

English 2307 - Intro to Creative Writing

(Spring 2018)

Instructor: Caleb N Humphreys

Office: Reese, Building 3, #318A

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday: 12:15-1, Tuesday: 6-7pm, Friday: 12-2

* If you cannot meet at one of the above times, simply schedule an appointment.

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*Email is the best way to contact me.

Catalog Description

This course provides practical experience in the techniques of imaginative writing and may include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama or other genres.

Purpose

The late writing scholar Donald Murray explains that we write “to learn, to describe, and therefore to see, to entertain, to inform, to persuade, to celebrate, to attack, to call attention, to think, to make money, to promote, to advocate, to connect, to relate, to make, to share. But always behind each writing purpose is the secret excitement of discovery: the word, the line, the sentence, the page that achieves its own life and its own meaning.” In this course, we will explore the reasons why writers write and how/why we respond to the written word. Through critical reading and writing, discussion, peer review, and classroom exercises, students will develop the skills necessary to express their ideas across a variety of genres.

Office Hours

I have scheduled regular office hours, and I’m also available by appointment. Utilizing my office hours is the most effective way for me to give you individual attention and get to know you better. In general, it is best to come early in the semester, especially if you have any particular questions or concerns about your success in the class. As a courtesy and for your convenience, please let me know if you are planning on coming to my office hours.

Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

- Have a greater understanding of creative processes.
- Explore the nature of creativity itself and complimentary processes of structuring, editing and presenting work in a variety of genres.
- Learn of the principle elements of narrative.

- Fashion vibrant, individual writing styles.
- Grow to see themselves as writers as evidenced by a final Writing Portfolio.

Grading of Course Work

Attendance and Participation	15%
Workshop Submissions	30%
Workshop Feedback (both verbal and written)	30%
Final Portfolio	15%
Reading Responses	10%

Grading Policies

As this is an introduction to creative writing, I will not evaluate your work on the quality of your craft. Instead, your submissions will be evaluated based on the following criterion:

- Originality and style
- Effort
- Content and completeness
- Conventions (Does the piece adhere to the assignment, if applicable?)

Writing Assignments

There will be several different writing assignments. Sometimes I will assign reading response questions, writing prompts or exercises, and/or mini-essays for you complete at home and turn in before class. Some creative writing prompts or exercises may turn into creative pieces that you submit to workshop, so take them seriously but feel free to experiment!

Late Work Policy

I do not accept late work. This class is writing intensive, but you should enjoy it. I will do my best not to overwhelm you with assignments, but coming to class unprepared is detrimental to yourself and to your classmates.

Late workshop submissions will not be accepted. Failure to submit a workshop piece is both disrespectful to your peers and rather lazy. This will result in a reduction of a letter grade.

Workshops

This class is a safe environment founded on respect for all. Workshopping is an opportunity to form a writing community with your peers. It is important to remember that workshop is a critique craft and not a critique of any individual. **I understand that having your pieces workshopped for the first time can create anxiety and I encourage you to come speak with me individually about any concerns you have about this important and incredibly rewarding part of the course.**

We will go over workshop specific rules and guidelines before we hold our first workshop.

Final Portfolio

Your final portfolio is a compilation of your work for the semester and will be turned in at the beginning of class on the scheduled final exam date. Components:

- **All of your creative work for the semester**, including free writing, writing prompts, workshop submissions, and even in-class assignments.
- One thoroughly, meaningfully revised short story.
- Two thoroughly, meaningfully revised poems.
- One new story or essay inspired by one of the writing prompts or assignments.
- A one-page letter of reflection.

The portfolio should be presented in a professional, self-respecting fashion, and not just as sheets of paper stapled together. You can get creative with the presentation if you want to, but something simple and well-organized will suffice.

Attendance and Participation

The successfulness of this class depends on you, your presence, and your voice. As with any workshop-driven course, the goal is to create a community of writers. Attendance is mandatory, then. This comes from a desire to make this class a cooperative learning experience and form a true community. You will be called upon to enter discussion, contribute your ideas, share your writing (both revised and informal), and otherwise join in class activities. **Simply speaking once per class will not ensure a perfect participation grade—only students who consistently provide thoughtful and insightful critical analysis of the reading and their peers' work will receive such a grade.** Learning in this class results from being present; there are no make-up assignments for missed participation.

That said, I understand that sometimes life gets in the way. Therefore, you may miss up to four (4) classes. **Do NOT miss your scheduled workshop dates.** Failure to attend class when your piece is being workshopped will drop the submission by a letter grade.

The student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive. Any student who misses more than four (4) class sessions could be dropped from the course. An absence is defined as failing to attend class or leaving class without the instructor's approval. If you are unprepared for class, you may be asked to leave and will be given an absence. Furthermore, a student will be counted as absent for every two tardies.

Academic Integrity

The guidelines set forth in the South Plains College catalog will be followed. From the catalog:

Cheating: Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of

another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating. Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.

Plagiarism: Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is another word for academic dishonesty and is a form of theft. All of the writing and the ideas in your writing (e.g., journals) must be your own. Any attempt to pass off the work of someone else as your own will result in an F for the course.

Failure to comply with this policy **will** result in a '0' (no credit) for the assignment and can result in an "F" for the course if circumstances warrant. Please note that essays cannot be "recycled" – reusing previous essays that you have written is still a form of academic dishonesty. All writing in this class must be new and original.

Blackboard, Internet Access, and Word Processors

Blackboard is the website host for our class, where you are able to view and access homework, view and print out class *PowerPoint* lessons, check your grades, view the syllabus, and utilize additional links. You will need internet access and a word processor to complete your homework assignments. If you do not have a computer or reliable internet access, you will need to plan time into your weekly schedule to use the SPC computer labs on the Levelland, Reese, or ATC campuses or find a computer with reliable, fast internet access and a word processor that you can use on a regular basis. Access our Blackboard course from the SPC homepage: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/> or at:

<https://southplainscollege.blackboard.com.>

Frequently, you will need to view *PowerPoint* presentations and *Microsoft Word* files, as found under the *Course Content* tab. In order to fully participate in the course, you will need access to *Microsoft Office*. SPC provides *Office 365* for free for all students. You can download the programs here:

https://myspc.southplainscollege.edu/ICS/Students/Information_Technology/Computer_and_Software_Purchases.jnz?portlet=Microsoft_Office365.

Cell Phones and Technology

- Please do not use your cell phones during class except in the event of an emergency (talk with me about it first). Put your phone on silent, and do **NOT** text message during class. If you are expecting an important call or emergency call, quietly step outside in order to avoid disturbing your fellow students.

- As most of our readings will be in the electronic form, you may bring and use your personal laptops and tablets. However, if you are caught using them for anything other than our course, you will not be allowed this privilege.

Classroom Etiquette

Since you are college students, you are expected to conduct yourselves professionally:

1. Be respectful.
2. Bring all necessary materials (textbooks, notebook, writing utensil, etc.) to each class.
3. **Come to class prepared.**

Note to Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland Student Health & Wellness Center 806-716-2577, Reese Center (also covers ATC) Building 8: 806-716-4675, Plainview Center Main Office: 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611, or the Health and Wellness main number at 806-716-2529.

Diversity Statement

In this class, I will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

As your instructor, I do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or veteran status. You can find SPC's Non-Discrimination Policy Statement online.

*I reserve the right to make changes in course policy at any time.