**Creative Writing
English 236**

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 **Welcome!** This course is an online creative writing class designed to be both creative and educational. We will first read and write analytically about the poetry and fiction of others, and we will practice writing description, characterization, setting, plot, dialogue, and poetry, producing several poems, vignettes, and one complete and revised short story. We will study fiction and poetry techniques through the use of our textbook, and we will learn through practice exercises and assignments as well as online interaction and feedback for each other in the form of Discussion Boards and online poetry and fiction “workshops” (see How Workshop Works handout for details).

**Required text**:  *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft, 4th edition,* Janet Burroway.  Be sure to get the correct edition!!

**Class Goals and Desired Outcomes**:

This class will focus on creative writing of fiction and poetry. Here are some specific learning objectives for this class:

1.  To understand the basics of plot in short stories and to explore various plot structures through in-depth reading of assigned stories, our text chapters that guide us through all elements of writing fiction, and through learning to write a short story and get feedback on a draft.

2.         To understand the elements of setting and description and characterization and to develop setting and explore character development in short-story writing.

3.  To understand the importance of point-of-view in stories and to practice POV.

4.         To practice and develop skills in the use of vivid description and realistic dialogue in the writing of short stories.

5.         To develop workshop/revision skills by participating in student/classmate reviews of fellow students’ stories and poetry.

6.         To read, discuss, and analyze various forms and strategies of poems and to write

 poems.

7.         To learn how to submit work for consideration for publication.

**Additional Assessment Goals:**

This course will help improve your skills in the following areas:

**1. Critical Thinking:**

In this course, you will read and discuss information and ideas with your classmates. There are ways to do each of these activities that demand critical thinking and ways that do not.  For example, critical thinkers are active rather than passive readers.  They read texts (and the stories and poetry of your classmates) closely, note key ideas, look up difficult words, work hard to understand difficult passages, and keep up a dialogue with the text in the margins.  Critical thinkers are also active rather than passive listeners.   Critical thinkers recognize that others may see the world differently than they do and see those perspectives not as threats but as part of the continuing and necessary dialogues that are inherent in civilizations.  Critical thinkers think clearly, logically, and specifically about issues, and can refer to specific details and information to support their generalizations.  Part of my job as an instructor involves teaching you to be critical thinkers by explaining and modeling the behaviors of critical thinkers.  We will engage critical analysis skills as we review each others' writings.

**2. Written Communication:**

Writing in this course will vary from creative, rule-breaking pieces to formal critiques of writing which will analyze and critique the stories and/or poetry of other writers.  Additional elements critical to writing clearly and effectively are clear focus and ideas, coherent structure and organization, correct grammar, careful editing, and effective use of language.

3.**Responsibility:**

Regular attendance online, class preparedness (including reading materials and completing assignments before class discussion online and before class critiques), timely submission of assignments, and an atmosphere of mutual respect are all required of you as students of this course.  You are also responsible for checking due dates and assignments online and using the format page of the site to send your work in the correct format via email and in the Discussion Board postings.

I have attempted to structure this course with some flexibility, but it is important that you follow these responsibility guidelines.  I understand that your life is busy, and that you probably have a job and other responsibilities beyond school.  However, I stand by these responsibilities and will expect them to be fulfilled by everyone equally. It is too easy with an online class to procrastinate.  Please realize that this is a "real" course with "real deadlines, and it is not a "self-paced" course.

**Specific Expectations:**

1. Participate via CANVAS—the online class site regular and complete

 assignments by due dates assigned.

2. Submit polished work.  Spelling, grammatical structures, clear writing, fair analysis, etc. are all considered basic even in creative writing.
3. Participate fully: go on to the discussion forum son assigned days to post and/or critique your classmates' work.

4. Participate in collaborative learning in all its forms.  You are not in this intellectual pursuit alone.

5. Deal with me and others in this class in an open, honest, and direct manner in all matters; always show mutual respect.

