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## ENG 2000-001: Introduction to Creative Writing

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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## ENGLISH 2000 – 001

Introduction to Creative Writing

Fall 2022: 1:00pm to 1:50pm, MWF

Classroom: Coleman Hall 31 59

Instructor: Dr. Mike McClelland

Office: Coleman Hall 3365

Email: mbmcclelland@eiu.edu

Office Hours:

MWF 12:00pm to 1:00pm and MW 1:50pm to 2:20pm

### **Welcome to Intro to Creative Writing!**

“Some may say I couldn’t sing, but no one can say I didn’t sing.” -Florence Foster Jenkins

### **COVID**

EIU is a mask-optional campus, though I would ask that you mask for this class if at all possible. If you are feeling any symptoms, please stay home and get tested. To view the latest EIU COVID-19 related information and any policy updates, please visit <https://www.eiu.edu/covid/>.

### **Course Description**

An introduction to the creative aspects of creative writing, examining poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and writing for stage and screen through studying the work of published authors and producing original work discussed in an open forum throughout the semester. For this course, we will read poems, stories, essays, and plays/screenplays intensely to determine how they “work,” covering issues of craft and technique. This course also focuses extensively on our own writing; students will complete exercises, workshop polished pieces, and participate regularly in entire class workshops, submitting drafts, revisions, and more polished works. Copies for distribution to all workshop members are to be distributed a week before workshop.

Please note, that as instructors of a creative writing class, we assert our right to discuss all topics that literature covers; if you are not mature and are not willing to view the world as a complex place, this might not be the class for you. Exercises and in-class writing will also be a mandatory part of the course.

### **Required texts:**

- Burroway, Janet. *Imaginative Writing*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition
- Salesses, Matthew. *Craft in the Real World*
- Handouts distributed by the instructor

### **Optional Texts:**

- McClelland, Mike. *Gay Zoo Day*. (I'll pass out copies to read in class. This isn't to boost my ego; in the spirit of workshopping, I want to give you the opportunity to critique my work as I am critiquing yours.)

### **Required materials:**

- A notebook or lined paper; a pen or pencil; access to the Internet; a computer with word-processing capabilities and a printer; copies of your writing as needed.
- Your imagination!
- You will be required to bring *Imaginative Writing* as well as any additional assigned handouts and texts to each class meeting (unless otherwise instructed). Failure to do so will affect your grade.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Develop a routine for ideation, brainstorming, and writing
- Develop and understanding of craft, genre, revision, and publication.
- Develop knowledge around the characteristics of Creative Nonfiction, Poetry, Fiction, and Drama
- Develop and practice the workshop process
- Learn to give feedback on the work of your peers
- Develop skills around reading your work for an audience
- Gain and understanding of your own writing voice and your writing goals.

### **Grading**

- Workshops 40% (10% and for each workshop submission and response)
- Class Participation 20%
- Final Portfolio (Each workshop piece revised with a short introduction) 20%
- In-Class Writing 10%
- Literary Magazine Project 5%
- Final Reading 5%

### **Revision**

- Students will be expected to revise each of the four workshopped pieces from the semester. Some pieces will require a lot of revision, some very little. The key to revising is listening to classmate and instructor feedback with “one ear open and one ear closed” and then revising accordingly.

## Final Portfolio

- Students will turn in revised versions of all four workshopped pieces from the semester along with a short introduction (500 to 1000 words) describing how their writing process evolved or changed (or didn't) over the course of the semester.

## Workshopping

- Creative writing workshops can be a vital part of the writing process and are especially helpful in providing a pathway to revision for your creative work. In addition, becoming a better reader of others' work is a key part of becoming a better writer. That said, workshops have a complicated and often fraught reputation. We will work off of Salesses's *Craft in the Real World* while also bringing our individual perspectives to the classroom and assembling our own unique classroom culture from those perspectives. From this standpoint, we will work together to come up with an appropriate method of workshopping in our classroom. Given the size and introductory nature of this course, we will be doing group workshops for each of the 4 parts of this course.

## Participation

- Participation means coming to class and actively participating in building classroom culture by speaking up, by completing in-class writing assignments, and by reading a particular day's assigned material before class begins. Participation means silencing your cellular devices and shutting your laptops during class.

## Plagiarism and Copyright

Just don't plagiarize! If you have any issue completing your assignments within the assigned timeframe, please contact me directly before you even consider plagiarizing an assignment. I will work with you on a timeframe for completion.

Eastern Illinois University considers plagiarism a serious offense under its student conduct code, and the penalty can be as serious as expulsion from school.

The English Department's policy on plagiarism: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

## Late and Make-up Work

- All work should be turned in complete and on time. As we are workshopping your work, it is key that we are getting our assignments in before the scheduled workshop. If you know you will be missing particular days, please let me know in advance so that we can make sure that everyone gets four workshops in. Of course, unforeseen things happen, and if you have

a documented excuse for your absence I will work with you to make sure that you get credit for all of your work. Work submitted late without an appropriate excuse may be penalized up to a letter grade per day for each day it is late.

### **Methods of Evaluation:**

The grades for this class will be determined by points earned (1000 total points possible) and will be reported based on the standard grading scale. However, per IAI standards, a grade of C or higher is required for advancement to higher level English courses.

100% to 90%: A

89% to 80%: B

79 to 70%: C

69% to 0%: NC

### **Conduct and Kindness Policy:**

Participants in this course **must** be course compliant with the University's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, which prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person because of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis of discrimination precluded by federal and state statutes is strictly prohibited.

