

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

- A. Department Information:
Division: Humanities
Department: English
Course ID: ENGL 032
Course Title: Creative Writing
Units: 3
Lecture: 3 Hours
Prerequisite: ENGL 914 or eligibility for ENGL 015 as determined by SBVC assessment process.
- B. Catalog Description:
Introductory course in creative writing focusing on poetry and fiction. Includes strategies for writing both poetry and fiction, and the development of critical standards for judging literature. This non-transfer course is taught simultaneously with ENGL 232, a transfer-level course. Assignments differ for the two courses although students participate in the same lectures
- Schedule Description:
Introductory course in creative writing focusing on poetry and fiction. Includes strategies for writing both poetry and fiction, and the development of critical standards for judging literature.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

- Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to:
- A. Distinguish between sophisticated and simple poetry and fiction;
 - B. Identify and use various forms of figurative language;
 - C. Identify the major types of meter in poetry;
 - D. Identify and use various sound devices in poetry;
 - E. Identify various traditional verse forms in poetry;
 - F. Identify and use various points of view in fiction;
 - G. Write poems that demonstrate a basic level of language, music, tone and content;
 - H. Write short fiction that demonstrates a basic use of plot, character, setting and tone;
 - I. Read and paraphrase the meaning of poetry and short fiction.

IV. COURSE CONTENT:

- A. The sources of poetry
 1. Using experience and observation
 2. The role of imagination
- B. Elements of poetry
 1. Language
 2. The importance of imagery
 3. The uses of figurative language
 4. The problems with language that is too general, abstract or hackneyed.
- C. Musical devices
- D. Sound devices
 1. Meter
 2. Rhyme
- E. Poetic forms and the poetic line
 1. Traditional forms
 2. Syllabics
 3. Free verse

4. Prose poetry
- F. The sources of fiction
 1. Blending experience and invention
 2. Avoiding formula writing
- G. Elements of fiction
 1. Plot
 - a) The role of conflict
 - b) Plot structure
 - c) Development of the individual scene
 - d) Moving from the scene to the whole
 - e) Managing chronology
 2. Point of view
 - a) Selecting the point of view
 - i) First person
 - ii) Third person - omniscient
 - iii) Third person - dramatic (effaced)
 - iv) Third person - limited omniscient
 3. Character
 - a) Flat versus three-dimensional characters
 - b) Ways of revealing character
 - c) Writing effective dialogue
 4. Setting
 - a) Elements of setting
 - b) Uses of setting
 5. Theme/ Central Concern
 - a) Knowing your intention
 - b) Theme versus the moral of the story

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Lecture/discussion: Readings in the text will be supplemented through lecture and the concepts will be applied to specific poems and short stories. Students will be asked to discuss readings and apply the concepts to specific works of literature.
- B. Workshop: Students submit their own poems and short stories for peer review and class discussion. The teacher needs to model the approach and techniques of workshopping early in the semester to give the students the tools they will need. As students grow more confident and skilled, the teacher can play a smaller role.
- C. Technique Exercises: Students will practice elements of technique through in-class, hands-on exercises. For instance, after learning about meter, students will scan sample lines in various meters to practice identifying meters. In addition, students would then practice writing lines in some common meters.

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Poetry assignments will reflect a particular concept being taught. For example, early in the course while students are tempted to use too much abstraction in their writing, the assignment might be to describe a concrete object by involving three of the five senses. After discussing traditional poetic forms, the instructor might assign a sonnet or sestina.
- B. Short stories can be introduced by assigning individual scenes. Each scene assignment can reflect a concept being taught. One could stress the use of dialogue, another the first person point of view, while a third could focus on using setting to establish tone. These assignments allow the students to focus on particular elements of fiction before they have to put all the elements together in a short story.

VII. EVALUATION(S):

- A. Methods and Frequency of evaluations:

1. Portfolio of creative work: Each student will submit a portfolio of poetry at the end of the poetry section, containing all the assigned poems, the rewrites and any extra credit poems. This will be evaluated on the quantity of work, the quality of work (how well the student employed the concepts taught), and the range of concepts attempted by the student. A similar portfolio will be required at the end of the fiction portion of the course. An example of a poetry assignment is: Write a poem in which you describe a town or city. Try to identify a dominant characteristic of the place and focus your poem on that characteristic. Rely heavily on concrete imagery, both literal and figurative. The purpose of the assignment is to develop the student's ability to use imagery. The instructor may elect to have a portfolio turned in at the end of the semester with both poetry and fiction.
2. Journals: Students will write in journals on a regular basis (at least weekly) to respond to stories, poems and concepts studied in class.
3. Quizzes: These are given frequently to test the student's understanding of reading assignments.

VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):

Three Genres, 7th edition, Stephen Minot, Prentice Hall, 2003.

The College Handbook of Creative Writing, Third Edition, Robert DeMaria, Heinle & Heinle, 1998.

Contemporary Short Fiction, David Madden, Thomson/Heinle, 2002.

A Pocketful of Verse, David Madden, Thomson/Heinle, 2002.

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None