

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

ENGLISH 366A-01, 366B-01
COURSE TITLE: Fiction Writing I

Fall/Winter 2012-13

Instructor: Suzette Mayr

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Office Hours:

(Fall 2012) Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:00 pm

(Winter 2013) Tuesday/Thursday 5:00-6:00 pm

or by appointment

Homepage/Course Website: <http://english.ucalgary.ca/profiles/suzette-mayr>

Course Description:

Prerequisite: Consent of the Department.

English 366 is an introduction to the art of fiction writing, with particular emphasis on the short prose form. This class will be conducted as a workshop, with students required to critique one another's writing over the course of the year. Students will also complete several creative writing exercises, present one group stylistic analysis to class, and both attend and report on two readings or literary events that occur outside of class

Students are expected to read and write a great deal, to discuss published fiction as well as their classmates' writing, and to come to class prepared to discuss this writing with constructive, informed and intelligent criticism. The workshop format does not imply group work, but all-class participation under the instructor's direction. Students will bring to class enough copies of their work to distribute to all of the other members of the class, and students are expected to come to class a week later having read that material and prepared with constructive criticism and relevant responses.

Over the year, students will be required to write five one-page exercises, and three short stories that will be workshopped in class, one in the first term and two in the second term. A fourth story, which will not be workshopped, is due to the instructor at the end of the year. Each story should be at least eight pages long (twelve-point font, double-spaced), but can be longer. Material submitted to class must be original – work submitted to another course or published elsewhere prior to this course is unacceptable.

Texts and Readings (available from the University of Calgary bookstore unless otherwise indicated):

English 366 Course Pack (available from Bound and Copied – 1st Floor MacEwan Student Centre)

King, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*

Willis, Deborah. *Vanishing and Other Stories*

Email and Electronic Submissions Policy:

I am happy to reply to short, specific questions via email and will answer as promptly as possible (usually it takes me approximately one week to respond to a given email). However, I cannot guarantee that you will have a reply within a specific amount of time. If you have detailed questions on the course material, it is more appropriate to see me during my office hours, or make an appointment to see me personally in my office.

Assignments and Evaluation:

All work must be typed and double-spaced in a legible font, no smaller than 12-point.

First term: Five one-page writing exercises (15% total) and one short fiction (10% total)

Second term: Three short fictions (15% each = 45% total) – one short fiction during this term can be a rewrite of an earlier work, but it must be a radical rewrite and must be accompanied by a two-page discussion of what was rewritten and to what effect.

Writing (due dates throughout the year; final short fiction due 11 April 2013)	70%
Class Participation	10%
Written Critiques (due dates throughout the year)	10%
Two Reading Reviews (1 st due 6 December 2012; 2 nd due 11 April 2013)	5%
In-class Group Presentation	5%

Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. There is no final exam in this course.

Attendance and Participation:

In order to receive full marks for the Participation component of the final grade, students must arrive punctually, attend class, and participate in class discussion. If you are uneasy about discussing your own or other people's work, you should reconsider your presence in the class.

Grading System:

The final grade will consist of an evaluation of all the work handed in. Attendance, participation, and the degree of improvement made will figure into the final mark. Students will receive feedback throughout the year. All assignments are marked with a letter grade and are averaged according to the corresponding four-point value specified by the undergraduate grading system in the university calendar (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html>):

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)

It is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades.

A+: Outstanding work

The work has all of the qualities of work that qualifies in the "A range" (see below) but is most definitely publishable.

A range: Consistently exceptional work

The work is moving toward a publishable level. The use of language is concise and precise and original; figures of speech are imaginative and compelling; the content of the work is interesting and is treated in a fresh, new way, and the form chosen is the best possible. Writing in this range employs every element of fiction with sophistication and elegance.

B range: Consistently good work

The work is above average, with good use of language, originality, and control, but could use more refinement or development, and more revision. It shows at least in part a heightened awareness of structure and image, several striking aspects of narrative, and an interesting perspective or point of view. Word choice and description are generally exact and thoughtful.

C range: 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 plot are sound but may verge on clichéd and predictable. Vocabulary is adequate but may be limited.

D range: Minimal pass

The work shows some effort but is carelessly constructed and may have grammatical problems or lack awareness of the mechanics of English. Use of language will be undistinguished and clichéd, ideas ordinary, even predictable.

F: No credit

Work shows no effort; no work has been done at all.

Note:

In this class there is no such thing as writer's block and this excuse will not be accepted. If you are to make good progress, it is essential that you set aside time for writing every day because waiting for inspiration will only lead to trouble and lack of discipline. As a famous writer once said: Writing is 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration!

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. Students who submit material to be workshopped after their due date will either not have their material workshopped or the material will be the last to be workshopped. Be aware that missed deadlines will also throw the workshopping schedule into chaos, which will incur not only the wrath of the instructor but also of fellow students. Do not submit late assignments!

*In instances where assignments are due to 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.***

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/content/scribe-and-muse-reading-and-writing-club>
Our email address is smrwc@ucalgary.ca.

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>.

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>

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>

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

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>.

Academic accommodation:

It is a student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and if you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters should be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/>

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 Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@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>

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.