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ENG 5025-001: Creative Writing and Professional Development

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English 5025, Creative Writing and Professional Development
Coleman Hall 3159, 4:30 to 5:20, Mondays
Dr. Daiva Markelis/dmmarkelis@eiu.edu/549-8352
Office: Coleman Hall 3375
Office Hours: M 3:00 to 4:00, T/R 11:00 to 12:30, W 5:30 to 7:00
and by appointment

Course Description/Objectives
In this course we’ll examine effective ways of submitting work to literary journals and magazines. We’ll also discuss emerging and established online venues, the use of blogs to showcase work, employment opportunities for writers, and suggestions for applying to graduate programs for further study. This course requires active participation. You’ll be asked to read your work in front of the class—we will work on effective introductions, stage presence, and answering impromptu questions. At the end of the semester, we will have a group reading where members of the class will share their creative work with a wider audience.

Required Textbooks
Bird by Bird by Anne Lamott
The Creative Writer’s Survival Guide by John McNally

Attendance
Attendance is mandatory. Medical absences must be accompanied by appropriate documentation.

Class Participation
You should come to each session armed with observations, evaluations, opinions, questions, and insights, ready to take an active part in the ongoing dialogue about the materials and our various projects. Besides preparation, class participation also means responding constructively, respectfully, and energetically to what others share. This course is about working to create a supportive, non-competitive environment in which you and your colleagues can feel comfortable making and assessing creative artistic choices. Please be respectful to one another, and, on those occasions when you will be asked to provide evaluative commentary, please provide insightful, constructive, and specific feedback, the kind you hope to receive when it is your turn.

Assignments and Grading
1. WORKSHOPPING/SENDING OUT WORK: 40 percent of grade
   Each class member will choose a creative work that has the potential to be published. This can be a short story, creative nonfiction essay, or several poems. Each student will then workshop the piece in class, find five suitable venues for the piece, write appropriate cover letters, and then send the work out. Students will keep a log detailing progress.

2. READING WORK OUT LOUD: 40 percent of grade
   Each class member will work on effective presentation and reading techniques. Students will choose a piece of their own writing to perform and will participate in a public reading of the work.

3. CLASS PARTICIPATION: 20 percent of grade
   This includes having done the required reading on the syllabus.
Syllabus

August 19  Course Introduction
          Setting a Date and Venue for Public Reading

26  Publishing in Journals and Magazines
    Read McNally, pp. 67-72, 79-93, and 247

September 2  Labor Day/No Class

9  Workshop

16  Workshop

23  Workshop
    Also, bring to class 5 possible publication venues:
    magazines, journals, online literary sites, etc.

30  Send out creative piece of your choice
    Dealing with Rejection
    Read Lamott, pp. 116-130

October 7  Blogs, Literary and Otherwise (bring computer, if possible)
          Other Social Media
          Read McNally 152-159

14  Applying to MFA and Ph.D Programs in Creative Writing
    Read Part 2 in John McNally except for pp. 33-37

21  Talking About Your Work

28  The Book Publishing Process; Read McNally, 94-139

November 4  Stage Presence

11  Practice Reading

18  Employment for Writers
    Read all of Part Five in McNally

25  Thanksgiving Break

December 4  The Writer’s Life
            Read all of Part 6 in McNally; read Lamott, 185-221