**Course Activities:**

**1.         Participation in online discussions and story/poetry workshops.**

**2.         Write and revise after workshop a complete short story, 3 pg. minimum, 10 pg. maximum, Double spaced:** After we have studied short story writing techniques and read several models, you will write a short story which includes the elements we have learned including the following: plot structure, characterization, point-of-view, description, and dialogue.  **Workshop due dates vary (you will be assigned a specific date).  You will be required to post a copy of your story on CANVAS for the entire class one-to-two class days before the set workshop date (directions will follow).**

**The final, revised version of your story will be due for instructor comments and a grade within one week of the whole-class workshop and feedback from your classmates.**

**3.         Poetry--Four Required Poems:**

You will be required to write four poems for a grade during this course: One **Haiku,** and three other poems—form or free-form (see homework files for exact assignments and specific due dates).

**4.         Short Story Critique:**

You will be required to write **a formal critique** of classmate’s story (you will be **assigned** to a story to review) during whole-class workshops: you will  **write and then post on CANVAS a 1-2 page written critique using the guideline critique questions** (loaded under files and the Discussion Boards).    Also, you will be required to read carefully all other stories-up to 25 stories total- and post a 1-2 paragraph response online for each (more details later).

**5.         Homework Assignments:**

Home assignments include reading responses, CANVAS homework and workshop responses, reviews, etc.

**6.**        **Final Self-Assessment paper:**

You will write a short paper assessing your progress in poetry, fiction, and critiquing skills (Assignment link for exact assignment will be posted towards the end of the quarter--see Homework link for specific due date).

**LATE WORK/MAKE-UP POLICY:**

It is extremely important in this class to have your work done on time.  Because much of our class relies on whole-class participation in reviewing each other’s work, **you must have your own stories and poems ready on time and you must submit reviews of others’ work on time. Work with me directly for exceptions.**

**Whole-Class Workshops**:  If you have to miss a whole-class workshop day (not including your own story’s day), you may submit your review late **for half credit (max. 2 days late).**  However, you may do thisonly **twice**; afterwards you will get a **zero** for missed workshops.

**Grading/Evaluation:** Grades/Percentages will be earned as follows:

 1) **Participation: thorough and timely participation                                         (10%)**

 2) **Online Postings quality/quantity**                                      **(10%)**

3) **Complete short story** (Posted 1-2 days before wksp) **(20%)**

          (online workshop; then, revise **within** **one week for a grade)**

4) **Four poems**          **(50 points each—up to 200 points)                                (20%)**

5) **Formal critique** of a classmate’s story  **(up to 100pts)                                 (10%)**              6) **Whole-class workshop**/**story reviews—10 workshops**                                   **(10%)**                   whole class workshops online --up to 25 stories reviewed total

 7) **Individual** and **class assignments**                                                                **(20%)**      (including all homework--assigned readings and exercises as well as
     in-class writing exercises, discussion preparedness and participation, workshop participation and quality of online feedback contributions).

8) **Final Self-Assessment Paper**           (up to 50 pts)                                      **(5%)**                  9) **Poetry submission for the on-campus journal.**                                         (**5%)**

 ***Espial*, GRC's Literary, Arts Journal.**             **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_                                           total possible= 100%**

**Decimal Grading:** Green River uses numerical grading.  Numerical equivalents of grades are listed below:

4.0       = A   = 100-96                            2.5-2.3 = C+ = 80-78

3.9-3.5 = A-  = 95-92                              2.2-2.0 = C   = 77-75

3.4-3.2 = B+ = 91-88                              1.9-1.6 = C-  = 74-71

3.1-2.9 = B   = 87-85                              1.5-1.3 = D+ = 70-68

2.8-2.6 = B-  = 84-81                              1.2-1.0 = D   = 67-65

**Policy on Cheating:**

In this course you will be working in groups and by yourself. Individual assignments, such as out-of-class work, may be discussed in a group, but must be written individually.  Do not give your paper to someone else! If individuals are found to be cheating, their names will be given to the Dean of Academic Education for further action which may range from no credit in the exam/assignment to no credit in the class.

**Don’t steal/copy stories or poems from the web--I can find them too!  Even stealing a plot line from another story or movie is plagiarism.**

Plagiarism is when you copy or use (even ideas) an outside source, but do not properly reference the work in your paper.   I will treat plagiarism in the same manner as cheating.  If you have questions about how to avoid plagiarism please ask me.

**What if I have a disability and need accommodations?**

ADA Statement: If you believe you qualify for course adaptations or special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is your responsibility to contact the Disability Support Services Coordinator and also let me know.