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ENGL 2100 90
Fall 2014
T/TH 10:00 a.m. -11:20 a.m.

SYLLABUS

- I. ENGL 2100: Introduction to Creative Writing
- II. SEMESTER HOURS: 3
- III. CATALOG DESCRIPTION: An introduction to the forms and techniques of creative writing, with opportunities to write poetry and fiction.
- IV. COURSE DESCRIPTION: Introduction to Creative Writing is designed to stimulate the curiosity, creativity, and the engagement with the world necessary to the art and craft of imaginative writing. As a course focusing on multiple genres, students will receive guidance and gain valuable experience writing short fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction. Grounded in a reading-into-writing pedagogy, they will explore the work of various contemporary (living and working) writers. Students will practice the techniques demonstrated by these writers through the completion of generative exercises and other writing and revision assignments. They will keep a writing journal and, on occasion, share their work with the class to receive constructive feedback and strategies for revision. Throughout the semester, students will have the chance to attend various fiction and poetry reading in the DFW-area as well as embark on field trips to places such as the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Dallas Museum of Art, and the Trinity River Audubon Center. They will also have the opportunity to participate in campus open-mic readings and in the production of a literary magazine or on-line journal that features works produced in the course.
- V. COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: ENGL 2100 will reinforce and supplement the basic language and rhetorical concepts learned in ENGL 1313 and/or 1323 by requiring students to write poetry and prose. Poetry and fiction are unique forms of written communication. Through reading the works of published writers and writing stories and poems of your own, you will develop a heightened awareness of literary language and craft. As with other types of writing, you will learn that decisions about form and content are often the result of careful and intense deliberation. With an increased consciousness of audience, language, and rhetorical effect, you will become not only close and careful readers, but also writers whose creative output reflects clarity, originality, and thought.

You will read both poetry and fiction to identify and understand the connection between reading and writing. By reading critical commentaries written by established writers, you will become familiar with general theories about crafting poems, and stories. Through reading and analyzing the creative work of published writers, you will see theories in practice and learn to identify what makes their writing both successful and unique. When applying what you learn from other writers to the way you write and think, you will work with an increased awareness of conventions specific to each genre. Occasionally, it will be your responsibility to select, with your group members, the poems and fiction we will read and discuss in class. Each group will give two (2) fifteen to twenty minute presentations (one on a poet, one on a fiction writer), encouraging the class to produce creative work written within the context of tradition, while at the same time developing their personal styles and individual voices.

By requiring you to workshop and read/perform your creative work, I hope to enforce the idea that creative writing, like most other forms of writing, is communication and that poems and stories you write for this course are meant to be shared. With the knowledge that you will be sharing your work with the class, it is my hope that you will write poems and stories with regard for an audience and gain confidence from positive feedback from your peers and me. Your poetry and prose manuscripts will be the result of multi-drafting and the writing process, allowing you to see improvement in your work from the beginning to end of the course. As with any writing course, my overall objective is to help you become more confident and competent writers.

- VI. COURSE COMPETENCIES: By the semester's end, students should be able to:

- develop a comprehension and understanding of a wide range of literature.
- think critically and make sound interpretive arguments based on the evidence of a text and solve analytical problems creatively.
- understand the elements of a writer's craft and be able to write well in many forms.
- narrow their focus and energies to produce the most effective work while meeting deadlines and managing their time efficiently.
- understand diverse cultural values reflected in both their own and the creative work of others.
- develop creative problem-solving skills, the ability to experiment and invent.
- develop and hone skills of composition, grammar, and rhetoric.
- make both emotional and rational appeals through language.
- give and receive constructive criticism.
- revise and polish their creative work.

