

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 366.01
COURSE TITLE: Fiction Writing I

Fall/Winter, 2015/16

Instructor: Dawn Bryan

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Office hours: Wednesday, 16:30 – 17:30

Homepage/course website: Any supplemental materials will be posted on D2L

Course description: Students in English 366 will undertake a careful study of the basics of fiction writing. This course recognizes that writers at every level benefit from a thorough scrutiny of the fundamentals of both the theory and practice of writing fiction. Students will begin by identifying and attentively considering the building blocks of narrative. As the course progresses, students will learn to combine newly honed skills to produce complete short works.

Texts and readings: *The Art and Craft of Fiction: A Writer's Guide* by Michael Kardos. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013. This text is available through the campus bookstore or online.

Assignments and Evaluation:

All assignments must be typed and double-spaced, employing a legible font and 1" margins. Do not provide a title page, but on the first page include the following information: your name, the instructor's name, the course number and section, the date, and a brief, descriptive title. Please include your last name and page numbers on all subsequent pages. You *must* staple your assignment. No binders, folders or other containers, please. Students may format assignments differently where graphic elements are a necessary component of the work. Please speak with the instructor if this is the case.

1. Writing Exercises (4 at 5% each; 20% total)

In the fall term, students will complete four (4) Writing Exercises. Writing Exercises are assigned explorations of a key aspect of the basics of fiction writing. Each exercise will be short (no more than two double-spaced pages in length, according to the specific exercise). Students will submit exercises directly to the instructor, and each is due according to the distributed schedule.

2. Short Fiction Assignment & Critique (3 at 15% each; 45% total)

One (1) Short Fiction Assignment is due in the fall term. Two (2) Short Fiction Assignments are due in the winter term. Short Fiction Assignments are a chance for students to continue to explore the theory and practice of fiction writing. Each assignment will comprise a short work of fiction, complete in itself and no more than eight double-spaced pages in length.

Each Short Fiction Assignment will receive oral and written critique from classmates. Critique is an essential component of creative writing pedagogy, and a student's willingness to receive constructive criticism in the form of critique is a necessary part of English 366. At the beginning of fall term, the class will schedule all critiques.

Students must submit a paper copy of each Short Fiction Assignment to the instructor *one week prior* to the date on which it is to be critiqued in class. Also *one week prior* to critique, an identical copy of the assignment will be made available to classmates so they may read and prepare a written critique. At the start of term, the class will determine the best method for making assignments available to one another for critique.

Students should make every effort not to miss a scheduled critique, either their own or that of a classmate. Missed critiques will be rescheduled as time allows.

3. Capstone Short Fiction Assignment (15%)

Due at the end of winter term, the Capstone Short Fiction Assignment will comprise a short work of fiction, no more than eight double-spaced pages in length. This assignment is a chance for students to demonstrate mastery of skills explored over the course of the year. Students will submit the Capstone Short Fiction Assignment in class, directly to the instructor. There will be no classroom critique for this assignment.

4. Participation/Written Critiques (10% for fall term; 10% for winter term; 20% total)

This grade includes attendance and participation, as well as preparation in the form of a Written Critique (one page, double-spaced). Students must prepare a separate Written Critique for *each* of their classmates' Short Fiction Assignments scheduled for classroom discussion. Each student must provide two (2) copies of their Written Critique to the instructor at the beginning of the class when that assignment is due for critique. The instructor will distribute one of these to the student whose work is critiqued, and the other will remain with the instructor for grading purposes.

Each student will receive an indication of the fall term component of this grade by the first week of the winter term. The instructor will indicate the winter term grade as soon as classes end.

Please note: as many as four students may be critiqued in a single class. Students taking English 366 will read and comment on approximately 30 pages of student work each week. Students will also write regularly and complete all other course readings. English 366 is a reading/writing intensive class, and students *must* be ready to spend the time necessary to prepare fully.

Also, please consider that participation includes a willingness to communicate insights, as well as a toleration of silence while classmates prepare to speak. At all times, students must demonstrate respect for their classmates and their work. Class discussion will provide an on-going consideration of the ethics of critique, but be aware that personal comments and inappropriate language/behaviour constitute academic misconduct and will be treated as such.

There is no Registrar scheduled exam for this course.

All four (4) Short Fiction Assignments (including the capstone assignment) must be complete in order to receive a passing grade on the course. No extra-credit assignments will be considered.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each business day [not class] that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted one week past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

Please make every effort to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

Grading system:

The University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System, as described in the Calendar (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>), will be used in this course.

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

The instructor will use the following descriptions in assigning grades to all student work.

A: Consistently exceptional work

Outstanding or superior performance that shows a comprehensive understanding of subject matter. The work is moving toward a publishable level. The use of language is precise, original, imaginative and compelling; if applicable, the content of the work is treated in a fresh, new way, and the form chosen is the best possible. Writing in this range employs every element of the genre with sophistication and elegance.

B: Consistently good work

Good, clearly above average performance. The work demonstrates originality, control, and generally exact and thoughtful use of language, but could use more refinement or development, and more revision. It shows at least in part a heightened awareness of language and image, and an original perspective or point of view.

C: Consistently average work

The work is satisfactory, but relies on ordinary, even somewhat predictable use of language. Work in this range is formally not innovative, although the writing will be competent, even promising. The material will definitely need more work, more layering, more texture. Image and sound but may verge on clichéd and predictable.

D: Minimal pass

The work shows some effort but is carelessly constructed. Use of language will be undistinguished and clichéd, ideas ordinary, even predictable.

F: No credit

Work shows no effort or flippant treatment of the assignment; no work has been done at all.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Electronic device and Internet use

Students may use computers and other electronic devices for course-related activities only. Be aware that the use of electronic devices may be distracting to other members of the class. Please be courteous in your use of such items. Gaming, inappropriate browsing, and texting are not acts of courtesy, and students who are a distraction to others may be asked to leave the classroom.

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events

<http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

Writing support:

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<http://www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/eetiquette.htm>

Library and Research Support:

Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: maboymd@ucalgary.ca

Find *The English Pages* research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:



Academic regulations and schedules:

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available

at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf.

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

“Safewalk” Program:

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at

ascarts@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at

<http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses (www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>) "The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community". The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a "positive and productive learning and working environment." This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that "seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff". Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.