ENGLISH 2060: Creative Writing

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Office Hours: M/W 9:00-10:00; T/Th 9:00-11:00, 12:30-2:00 (other days/times by appointment)
Faculty Page: http://www.westga.edu/english/show_bio.php?emp_id=23583

COURSE DESCRIPTION


This course is designed to introduce you talking about literature from a craft perspective: that is, to look at writing as a fine art and discover how authors make it—how you yourself make it. Unlike a traditional classroom, we’re only interested in what the reading means as part of discussing how authors create the meaning in text. As a student in the class, you’ll analyze your own work and the work of others for its craft: what and does and does not work well yet. Throughout the semester, you’ll practice reading your work out loud to groups of people; at the end of the semester, you’ll workshop your own writing in class and respond formally and informally to other students’ writing.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes: http://www.westga.edu/english/index_330.php

COURSE MATERIALS, ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Materials

The Triggering Town by Richard Hugo (ISBN 978-0393338720)  
Writing Poetry: Creative and Critical Approaches by Chad Davidson and Greg Fraser (ISBN 978-0230008120)  
Other readings available via CourseDen/D2L

Assignments

- Professionalism: Skills Workshops and Class Participation (20%)  
Students will come to class having read the material as well as prepared questions and comments for the group. The majority of class will be discussion and (surprise!) writing, so prepare accordingly. You may not sit in class like a stump; unpreparedness will result in a quiz. We will spend a good deal of time on lessons designed to specific various common problems in the craft of creative writing. These workshops are calisthenics, rigorous exercises designed to target specific competencies that every creative writer needs, regardless of genre. You are expected to be present for these workshops as well as to visibly participate in them.

Since we do not have a “quizzes” or “homework” category, each failed quiz (earning less than 70%) or failed writing assignment will result in a deduction of 5 points from the final
professionalism grade. Missing quizzes or assignments apply in the same manner, and there are no opportunities for “make up” work. If a student is obviously disengaged (texting, studying for another class, napping, refusing to participate, etc.), the same 5-point deduction rule applies. If you show up to class regularly, keep up with the reading, engage in the course discussions, and apply yourself seriously to your work, these are points that are here for the taking.

- Writers’ Workshops (20%)
  We will workshop original creative work. You will be expected to submit work for review, and you will be expected to comment constructively and thoughtfully, in accordance with principles we’ve examined, on your peers’ work. Your workshop participation grade will depend on your useful criticism of peers’ work in class and in written form.

- Journals (30%)
  I recommend a sturdy, hardback, bound journal for carrying around. We will do a good deal of in-class writing (calisthenics), which you will write in the journal. You will later be expected to take ALL of that, in addition to assigned weekly journal exercises (see CourseDen), type them up, proofread them, and add/revise as you see fit in accordance with what we’ve learned since you first wrote it. You must have them all neatly organized, ordered and labeled. These “Finalized Journals” will be due three times throughout the semester.

- Portfolio (30%)
  Your final portfolio will include the following items: 1) a table of contents; 2) a 3-5 page critical preface (including a statement of your aesthetics, either implicitly or explicitly and discussion of techniques) in strict MLA format; 3) five examples from the class of seriously-revised writing (the revision should appear before the original). Please see CourseDen for more details.

Grade Chart: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; Below 60 = F (Not turned in = 0)

POLICIES

Expectations

Imagine me as your manager for this course. When you are hired, the manager has high expectations for your abilities as well as your professionalism; each time you disappoint your manager, his opinion of your professionalism goes down. As your manager, I expect you to:

- Display a working knowledge of the syllabus
- Attend all classes, arriving on time with relevant materials in hand
- Participate fully and respectfully in class discussions
- Remain attentive and engaged throughout the class period
- Avoid repeating mistakes addressed in feedback
- Submit quality work, complete and on time
- Communicate promptly with me about any concerns

Ultimately, your success depends on how much time, energy, and effort you are willing to put into the class. I am only in control over one hundred percent of my own effort, but I promise you will always receive my full effort. I hope to see the same level of dedication in you. I want to help you make the grade you desire; I promise that you will receive the grade you earn.
Submitting Assignments

All assignments must be submitted through TurnItIn (www.turnitin.com). There are no waivers for computer, program or user errors. There are no make-up opportunities for missed in-class work.

Formatting

Although assignments will be submitted and receive comments online, they should still be properly formatted in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1” top and bottom margins and 1” right and left margins. While we can let go of some of the MLA format constraints with poetry and fiction, keep in mind that decorative fonts and odd formatting distract the reader.