VII. COURSE OVERVIEW AND CONTENT: Because I realize the importance of good writing and that competent writing comes with practice, I require a lot of work both in- and outside of class. I will assign a reading and/or writing assignment every class period upon which you should spend *at least an hour* completing. For ENGL 2100 you will be required to:

- write and revise two (Midterm/Poetry and Final/Fiction) Portfolios.
- keep a Writer's Notebook made up of approximately twenty (20) assigned entries, completed in- and outside of class.
- select both a poet and fiction writer upon whose work your group will develop handouts and deliver oral presentations—two (2) total.
- share work from your Writer's Notebook with the class.
- supply constructive feedback to the work of your classmates.
- attend at least one (1) poetry or fiction reading, open mic, or class outing.
- enthusiastically participate in group work, class discussion and workshops, and complete all other writing assignments and exercises, including the creation of a 'zine/website.

VIII. COURSE MATERIALS:

Texts (required):

1. Addonizio, Kim, and Dorianne Laux. *The Poet's Companion: A Guide to the Pleasures of Writing Poetry*. New York: Norton, 1997.
2. Kardos, Michael. *The Art and Craft of Fiction*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.
3. Additional readings available on Blackboard

Additional Materials (required):

- Daily access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection. If you do not own a computer, be sure to familiarize yourself with the campus computer labs and their hours as soon as possible.
- Access to a reliable printer. You will be required to print out your own work and additional course materials available through Blackboard. Lack of printer ink is not a valid excuse for coming to class unprepared.
- A UNTD email account and course website (Blackboard) access are mandatory. You will need to print hard copies of all assignments and handouts from Blackboard.
- Additionally, please come to every class with the following materials: a pen or pencil, a notebook that will serve as your Writer's Notebook, and a two-pocket folder to amass your Midterm and Final Portfolios. Also, be sure to budget expenses for photocopying your poems and stories to share with your peers and me.

IX. COURSE EVALUATIONS: Your final grade will be determined by the following formula:

Writer's Notebooks (in-class and outside writing)	15%
Participation (workshop, group work, class discussion, readings, outings, open mics, 'zine/website)	15%
Group Poetry Presentation/Handout (15-20 minutes + handout)	15%
Group Short Fiction Presentation/Handout (15-20 minutes + handout)	15%
Midterm Portfolio (5-7 poems + 2-3 pp. reflection essay)	20%
Final Portfolio (1-2 stories <u>totaling 10-15 pp.</u> + 2-3 pp. reflection essay)	20%

MIDTERM AND FINAL PORTFOLIOS AND THE GROUP PRESENTATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED AND TURNED IN AT THE SCHEDULED DUE DATE AND TIME TO RECEIVE A PASSING GRADE FOR THIS COURSE. SHOULD YOU FAIL TO SUBMIT ANY OF THE FOUR (4) MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS ON THE SCHEDULED DUE DATES, YOU WILL NOT PASS THIS COURSE

POINT VALUES:

- A = 90% or better
- B = 80 – 89 %
- C = 70 – 79 %
- D = 60 – 69 %
- F = less than 60%

X. MISSION STATEMENT, MY PHILOSOPHY, AND METHOD OF INSTRUCTION: I teach writing as a recursive and frequently collaborative process of invention, drafting, and revising. Writing is both personal and social, and students should learn how to write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Since writing is a process of making meaning as well as communicating, I respond to the content of students' writing as well as to surface errors. You should expect frequent written and oral responses on the content of your writing from both your peers and me. This class relies on a discussion and workshop format. My instruction emphasizes the connection between writing, reading, and thinking, and you should give thoughtful, reasoned responses to the readings. Reading and writing are often the subjects of class discussions and workshops, and you are expected to be active participants of the classroom community.

Like your classmates, I will serve as a reader and respondent to your writing as well as a facilitator of ideas and classroom discussion. Of course, I will also serve as your evaluator, but my main concern is to help coax out your best writing. Believe me, I'm on your side, and I'm here to assist you with your writing in

every way. I *can't* tell you exactly how to become a great writer or even *what* or *how* to write; it's not something that you can really learn from any person or book. But I *can* tell you what I know about writing from my own writing experiences and what I've learned about writing in graduate school and my years teaching college writing. Good writing can come from almost anyone—it is not a natural gift—but it is usually the result of very hard work. Always give your written work your fullest effort; when it comes to writing, hard work and diligence can often yield unexpected rewards. Remember, your success as a writer in this course is entirely up to you.