In addition, as we will be discussing and investigating aspects of each other's cultures, it is important for members of this class to not only "tolerate" each other's unique and different qualities but to celebrate them. It is a requirement of this class that all we treat each other with kindness, respect, and compassion.

### **Electronics:**

Failure to silence and put away phones, laptops, and smartwatches, and other cellular devices (if they aren't being used for class purposes) will result in points being deducted from your participation grade for the class.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

### **Students with Disabilities**

You are welcome here and are an equal member of this classroom. Please advocate for your rights and allow me to help point you in the right direction for exercising those rights! If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please

contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by McAfee, Room 1210, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

### **The Student Success Center**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

### **The Writing Center**

“The Writing Center of Eastern Illinois University is a place where students can develop as writers and thinkers. We recognize that student writers come to the center with individual needs and individual writing processes, and we are committed to working with students from all disciplines, majors, and academic backgrounds at any stage of the writing process.” I highly recommend you visit the Writing Center in the first three weeks of class with low stakes assignment, so you are comfortable in the environment and familiar with their processes when you go in for a more challenging one. <https://www.eiu.edu/writing/index.php>.

### **English Education/Teacher Certification**

Students seeking Teacher Certification in English Language Arts should request each of their English Department professors to complete the "Application for English Department Approval to Student Teach" before the end of the semester. This online evaluation form is available here: <https://www.eiu.edu/english/machform/view.php?id=19831>.

### **Resources for Student Well-Being**

Life is hard, especially when you're in college. Please check out the university's extensive options for assisting your emotional/physical/spiritual wellbeing: [https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20 Well-Being\\_26-July-2022.pdf](https://www.eiu.edu/fdic/Student%20Well-Being_26-July-2022.pdf)

### **ENG 2000 Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to attend class meetings as scheduled. When an absence does occur, the student is responsible for the material covered during the absence. When possible, the student should notify the instructor in advance of an anticipated absence.

After 1 unexcused absence, absences will begin to negatively influence your class participation grade.

### **Electronic Writing Portfolio**

Assignments you complete for this course will not be appropriate for the EWP.

## ***TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS***

### **Week One**

Week of 8-22: Introductions and discussion of syllabus. Introduction to textbooks. Introduction to/formation of our class's workshop model

8/26 is the last day to add a class!

### **Week Two**

Week of 8-29: Part One (Poetry)

Reading and in-class writing

9/2 is the last day to drop a course with no grade and/or withdraw from all classes with full tuition and fees refund

### **Week Three**

Week of 9-5: Poetry, Continued

No Class on Monday, 9/5 (Labor Day)

Reading and in-class writing

### **Week Four**

Week of 9-12: Poetry, Continued

**Small Group Workshop 1 – Poetry.** Have a short poem prepared and emailed to class by 9-12. We will workshop, revise, then discuss your poems over the course of the week.

### **Week Five**

Week of 9-19: Part Two (Fiction and Graphic Narrative)

9/19 is the last day to withdraw from all classes with 50% tuition and fees refund

### **Week Six**

Week of 9-26: Fiction and Graphic Narrative, Continued

### **Week Seven**

Week of 10-3: Fiction and Graphic Narrative, Continued

**Group Workshop 2 – Fiction or Graphic Narrative.** Have a piece of flash fiction or short graphic narrative prepared and emailed to class by 10-3. We will workshop, revise, then discuss your piece over the course of the week.

No Class on Friday, 10-7 (Fall Break)

### **Week Eight**

Week of 10-10: Part Three: Creative Nonfiction. Literary Magazine Project Assigned.

### **Week Nine**

Week of 10-17: Creative Nonfiction, Continued

Optional Reading: Read “Sheffield Beach” in *Gay Zoo Day*.

### **Week Ten**

Week of 10-24: Creative Nonfiction, Continued

**Group Workshop 3 – Creative Nonfiction.** Have a short essay/memoir prepared and emailed to class by 10-24. We will workshop, revise, then discuss your piece over the course of the week.

### **Week Eleven**



Week of 10-31: Genre Fun! Horror, Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Beyond. Literary Magazine Project due.

Optional Reading: Read “The Christmas Card” in *Gay Zoo Day*.

11/4 is the withdrawal deadline

### **Week Twelve**

Week of 11-7: Part Four (Writing for the Stage and Screen)

Optional Reading: Read “The Self-Banished” in *Gay Zoo Day*.

### **Week Thirteen**

Week of 11-14: Writing for the Stage and Screen, Continued

Optional Reading: Read “Mombasa Vengeance” in *Gay Zoo Day*.

### **Week Fourteen**

Week of 11-21: No Class, Thanksgiving Break

### **Week Fifteen**

Week of 11-28: Writing for the Stage and Screen, Continued

Optional Reading: Read “La Castaña” in *Gay Zoo Day*.

**Group Workshop 4 – Plays and Screenplays.** Have a short scene from a play or screenplay prepared and emailed to class by 11-28. We will workshop, revise, then discuss your piece over the course of the week.

### **Week Sixteen**

Week of 12-5: **Class Readings and Road to Publication.** You will each read a portion of your favorite piece of your own work from the semester to the class. During these classes, we will also discuss how and why

Optional Reading: Read “Olive Urchin” in *Gay Zoo Day*.

### **Week Seventeen**

12-13 (Tuesday): FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE

### **Writing Deadline Schedule**

1. Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup>: Have a short poem prepared for group workshops.
2. Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>: Have a flash fiction piece or short graphic narrative prepared for group workshops.
3. Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>: Have a short creative nonfiction piece prepared for group workshops.
4. Monday, November 28<sup>th</sup>: Have a short scene from a play or screenplay prepared for group workshops
5. Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>: Have your final portfolio submitted by 11:59pm.

