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Creative Writing I

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CREATIVE WRITING SYLLABUS
SPRING 2019

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number: ENGLISH 2307.S01

Course Title: Creative Writing

Course Credit Hours:

Lecture Hours: 3

Lab Hours: 0

Placement Assessments: None

Prerequisite: English 1302.

Credit hours: 3 **You may take the course as completion only.**

Catalog Description: Practical experience in the techniques of imaginative writing. In this course, emphasis will be on the writing of fiction or non-fiction. Each student will study selected literary works to improve critical reading toward the goal of improving creative writing. This course does not satisfy the college requirements for a sophomore literature course.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of individual and collaborative writing processes.
2. Develop ideas with appropriate support and attribution.
3. Write in a style appropriate to audience and purpose.
4. Read, reflect, and respond critically to a variety of texts.
5. Use Edited American English in creative writing.

Withdrawal Policy: 6.24 Repeating Courses

Grades of all courses taken will be recorded on the student's transcript. The highest grade earned will be used in computing the grade point average and applied toward degree or program requirements.

When a course is repeated:

1. Only one (1) course/grade will be counted in a student's GPA.
2. The highest grade will be used in GPA calculations.

Courses that were repeated before fall 2008 will have only the last grade and credits (whether higher or lower) earned used in computing the grade point average and applied toward degree or program requirements.

Veterans should consult the Director of Financial Aid/Veterans Affairs before repeating any course. Students planning to transfer to another college or university should check with a Collin College academic planning consultant (advisor) or with receiving institutions for their repeat policies. See the Registration Guide for details on specific courses.

Student Handbook, p. 69

Collin College Academic Policies: See the current Collin Student Handbook

D = 197-272

F = 196 or below

NOTE: Your **two original (closely edited) stories** must be based on exercises after I have given you feedback on them. You will revise the draft of the first story after it has been workshopped. That is referred to as the revised first story.

The second story is not workshopped and is turned in the last day of the semester.

Exercises:

- Each exercise will count 10 points.
- Your final grade for the exercises (100) is based on your completing each exercise **on time and with commitment**—write with energy and imagination. In other words, write with your brain and heart engaged.
- **TO RECEIVE 10 POINTS for the exercises, YOU MUST TURN IN YOUR TYPED ASSIGNMENTS IN CANVAS BY THE DUE DATE.**
- **Do not e-mail your exercises to me.**
- **EACH EXERCISE SHOULD REFLECT AT LEAST 30 MINUTES OF WRITING TIME. The idea is to write (TYPE) without stopping for 30 minutes (or more, if you find the story developing well) so that you allow the story, or part thereof, to flow.**
- Stay in the action and keep writing as long as you can push yourself—I repeat, at least 30 minutes; don't worry about writing a "story";
- just write explicit detail (brushing teeth, picking at fingernails, buttoning a button) without thinking too much about **what** you write—no plot for this kind of writing.
- Have two people interacting right away. In the interaction, discover **what happens next** by watching and listening to your characters.
- Don't worry about an ending.
- It would be a good idea to complete the first reading assignment before you do your first writing assignment.
- Use sensory language, concrete nouns, and strong verbs. The adjectives are lively and create images.
- Have your character experience some emotion—start with an idea in mind. For example, anger, regret, hopefulness, confusion, etc.

POLICY ON CELL PHONES: Place your phone in airplane mode when class starts. Please speak to me before class if you expect an emergency text for which you must leave your phone on. No phone use in class (unless I make an assignment using the phone).

POLICY ON COMPUTER USE: Banned unless you choose to use your laptop when I assign an in-class journal entry or another in-class assigned writing. Do not take notes on your computer. As you know, it is too easy to become absorbed in computer activity. The class discussion presents the only "text" on how to write that I assign. Notice that the texts offer readings—the best way to better your writing.

Here's the college policy:

Electronic Devices Policy Section 7-2.4, item S, of the Collin Student Handbook provides that **Collin College may initiate disciplinary proceedings for student violations, including, but not limited to, a student who engages in the use of media or telecommunication devices during class,** Collin College labs, and/or other learning environments. In addition, all media and telecommunication devices must be completely turned off (not on silent or vibrate) while taking examinations.

