

Introductory Creative Writing CRWT 2301.001

Fall 2015	Poe Johnson
Section 2301.001	Email: exj100120@utdallas.edu
T/Thu 11:30 AM – 12:45 PM	Office Number: JO 4.134
Class location: JO 4.504	Office Hours: Tue/Thu 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM (and by appointment)

Note: All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any and all changes will be communicated to students in writing.

Course Description

As an introduction to creative writing, this class will explore the relationship between craft and creation – with the expressed hope of giving students the proper tools required to be more successful in the production of short fictional and creative non-fictional stories. Throughout the course of the semester, students will analyze the disparate strategies and techniques that combine to make effective prose. While the goal of this class is not to teach a student how to write creatively—as that is largely impossible—the creation, analysis, and revision of their own stories will help students improve their own creative writing endeavors. As the class will focus heavily on workshops and criticism as a means of improvement, respect for the material and the writer is paramount.

Student Learning Objectives for CRWT 2301.001

- Students will learn to analytically read and critique works written by published and peer writers, along with their own work.
- Students will learn to identify the major elements of the fictional and non-fictional short story: character, narrative perspective, plot, etc.
- Students will learn the value of respectful written and oral constructive criticism, as well as active engagement and participation within a group of peers.
- Students will learn to follow and respect deadlines.
- Students will learn to revise and deconstruct their own creative output.

Required Texts

Burroway, Janet. *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft*. (4th Edition), 2014.
ISBN: 978-0134053240

Williford, Lex and Michael Martone, eds. *The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction: 50 North American Short Stories Since 1970*. (Revised and Updated, 2nd Edition), 2007.
ISBN: 978-1416532279

Assignments and Academic Calendar

<i>Tue, Aug 25th</i>	Introduction to the Course Why Do We Write? Course syllabus and class expectations
<i>Thu, Aug 27th</i>	Narrative Perspective Moore, "How to Become a Writer" (Blackboard) Barthelme, "Me and Miss Mandible" (Blackboard) Workshop/Critique Signup
<i>Tue, Sep 1st</i>	Flat and Round Characters Burroway, Chapter 3, "Voice" (IW) Diaz, "Nilda" (SAC)
<i>Thu, Sep 3rd</i>	Characters Pt. 2 Burroway, Chapter 4, "Character" (IW) Cisneros, "Never Marry a Mexican" (SAC)
<i>Tue, Sep 8th</i>	Story Burroway, Chapter 6 "Story" (IW) Saunders, "Jon" (Blackboard) Bloom, "Silver Water" (SAC)
<i>Thu, Sep 10th</i>	Plot Burroway, Chapter 9, "Fiction" (IW) Packer, "Brownies" (SAC) Homes, "A Real Doll" (SAC)
<i>Tue, Sep 15th</i>	Where, When, Why Burroway, Chapter 5, "Setting" (IW) O'Brien, "The Things They Carried" (SAC)
<i>Thu, Sep 17th</i>	Imagery and Description Burroway, Chapter 2, "Image" (IW) McKnight, "The Kind of Light That Shines on Texas" (SAC) Walker, "Nineteen Fifty-Five" (SAC) Group #1 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Sep 22nd</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Sep 24th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies) Group #2 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Sep 29th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Oct 1st</i>	Workshop Group #3 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Tue, Oct 6th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Oct 8th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies) Group #4 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled

<i>Tue, Oct 13th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Oct 15th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies) Group #4 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Oct 20th</i>	Creative Non-Fiction Burroway, Chapter 8, "Creative Non-Fiction" (IW) Laymon, "You are the Second-Person" (Blackboard)
<i>Thu, Oct 22nd</i>	Fact vs. Fiction Walker: "Beauty: When the Other Dancer is the Self" (IW) Sedaris "Guy Walks into a Bar Car" (Blackboard)
<i>Tue, Oct 27th</i>	Fictional Reality Lahiri "Trading Stories: Notes from an Apprentice" Yamanaka "JohnJohn's World" (Blackboard)
<i>Thu, Oct 29th</i>	Documenting Life Ward "No Mercy in Motion" (Blackboard) Didion "At the Dam" (IW) Dybeck "Thread" (Blackboard) Group #1 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Nov 3rd</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Nov 5th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies) Group #2 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Nov 10th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Nov 12th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies) Group #3 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Nov 17th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Nov 19th</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies) Group #4 Stories Due: 21 Copies, Double-Spaced, Single-Sided, Numbered, Stapled
<i>Tue, Nov 24th</i>	Fall Break
<i>Thu, Nov 26th</i>	Fall Break
<i>Tue, Dec 1st</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Thu, Dec 3rd</i>	Workshop Critiques Due (2 Copies)
<i>Tue, Dec 8th</i>	Last Day of Class Portfolio Presentations

