**English 5375.B01 Creative Writing | Summer I 2019**
Dr. Robin Carstensen | Office: Faculty Center 281 | robin.carstensen@tamucc.edu

Phone: 361-825-3627  
Office hours: MW 2:15-4:15 p.m. | and by appointment

**Hybrid Course Meets**  
**Day:** MW | **12:00-1:55 p.m.** | **OCNR 255**

**Required Texts**

**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 a studio/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 may 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 and have the option to 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, creative nonfiction, 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 is a Hybrid 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 interpersonal communication skills. The course will have real deadlines and due dates, in person face to face and also online. We will meet asynchronously online, though you will have deadlines for assignments to be posted by certain days and times.

**Course Requirements and Grade Distribution**

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

- Professionalism: 10%  
- Exercises/Pathways: 20%  
- Submitting and Responding in Workshop: 20%  
- Discussion and Reading Responses: 20%  
- Final Portfolio: 20%  
- Final Exam: 10%

**Discussion and Reading Responses (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 respond to and engage with the reading assignments from our course print and online texts. For each text reading, you will be asked to read an assigned work, quote from at least one or more significant passage, and respond to that passage, exploring what you learned from the techniques employed, such as how to develop character, setting, style, point of view, dialogue, complexity, etc. For some readings, I offer guiding questions and for some you will be asked to do an exercise that may develop into a longer piece. I will instruct you to submit on the Blackboard Discussion Forum. You will include your most significant responses and exercises in your final portfolio.

**Writing Exercises/Pathways (20%)**: Each day, you will be doing writing exercises that come from the pathway prompts at the end of each chapter and from other sources. These exercises are designed for you to practice and focus on one or more techniques we are currently studying. Some of your poems and prose will develop from these shorter exercises. Most of these you will post in your BB Journal. From time to time, I will ask you to reflect on your own learning and progress. Save all of your drafts of these exercises, as you will be showing evidence of progress on each revised and polished piece in your final submission portfolio.

**Submitting to Workshop**

- You will submit at least three relatively “longer” revised pieces to a formal peer reviewed workshop during the semester, one time in each of three separate “rounds.” Each time you come up, you will submit a maximum of eighteen pages of prose (double-spaced) or one long poem or two shorter poems. You will also submit micro fiction and other exercises, early drafts, and shorter versions to your group and on the Discussion Forum for less formal review.
- When you “come up” for the formal review in workshop, you will submit an original piece that is as crafted and well-developed as possible, applying the principles that we read and discuss in class. Your purpose is to get feedback on your best work.
- You must post your work onto Blackboard no later than two class periods before your work is to be considered. We will have sign-ups for each round.

**Responding to Workshop (20%)**
• You will also facilitate discussion (i.e. be a primary respondent at least twice during the semester: you will be responsible for starting the discussion of a submitted piece of work by giving us your carefully considered evaluation of the piece.
• You must respond in writing to all works submitted to the workshop or your group workshop, even if you miss class.
• All responses must be done before class, though you may add to them in and after class if you have further thoughts.
*Responses should be very specific and techniques-based, not reactionary-based. Guidelines and examples are in the Content Folder—Workshop Review Guidelines.

Final Portfolio (20%) will contain:

--Critical Reflective Letters | Prose: Fiction and Creative Non-Fiction Section | The Poetry Section

-- Literary Journal Submissions: I will teach you how and where to research the literary markets for a suitable fit for your work, and we will work on cover letters. As a part of your final, you will be asked to show evidence of submitting your polished poems and/or prose pieces to at least three different places.

--Your portfolio will be graded on its evidence of the work you have put into the course, your revisions and attention to peer reviews, the results you have achieved, and on the self-assessment of your work and your progress. See Course Content on BB for more guidelines.

Final Exam Presentation (10%): Digital Storytelling (i.e. a set of your poems, your short fiction or nonfiction or excerpt from one of your pieces), with a critical introduction/artist statement and graphic/visual component. OR original E-zine (print, online, or both—individual or group)

My Course Policies

Professionalism in an Online Course: (10%)

Your professional contribution to our community of learners requires your attendance, daily preparation, participation, and interaction.

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.

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, online and face-to-face discussions and inquiry, peer-draft reviewing, drafting, revising, and critical thinking. You will need to meet the real deadlines and real due dates.

Blackboard Policy

You are responsible for checking our course on Blackboard every day. Check Announcements, for daily assignments and messages from me. Post into the assigned BB folder by the posted due date.

Absence Policy: It is most likely impossible to earn an A after one class absence, and very unlikely to earn a B after two absences. Understand that one class meeting per week equates to two weeks in a full semester.
Late work Policy: Late work is only accepted in extreme cases such as health reasons, or when the student has made arrangements with me prior to class. These arrangements may include job interviews, sports team travel or family crisis, and must come with documentation.

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 M-F, sometimes on weekends. The best email is a short one that offers a specific question after reading the BB instructions. Any concern or problem is followed by a brief solution. For example, if a student needs to miss a class and must turn in something late due to a family illness, I appreciate an email that tells me the student intends to read the BB announcement and post the assigned work by the day after the due date. If you need an appointment with me outside of my office hours, please ask me after class or email me.