Recycled Work

This is a class about generating new work. Do not submit work that you completed before the class began meeting; do not submit work that you completed for any other class or professor. The plagiarism policy applies.

Improvements

All organizational, stylistic and grammatical considerations we discuss over the course of the semester should be reflected in your writing. Gradual improvement is a necessity. Grading of the last journals and portfolios will take into consideration the overall clarity and correctness of your work. Errors you make early in the semester should not appear in the final portfolio.

Office Hours

I encourage you to visit me during my office hours (or to make an appointment if you cannot make my regular times). Please feel free to come by to say hello, to introduce yourself, to ask questions about the readings, or to discuss any element of your writing and research (at any stage of the process). See me the same day you begin to have a question or concern. Please do not wait until the day before an assignment is due to seek assistance—give yourself time to think and write, and ask questions early and often.

Attendance

Regular participation in this class is vital to its success. You are expected to attend every class session regularly. What we cover in class is what you need to know. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to contact another student for an explanation of what was covered. I offer you 4 absences to do with as you like—use them wisely for the inevitable "stuff" that will mess up your semester: illness, traffic, death in the family, etc. If you miss 5 classes for whatever reason, you will not pass this class. Two late arrivals count as one absence, and leaving early applies in the same manner. No distinction exists between excused and unexcused absences, and assignments are still due on the day assigned.

Disruptive Behavior and Electronic Devices

Students will be dismissed from any class meeting at which they exhibit behavior that disrupts the learning environment of others. Such behavior includes—but is not limited to—arriving late for class, allowing cell phones to ring, speaking disrespectfully to the instructor and/or to other students, checking
email or surfing the web, and using personal audio or video devices. Laptops and tablets may be used for class-related work only; use for other purposes will result in your dismissal from class. Each dismissal of this kind will count as an absence and will be applied toward the attendance policy. Sleeping—for a minute or an hour—counts as an absence. For the sake of transparency, my biggest pet peeves are off-task electronic usage and class disruption.

Email Policy

The official communication method for this class occurs through campus email or CourseDen. You remain responsible for regularly checking both UWG Email and CourseDen. In order to guarantee your privacy, I do not respond in detail to emails sent from alternate email providers. Additionally, please understand that even my life is sometimes hectic, and allow me at least twenty-four hours to respond to any attempts at communication. If for some reason you do not hear from me within twenty-four hours, assume the technology has failed and try again. I want to help and will always respond.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

The university considers plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty to be a serious breach of academic ethics. Section 207 of the University of West Georgia Faculty Handbook, which defines plagiarism as “Improper academic conduct…the purchase and use of ghost-written papers and reports, or incorporating into a report, term theme, research paper, or project, ideas and information obtained from another person without giving credit to the person from whom such information was obtained.”

Excessive Collaboration: By the end of the term in both ENGL 1101 and 1102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce independent writing (writing without collaborative assistance of peers, writing tutors, or professionals in the field) that shows an acceptable level of competence. Although classroom activities and out-of-class assignments may highlight collaborative learning and collaborative research, excessive collaboration (collaboration that results in the loss of a student’s voice/style and original claims to course related work) is considered another form of academic dishonesty and therefore will not be permitted.

Each incidence of plagiarism is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of penalties including but not limited to failing the assignment, failing the course, and referral to the disciplinary review board (which may ultimately result in the expulsion, suspension, or disciplinary removal of the student from the university). In order to facilitate the prevention and detection of plagiarism the Department of English and the University of West Georgia will maintain records of plagiarized assignments and those who prepare and/or submit them.

I have a no-tolerance plagiarism policy. If plagiarism occurs, the student receives an automatic F for the course. In short, please do not plagiarize. If you are struggling with time constraints for any reason, see me before making a poor decision like plagiarizing. For further information: http://www.westga.edu/~engdept/Plagiarism/index.html

University of West Georgia Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not
maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student’s conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student’s account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions.

**Students with Special Needs/Disability Pledge**

Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given.

