

Policy Statement and Syllabus
English 5302: Multigenre Creative Writing
Summer II 2019

Instructor: Laura Payne, Ph.D.

Email: ibutler@sulross.edu

Office Location: MAB 114

Office Hours: cyber and by appointment

Office Phone: 432.837.8151/8744

Required Text

- Mays, Kelly J., *The Norton Introduction to Literature*, Twelfth Edition.
- Dunkelberg, Kendall, *A Writer's Craft: Multi-genre Creative Writing*.
- Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*.

Course Overview and Expectations

This is an intensive, graduate-level creative writing course that examines, practices, and discusses short fiction and poetry writing and the elements which determine each form. We will do so through close readings and reactions to examples of literature and by writing our own original short stories and poems. Finally, we will write a personal essay which seeks to further our critical thinking skills as they pertain to what we read, how we write, etc.

English 5302 focuses on achieving key expectations including the following:

1. To improve writing using documented methodologies;
2. To apply documented methodologies to the critical examination of canonical literature;
3. To increase confidence in the students' abilities to teach literary analysis and writing in their professional lives;
4. To further our creative skills in original writing.

Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to improve your knowledge of literary genres and elements, and writing techniques through a close consideration of literature and of writing practices. The course will help you to improve your literacy through close readings, and it will aid your abilities to analyze and discuss your ideas about what you read. The course will also help develop your

abilities to write clearly and concisely in the vein of what you read, especially in terms of higher creative pursuits. The course will help you to take part in a wider discussion of genres, furthering your ability to also instruct future students in the literary genres.

At the end of this course the students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe elements which make up literary genres;
2. Understand and describe how to use genre techniques to understand and practice forms;
3. Describe how to apply techniques and methodologies to create successful class discussions and class writings;
4. Describe the foundations of short stories and poems and identify several masters of the each form;
5. Discuss how your own writing craft and processes can serve as openings for thoughtful and successful discussions and pedagogical approaches;
6. Establish pedagogical approaches to both writing and literary studies for future use in professional lives, particularly education.

Course Requirements

Assignments require:

- substantial individual readings from the text;
- substantial writings in both journal form and creative form;
- detailed discussion boards;
- subjective testing.

In addition to the reading and writing assignments, coursework will consist of in-class discussions via discussion boards based on your understanding of what we read and other subjects pertinent to the course. You will be expected to keep up with the reading assignments for each class and then freely to discuss the reading assignments with your instructor and peers. You must complete satisfactory work and actively participate in class to complete English 5302; therefore, consistent online attendance is required for you to pass this course. An online course is not an independent study—at your own pace. This course expects students to log onto the course and to participate daily in order to succeed. The entire course will only run smoothly if all students participate equally.

First Class and Beyond:

On the first day of class, I will post opening/welcoming remarks and suggestions for getting started in the course. On subsequent days, please check announcements for instructions, lectures, and answers to class questions/clarifications to the course, which will also be posted by noon each class day (i.e. Monday-Friday). I will be “off-line” on the weekends, which will begin by 12 p.m. Fridays and continue until 12 p.m. Mondays.

Coursework:

****Please note that you should write attached assignments in Microsoft Word to ensure we may all utilize them. Work may be submitted in “.doc, .docx, or .rtf. Please contact Sandy Bogus at sbogus@sulross.edu (or 432.837.8523) if you have technical problems or questions. Blackboard only works best in **Firefox, Safari, or Chrome** (rather than Explorer). It is free to download.****

Major Assignments: Students are responsible for all assignments in this course and must satisfactorily complete all major assignments in English 5302 to receive a passing grade.

| Major Assignment | % of Final Grade |
|--------------------|------------------|
| | |
| Journal | 20% |
| Fiction Manuscript | 20% |
| Poetry Manuscript | 20% |
| Final Examination | 20% |
| Discussion Boards | 20% |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total Points | 100% |

The vast majority of this course will be completed via the writing and “discussion” of both short fiction and poetry readings. We will read and write about selections from the required text 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 course’s work. All of your participation must be thoughtful, sincere, and tactful. In the pursuit of these goals, we will write one short story manuscript and one poetry 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,” the prompts for which are listed in the syllabus. You will participate in directed discussion boards, which will answer and/or bounce off discussion prompts as listed in the syllabus. These also serve as the class participation component of the course, as they mirror the reading schedule. Discussion boards will largely influence the course grade. Finally, you will turn in a final examination in essay form, which pulls together the work from the semester.