REPEAT: I DO NOT ALLOW USE OF COMPUTERS or PHONES DURING CLASS UNLESS YOU ARE VIEWING RESERVE MATERIAL OR TYPING AN IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT.

PLEASE SHOW RESPECT TO OTHER STUDENTS AND TO THE PROFESSOR AT ALL TIMES. That means you should not leave for a bathroom break minutes after class begins (unless there is an emergency).

CRITERIA FOR YOUR TWO ORIGINAL STORIES

KEEP ALL OF YOUR DRAFTS. AS YOU REVISE, SAVE YOUR DRAFTS IN SEPARATE FILES. THEN IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF YOUR STORY, YOU CAN SHOW ME ITS DEVELOPMENT. A PERFECT STORY RARELY HAPPENS IN THE FIRST DRAFT. IF YOUR STORY IS SO GOOD AS TO LOOK PROFESSIONAL, I WILL ASK TO SEE YOUR PROCESS. AT THAT TIME YOU CAN PRINT OUT YOUR SAVED DRAFTS FROM YOUR FILES. AND YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY SEND OFF THAT STORY TO A PUBLISHER since it is exceptional.

Criteria for story #1: REQUIRED:

The first story (the submission of your revised draft of one of the exercises) is due on Canvas on the due date. Then it will be scheduled for workshop. After you get feedback from the professor and from the other students, you will revise the story for submission on the later due date. All submissions should follow accepted manuscript style according to the style in the **Begin Here module.** Your final grade of the **revision** considers content and inclusion of the elements of fiction that I teach throughout the semester. Just as in your English 1301 class, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics figure in your grade. Remember, in order to get published, a writer must follow those rules. I will look for character development, consistency of point of view, and consistency of tone. Use exquisite detail and avoid clichés, adjectives, and adverbs. If “telling,” bring the story to life with sensory details—nouns and active verbs. In other words, the rules that apply to writing essays for English 1301 and 1302 apply here. Be sure to ground your character in a place and time, and restrict the amount of time that passes in the story to one day (unless you are VERY good and understand fully the way short stories work). **THE STORY MUST ORIGINATE IN ONE OF THE WRITING EXERCISES THAT YOU HAVE TURNED IN.** YOU SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED MY FEEDBACK ON THE EXERCISE THAT YOU CHOOSE.

Criteria for original story #2: Your second story (NO DRAFT WILL HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED) should be written after you have studied a short-story author of your choice. This story is NOT workshoped. All writers have been influenced by whom they have read; you will choose your author as one whose style comes close to the level you hope to achieve in your own writing. After reading three or four stories by that author, choose one to study in detail, noting sentence structure, character development, syntax, story development, point of view, span of time, place, and so forth—all that we have covered in the course. The best way to accomplish this microscopic reading is to retype the story word-for-word. **SEE THE COURSE SCHEDULE FOR THE DUE DATES OF:**

- 1. THE REVISED DRAFT of the first original story**
- 2. THE SECOND ORIGINAL STORY.**

In effect, this writer is your teacher. Once you have explored the writing in depth, put that author's stories away and rework one of the assigned exercises from *What If* or classroom exercises into a story. Once you have refined your story, look again at the work of your chosen "teacher" author. Compare that complete story with yours. That is, look to see how your elements of fiction lack the depth provided by the original author. Look to see if your detail matches the other's for intensity and clarity. And so forth.

The final manuscript submission should follow the requisites for the first story. Use the model manuscript form (Important Information module). **I will not grade your carefully edited two stories unless they follow the manuscript style [model provided].**

It is the policy of Collin County Community College to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This college will adhere to all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty member and/or the Services for Students with Disabilities at 972-881-5950 in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Scholastic Dishonesty Statement
(based on revisions to the Student Handbook approved by Collin's Board of Trustees, November 2004)

Scholastic Dishonesty

The College may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree and/or the submission as one's own work material that is not one's own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher's editions, and/or falsifying academic records.

Plagiarism is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were one's own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.

Cheating is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination, illicitly obtaining examination questions in advance, copying computer or Internet files, using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own, or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.

