





Spring 2016

ENGL F3xx F01

Pre-reqs: ENGL111X; ENGL 211X or 213X; ENGL 271; or instr. permission

TR 2-3.30 (Gruening 304)

3 credits

Prof. G. Brightwell

Office hours: T 3.30-4, W 5.30-6, R 10-11

Office: Gruening 822

Office tel. 474-5209

Email: gabrightwell@alaska.edu

### **Intermediate Creative Writing: Fiction**

**Course Description:** Forms and techniques of fiction. Students' work read and discussed in class and in conference with the instructor. Close study of the techniques of established writers. ENGL F111X; ENGL F211X or ENGL F213X; ENGL F271; or permission of instructor. (3+0)

So you want to write stories? Maybe you've only ever dreamed about writing, or perhaps you already have a drawer full of stories, only they're not *quite* ready to be sent out into the big world. This is the class for you! We will cover everything from generating ideas to editing your work. You'll learn what scenes are, and why you need them. You'll get to grips with characters, and description, and structure. You'll think about what different sorts of fiction require of you—and what readers expect from them..

This should be a course you throw your heart into—your writing will only come alive if you dedicate yourself to it, and are prepared to weather the hard work and disappointments. After all, learning to write means putting words down on the page and discovering that they are not what we expected or hoped; it is about hammering away at a piece of writing until it shines in the way we had imagined when it existed only in our heads. It is very much about learning to pay close attention to the effects words produce. In short, it is hard work, and not an easy way to earn a grade.

My aim is to give you plenty of chances to start pieces, and the time and feedback to turn those that work best into finished stories. To this end, most of your graded work will be made up of a variety of short exercises and quizzes, plus four complete stories (including one s6(e)4(. un28)20( t)-2bu(s)-

develop an understanding of how to submit their work for publication, and the sorts of venues available;

learn how to give critical feedback on short stories by participating in small-group and whole-class workshops.

**Here are the texts you will need:**

*Writing Fiction*. Janet Burroway et al. **8<sup>th</sup> edition**. Longman (not earlier editions!).

College-level dictionary and thesaurus (for home use)

Small notebook (recommended)

**Course policies**

By staying in the class, you agree to abide by the rules below so make sure you are familiar with them. Please note that they are not open to negotiation.

(1) *email*: **you must check your university email account regularly** as this is the means I may use to contact you with any course changes and extra information. It is particularly important that you check your email after handing in assignments, especially at the end of the semester, in case there are problems with your work.

(2) *academic honesty and behaviour*: all work must be written specifically for this class and must be entirely your own. Unacknowledged inclusion of other writers' words, ideas or information in your work (even by accident) could result in failure of an assignment or of the course, or in more serious consequences. Plagiarism that seems more than oversight will be reported. In addition, students are expected to abide by the Student Code of Conduct.

(3) *writing consultation*: I will meet with you individually twice during the semester to discuss your work (you are welcome to see me more frequently if you wish). Failing to come to a writing consultation will be equivalent to a week's worth of absences. I will expect you to come with specific questions to discuss with me. I am also available to answer short questions via email, but not within 48 hours of an assignment due date. If you have queries about your grade for an assignment, you may contact or meet with me at least 48 hours after receiving your grade, but be aware that grades are not open to negotiation.

(4) *document formatting*: all work must be word-processed and use MLA layout (see checklist page 7). Do not use a separate title page. Page counts are for *full* pages of writing, unless otherwise specified. Attach pages with a staple (**no loose papers, no paperclips or folders**).

(5) *grading*: producing effective imaginative writing requires skill, perseverance, and a strong sense of the strategies and techniques used by successful writers. Your work should be clear in

**I also use plus and minus grades.**

handouts and assignment information to you on request. I do not provide a summary of the material covered in class—for that, you must contact other students.

(8) *dropping the course*: if you decide not to complete the course you should drop by the last date for withdrawal to avoid an academic penalty. If you simply stop attending you may remain on my course list and receive an F. If you have serious problems that mean you miss a substantial portion of the course, you should consult with your advisor about withdrawal.

(9) *in-class writing, quizzes, and exercises*: we will usually have *at least* one piece of in-class writing or a quiz, and a short exercise each week. If you are absent, consult with me about how to make-up missed work. Please note that, to be counted towards your grade, work must be completed in a timely manner. We will also have quizzes on our reading. Quizzes cannot be made up.

(10) *student support*: the university offers a range of support systems (contact the Office of Student Support Services). I highly recommend the Writing Center (8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Gruening), particularly tutors pursuing advanced degrees in creative writing. If you need special accommodations made for you because of a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (474-7043).

### Assignments

Participation (inc. written responses to peers) 10%

In-class writing/exercises/quizzes 10%

Assignment #1 15%\* \*\*

Assignment #2 20%\* \*\*

Assignment #3 (short-short submitted for publication with students required to research appropriate venue for their work) 20%\* \*\*

Assignment #4 25%\* \*\*

\* **A** A majority of the final grade is derived from writing activities (80%)

\*\* **B** A research paper/project (students are required to submit four writing projects)

**Drafts:** as you work on your stories, keep your drafts. Turn in one draft with each assignment (usually the draft submitted to a workshop).

**Assignments:** original short stories, approximately 6-8 pages long (except for assignment #3). Must be handed in with drafts

finished assignment (top), commentary, and draft/s (bottom) stapled together to be handed in.

**If you do not fulfil these basic requirements, your assignment may be returned ungraded for revision, or may be graded down (possibly to a grade of F).**

**Course schedule**

Jen "Who's Irish" 323-332

Week 5: Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> Feb

Time

Discuss: "Long Ago" 208-214, 218-222

Divakaruni "Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter" 239-243

Gould "Feelers" 244--



Imagined worlds, in all their strange glory (hand-outs will be provided)

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> Apr

Submitting work for publication—submitting short-shorts

**Assignment #3 due**

Week 12: Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> Apr

Whole class workshop #1 (read work beforehand and bring 2 copies of each letter)

**D Drafts/revision/feedback**

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> Apr

Whole class workshop #2 (read work beforehand and bring 2 copies of each letter)

**D Drafts/revision/feedback**

Week 13: Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> Apr

Whole class workshop #3 (read work beforehand and bring 2 copies of each letter)

**Drafts/revision/feedback**