English 3320  
Creative Writing Fiction  
Fall Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. Laura Rebecca Payne  
Email: lbutler@sulross.edu  
Office: MAB 114  
Phone: 837.8744/837.8151  
Office Hours: M/W 10-12; 3:30-5; T/Th 3:30-5 (and by appointment)

Required Texts:

Gotham Writers’ Workshop Fiction Gallery (Author: Steele) ISBN: 9781582344621

The Making of a Story (Author: LaPlante) ISBN: 9780393337082

Course Description:  English 3320 is a course that explores the foundations of fiction writing through invention and workshop of our writing, reading, and discussion of contemporary short literatures. We will read various selections of short prose fiction, interpret them in discussions and writings, and then apply those interpretations to our own prose writing. We will practice strategies for invention and apply these to the creation of a writer’s journal that will reflect our growing sense of skills. Finally, we will workshop our manuscripts in order to prepare our work for revision. You will leave this course understanding and appreciating your own heightened skills in reading, interpreting, discussing, and writing as a writer in order to further develop your own distinct voice and creative processes.

Course Objectives:  Students in English 3320 will:

• examine the processes of short fiction writing through the academic lens;
• analyze creative methodologies;
• understand techniques used in the creation of short stories, especially those historically proven with both popular and critical audiences;
• prepare to enter the academic, professional, and writing markets with a full understanding of its professional expectations;
• develop the appropriate language for expert navigation of fiction writing and the academic discussion of the story as a genre;
• prepare professional documents which reflect careful and successful rhetoric;
• communicate carefully, fully, and successfully via an online environment.

English (undergraduate) Program Learning Outcomes:
Graduating students will demonstrate in 3320 that they can
1. Construct essays that demonstrate unity, organization, coherence, and development
2. Analyze literary works by applying principles of literary criticism or theory
3. Demonstrate creativity or originality of thought in written or multimedia projects
4. Compare/contrast and analyze major works and periods within World, English, and American literature.

**Educator Standards:** For students seeking certification, this course will cover aspects of the following SBEC educator standards and competencies:

**English Language Arts and Reading 8-12 Standard IV:**

English language arts teachers in grades 8-12 understand an extensive body of literature and literary genres and provide students with opportunities to read diverse forms of literature and to view literature as a source for exploring and interpreting human experiences.

**Competency 006:** The teacher understands literary elements, genres, and movements and demonstrates knowledge of a substantial body of literature.

**Competency 007:** The teacher understands strategies for reading literary texts and provides students with opportunities to formulate, express, and support responses to literature.

The vast majority of this course will be completed via the writing and discussion of fiction readings and writing processes. We will read and write about selections from the required texts for the course. You are expected to participate fully in a completely engaged manner and will be held accountable for your participation, both in formal and informal forums, throughout the completion of the session’s work. All of your participation must be thoughtful, sincere, and tactful. In the pursuit of these goals, we will write a short-short story and a full-length, for-workshop, short fiction manuscript. You will also complete a course journal that will hold course materials generated this semester. The course journal will consist of only assigned writings in the form of “elements.” You will participate in directed workshop feedback of one another’s manuscripts. These also serve as the class participation component of the course, as they include assigned items such as and in particular workshop participation (i.e. comments and reactions to one another’s fiction) and will largely determine the course grade in the journal. You will write an artist's/genesis statement, which will serve as the final examination.
Detailed Assignment Description:

Readings—The readings for the course involve two valuable types of writing: (1) stories by masters of fiction writing and (2) a writing text about fiction writing and writers/scholars. Thus, we will be able to read great and varied examples of fiction as a way to model techniques while also glimpsing the craft of writing via masters’ instruction. I will also post lectures for you to read, in which I will impart ideas regarding craft, often tied to my own writing life. This all allows us to increase confidence in our writing and analytic abilities as a way into our writing and (perhaps) teaching of writing.

Short-Short Story Manuscript—The short-short story is a form growing fast in popularity among writers and readers. It is essentially exactly what it sounds like—a short-short story. The length for these maxes out at six pages and can be as brief as a page (in the form of flash fiction). Our short-shorts will be 2-3 pages in length. Please format using MLA.

Short Story Manuscript—The manuscript will be an original short fiction of 7-10 pages, typed in Times New Roman, twelve-point font and double-spaced, using MLA formatting. It will be turned in as a Word attachment. It will reflect knowledge and execution of the techniques of short fiction which work to create vibrant and fully-realized fiction. The goal of writing the manuscript is to apply the knowledge gained in our readings, discussions, and growing expertise in fiction writing to create an example of the craft. Manuscripts also give us practical work about which we may discuss and analyze craft and the products of this craft. Thus, the manuscript serves as a lab for improved creative and pedagogical techniques. The manuscript is due under the assignment link on its due date. Then, I will post the pieces as discussion boards on the days each manuscript’s workshop discussion board is due. So, you may work ahead, but you must post your comments by its due date. Please note, the initial draft of the manuscript is the graded version. I will respond via the assignment link individually and in a graded format.

