English 5375.B01-Creative Writing | Summer I 2014 | Hybrid Course
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Office hours: T/Th – 1:00-4:00 or by Appointment

Course Meets: MW 12:00-1:55 in O'Connor Bldg, Room 222

Required Texts and Materials


A writer’s notebook. This may be anything you like, bound or unbound, plain or fancy, handwritten or computer-generated, as long as you use it.

Course Design and Objectives
This course is designed for students to continue developing their craft in writing poetry, short fiction, and creative non-fiction in an informal workshop setting. This writing/revising intensive course invites students from a diversity of creative writing background and experience. The course teaches the principles of writing prose fiction and poetry, with an emphasis on the elements and critical terminology of each genre. Students will practice writing in each major genre, and will also choose one genre on which to focus their craft. Students learn how to accept and use (or reject) the criticism of peers, and finally increase skills as a useful critic of others. Students turn in a final portfolio as well as submit polished pieces to literary journals.

Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of the course, students will have:
- demonstrated knowledge of various literary techniques through written exercises that employ these techniques;
- significantly improved their own writing, analytical, and critical skills;
- become familiar with the appropriate critical terminology needed to provide peers with accurate, insightful feedback on the work submitted to the workshop;
- revised the pieces submitted to the workshop, selecting from and/or rejecting the critical comments of peers as deemed appropriate;
- written original works of short fiction and poems, employing appropriate and varied techniques from the range available to the “creative” writer
- compiled a portfolio of revised work and submitted polished pieces to journals.
What in the World is a Hybrid/Blended Course?

At Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, the term “online course” refers to a fully distance education course (85% or more of course content) offered via the Internet; while the term “hybrid course” refers to a course with more than 50% but less than 85% of course content offered via the Internet: [https://iol.tamucc.edu/def_of_courses.html](https://iol.tamucc.edu/def_of_courses.html)

For more than 50% of the time, we will be meeting on-line through the Blackboard Portal to work on assignments, participate in discussions, and interact with each other. The only differences are the venue and your responsibilities. In order to be successful in this course, you must be **self-disciplined** and possess a strong sense of **self-initiative, independent thinking, and intrapersonal communication skills**.

**Course Requirements and Grade Distribution**

Grades will be determined according to the following percentages for each component of the course requirements:

- Professionalism: 10%
- Final Portfolio: 30%
- Journal Submissions: 10%
- Techniques and Preferences: 20%
- Workshop Sessions: 30%

For the **Techniques & Preferences Sessions (20%)**: we will be using the course readings as resources for your personal discovery of the techniques of creative writing as well as your exploration of your preferences as a writer. In order to accomplish these goals, I will ask you to keep a writer’s notebook or journal (part of your task will be to name this feature for yourself). For each technique session, you will be asked to read from one of the works, stripmine/extract the selection for technique and/or preference, try it in your notebook/journal, and bring it to class or submit on the Blackboard Discussion Forum to share or discuss with peers.

For the **Workshop Sessions (30%)**: While this isn’t a class that calls for tests, papers, or other, more usual academic evaluation methods, it does ask of you a high degree of professionalism. You will be expected to be in class on time at the start of each class period, to do every assigned reading and to be fully prepared to discuss every piece of your peers’ submitted work throughout the semester, whatever else is going on in your life! A studio approach only works if all participants are responsible, and willing to give and be engaged at all times.

**Journal Submissions**: (10%): You will be taught how to write cover letters, and you will be introduced to the contemporary websites that provide calls for submissions and links to journals accepting submissions. As a part of your final, you will be asked to show evidence of submitting your polished poems or prose piece to at least five different places.

**Final Portfolio (30%) will contain:**
The Fiction and Creative Non-Fiction Section (15%)

- a minimum of one polished fiction and creative non-fiction piece with any other stories, or beginnings of stories, that you have written during this period of time, with all drafts.
- a self-evaluative cover letter that addresses the work you have done and the progress you feel you have made in this section of the course

The Poetry Section (15%)

- a minimum of three poems, with all their drafts
- any other poems you have written during this time, also with all drafts and peer reviews
- a self-evaluative cover letter that addresses the work you have done and the progress you feel you have made in this section of the course

Your portfolio will be graded on its evidence of the work you have put into the course, the results you have achieved, and on the self-assessment of your work and your progress.

