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ENGL 111-001
MWF 10:30-11:20, Hodges 222

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English 111: Introduction to Creative Writing

Welcome to Introduction to Creative Writing. Whether you're here because you love to write or you want to improve your skills for the job market, we're all going to have fun with writing this semester. In this class, you'll get to write poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction, and you'll be ready if you want to take a more specialized course in one or more of these genres in the future.

When it gets warmer, we'll meet outside sometimes and write about the people and landscape around us. The most important things in this class are to have fun, read thoroughly (you have to read well to write well!), focus intently on the elements that make great writing great, and be respectful of other students.

What You Need:

Heather Sellers, *The Practice of Creative Writing*. ISBN:9781457628030

Ted Kooser, *Winter Morning Walks*. ISBN:0887483364.

Bill Henderson, *Puschcart Prize XXXVII: Best of the Small Presses* ISBN: 9781888889659.

James Thomas and Robert Shepard, *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*. ISBN:9780393328028

Judith Kitchen & Mary Paumier Jones, *In Short: A Collection of Brief Creative Nonfiction*. ISBN:9780393314922.

A spiral notebook for in-class writing and a 3-prong folder or small binder where you can keep and organize your work.

Folder to keep track of classmates work.

Also, note that you will have to make photocopies of your projects for each member of the class.

What We'll Be Doing:

Creative Projects: We'll start out with poetry, then we'll move to fiction, and lastly to creative nonfiction essays. For poetry, you'll be turning in 1-3 poems, for fiction, one 4-8 page story, and for nonfiction, one 4-8 page essay. Poems should be single spaced and stories and essays should be double spaced. Use font 12 Times New Roman.

The work has to be something you write DURING THIS COURSE. Talk to me if you have questions or concerns. On the day projects are due, you will bring 21 copies (or 20 not counting yourself), and we'll pass them out to everyone in the class so we can read them at home and then discuss them as a group. Everyone will be assigned a number, make sure to put your number on the top of all of your submissions. You can tell which number to read for which day on the class schedule. When you get each project back, you will get an in-process grade that isn't final and just lets you know where the project is right now. You'll have the opportunity to revise and raise your grade before you turn in the final portfolio. Your grade for these projects will be based on following the elements of literary writing that we talk about in class, overall structure, and neatness.

Workshop Comments: On the day that we workshop particular projects, you need to give a typed page (double-spaced is fine) to the writer and a copy to me. These comments will be graded. You also may want to make comments in the margins on the draft itself and return the draft to the writer. In your page of comments, focus on the elements that we've talked about in class, and try to be constructive and respectful of what the writer wants the piece to say and do.

Creative Sketches: Throughout the semester, I'll ask you to do homework assignments that let you practice skills and come up with ideas you might want to use in your projects. Unless I tell you otherwise in class, sketches should be at least one full double-spaced page, font 12, Times New Roman.

Written Thoughts for Reading Assignments: When you have a reading assignment for homework, you'll need to turn a short paragraph (handwritten OK) for each poem, story, or essay that 1) tells what you liked most about the piece, and 2) tells one interesting thing about the writing of the piece that you can share with the class. So, if you have two pieces to read, you'll write two short paragraphs. We'll be discussing the readings in class, and the point of these paragraphs is that you'll be ready to add to the discussion.

Response to a Local Creative Reading: Throughout the semester, I will make you aware of creative readings going on around campus and in Morgantown. By the last day of class, you need to go to one reading and write a full page (font 12, Times New Roman) about what you heard and saw. It's fun and interesting to hear what other writers are doing. You might want to go to them all ☺.

Participation: When we workshop, you'll be expected to contribute to the discussions of each other's work. As a class, we'll work to preserve a positive, respectful atmosphere so everyone feels confident to express his or her opinion. Also, you'll have the opportunity to earn participation points throughout the semester by contributing to reading discussions and by volunteering to read out loud.

Some Course Policies:

Grading system: For the creative sketches, the pages of written workshop comments, the response to a local reading, and the written thoughts for reading assignments, you will get a grade of check plus (3 pts), check (2 pts), check minus (1 pt), or no credit. I'll drop one creative sketch and one reading assignment.

Attendance: Attendance is important in creative writing because you need to be in class to practice the skills you'll need to complete your projects, and when we start workshoping, you need to be there to give your input about other students' work. I know things happen, so you can miss **4** times without penalty. For a fifth absence, your grade will drop one letter. For a 6th, your grade will drop another letter. If you miss **SEVEN TIMES YOU WILL FAIL** the course. Note: It's extremely important for you to be there when other students have taken the time to comment on your work, so except for extreme emergencies, **if you miss a workshop of your own work, your course grade will drop one letter.**

Late Work: Please turn your projects in on time so we'll have time to read and workshop them. Late projects will be dropped a letter grade. It's unfair to other students for you to email your work because other students will then have to print your project. Late reading assignments won't be counted since they aren't useful after the class discussion. Late creative sketches will be docked one point.

Plagiarism: We'll of course expect that everything you turn in will be your own work. If not, we'll have to follow the WVU academic dishonesty policy, which can result in automatic failure of the course.

Grade Breakdown:

45% for your final writing portfolio

30% for short assignments, including creative sketches, the response to a local creative reading, and written thoughts for reading assignments

10% for written comments for the workshops of your classmates' writing

15% for participation

Schedule of Work

**Subject to change according to progress.

January		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
14 Welcome!	16 Poetry	18 Poetry
21 <i>NO CLASS—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i>	23 Poetry	25 Poetry
28 Poetry	30 Poetry Due	Feb 1 Poetry Workshop #1-5

February		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
4 Poetry Workshop #6-10	6 Poetry Workshop #11-15	8 Poetry Workshop #16-20
11 Fiction	13 Fiction	15 <i>Out of Class Writing Day</i>
Fiction	20 Fiction	22 Fiction
25 Fiction Due	27 Fiction Worskhop #1-3	Mar 1 Fiction Worskhop #4-6

March		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
4 Fiction Workshop #7-9	6 Fiction Workshop #10-12	8 <i>Out of Class Writing Day</i>
11 Fiction Workshop #13-15	13 Fiction Workshop #16-18	15 Fiction Workshop #18-20
18 Nonfiction	20 Nonfiction	21 Nonfiction
25 NO CLASS – Spring Break!	27 NO CLASS - Spring Break!	29 NO CLASS - Spring Break!

April		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1 Nonfiction	3 Nonfiction	5 Nonfiction Due
8 Nonfiction Workshop #1-3	10 Nonfiction Workshop #4-6	12 Nonfiction Workshop #7-9
15 Nonfiction Workshop #10-12	17 Nonfiction Workshop #13-15	19 Nonfiction Workshop #16-18
22 Nonfiction Workshop #18-20	24 Poetry Revision	26 Fiction Revision

April/May		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Apr 29 Nonfiction Revision	May 1 Class is Canceled for Conferences! You will meet with Rebecca in Eliza's. Bring your papers. We can discuss any questions you may have.	May 3 (Last Day of Classes for Fall semester) Class Activities: The end! Read around! Due Today: <u>FINAL PORTFOLIO</u> Have a wonderful summer!

***Portfolios Returned By Final Exam Time Slot**