

Sul Ross State University Rio Grande College

Fall 2022

Version 1

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Office Hours: In person: W/Th 1-5:40 p.m., by appointment any day/time

Class Time: TBD

Course Overview and Expectations

This is a 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 short journal entries which seek to further our critical thinking skills as they pertain to what we read, how we write, and how we are read.

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 literature;
3. 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.

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;
4. Describe the foundations of short stories and poems
5. Discuss how your own writing craft and processes can serve as openings for thoughtful and successful discussions and pedagogical approaches;

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Student Learning Outcome #1 – Students will be able to construct documents that demonstrate coherence, development, organization, and appropriate/effective grammar, usage, and mechanics.
2. Student Learning Outcome #2 – Students will be able to analyze and interpret literary works by applying principles of critical thinking, literary criticism, or theoretical engagement.
3. Student Learning Outcome #3 – Students will be able to produce researched documents that demonstrate the ability to locate a variety of credible sources, employ them effectively through quotations and paraphrases, integrate them smoothly into the writer’s own prose, and document them correctly using the style appropriate to the document.

Course Requirements

Course Text

Required:

Steering the Craft: A Twenty-First-Century Guide to Sailing the Sea of Story, Ursula K. LeGuin (978-0544611610)

Dandelion Wine by Ray Bradbury

There will be others as requested by our guest lecturers.

Suggested:

A Swim in a Pond in the Rain: In Which Four Russians Give a Master Class on Writing, Reading, and Life by Saunders, George

The Novel Inside You: Writing, Reading, and Creativity by Magrs, Paul

Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art by McCloud, Scott

Wonderbook (Revised and Expanded): The Illustrated Guide to Creating Imaginative Fiction, VanderMeer, Jeff

Beginnings: Crafting a Story Opening That Hooks Readers, Agents, and Editors Alike, Munier, Paula

Structuring Your Novel: Essential Keys for Writing an Outstanding Story, Weiland, K. M.

The Breakout Novelist: Craft and Strategies for Career Fiction Writers, Maass, Donald

The Emotion Thesaurus: A Writer's Guide to Character Expression, Ackerman, Angela

The Practicing Poet: Writing Beyond the Basics, Lockwood, Diane

Writing with Quiet Hands Munier, Paul

Some books and short stories by our guest lecturers:

The Shadow Galaxy: A Collection of Short Stories and Poetry by J. Dianne Dotson

The Quesstrison Saga® (*Heliopause; Ephemeric; Accretion; and Luminiferous*) by Dotson

Pennyblade by J.L. Worrada

The Feral Space Series by J.L. Worrada

Threading the Labyrinth by Tiffani Angus

The Pottawatomie Giant and Other Stories by Andy Duncan

Wakulla Springs by Andy Duncan and Ellen Klages

Ragged Alice by Gareth L. Powell

The Ack-Ack Macaque series by Gareth L. Powell

Enoch Series by Raphael Ordoñez

Assignments require:

- substantial individual readings from texts;
- substantial writings in both journal form and creative form;
- detailed zoom workshop discussions;

Writing is a labor-intensive and iterative process. 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 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 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. This journal will keep track of, and reflect on, your choice of story or book each week of class. We will also be workshopping each other's works. Workshop is a classic creative writing tool wherein work is shared with other writers for feedback.

Grading

I will be using contract grading in this course.

What is contract grading?

“Contract grading emphasizes writing processes and labor as much or more than final products.”

Since creative writing is inherently subjective to grade I have designed the grading in this class to reflect the effort you put in, and the steps you take to becoming a better writer. I’ve designed the assessment or grading methods of this class so that it rewards all the labor you put into your writing, and so that it rewards the process, and not just the final product.

You will choose which grade you will be aiming for. If you reach all of the targets of that grade, then you earn that grade. If you miss targets you will automatically drop into lower grade categories. If you do not fulfill enough criteria from the course you will receive an F.

In order to receive an A:

1. Complete all Big Assignments on time.
2. Complete all Medium Assignments on time.
3. Complete all Small Assignments on time.
4. One medium/small assignments may be turned in late.
5. Complete all written peer reviews.
6. Attend all workshop days.
7. Attend all guest lectures.
8. One guest lecture or workshop day may be skipped provided written feedback is turned in within three days.

In order to receive a B:

1. Complete all Big Assignments on time.
2. Complete all but two Medium Assignments on time.
3. Complete all Small Assignments on time.
4. Complete all but 1 written peer review.
5. Attend all but 1 days of workshop.
6. Attend all but 1 guest lecture.

In order to receive a C:

1. Complete all Big Assignments on time.
2. Turn in all Medium Assignments.
3. Complete all but two Small Assignments on time.
4. Complete all but 1 written peer review.
5. Attend at least half of workshops.
6. Attend at least 2 guest lectures.

In order to receive a D:

1. Complete all Big Assignments on time.
2. Turn in all but two Medium Assignments.
3. Complete all but three Small Assignments on time.
4. Complete all but 2 written peer reviews.
5. Attendance at workshop is optional.
6. Attendance at guest lectures is optional.

The following will result in failure (F) in the class:

Not turning in the two major assignments.

Failure to complete more than half of the other assignments.

Regular, unexcused absences and/or non-participation.

Big Assignments:

Poems

Short Story

Medium Assignments:

Journal entries

Poetry drafts

Short story drafts

Small Assignments:

Reading assigned work from guest lecturers.

Other class activities:

Workshop of your own work.

Workshop of other's work.

Attending guest lecturers.

“Attending” indicates that you are participating fully, either with camera on or vocally asking questions and responding or commenting.

ADA Statement

SRSU Rio Grande College is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disability Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in gaining opportunities for full participation in programs, services and activities. The Disability Services Coordinator is the Director of Student Services 830-758-5006 in Eagle Pass, Texas.

Blackboard

This course requires numerous written assignments, all of which *must* be submitted to Blackboard by the published deadline.

Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, 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. 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.

My goal is your success! I welcome all requests for phone or video conference appointments, and e-mailed questions.

Schedule

Subject to change!

Week 1 August 22nd

Intro to course, creative writing, form, journals and guest lecture on workshopping from author James Worrad

Week 2 August 29th

Poetry (sound and emotion)

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 1 Due

Week 3 Sept. 5

Poetry (punctuation)

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 2 Due

Read: *Dandelion Wine* by Ray Bradbury

Week 4 Sept. 12

Poetry (sentences, voice)

Guest lecture from J. Dianne Dotson (Sept. 14, world-building and lyrical prose)

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 3 Due

Week 5 Sept. 19

Poetry (repetition)

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 4 Due

Poetry Draft Due

Week 6 Sept. 26

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 5 Due

Workshop Poetry

Week 7 Oct. 3

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 6 Due

Week 8 Oct. 10

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 7 Due

Week 9 Oct. 17

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 8 Due

Week 10 Oct. 24

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 9 Due

Week 11 Oct. 31

Reading from LeGuin, Journal 10 Due

Week 12 Nov. 7

Reading, Journal 11 Due

Week 13 Nov. 14

Short Story Draft Due

Short Story Workshop

Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 Nov. 28

Short Story Workshop

Short Story and Poetry Due Dec. 5th

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