****I expect your coursework to mirror the time you would take with this course if it were an onsite course. Thus, you should spend approximately three hours a day working on this course, with additional time for formal reading and writing assignments determined by your personal pace.**

Detailed Assignment Description:

Discussion Boards—The discussion boards allow us to speak to one another. Think of the discussion boards as the “cyber” equivalent of sitting in a seminar room with one another and talking about our readings, writings, thoughts and reactions to the coursework. The first discussion boards will ask you to do just this. Please answer in detailed manners, using examples and analysis of the why and how of your answers. The posts must be approximately three to four hundred words. Responses to posts should be approximately two hundred words. The discussion boards will improve our teaching and practice of methodologies of fiction and poetry, and theories on and about fiction and poetry through improved abilities to articulate your growing knowledge-base and expertise in the field of creative writing.

Readings—The readings for the course involve two valuable types of writing: (1) short fiction and poetry by masters of literature and (2) theoretical writing about fiction and poetry writing and literary analysis as determined by the text. Thus, we will be able to read great and varied examples of literature as a way to model techniques while also glimpsing the craft of writing via those masters. This allows us to increase confidence in our writing and analytic abilities as a way into our writing and ultimate teaching of writing. All great writers read. Reading serves as a primary and crucial step toward developing our skills.

Short Fiction Manuscript—The fiction manuscript will ask you first to write a brief essay in which you identify and analyze the techniques in one or more of the short stories we have read and which you admire and attempt to model in your own writing. This should be no more than two pages in length. Then the short story will be an original piece of yours in which you indeed attempt to develop techniques of the form. The story will be typed, in Times New Roman font, double-spaced, 7-10 pages in length, and utilize MLA style.

Poetry Manuscript—This assignment requires you to write a five-page manuscript of poems. Like the fiction manuscript, you will write a brief analysis of one or more of the poems we read for class and which you admired, identifying and critically discussing the elements that make the form successful. You will then write five pages of original poems which also attempt to develop the techniques of the form.

Course Journal—The course journal will consist of prompts which ask you to journal about what you read, analyze techniques authors use when writing short fiction and poems, or to expand your own ideas for course writings. The goals of journal exercises are to facilitate clear understanding of literature and writing as well as develop your 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 further, more formal assignments—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 a single Word attachment. But please write the exercises as they are due—this will maximize their success for your endeavors. Each entry should be a minimum of 300 to 500 words. The precise prompts are listed in the syllabus per selected class day.

Final Examination—The final examination will pull together the key ideas and aspects of the advent of the literary forms and of your own writing. That is, I will ask you to write fully-developed essays that explore key concepts and personal analyses of the session's work. The goal of this assignment is to apply our discussions and growing skills in analysis of the short story and of poetry, the readings of such, and your writing skills. It will also measure your ability to pull together the session's significant ideas comprehensively and clearly.

Late Work: All major assignments and/or projects, etc. are due on the dates assigned by midnight, unless otherwise noted. You are responsible for all assignments in this course and must complete all required work in English 5302 to receive a passing grade.

Late assignments will receive a full letter grade deduction for being late. This means, if you turn in your assignment late and it receives a B, it automatically will be reduced to a C.