Any student who has a special need should inform me during the first week of class. We will then set up a conference to discuss the specifics of the official paperwork from Accessibility Services. Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. For more information, please contact Accessibility Services at the University of West Georgia: [http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index_8884.php](http://www.westga.edu/studentDev/index_8884.php)

**Departmental Policy on Severe Weather**

The University of West Georgia is committed to the personal safety of its students, faculty, and staff in the event of severe weather. University policy regarding severe weather and emergency closings is posted at [http://www.westga.edu/police/index_2277.php](http://www.westga.edu/police/index_2277.php) and official announcements about class and/or examination cancellations will be made only by the President and/or the Department of Public Relations. Although it is not possible to develop policy to address every weather-related emergency, these guidelines are intended to provide some general direction about such situations. For immediate severe weather situations, especially when classes are in session, faculty, staff and students are advised to follow the emergency procedures identified below:

1. Direct occupants to remain in the building and to seek shelter immediately on the lowest level of the building in interior rooms (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
2. Instruct occupants to not leave the building.
3. Evacuate all offices, rooms or hallways with windows and glass or with exterior walls.
4. Provide assistance to persons with disabilities.
5. Accompany occupants to the nearest designated shelter area in the building.
6. Comply with departmental severe weather policies/procedures.
7. Wait for an “all clear” signal before resuming activity.
8. Occupants will: a) proceed to the nearest designated shelter area in the building by the closest route; b) move quickly but in an orderly manner so that all will arrive safely; c) will not attempt to vacate the premises, drive or seek shelter in cars; d) take a seat in the shelter area; e) remain cooperative with those in charge; and f) wait for an “all clear” signal before resuming activity.

In the event that classes are cancelled or disrupted for less than one calendar week, each professor, at his or her discretion, will make adjustments as needed to cover material missed during those cancelled sessions. This may or may not involve the use of rescheduled or online classes. If the closures exceed a single calendar week, students should contact the Chair of the Department of English and Philosophy at 678-839-6512 or the professor of the class for updated information regarding changes to the schedule in the Department. It is the intention of the Department of English and Philosophy to handle every concern seriously and as effectively as possible.
Fall 2014 Reading and Assignments Schedule

All assignments are due before class on the day they appear.

WEEK 1:
• Monday 8/25: Introduction
• Wednesday 8/27: Opening the toolbox; how to begin; description and specificity intro; adding the unexpected

WEEK 2:
• Monday 9/1: NO CLASS.
• Wednesday 9/3: Read The Triggering Town – “Introduction” and “Writing off the Subject”

WEEK 3:
• Monday 9/8: Making Shapely Fiction – Accuracy, Atmosphere, Description, Imagery, Imagination, Immediacy, Metaphor and Simile, Mise-en-scene, Names, Places and Place Names, Texture, Trust Your Material
• Wednesday 9/10: Online Readings

WEEK 4:
• Monday 9/15: Writing Poetry – Chapter 1
• Wednesday 9/17: Online Readings (To be announced)

WEEK 5:
• Monday 9/22: The Triggering Town – “The Triggering Town” and “Assumptions” JOURNAL #1 DUE
• Wednesday 9/24: Online Readings (To be announced)

WEEK 6:
• Monday 9/29: Making Shapely Fiction – Character, Dialect, Dialogue, Interior Monologue, Motif, Showing and Telling, Stream of Consciousness
• Wednesday 10/1: Online Readings (To be announced)

WEEK 7:
• Monday 10/6: Writing Poetry – Chapters 2-3
• Wednesday 10/8: Online Readings (To be announced)

WEEK 8:
• Monday 10/13: The Triggering Town – “Nuts and Bolts” and “Statements of Faith”
• Wednesday 10/15: Online Readings (To be announced)
• Friday 10/17: Last day to withdraw with a grade of W. Students withdrawing from full term courses after midnight will be awarded a grade of WF. Note: A WF grade is calculated as an F in the GPA.

WEEK 9:
• Monday 10/20: JOURNAL #2 DUE Writing Poetry – Chapter 5
• Wednesday 10/22: Making Shapely Fiction – Pages 61-76 and Bathos, Cliché, Endings, Flashback, Formula, Frame Story, Genre, Sentimentality, Sex, Stereotype

WEEK 10:
• Monday 10/27: Writers’ Workshop
• Wednesday 10/29: Writers’ Workshop

WEEK 11:
• Monday 11/3: Writers’ Workshop
• Wednesday 11/5: Writers’ Workshop

WEEK 12:
• Monday 11/10: Writers’ Workshop
• Wednesday 11/12: Writers’ Workshop

WEEK 13:
• Monday 11/17: Writers’ Workshop JOURNAL #3 DUE
• Wednesday 11/19: Writers’ Workshop

WEEK 14:
• Monday 11/24: NO CLASS
• Wednesday 11/26: NO CLASS

WEEK 15:
• Monday 12/1: Portfolio Drafting Day
• Wednesday 12/3: FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE, Student Evaluations and Presentation Details
WEEK 16: Exam Week

• Wednesday 12/10: Class Presentations from 11:00-1:30pm * NOTE TIME CHANGE *