

ENGLISH 3303: Creative Writing
Fall 2015
8-9:15 Bowen 250

Professor: Ms. Becky Hagenston (not Dr., not Mrs.)

Office: Lee 2006

Office Hours: 10-12 M, 1-2 TTh and by appointment

Email: bhagenston@english.msstate.edu (if you email after 5pm, I'll get back to you the following morning)

English Dept. Main Office: 325-3644

Required Texts and Materials (*please do NOT order electronic copies of the texts*)

The Art and Craft of Fiction, Michael Kardos

In the Palm of Your Hand by Steve Kowit

The Girls of Peculiar by Catherine Pierce

Stories and handouts to be printed from MyCourses

Notebook for in class writing (bring this to class each day)

4 folders or manila envelopes

Binder or accordion file for turning in portfolio

You are also responsible for making copies of your work to bring for workshop.

You will lose participation points for not bringing the assigned texts/handouts to class.

BACK UP ALL YOUR WORK. I will not accept any "My computer crashed" excuses!

Course Goals and Objectives:

This is an advanced writing class for people who already have a strong grasp of grammar and sentence mechanics and—most importantly—love to read, and want to learn the techniques writers use to create poems and stories. It's important to keep in mind that not only do all the rules of grammar and sentence mechanics apply in creative writing, but there are additional rules to learn as well! **If you have difficulties with punctuation and grammar, you should be prepared to devote extra time to all assignments and use the Writing Center.**

Please note: You can't get higher than a C on any written work that has grammar/sentence/punctuation problems or that does not meet the minimum length requirements.

This course will introduce you to poetry and short fiction from a writer's perspective. This means that we will read the class material as writers, with an eye on how structure, language, metaphor, and other tools of writing work to create compelling literature. This means, as well, that your writing will be read and discussed by the class. Attendance and class participation are crucial elements to the course.

In this course, you will be writing and reading “literary fiction”—no sci fi, no children’s stories, no fantasy, horror, historical fiction, erotica, romance, or vampires.

Student Responsibilities:

You will read and write a great deal this semester. You are required to read and comment on classmates' work with care, and offer friendly, constructive criticism in workshop. Type and double-space everything except poetry for this class (poems should be single-spaced), and save each draft.

Assignments:

Your notebooks will be used in class discussions and for in-class exercises. Bring your notebook to class every day.

You will complete one 10-15 page story and 3 poems, all of which you may revise. *When you turn in more than one draft of anything, please deliver them in a folder or manila envelope.* Besides the final draft, include copies of your earlier drafts, workshop comments, and notes. Remember to save and print out drafts for this purpose. Organize everything in the folder chronologically, with the latest draft on top. **I will not accept revisions that do not contain this material.**

Grading

Each portion of the course carries the following weight:

Short Story	30 % (This story is <i>over</i> 10 pages. A story that does not go on to the 11 th page—with 1 inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font, no extra spaces between paragraphs—cannot earn higher than a C)
Poem #1	7
Report for Poem 1	3
Poem #2	7
Report for Poem 2	3
Poem #3	7
Report for Poem 3	3
Quizzes and homework	20
Story Critiques	5
Self-Evaluation	10 (This is <i>over</i> 3 pages. Same font/margin format as story)
Class Participation	<u>5</u>
	100

Grading Scale:	90 or above = A
	80-89 = B
	70-79 = C
	60-69 = D
	below 60 = F

Attendance and participation are absolutely necessary for this course. You are allowed 2 absences, but after that your participation grade will be 0/5. If you wish to do well in this class, you will not miss any classes at all. I don't need to know why you were absent, but it's important that you're prepared for the next class.

The way to get full participation points is to come to each class on time, do your work, bring required materials to class (including the book and poems/stories we're discussing that day) and be prepared to discuss the day's assignments.

Missing 6 or more classes or being late 12 times = F
(except in extreme and documented circumstances)

THERE ARE NO MAKE UP QUIZZES FOR ANY REASON. Quizzes are at the beginning of class, so be on time.

The Emergency Assignment:

I will not accept late writing assignments or critiques. You are allowed TWO emergency assignments, to be posted on MyCourses. Be sure to post BEFORE class (as an attachment in Word). (If for some reason you can't get this to work, you may email it to this address: **bhagenston@english.msstate.edu.**) If it doesn't attach, if I can't open it, if you misspell my name and it bounces back, if it doesn't go through—then it doesn't count. It's your responsibility to make sure that the attachment attaches. (If you email it, make sure it's in your sent mail.)