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 Student Resources and Policies

Disabilities Accommodations

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 at (361) 825-5816.

Veteran’s Services

Our campus offers wide student support for veterans. For on campus and community support and services, including the Office of Veteran’s Affairs, the Veteran’s Lounge in the UC room 210, and the Veteran’s Student Organization, please see: http://icare.tamucc.edu/Student%20Veteran%20Resources.html
For Veteran’s counseling, appointments are suggested, however, walk-ins will be accommodated; schedule permitting. To make an appointment, students can call the University Counseling Center at 361-825-2703. Students need to bring their 214 form to their initial appointment. A student does not need to meet any specific criteria as far as military discharge status or when they served to be eligible for services. If they have served in some capacity, they are eligible to meet with the Vet Center counselor. http://vets.tamucc.edu

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 for more information.

Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

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 or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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 your being dropped from the class. The last day to drop a class for Summer I is on Friday, June 21.
**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. 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 University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: 

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

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**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.

**Statement of Civility**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high-quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in an F for that assignment.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism Definition:**
In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is a violation of academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students 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.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/), and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

For the Schedule, see Blackboard Announcements, updated weekly, with more specifics.

**Provisional Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Week Number</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Readings—Poetry</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td>Submit Discussion Forum Responses</td>
<td>Monday— Discuss Video on the Civic Responsibility of the Poet in America Today; with Tracy K. Smith’s articles in The New Yorker and the New York Times—Content Folder, BB</td>
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<td>June 3-</td>
<td>Submit The Writing Exercises Tues &amp; Thursdays Online</td>
<td>Introductory Poetry Readings and Pathways, Chapter 1 “The First Step on a Writer’s Path” and Chapter 2, “Imagery and Figurative Language” from Lisa Roney’s <em>Serious Daring</em></td>
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<td>June 6</td>
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<td>Tuesday: Pathways and Responses to Ch. 1 and 2.</td>
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<td>Thursday: Practicing Letter-Poem Exchanges. Reading Ch. 3 “Sound and Rhythm” and Ch. 4 on “Form.”</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Discussion Forum on Mon/Tues</td>
<td>Sound and Rhythm and Form</td>
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<td>Thursday—Writing and Submitting the short short</td>
<td>Studying Sound and Rhythm and Form, and reading Ghazals and Pantoums in Content Folder, BB.</td>
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<td>Tuesday—Practice Ghazals and Pantoums, etc.</td>
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<td>Thursday—Practice Found and Prose Poems. Reading Destination Fiction: 108-140; Ch 7 “Description and Setting” and Ch. 8 “Character”</td>
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<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Peer Review of Short Short Story—Introduction to Literary Markets and the Submission Process</th>
<th>Prose Poems to Fiction</th>
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<td>June 17-20</td>
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<td>Monday—Pathways on the Prose Poem/Flash Fiction and the Short Short</td>
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<td>Tuesday—Flash and Short Story Pathways from Ch. 7 and 8. Read Ch. 9 “Plot” and Ch. 10 “Point of View and Voice”</td>
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<td>Weds—Pathways from 9 and 10 and <strong>Introducing the Literary Market and Submissions Process</strong> Newpages.com Duotrope.com CWROPPS, etc.</td>
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<td>Thursday—Develop one pathway into a longer short, from 8-10 or more pages. Identify your literary market/audience.</td>
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<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Literary Markets and Peer Review of the Short Story</th>
<th>Fiction to Nonfiction</th>
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<td>June 24-27</td>
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<td>Monday—Peer Reviewing a Long-Short Draft</td>
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<td><strong>Identifying the Literary Market and Working on Cover Letters</strong></td>
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<td>Tuesday—Destination: Creative Nonfiction Ch. 5 “Memory” and Ch. 6 “Research”; Pathways on Memoir and Revision of Short Stories</td>
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Wednesday-- Discuss pathways on the Memoir; Introduce literary journalism, personal essays, and op-eds, possibly read from these online: “A Ticket to the Fair”—David Foster Wallace; “Women in the Fracklands”—Toni Jensen; “Girls, Monsters”—Jaquira Diaz; “Everything is For Sale Now”—Ruth Whippman. Content Folder, BB.

Thursday—Response and Draft a Memoir or Literary Journalism piece.

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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Peer Reviews</th>
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<td>July 1-4</td>
<td>Revisions &amp; Cover Letters</td>
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<td>Last In-Class Day</td>
<td>Final Exam Presentation</td>
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<td>Weds July 3</td>
<td>July 5th—Submit Final Portfolio</td>
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**Creative Nonfiction and Publishing**

Monday—Peer Reviewing and Revising; preparing for the Digital Presentation

Tuesday—Working on Memoir or Literary Journalism piece, prepping for digital presentation

Wednesday, July 3rd: Final Exam and Last Class Day

Face to Face: Digital Presentations

July 5: Submit the Final Portfolio—with submissions to markets and Self-Reflective Letter