

ONLINE SYLLABUS

English 2310 Online
Introduction to Creative Writing
Winter Session (12/26/13-1/14/14)

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Course Mechanics:

The course is run through the Blackboard website, accessed via the WP Connect Page. From the Blackboard course site, students will be able to:

- Check Syllabus
- Read Sample Readings
- Comment on Each Other's Work through Discussion Board.

Course Objectives:

"Introduction to Creative Writing" has been designed as an introductory course to give students the opportunity to explore personal voice and style and to experiment with different modes of writing. By the end of the semester, the student writer will have written and revised one poem as well as a short piece of fiction. The student writer will have read examples of these different modes by masters of the forms, and will have experience receiving feedback both from the Editor-Professor, as well as from peer student writers. At the end of the course, students will e-mail me their journals containing samples of their drafts, writing exercises, etc. Please note that what you send in for workshop should not be YOUR first draft. You should hone a work as much as possible so that feedback is useful.

Required Texts and Materials:

- The assigned text for this course is:

David Starkey's *Creative Writing, an Introduction to Poetry and Fiction* (2014)

ISBN10 1-4576-6167-5

ISBN13 978-1-4576-6167-9

- An online resource accompanies our text; you may use it to expand your knowledge of the genres being studied: (Web site for Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief (bedfordstmartins.com/starkey)).
- Students are required to have access to a Microsoft Word program and to the Internet. You will post comments on peers' work on Discussion Board.
- An electronic portfolio for all class assignments (including journals, discussion board posts and drafts of writing) that you will turn in no later than 1/14 at 9am. **YOU MUST TITLE AND DATE EACH ENTRY ACCURATELY.** You will send me

this portfolio at the end of class (on January 14th) as 1 document titled YourLastNamePORTFOLIO.doc. It will be graded. (the title of my portfolio file would be WittPORTFOLIO.doc)

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the winter session, student writers will have gained experience in writing in the basic modes of poetry and fiction. They will have experimented as well with honing a personal voice and style in these two modes. They will have had the experience of readers (professor-editor as well as student-editors) responding to their posted works. In short, they will have had a sampling of a writer's life. Student writers will know better by the end of this introductory course if they want to continue writing creatively and, if so, whether their strengths and inclinations point towards a particular mode of writing. Please note: Creative Non-Fiction is not included in our text and is a genre as valid as the others that we will study. We simply do not have time in this intense and condensed version of the course to cover all genres so we will exclude both Creative non-fiction and drama. We will focus on poetry and short stories.

Course Expectations:

I have structured the syllabus to reflect a breakdown of the work day-to-day for each of our "class periods" as well as the homework that would normally be assigned. This is an asynchronous online class, which means that you can make your own schedule for completing assignments as long as the day's load is done by the due dates on the syllabus. I do not accept late work, so you may want to create a calendar for yourself in order not to miss deadlines. If you miss a deadline you will not receive credit for that assignment. Please be aware of when your group is scheduled to post work on Discussion Board for workshop.

Discussion Board: I will post a total of 20 Discussion Board questions to which you must respond. There is a deadline for each Discussion Board and each one will become unavailable when the deadline has passed. In addition, each group will post work on Discussion Board, and everyone in the class must respond to each post. Please use your best writing for all correspondence in this class. It is a writing class, and as such I expect to see work that is proofread carefully. Every email you send, all notes that you give to one another, and all Discussion Board posts should be written in Word before you post them so that you can edit your work before you share it. Work should be spell-checked, capitalized and punctuated properly. Points will be deducted for work that is not at college level. Save these files in Word as they will be part of your final portfolio.

Portfolio: Please keep an electronic portfolio for all your responses to Discussion Board prompts (there will be 20), and all of the drafts of your own writing. **Clearly label, date, and title each exercise.** On January 14th, you will post this portfolio to Blackboard's Discussion Board in a single Word document (titled with your last name followed by "portfolio" (WittPORTFOLIO.doc, for example).

Workshopping: All students have been divided into groups. Please look under "Syllabus" to know which group you are in and when to post your work **in attachment** on Discussion Board

and read and respond to others' work. Please label the attachment using your last name and draft number. **Again, you must respond to work by the date and time assigned to receive credit.**

Responders: You must respond to the work of everyone in your group. Select two questions from amongst the checklists in the Starkey book (**not two from each one, but two in total**) relevant to the work under discussion, and answer them considering your peers' work. Remember that you are offering your peer feedback for revision—use the questions you find most relevant to the work at hand).

Professor/Editor: I will make comments and suggestions on the work itself using the Microsoft Word “Track Changes” option under “Tools” in the Word Processing program. This will be followed by my comments. **YOU WILL RE-WRITE YOUR POEMS AND STORIES ACCORDING TO MY COMMENTARY and include these in the journal you send at the end of the course.**

Rewriting: All good writing is, as the saying goes, rewriting. You should be polishing, honing, and revising your work throughout the course. Use assigned exercises to help you in the revision process. “Rewriting” will be considered very broadly as I might suggest an entirely new direction for a subsequent draft. “Rewriting” is not as simple as changing a word or two, and your grade will, in part, be determined by how seriously you undertake to rewrite.

Grading:

In terms of your creative work, I, like you, will be considering the checklists from each chapter as the guideline/rubric for my comments and grading. Please note that participation is a crucial component in this course and that your grade for the course is determined by the seriousness with which student-writers approach the assignments and the general consideration they show in meeting deadlines.

Creative Writing has its own subtleties as far as grading: I reserve “B” for those who have completed all work responsibly and in a timely manner. To receive below a “B,” a student must have handed in work late, not participated adequately in workshopping, not completed assignments, or have committed serious grammatical issues of the sort usually reserved for English 1100--“College Writing.” An “A”--both in the final grade and on each completed work--is a more subjective sign of excellence that I reserve for those works that stand out in talent and execution. An “A” will always be somewhat of a judgment call.

Poetry: 25%

Fiction: 25%

Portfolio: 15%

Participation (including responding to other students' work, responses to Discussion Board questions, and timeliness of work): 35%