Policy on Late Work: **I do not take late work.** Late = 0

Attendance Policy:

I take creative writing very seriously and am committed to the success of this class, so understand that I expect you to *come to each class prepared*. **If you want to do well, you will not miss any classes at all.**

Arriving late, leaving early, or attending class unprepared (especially coming without papers for workshop) not only disrupts class but may count as an absence. If you do miss a class, contact me *immediately* (come to my office hours or else send me an email) to find out what you missed. (You will have missed a lot!)

2 Lates (after I've taken roll or handed out the quizzes) = 1 absence. **Texting in class = 1 absence.** Texting during class is rude and disruptive.

There will be a lot of assignments to print from MyCourses, and I may give assignments that are not on the syllabus—*it is your responsibility to contact me if you miss a class so that you can be prepared for the following class.*

Email Etiquette:

Please feel free to email me (bhagenston@english.msstate.edu) if you have a question or need clarification on an assignment. All emails should begin with my name and conclude with your name.

I am happy to respond to any email that is both **necessary** (you need clarification on an assignment or to find out what you missed if you were absent) and **polite**.

Classroom Decorum:

Cell phones must be on SILENT (or OFF) and OUT OF SIGHT—that means it's not on your lap under your desk. No computers on desks, either. Please do not read newspapers or out-of-class material. If I see you texting or checking your phone, I will count that as an absence.

Class Schedule:

Readings and written assignments are due on the day they appear on the syllabus.

Please keep in mind that the schedule is subject to change.

Student Honor Code

Mississippi State has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students. The code is as follows: "As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do." Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor Code. Student will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor Code. For additional information, please visit: <http://honorcode.msstate.edu/policy>.

Title IX

MSU is committed to complying with Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination, including violence and harassment, based on sex. This means that MSU's educational programs and activities must be free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual violence and/or harassment by any member of the University community, you are encouraged to report the conduct to MSU's Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 325-8124 or by e-mail to titleix@msstate.edu. Additional resources are available at www.msstate.edu/web/security, or students.msstate.edu/sexualmisconduct/

Support Services

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should visit the Office of Student Support Services, 01 Montgomery Hall, call 662-325-3335, or visit the website at www.sss.msstate.edu.

The Writing Center

There are several locations (President's Circle, Templeton Athletic Center, mobile sites) as well as online appointments. Please go to <http://www.writingcenter.msstate.edu/>.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism of any kind constitutes grounds for failing the course and may result in further disciplinary action. It is academically dishonest, and often illegal, to present someone else's ideas or writing as your own. It is also academically dishonest to submit your own previously written work for a current assignment or to submit an assignment in more than one class without previous knowledge and permission of the instructors.

Cheating on any assignments or quizzes, helping someone cheat, or plagiarizing will result in an XF in the course.

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Schedule is subject to change, and almost certainly will!

- T 8/18 Introduction to course and in-class assignments
Bring to class: *The Girls of Peculiar*
- Th 8/20 QUIZ: Syllabus
PRINT and READ: "Are You Mister Lonelee?" by Brad Watson (on MC)
- T 8/25 READ: Kowitz Chapter 2. Find one poem in Ch. 2 *and* one poem in Pierce that you especially like. There's no written assignment due, but please take careful notes and be prepared to discuss.

READING: Brad Watson / 3:30 Fowlkes Auditorium

- Th 8/27 PRINT and READ: Poetry Handout (on MyCourses—print and bring to class!)
Read Pierce
DUE: 300 + words on one poem (in the handout or Pierce) you particularly admire, and why. Follow the Basic Guidelines handout. Counts as a 10-point homework assignment. Include word count. This is entirely your own work. Please do not Google these or any poems.

BRING: Poetry Terms, Poem 1 Instructions, Poem 1 Worksheet, Poem 1 Report Instructions, Lineation

- T 9/1 QUIZ: Terms and Lineation
READ: Kowitz Chs. 5 and 11
Assignment: Choose 2 of the poems from Chapter 11 and type up a list of the 5 most vivid images in each

Workshop sign-up

Th 9/3 **DUE: Poem 1. Everyone turns this in,** and the following 4 people bring ___
copies:

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____

WORKSHOP: 1 and 2

T 9/8 Workshop 3, 4 (bring typed worksheets)
READ: *The Art and Craft of Fiction*, Chapters 1 and 2
Be an active reader: I expect you to underline/highlight useful info in the book,
and/or take notes.

Th 9/10 READ: "This is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona" (185-)
DUE: assignment TBA

T 9/15 READ: "In the Land of Men" (on MC)
READ: Kardos chapters 3 and 4

Part 2 of schedule to follow