Keep a writer’s notebook (or journal or day book, whatever you want to call it), in which to store your exercises, responses, ideas, snippets, observations, useful quotes, images, musings, etc. This might be a leather-bound book, a spiral notebook, pocket note-cards, or a computer file—it’s entirely up to you. This will become very useful to you as a writer, and will come in handy as you choose what you would like to include in your portfolio to demonstrate your growth.

My Course Policies

Professionalism: (10%)
Your professional conduct is an urgent part of what will help you and our community of learners in this course successful. In other words, you are one of the parts that make the whole. Your professional contribution to our community of learners requires your attendance, daily preparation, participation, and interaction. Participation in physical and virtual class discussions is an important part of this course. This course sees professionalism as the ways you prepared, contributed to/engaged in the processes of reading, writing, organizational work, collaborative work, online and face-to-face discussions and inquiry, peer-draft reviewing, drafting, revising, and critical thinking.

Blackboard Policy
You are responsible for checking our course on Blackboard every day. Check our Reading and Assignment Schedule for weekly updates. Check Announcements, for daily assignments and messages from me. Also, we will use Blackboard Messages to contact one another and send drafts to our partners.
Establish Partnerships and Communicate: Make a pact with at least two colleagues in your group to stay in contact about the course in the event of one’s absence. You are encouraged to take responsibility for each other and for information missed. If you are absent, make sure a colleague picks up necessary handouts, worksheets, and takes careful notes and gathers information for you. Again, always check Blackboard.

E-Communication Policy
- The best way to contact me is through my email address: robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu.
- I will respond to professional emails that include your subject and class section in the Subject Heading, address me by my professional title, and offer your signature.
- I will respond to email within 24 hours between 9 a.m.- 9 p.m., M-F.
- Though I do respond to e-mails from students who have very specific questions, I never respond to tweets, instant-messages, badly misspelled, and vague, unprofessionally addressed e-mails or text-messages, such as “hey, slept thru alarm. what’d i miss?”
- If you need an appointment with me outside of my office hours, please ask me after class or email me.
- I do not accept Skype/Facebook/Linkedin friend requests (until graduation).

Absence Policy: It is impossible to earn an A after four absences, and very unlikely to earn a B after seven absences. So, try to save your absences for unexpected illnesses and crises (i.e, don’t use them all up recuperating from all-night festivities). Typically, an “A” student exemplifies outstanding community professionalism and self-initiative.

Late work Policy: In the case that a document is turned in or posted late with no prior arrangement with me, that document’s grade will be lowered ten percentage points for each class meeting that the student fails to turn it in. If the student has made arrangements with me prior to class, due to job, sports team travel or family crisis, late work may be accepted with no grade penalty.

Grading Standards

A (90%-100%): Outstanding work. An A document superbly addresses all components of the assignment. It clearly and logically expresses and develops an idea for a particular audience in an interesting way. A writing is highly polished and generally contains no errors in the use of English.

B (80%-89%): Very good work. A B document does a better than average job of addressing all components of the assignment. It expresses and develops an idea in a clear, logical way, and it is well adapted to the needs of its intended readers. B writing contains few or none of the common errors in the use of English. The professional appearance of B work is generally neat and polished.

C (70%-79%): Competent work. A C document manages to address most of the components of
the assignment and develops an idea for its intended readers, but does little to create a positive or lasting impression on them. C writing avoids serious errors in the use of English. The professional appearance of C work is acceptable but unremarkable and needs revision, polish, or redesign.

D (60%-69%): Unsatisfactory work. A D document is flawed by one or more of the following: insufficient attention to the assigned task and its audience, poorly developed ideas, inaccurate information, errors in the use of English.