Course material will be approached through class and group discussion as well as through in-class and out-of-class writing assignments. In class we will be discussing the assigned readings and the principles of craft. We will also cover the writing process: brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing your creative work. It is important that you keep up with all assigned reading; most written assignments will be based on the poems, stories, and material from the textbooks and handouts.

Extra instruction and counseling: All students are encouraged to seek extra instruction and counseling as needed. I will be available during my office hours and by appointment.

- XI. POLICY ON ABSENCES, TARDINESS, AND LATE WORK: You are expected to be here, on time, for every class meeting. Because this course is rooted in active in-class participation—writing, reading, responding—regular attendance is not only mandatory, it is imperative to your growth as a writer and to your success in ENGL 2100.

If you know in advance that you will arrive late or must leave early, please notify me beforehand. Otherwise, arriving after I close the classroom door and collect the attendance sheet will result in an absence. Should you leave class without notifying me beforehand I will consider you absent.

In this class, four (4) absences are allowed. Students missing five (5) classes or more will be asked to withdraw from the class or receive an "F" or "WF" the course.

Typically, no absences will be excused; however, exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis for students providing official documentation of legitimate reasons for missing class, which include but are strictly limited to the following:

Your illness
Your hospitalization
Death in the family
Religious holidays

All other reasons (car trouble, work, children's appointments, etc.) are NOT valid excuses for missing class. You have four (4) opportunities to miss class without penalty. Use them wisely.

Official documentation for legitimate reasons for missing class must be submitted for my consideration within one week of absence(s). Students involved with university-sanctioned events will not be counted absent on days scheduled by those programs as a service of the university providing they 1) obtain from their advisors in these programs a signed statement on UNTD letterhead noting the scheduled events for the semester 2) turn letters in to me by the end of the second week of classes.

Note: students absent due to university-sanctioned events or other legitimate reasons should not expect to miss an additional four (4) classes without academic penalty. Students who miss six (6) classes or more, excused and unexcused combined, will receive an "F" or "WF" for the course.

Keep in mind that you are responsible for your attendance. It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet to make sure I know that you are here. Should you fail to sign the attendance sheet, you will be considered absent.

If you are absent from class, you are responsible for getting notes, handouts, and all other assignments. The Course Schedule clearly outlines all assignments, classroom activities, and due dates. In-class handouts are available on our Blackboard website. Being absent is no excuse for late work. I do not accept late assignments.

LATE WORK: Please complete all work on time. In fairness to those students who complete their work on time, I DO NOT accept late papers/assignments. Students attempting to submit late work will receive a zero for the assignment. Allow yourself enough reading and writing time to meet deadlines and to do your best work.

Bad Weather Policy: On those days that present severe weather and driving conditions, a decision may be made to close the campus. In case of inclement weather, call UNT Dallas Campuses main voicemail number (972) 780-3600 or search postings on the campus website www.unt.edu/dallas. Students are encouraged to update their Eagle Alert contact information, so they will receive this information automatically.

- XII. CLASSROOM AND EMAIL ETIQUETTE: The use of cell phones, pagers, and laptop computers in this classroom is NOT permitted. Please turn off, not merely set to “silent,” these devices before entering the classroom. Texting in class is strictly prohibited. Should I see a student texting during class time, I will issue one (1) warning. For each subsequent time, I will subtract one-percent (1%) from the student’s participation grade.

Email Etiquette: Because I am frequently out of my office, I prefer that students communicate with me via email. Please use the email function in Blackboard to send me email messages. That way I can immediately identify your class and section number.

I check my email frequently throughout the day; however, I typically do not check it after 9:30 p.m. on weekdays. Although I will usually reply to email right away, please allow up to 24 hours for a response.

I also ask that you keep in mind the proper, respectful, and mature ways of addressing professors about issues concerning your classes. Part of becoming a proficient writer and speaker is developing an understanding of audience, rhetorical situation, and appropriate tone and diction. Because written communication cannot express tone of voice and body language in the way spoken can, email messages can sometimes be misinterpreted by the reader. Therefore, be sure to review your email to ensure appropriate language and tone.

