

Creative Writing; Fiction: Eng. 3320
Spring 2025
Tues & Thur 11-12:15 Briscoe 305
Sidney Balman Jr, Writer In Residence & Professor
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Office Hours: M-Th By Appointment

1. Instructional Materials

- In this order read: Shawshank Redemption, Stephen King. On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft; Stephen King. Erasure, Percival Elliot. Seventh Flag, Sid Balman Jr. 1984, George Orwell.
- Supplemental reading materials available online or provided by instructor
- Outside research
- Access to Netflix, Twitter (X), Facebook and Instagram

2. Course Overview

- This course is designed for students who are serious about studying all aspects of fiction and fiction writing. It is not a survey course in world literature, rather focusing almost exclusively on stories that are relevant to our time.
- It is also intended to develop your research, analytic abilities, writing skills and awareness of current events. Fiction, even dystopic fiction, at its best incorporates current trends and events. Fact is always stranger than fiction.
- By the end of this course, you should have a deep understanding of modern fiction content and the ability to write it.
- This course will incorporate all aspects of modern content, including books, movies, and social media.
- Assignments and tests will be administered in person.

3. Course Primary Learning Objectives

- By the conclusion of this course the student should be proficient in:
 - i. Analyzing fictional content
 - ii. Writing fictional content
 - iii. Analyzing current events

4. Student Learning Outcomes

- The successful student will be able to:
 - i. Develop works of fictional content
 - ii. Analyze fictional content
 - iii. Understand current events and incorporate them into your writing

5. Course Requirements

- Students are expected to attend class and participate in exercises
- Review news daily on <https://apnews.com> (Free) and be aware of international, national and local current events
- Assignments are due on the day indicated in the syllabus. Late assignments will be reduced by a full letter grade unless the student provides a medical excuse from a doctor or a verified family emergency.
- Final writing project
- Participation in class discussion required.
- Students in this class must abide by appropriate online behavior.

6. Criteria for Grade Evaluation

- Each student will be graded on the basis of adherence to the assignment's guidelines in an effective and comprehensive way. Effort and improvement over the course of the term are the two most important criteria for grading.
- Evaluation of performance in this class is largely subjective, and as such this aspect of the class will be solely at the professor's discretion.
- There will be regular unannounced news quizzes during class
- Quizzes and Final Project: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=0-59

7. Students with Disabilities:

- It is Sul Ross State University policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodation because of a physical, mental or learning disability, please contact the ADA Coordinator for Program Accessibility, who is located in FH 112 or call Mary Schwartze at 432.837.8203. All requests for special accommodations must be related in writing to the professor prior to the second week of classes.

8. Academic Honesty:

- "The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials."
– Excerpt from the Student Handbook

9. SRSU Library Services

- The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

10. A copy of this syllabus will be posted on the Department of Language and Literature web page and on Blackboard.

See Following Page For Course Calendar/Syllabus (Subject to Change at Instructor's Discretion)

Date	Assignment Due	Reading/Viewing
1.16	No Class	No Class
Week 1	Review Syllabus Review Current News	Writing assignment Read and discuss Shawshank Redemption
Week 2	Review Current News	Writing assignment Finish and discuss Shawshank Redemption
Week 3	Review Current News	Watch Shawshank Redemption in class. Remote students watch on their own.
Week 4	Review Current News	Writing assignments Read and discuss On Writing by Stephen King
Week 5	Review Current News	Writing Assignment Read and discuss On Writing
Week 6	Review Current News	Writing Assignment Finish and discuss On Writing
Week 7	Review Current News	Writing assignment Read and discuss Erasure; Percival Everett
Week 8	Spring Break; relax, have fun!	Read Erasure
Week 9	Review Current News	Writing assignment Finish and discuss Erasure
Week 10	Review Current News	Watch American Fiction, movie version of Erasure
Week 11	Review Current News	Writing assignment Read and discuss Seventh Flag, by Sid Balman Jr.
Week 12	Review Current News	Writing assignment Finish and discuss Seventh Flag
Week 13	Review Current News	Read and discuss 1984 Discuss final writing project
Week 14	Review Current News	Read and discuss 1984 Discuss Final writing project

May 1	Review Current News	Final writing project Due
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