Attendance: As this is a web-format literature/writing course, consistent participation is absolutely necessary. Remaining current with the course schedule and taking part during the expected due dates will not only keep you personally engaged, but also will ensure that other participants of the course can benefit from your thoughts, ideas, and reactions toward the reading and writing assignments. *If you miss due dates, I will not expect others in the class to consider your work in arrears. Late work will result in an automatic ten points being taken off your grade; thus, if you received a B on an assignment, it will be reduced to a C. I do not accept any late work for this course after the final exam period has ended.*

****Please note that this course is an online format which necessitates that students complete discussion boards and major assignments on the day on which the assignments are made due. Thus, discussion boards must be posted by midnight on the day listed in the syllabus assignment and responses be posted by midnight on the following class day. This will ensure that the course's discussions move forward timely and with minimum inconvenience to your fellow students. After I have graded each discussion board, you may not redo or make it up. Thus, if you miss the assignment, you will not be able to make it up and will lose the credit. Please move on to the next assignment.**

Grading Scale:

Percentages and Grade Equivalents:

A= 90-100% B=80-89% C=70-79% D=60-69% F=59% or below

Disabilities Statement: Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements to ensure the most hospitable and enhancing (cyber) learning environment as possible.

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 Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C., in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8691. E-mail: mschwartz@sulross.edu.

Academic Ethics: It is the responsibility of students and instructors to help maintain scholastic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty. Any student who represents someone else's work as his or her own will automatically receive a zero for that assignment, which will likely result in a failure for the course. 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.

A Writer's Reference: I strongly recommend all students and instructors of writing and literature own and utilize Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*. It is a sound, credible, and particularly usable stylebook.

Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, such as online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. *[If the course requires students to take proctored exams or to purchase additional software or equipment, please describe those requirements here.]* The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Syllabus

| Date | Assignment | Comments |
|--|----------------------------|----------|
| Tue., 9 th July | **Read Course Introduction | |
| <i>The Norton Introduction to Literature:</i> Read: pages 1-42 (excluding stories unless otherwise noted below). “20/20” “Cathedral” | | |
| **Check Announcements!! | | |
| <hr/> | | |
| Wed., 10 th July | | |
| Discussion board 1: Introduce yourself to the class--discuss your professional life, your reading and writing life, your personal bio. To which genre (i.e. prose or poetry) are you most attracted as a read? --a writer? Respond to all posts! | | |
| <i>The Norton Introduction to Literature:</i> | | |
| Read: Chapter One, “Plot,” pages 82-89. “Sonny’s Blues” “Story of an Hour” | | |
| **Check Announcements!! | | |
| <hr/> | | |
| Thurs., 11 th July | | |
| <i>The Norton Introduction to Literature:</i> Read: “Roman Fever” | | |

“A&P”

**Check Announcements!!

Fri., 12th July

Journal element 1: Answer the questions after the assigned stories thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Two, “Narration and Point of View,” pages 160-164

“Girl”

“The Cask of Amontillado”

**Check Announcements!!

Mon, 15th July

Discussion board 2: Identify and discuss the effects of the differing points of view, both in terms of person and tense. Evidence specifically from assigned fiction in your discussion. Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: “The Yellow Wallpaper”

“A Rose for Emily”

**Check Announcements!!

Tues. 16th July

Journal element 2: Answer the questions after the assigned stories thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Three, "Character," pages 180-187
"Barn Burning"

****Check Announcements!!**

Wed., 17th July

Discussion board 3: What is the significance of a character-driven plot to fiction? Why are we more attracted, as readers, to this type of piece? Why is this particularly true for initiation stories? Evidence from assigned fiction in your discussion. Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: "A Good Man Is Hard to Find"
"Good People"

****Check Announcements!!**

Thurs., 18th July

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Four, "Setting," pages 245-247
"A Pair of Tickets"

****Check Announcements!!**

Fri., 19th July

Journal element 3: Answer the questions after the assigned stories thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: “Volar”
“Why I Live at the P.O.”

**Check Announcements!!

Mon., 22nd July Read Fiction Manuscript Assignment

Discussion board 4: How can setting function as a central component of a story? Does it at times feel almost as important as the characters? Note the importance of setting in the stories read last week. In which stories does setting function as a part of the characterization and theme of the pieces? Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Five, “Symbol and Figurative Language,” pages 285-290
“The Birth-Mark”
“Hills Like White Elephants”

**Check Announcements!!

Tues., 23rd July

Journal element 4: Answer the questions after the assigned stories thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Six, “Theme,” pages 334-338
“Love Medicine”