Collusion is intentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to providing a paper or project to another student, providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate during an examination; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site, and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

Academic Ethics described in the Student Handbook:

7-2.3 Scholastic Dishonesty

Every member of the Collin College community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Collin College may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work material that is not one's own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher's editions, use of information about exams posted on the Internet or electronic medium, and/or falsifying academic records. While specific examples are listed below, this is not an exhaustive list and scholastic dishonesty may encompass other conduct, including any conduct through electronic or computerized means:

- Plagiarism is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were one's own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.
- Cheating is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination; collaborating with another student during an examination without authority; using, buying, selling, soliciting, stealing, or otherwise obtaining course assignments and/or examination questions in advance; copying computer or Internet files; using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own; or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.
- Collusion is intentionally or unintentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, failing to secure academic work; providing a paper or project to another student; providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate about an examination or any other course assignment; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site, and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

In cases where an incident report has been filed for alleged violation of scholastic dishonesty, faculty are requested to delay posting a grade for the academic work in question until the Dean of Student's Office renders an administrative decision of the case. Students found responsible for scholastic dishonesty offenses will receive an authorized disciplinary penalty from the Dean of Students Office. The student may also receive an academic penalty in the course where the scholastic dishonesty took place. The professor will determine the appropriate academic penalty [which can mean that you receive a 0 for the project or paper under review and an F in the course] You are responsible for knowing, understanding, and adhering to the policies regarding academic ethics and scholastic dishonesty described in the above passage from the Collin Student Handbook.

COURSE CALENDAR AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Following is only an overview of the semester assignments. The assignments appear, along with other important information, in weekly modules (the dates for the week help you remember the current week. The calendar gives you the date). Your due dates are all entered in the calendar.

Each week you are expected to open the weekly module in Canvas to get details of your assignments and important information. **You are responsible for all that is contained in each module.**

Week

CLASS DISCUSSION AND ASSIGNMENTS

All writing assignments should be completed and submitted in Canvas by 11:30 p.m. on the due date (see calendar).

Week 1
1/22

See Canvas for Module 1 assignments.
Introduction.

Reading Assignment complete by the beginning of class on Thursday:
Introductions in *Crafting* and in *What If*.

Writing Assignment: Writing assignment Ex. #7 in *What If (WI)* due at beginning of class on Thursday (A HARD COPY--NOT TO BE SUBMITTED IN CANVAS. WE WILL GO OVER THIS ONE STORY IN CLASS--the rest of the submissions will be in Canvas).

Lecture: assigned readings and the writing process.

Week 2
1/29

See Canvas for Module 2 assignments.
Lecture: Beginning.

Journal: In-class writing exercise using poetry from a poetry book of your choosing (bring a book of poetry to class).

Reading Assignment: Read Tobias Wolff "Powder" p. 430 and Nadine Gordimer "Is There Nowhere Else Where We Can Meet?" p. 129. Read before class.

Writing Assignment: Exercise 6, p. 23 in *WI*. Submit in Canvas before 11:30 pm. on Thursday. See Module Two for details.

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Week 3
2/5

See Canvas for Module 3 assignments.
On Tuesday bring a small object about which you can tell a compelling story, true or not.
Lecture: Development; Showing and Telling

Writing Exercise #5, p. 20, *WI* due Thursday in Canvas by 11:30 pm.

Thurs: Discussion of the following readings:
Crafting Villiers de L'Isle-Adam pp. 390-393; Jonis Agee pp. 1-3, Raymond Carver pp. 56-61.
See extra credit possibility in Module Three.

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK. See Module Four - This is a two-part assignment, so allow successive days of writing time to complete it. SEE MODULE FOUR FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.

Week 4 **See Canvas for Module 4 assignments.**

2/12 **Tues: Discussion of Character.** Workshop of Writing Assignment ([see assignment above](#))
Thurs: Discussion of following Readings:
Alice Walker, pp. 402-407; Eudora Welty, pp. 409-416;
Helena Vivien Veramontes pp. 394-398 in *Crafting*.

Week 5 **See Canvas for Module 5 assignments.**

2/19 **Tues. Conflict, action and narrative, and plot comparison.**
On Tues, **bring a library book of photographs.** Exercise using photographs (in class).

Writing Assignments: Writing Exercise #36 due Thurs. in Canvas by 11:30 pm.