F (50%-59%): Unacceptable work. An F document is flawed by one or more of the following: failure to accomplish the assigned task and adapt to its audience, failure to develop an idea, serious errors in the use of English language.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Policies | Student Resources

Academic Advising

It is imperative that all students visit regularly with an academic adviser. Each college within the university has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisers to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. To find out how to contact the right adviser, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

Classroom/Professional Behavior

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

In-class Conduct
- In general, treat each other and the instructor with respect and follow standards of common courtesy. Here are a few specifics:
- Please place all cell phones or other electronic communication devices out of sight (in a bag, purse, pocket) while in class. You may think quietly texting someone is not distracting to the instructor or fellow students, but it is.
- Do not use your time in English 1301 to work on assignments for other classes.
- Computers are to be used for English 1301 work only. No shopping, no Facebook, etc.
Those who consistently violate this policy will be asked to leave. You will also be counted absent and lose credit for any in-class work that day.

- Do not talk or make excessive noise while the instructor or another student is speaking to the class as a whole. (This includes typing on the keyboard or clicking the mouse.)
- When group work is assigned in class, you must work in a group, not as an individual.
- During group work time, please stay on task and work cooperatively with other group members.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**
The University will not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of intellectual or academic dishonesty. Violations of academic honesty will be processed under the Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases 13.02.99.C3.01 (see [http://ses.tamucc.edu/grievances.html](http://ses.tamucc.edu/grievances.html) and the Student Code of Conduct [http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/2013-2014StudentHandbook.pdf](http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/2013-2014StudentHandbook.pdf)). All cases of academic misconduct are recorded in the student’s file. Consequences are determined by the faculty member and/or the Academic Integrity Hearing Panel. It is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Students sometimes commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:

- using the work of another as your own,
- downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- using resource materials without correct documentation,
- using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation, or
- turning in a researched paper without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

Be aware that there are many ways to plagiarize. English 1301 and 1302 courses and the Writing Center at CASA will review rules of academic citation. Information academic citation is available at the Purdue University’s OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) and/or from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Dropping a Class**
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in you being dropped from the class. Please be aware that you are allowed 6 drops in your entire undergraduate career, so these decisions must be made carefully. **June 20th, Friday** is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Grade Appeal Process**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that his or her final grade reflects academic evaluation which is arbitrary, prejudiced, or inappropriate in view of the standards and procedures outlined in the class syllabus, may appeal the grade given for the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the
appropriateness of the appeal. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see the University Rule 13.02.99.C2.01, in the University Handbook for Rules and Procedures: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures/](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures/)

The first step is a meeting with the instructor.

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Student Resources

Students with Disability and Veterans

Notice to Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance.

The Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA): The Writing Center of CASA provides free writing instruction to any student interested in improving his/her writing abilities. Tutors will assist you with all aspects of writing. The Writing Center’s purpose is not to correct or proofread your drafts but to help you learn strategies that good writers use during the processes of writing. You may visit the Center for assistance with a writing project for any of your classes. It is located in the Glasscock Building (825-5933).

University Counseling Center

We all encounter stress, problems, and difficult decisions in our daily lives. Sometimes, these problems may seem overwhelming or it might be difficult to talk about certain issues with your friends or family. The University Counseling Center is available for all students enrolled at TAMUCC. Students seek counseling for a multitude of reasons and the University Counseling Center offers individual therapy, group counseling, psychiatric services, psychological testing, consultation, outreach services, alcohol and drug education and prevention programs, and personal skills training. If you are in need of counseling services or just someone to talk to, please call or visit the University Counseling center at (361) 825-2703 in the Driftwood Building. Visit: [http://counseling.tamucc.edu](http://counseling.tamucc.edu) for more information.

Reminder to English Majors: As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should **keep a copy** of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and
report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

For the Schedule, see Blackboard Reading and Assignment Schedule, updated weekly. See Announcements for daily updates.