**Check Announcements!!

Wed., 24th July

Discussion board 5: Identify the symbols used in the stories read in the previous week. How do they significantly develop the central meaning of the stories, what you take away from the stories? In addition, the stories read develop poignant themes. Discuss the themes in at least three of the stories. Which elements besides symbols are utilized to develop meaning? Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: “Shiloh”
“The Open Boat”

**Check Announcements!!

Thurs., 25th July

****Fiction Manuscript due!!**

**Check Announcements!!

Fri., 26th July

Journal element 5: Answer the questions after the assigned stories thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: “Poetry,” pages 671-684
“The Art Of Reading Poetry: An Album”
All poems in the above sections

**Check Announcements!!

Mon., 29th July

Discussion board 6: The text gives you many techniques for reading and understanding poems. Which of these reading techniques works best for you? Discuss these in terms of your reading of any three of the poems read for last week. Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Ten, "Speaker: Whose Voice Do We Hear?"

"Exploring Gender: An Album"

All poems in above sections

****Check Announcements!!**

Tues., 30th July

Journal element 6: Answer the questions after the assigned poems thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Eleven, "Situation and Setting: What Happens? Where? When?"

"Homelands: An Album"

All poems in above sections

****Check Announcements!!**

Wed., 31st July ****Read detailed poetry manuscript assignment**

Discussion board 7: Define poetic voice and discuss its particular significance to poetry as a genre. Is the speaker and the poet necessarily one in the same? Discuss the voice any one of the poems read last week. What makes the voice unique to the meaning of the poems? Then, using a poem from the "Homelands" album, discuss the significance of the situation and setting to the messages of the poem. How do the poet create a landscape of culture in the poems, and what is the significance of details of place and situation to the poem's message? Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Twelve, "Theme and Tone"

"Family, An Album"

All poems in above sections

****Check Announcements!!**

Thurs., 1st August

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Thirteen, “Language, Word Choice, and Order”

All poems in above section

****Check Announcements!**

Fri., 2nd August

Journal element 7: Answer the questions after the assigned poems thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: “Chapter Fourteen, “Visual Imagery and Figures of Speech”

All poems in above section

****Check Announcements!!**

Mon., 5th August

Discussion board 8: Discuss how the themes of poems may be developed by tone and word choice (i.e diction) and order (i.e. syntax). Also, why is image crucial to a poem’s success? In the discussion of these concepts, please specifically evidence your points using at least two poems read last week. Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Fifteen, “Symbol”

All poems in above section

****Check Announcements!!**

Tues., 6th August **Read detailed poetry manuscript assignment

Journal element 8: Answer the questions after the assigned poems thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Sixteen, "Sounds"

All poems in above section

**Check Announcements!!

Wed., 7th August

Discussion board 9: Discuss which poems and poets you have enjoyed the most and why. Do you see a trend developing for what and whom you enjoy? Look for aspects of the poems (i.e. time period, formality, subject matter, geography, etc.) that help determine your preferences. Does your place as reader also determine tastes? Respond to 2 posts!

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: Chapter Seventeen, "Internal Structure"

Chapter Eighteen, "External Form"

All poems in above sections

**Check Announcements!!

Thurs., 8th August

****Poetry Manuscript due**

Read Final Examination Assignment

Journal element 9: Answer the questions after the assigned poems thus far and when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: "Reading More Poetry" pgs. 1332-1351

****Check Announcements!!**

Fri., 9th August

Journal element 10: Pull the course together in a personal narrative about your writing. What readings, genres, and writing experienced proved satisfying and enjoyable? What proved challenging?

The Norton Introduction to Literature:

Read: "Reading More Poetry" pgs. 1353-1369

****Check Announcements!!**

Mon., 12th August

****Journals due!!!**

Discussion board 10: Say farewell to your colleagues. Talk about your fiction and poetry manuscripts, about your writing aspirations now that you have a body of work completed. Respond to ALL posts!

****Check Announcements!!**

Tues., 13th August

Catchup Day

****Check Announcements!!**

Wed., 14th August

****Journal Due**

**Check Announcements!!

Thurs., 15th August

**** Final Examination Due**

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