Grading

Fiction Piece	10% (100 points)
Non-fiction Piece	10% (100 points)
Participation and Engagement	30% (300 points)
Written Critiques (one for each story written by a peer (1-2 pages), and one for a story written by a published writer (1-2 pages).	20% (200 points)
Final Portfolio (two revised stories, and critiques for the first drafts of the stories)	20% (200 points)
Discussion Leader/Discussion Questions	10% (100 points)
Total	100% (1000 points)

I will make use of the +/- system in grading as stipulated by the current University of Texas at Dallas Undergraduate Catalog.

Course Policies

Attendance

Because each class period consists of a mixture of class discussion, group work and free writing, your thoughtful, attentive, and active participation is essential (and will form a portion of your grade). If you sleep, engage in non-class-related activities, or interfere with your classmates' ability to learn you will be counted absent for that day. Be on time - class starts promptly. Leaving early will count as an absence.

Each student is allowed two (2) absences, no questions asked. Save them for when you really need them. Your final grade will suffer a 4% reduction for each absence you accumulate over three (e.g., 4 absences = 8% total reduction). **If you miss more than four (4) classes, you will automatically fail, NO EXCEPTIONS!!!**

Punctuality

Persistent tardiness to class is disrespectful to both your instructor and your peers. Continually arriving late to class will affect your participation grade in the course. Three tardies will result in one absence for the course, and I will consider you absent if you arrive more than 10 minutes late to class.

Class Participation

Your success in this course is a function of your level of engagement. I am interested in the quality of your remarks rather than the quantity. Please use your analysis of the readings, your daily/weekly assignments, and prior research and/or study when responding orally in class, and please be prepared to back up any points you make.

Participation in this course does not include doing work unrelated to this course during class, sleeping in class, or using the computers or other personal electronic devices for personal messaging, research, or entertainment.

Participation is earned, not given. Your participation will be judged based off of three criterion. 1. Attendance. 2. Your active engagement with the class, the material, and your fellow students. 3. Your ability to distill course readings.

Late Work

Better never than late. All assignments must be turned in on the agreed upon date and time. Late work is not accepted.

Personal Communication Devices

Turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other personal communication devices before the start of class. Do not use such devices during class. If I see you use a phone one time in class, your participation grade will be cut by half. If I see you use it again, your participation grade will be deducted completely.

You are not allowed to use your laptop/tablet in class unless you're using it to refer back to a reading.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

Students in this course are expected to maintain a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. I know that you know what constitutes plagiarism, so don't do it. When in doubt, ask me and we can discuss whatever confusion that you may have.

Please consult the following web sites addressing academic integrity as well as what constitutes cheating at UTD:

<http://www.utdallas.edu/deanofstudents/integrity/>

<http://www.utdallas.edu/deanofstudents/dishonesty/>

<http://www.utdallas.edu/deanofstudents/bigfour/>

University Policies

Please review the university policies at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

UT Dallas Writing Center

Located in McDermott Library room 1.206, the UT Dallas Writing Center is a free resource for you, the UT Dallas student, to help take your writing to the next level. Tutors are available every day of the week to work with you. Even published authors, like J. K. Rowling, need someone to bounce their ideas off of, so drop by and talk to them. Walk-ins and appointments are welcome.

Monday – Thursday: 10 am – 7 pm

Friday – Saturday: 10 am – 4 pm

Sunday: 3 pm – 5 pm

<http://www.utdallas.edu/studentsuccess/writing>

I have read and understood the policies for CRWT 2301. 001. I agree to comply with the policies for the Fall 2015 semester. I realize that failure to comply with these policies will result in a reduced grade the course.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

UTD e-mail address: _____

The use of students' work during Creative Writing class allows instructors to demonstrate writing concepts with examples specifically tailored for this course. Use of a writing sample benefits students by allowing them to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in others' writing and to apply what's learned to their own work. If you agree to allow your instructor to share your writing samples, your name and other identifying information will be removed from writing samples. Your work will be treated respectfully by instructors, who also expect that students demonstrate such respect. All students are expected to participate in peer review. If you agree to share your work for class demonstration and exercises, please sign the following statement:

I allow my instructor to use samples of my writing for demonstration during this class and for other classes. I may revoke my permission by letting my instructor know I no longer wish my work to be shared.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____