Read *Crafting* Sadat Hasan Manto, pp. 220-222; Dorothy West, pp. 417-420; "The Prodigal Son," pp. 204-205; Shirley Jackson, pp. 160-168. Also read about Plot in *WI* pp. 111-113.

First workshop participants: submit your story in the Discussion Board (type the number of the exercise on which the story is based at the end of the story). You should post your story in Canvas using the Discussion board (you need only click the submit button). Look ahead to Module Six for help in refining your story for the workshop.

Week 6 **See Canvas for Module 6 assignments.**

2/26 **Lecture: Interior Landscape of Your Characters.**
Writing Assignment: Exercise #32, pp. 96-98 in *WI*. Use this exercise to flesh out your story or enhance your character. See Module Six for details of assignment.

Read: *Crafting*, Ann Beattie, pp. 25-29; Julio Cortazar, pp. 82-83.

STORY DUE FROM REMAINING MEMBERS OF THE CLASS.

Pages 197-212 in *WI* will help you refine your story. See Module Six for assignment.

Thurs: Workshop #1

Week 7
3/5

See Canvas for Module 7 assignments.

Lecture: Showing and Telling.

Read *What If* "Sheep" p. 363-376 for discussion. Exercise #53 in class (if time).

Writing Assignment #24, pp 69-70 in *WI* due Thurs. in Canvas, no later than 11:30 p.m. See Module Seven for assignment.

Thurs: WORKSHOP #2.

SPRING BREAK

Week 8
3/19

See Canvas for Module 8 assignments.

Lecture: Style and Language.

Read: *Crafting* Italo Calvino pp. 51-53; Jorge Luis Borges pp. 34-37; Monica Ware, p. 408; Voltaire, pp. 399-401.

Writing Exercise due in Canvas on Thurs. before 11:30 pm:

#52, p. 141. This work lets you know how strong your own work can be if you use the right words [notice that I just used one-syllable words].

Thurs: WORKSHOP #3.

JOURNAL WILL BE DUE WEEK 12. Bind your individual entries in an attractive folder. Make it look appealing.

Week 9
3/26

See Canvas for Module 9 assignments.

Lecture: Dialogue.

Read for discussion: *Crafting* Tennessee Williams, pp. 422-425; *WI* pp. 73-83 on dialogue.

Writing Exercise due in Canvas on Thurs: #29, p. 84 in *WI*.

Thurs: WORKSHOP #4.

Week 10
4/2

See Canvas for Module 10 assignments.

Lecture: Invention and Transformation.

Read for discussion *WI* pp, 169-183. *Crafting* Edwidge Danticat pp. 88-91;
John Dos Passos, pp. 99-101.

Writing Exercise due in Canvas **Thur.**, p. 179. Read the student example.

Thurs. WORKSHOP #5.

TYPED STORY BY YOUR CHOSEN AUTHOR WILL BE DUE next week in Canvas.

Week 11
4/9

See Canvas for Module 11 assignments.

Lecture: Point of View.

Read: Pam Houston, p. 340-343 in *WI*; Ursula K. Le Guin, pp. 189-201 in
Crafting.

Writing Assignment due in Canvas Thur: (Exercise handout
to be turned into Canvas).

Typed story due.

Thurs: Workshop #6

Week 12
4/16

See Canvas for Module 12 assignments.

Workshop #7

Lecture: Revision.

Read *WI* on revision, pp. 197-212.

Review Exercise #85 in *WI*.

Handout on how to revise.

Writing Assignment due in Canvas on Thur: Exercise #89, p.
229-231 in *WI*.

**Thurs. Flash Fiction. Read *WI* pp. 273-286 Prepare to discuss the
story you like the best. Why?**

Journal Due

Week 13
4/23

See Canvas for Module 13 assignments.

Tues. Discussion of Revision

Week 14
4/30

See Canvas for Module 14 assignments.

Tues. Presentation on Author

Thurs: Presentation continued

**Submission of revised first (workshopped) story due in Canvas
no later than 11:30 pm on Thursday.**

Week 15
5/7

See Canvas for Module 15 assignments.

Tues. Read second story - first group (this story is not workshopped

Thurs: Read second story - second group