All email messages should include a brief description of their content in the subject line (i.e., “A Question about My Thesis Statement”). They should have a salutation (i.e., Dear Dr. ____). Also be sure to include a closing (i.e., “Sincerely,”) followed by your name.

While I am happy to assist you with your essays (or other course material) through email, please send me specific and detailed questions. I will not edit or grade drafts of your essays. Instead, send the thesis and/or sections of your essay with which you need assistance accompanied by specific questions.

In order to be fair to your classmates and myself, I ask that you limit requests for assistance to one (1) per 24-hour period.

DIVERSITY/TOLERANCE POLICY: Students are encouraged to contribute their perspectives and insights to class discussions. However, offensive & inappropriate language (swearing) and remarks offensive to others of particular nationalities, ethnic groups, sexual preferences, religious groups, genders, or other ascribed statuses will not be tolerated. Disruptions which violate the Code of Student Conduct will be referred to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities as the instructor deems appropriate.

- XIII. PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism is a serious form of academic dishonesty which, in its simplest definition, means taking the ideas or phrases of a published source without giving proper credit (documentation) to that source. In its most blatant form it occurs when students copy all or a

part of their papers from another source or sources—whether books, magazines, websites, or other students' papers—or turn in a paper written partially or entirely by another person. Plagiarism is counterproductive, non-writing behavior that is unacceptable in a course intended to aid the growth of individual writers. More specifically, it includes:

- Unauthorized collaboration and collusion
- Multiple submission of the same paper to fulfill assignments in different courses
- Submitting a paper that was wholly or partly written by someone else, regardless of the relationship
- Submitting a paper that you did not write, but that was obtained from files of other organizations on or off campus
- Submitting a paper obtained from the Internet or other services that supply college papers
- Submitting as your own work a paper or parts of a paper copied or paraphrased from other sources, with the intent to deceive the instructor

Academic integrity is a hallmark of higher education. You are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct and Academic Dishonesty policy. Any person suspected of academic dishonesty (i.e., cheating or plagiarism) will be handled in accordance with the University's policies and procedures. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct at http://www.unt.edu/csr/student_conduct/index.html for complete provisions of this code.

XIV. ADA COMPLIANCE: The University of North Texas Dallas faculty is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students' with documented disabilities are responsible for informing faculty of their needs for reasonable accommodations and providing written authorized documentation. For more information, you may visit the Office of Disability Accommodation/Student Development Office, Suite 115 or call Laura Smith at 972-780-3632.

XV. ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION:

1. MANUSCRIPT FORMAT: All written work should be typed and formatted according to MLA guidelines:
 - Your last name and page number should appear on every page in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top of the page.
 - Your heading should appear in the upper left-hand corner, one inch from the top of the page and should include your first and last name, my name, the course and section number, and the date (in that order).
 - The left, right, and bottom margins should be set a one-inch. Do not justify text/margins.
 - To make text legible for your readers, it should be double-spaced and typed using a standard (Times New Roman, Arial) 10- or 12-point font. Print your work in black ink on white paper. Print on only one side of each page.
 - Please remember to staple your pages together in the upper left-hand corner. No plastic binders, coversheets, title pages, etc.—just the writing. When you turn in an Essay Packet, you will place all materials in a plain, two-pocket folder. Always keep backup copies of your essays (on disk and on paper) for safety's sake.
2. MIDTERM AND FINAL PORTFOLIOS: Because ENGL 2100 is a course which focuses not only on the writing *product* but also emphasizes the entire writing *process*, you will turn in Portfolios (2 total) that must contain the following:

Polished Final Drafts of poems (5-7 total) and stories (1-2 stories totaling 10-15 pages)

- Rough Draft(s)
- All Peer Responses—questions/written responses to your draft from your classmates.
- Reflective Essay (2-3 typed pages)—an essay which reveals the process by which you arrived at the polished poems and stories in your Portfolio. Guidelines for the Reflective Essay can be found on Blackboard.