Course Journal—The course journal will consist of exercises in The Making of a Story. These exercises are all invention exercises whose goals are to improve techniques in fiction writing as well as abilities to write freely and with confidence. Obviously, the responses are as valuable as the effort put into them. Please feel free to use any of the notebook exercises as inspirations for the manuscripts—they are meant to be such. I will evaluate your effort on these exercises once, at the end of the course. It will be turned in as one continuous journal document in the course journal function in assignments and as a Word doc. You will separate elements with a page break and title each as elements and their numbers (e.g. Element One). Please write the exercises as they are due—this will maximize their success for your writing.

Examinations—These will gauge your abilities to critically synthesize and express experiences and knowledge gained in the class via timed written communications.

Assignments: Students in English 3320 will be required to follow the reading, writing, and discussion environment schedule as presented in the syllabus and be prepared to discuss
assignments at the “class period” in which they are due. Students will be expected to write assignments consistently and timely, as this course only works as well as the students completing the work.

The formal assignments will be weighted as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short-short</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Story</td>
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<td>Midterms Examination</td>
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<td>Course Journal</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Grades:** English 3320 will be graded on a scale of 100 with an A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, and F=59 and below.

**Attendance:** Attendance in this course follows the attendance expectations lined out in the SRSU student handbook. Missed work may only be made up with so penalty if the absence is excused. Excused absences include university-sanctioned school activities, a death of an immediate family member, or an illness which a doctor prescribes bedrest.

**Late Work:** Assignments that are turned in late receive a 10-point deduction, regardless of how late the work is. Thus, an assignment that is graded at a B will be automatically reduced to a C, if the assignment is late. Assignments are due as listed in the schedule. Assignments turned in at any time after the posted due date and time are considered late. Please let me know in advance if you are experiencing a problem. I will not accept any late work after the final examination period for this course. It is completely the student’s responsibility to make arrangements for and to turn in late work. I will not remind students of late or missed work.

**Manuscripts for workshop must be turned in on the date and time due or they will not be workshopped by the class. In addition to not enjoying the readings of peers, this late assignment will lose an additional 10 points.**

**The Writing Center:** The Writing Center is an academic support service available to all Sul Ross students. I strongly encourage you to make the center an integral part of your writing process by visiting the tutors frequently during the semester. The benefits of such visits are readily apparent in your work. The Center is located on the first floor of the library, in the TLC.

**Disabilities Statement:**

SRSU Disability Services:
**ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)** Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartze-Grisham, M. Ed., LPC., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas. Telephone: 432-837-8691. E-mail: mschwartze@sulross.edu.

**Academic Ethics:** Any student who represents someone else’s work as his or her own will automatically receive a zero for that assignment. Plagiarism can be purposeful or inadvertent, but either results in an unacceptable and unethical academic performance. Plagiarism will most likely result in a failure for the course.

**Miscellaneous yet Important:**

If, for any reason, you require accommodations for the successful completion of this course, please let me know as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements.

I require that all discussions of our creative/scholarly work remain tactful, sincere, and highly ethical. Take the time with one another’s work that you would wish taken with your own. If you do not feel up to this challenge, please find another course.

Please stow away all electronic devices in my classroom.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed. Jan 7</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. Jan. 22</td>
<td>Chapter 1 (<em>The Making of a Story</em>)</td>
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<td>Wed. Jan. 24</td>
<td>Fiction Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. Jan. 29</td>
<td>Chapter 2 (<em>The Making of a Story</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. Jan. 31</td>
<td>Fiction Gallery</td>
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<td>Mon. Feb. 5</td>
<td>Chapter 3 (<em>The Making of a Story</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. Feb. 7</td>
<td>Fiction Gallery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon. Feb. 12</td>
<td>Chapter 4 (<em>The Making of a Story</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed. Feb. 14</td>
<td>Fiction Gallery</td>
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Mon. Feb. 19  Chapter 5 (The Making of a Story)

Wed. Feb. 21  Fiction Gallery

Mon. Feb. 26  Chapter 6 (The Making of a Story)

Wed. Feb. 28  Fiction Gallery

Mon. Mar. 5  Chapter 7 (The Making of a Story)

Wed. Mar. 7  Fiction Gallery

Mon. Mar. 12  Spring Holiday!

Wed. Mar. 14  Spring Holiday!

Mon. Mar. 19  Chapter 8 (The Making of a Story)
Wed. Mar. 21    Fiction Gallery

Mon. Mar. 26    Chapter 9 (*The Making of a Story*)

Wed. Mar. 28    Fiction Gallery

Mon. Apr. 2     Chapter 10 (*The Making of a Story*)

Wed. Apr. 4     Fiction Gallery

Mon. Apr. 9     Chapter 11 (*The Making of a Story*)

Wed. Apr. 11    Fiction Gallery

Mon. Apr. 16    Chapter 12 (*The Making of a Story*)

Wed. Apr. 18    Fiction Gallery
Mon. Apr. 23  Chapter 13 (The Making of a Story)

Wed. Apr. 25  Fiction Gallery

Mon. Apr. 30  Fiction Gallery

Wed. May 2  journals due

Final Examination:

*I will not accept late work after the final examination period in complete.