised Portfolio works should also be double spaced. Omit extra spacing between paragraphs on double-space manuscripts.

WORKSHOP CRITIQUES. You are responsible for providing a page response to each of the stories or chapters we critique in workshop. Peer critiques must be typed and on time for each workshopped story or chapter (single space, due at the beginning of class when that story is up).

Attendance Policy. You need to be in class all the time. I allow up to four absences, whether excused or unexcused. Each absence after that will lower your final grade one full grade (if your calculated final grade is a B, for instance, and you have four absences, you will receive a C for the course).
Seven or more absences will result in a failing grade.

Late Work. Writers live and breath deadlines. The same holds for this class. A late story loses the privilege of being workshopped. It also will be penalized one full grade for each calendar day of lateness.

Students with Disabilities. If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.