Evaluation: Portfolios will be graded holistically; I will look at all steps in the writing process when determining your grade. Of course, the greatest factor in determining your grade will be the stories and poems, but that does not mean that I will ignore the other material in your Portfolio, including your workshop responses. I am also interested in seeing some effort and improvement from draft to draft. Basically, I'm looking for work that is thoughtful, coherent, organized, and aware of its audience—writing that has a voice, “that says someone’s home.” I will also be mindful of grammar, spelling, and mechanics but to a lesser degree than form and content. We will discuss grading criteria and what makes a successful Portfolio in further detail in class.

3. WRITER’S NOTEBOOKS: You will be required to keep a journal or writer's "sketchbook" of at least two (often more) pages per week. A standard, college-ruled, spiral notebook will do. Keep in mind that I want you to use this notebook for your imaginative journal only. No calculus notes or shopping lists, etc. I will give you approximately twenty (20) writing assignments drawn from the exercises in our textbooks, the poems and stories from the student presentations, and elsewhere. Essentially, journals will be a place for you to generate writing. Your journals can also contain other raw materials for poems and stories that you write on your own, things such as:

Your poems and stories and/or ideas for them
Other people's poems, words, lines (or just parts of them)
Song lyrics or entries written to music
Sound bytes from radio, television, chat rooms, bits of overheard conversations, etc.
Found words, ideas from books, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, road signs, labels, etc.
General observations and philosophical musings about anything
Images and things that appeal to the five senses (sounds, sights, smells, tastes and feelings you experience, remember, imagine, etc.)
Similes, metaphors, and titles
Dreams, daydreams, nightmares, hallucinations, etc.
Words with spelling, look, sound, or the meaning you like or dislike and homonyms, synonyms, rhyming words, etc.
Sketches, drawings, photographs, etc. (yours and others)
Collage or cut-ups from newspapers and magazines (individual words, phrases, pictures, etc.)

I will check your journal twice during the semester, at midterm and at the end of the course. Nevertheless, please bring your Writer’s Notebook to every class meeting. Time allowing, you will read parts of your journal to your classmates, so be prepared and be sure to write things about which you are confident sharing with others. And keep in mind that journals are primary for *you*. Do your best work; don’t sell yourself short.

4. WORKSHOP: Throughout the semester we will be workshoping your creative work both in small groups and as an entire class. In order to receive credit for this portion of your grade, you must:
- be in class.
 - be prepared with enough copies of your written work for the group. Lack of preparation—coming to class without a sufficient number of copies—will result in a zero for that day’s workshop grade.
 - provide constructive verbal feedback to the work of your peers . No off-topic discussions, working on materials for another class, etc. Keep in mind that Peer

Responses will appear in your group members' Portfolios where I will see them, so do a good job. Moreover, give your peers the time and effort you would like them to spend on your own work.

I will provide further guidelines and instruction on workshop and responding to the work of your peers in upcoming classes.

5. READINGS, OPEN MICS, OUTINGS, 'ZINE: You will have several opportunities this semester—both on- and off campus—to experience live poetry and fiction readings as well as to share your work with an audience. I will post and announce information about these events as they become available. We will have at least one off-campus writing excursion and, time allowing, create a literary magazine (“zine”) or website to showcase your written work.

Writer's Notebooks: Assignment 1 (To be posted to the Blackboard Discussion Board no later than Tuesday, September 2 at 7:00 a.m.)

For our Tuesday, September 2nd class meeting, buy your Writer's Notebooks (along with your required texts) and spend time responding to the following prompts. You should write **at least a full page**. Come to class on Tuesday ready to discuss your response.

- 1) Describe your experience reading and writing poetry. What kind of poems do you write? Who are some of your favorite poets? What qualities do you think make up a successful poem? If you have little or no experience with poetry, which is ok, discuss why?
- 2) Choose one poem that feel reflects qualities that you believe make for a successful poem. Copy the text of this poem to your post and discuss its merits. Come to class prepared to share your post.