

Springfield College in Illinois

~ New Horizons ~

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Spring 2006 (session C)
Room D229
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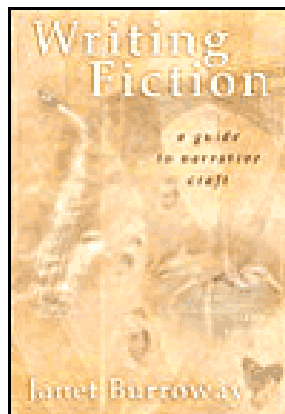
Ted Morrissey ([CV](#))
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ENGLISH 216-70 - CREATIVE WRITING: FICTION (3 Credit Hours)

I. Course Description: **English 216 Creative Writing: Fiction** is a course designed for students who have an interest in producing original creative prose works, especially the short story. Students will both write creatively and analyze the creative works of others to gain a better understanding of the writing process. Issues related to publication and writing for publication will be a significant focus of the course as well. A student must earn a grade of "C" or better to receive credit toward graduation. Prerequisite: English 111 with a grade of "C" or better.

II. Textbook:

Burroway, Janet, with Susan Weinberg. *Writing Fiction: A Guide to Narrative Craft*. 6th ed. New York: Longman, 2003.



Available at [SCI's Bookstore](#).

III. SCI Mission Statement: The mission of Springfield College in Illinois is to provide students the best liberal arts education in the Ursuline tradition of a nurturing faith-based environment. We prepare students for a life of learning, leadership and service in a diverse world.

IV. Goals, objectives and outcomes:

A. Goals:

1. To understand the structure and elements of fiction and the writing process.
2. To produce fully developed works of fiction.
3. To demonstrate an understanding of the critical terminology of the creative writer.
4. To practice standard English for editing and proofreading.
5. To examine outlets for creative writing (i.e. publication), both traditional print and electronic.

B. Common Student Learning Objectives:

CK-1 Content Knowledge (Lifelong learning): Know and apply the central concepts of the subject matter

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CS-1 Communication Skills (Lifelong learning and leadership): Communicate effectively in oral and written forms

PS-2 Problem-Solving Skills (Lifelong learning and leadership): Seek information and develop an in-depth knowledge base, grounded in research

SR-2 Social Responsibility (Service and Leadership): Make ethical and informed decisions

GP-1 Global Perspectives (Diversity): Recognize the importance of diversity of opinion, abilities and cultures.

C. Course Based Student Learning Objectives: Students who have successfully completed ENGLISH 216 will be able to . . .

1. Find ideas for fiction and develop those creative ideas via drafting and revision. (CK-1, CS-1)
2. Manipulate fictional elements like characterization, plot, and setting to achieve a desired effect. (CK-1, CS-1)
3. Analyze and discuss the elements of fiction as they are manifested in their own and others' creative writing. (CK-1, PS-2, GP-1)
4. Use terminology associated with creative writing. (CK-1)
5. Successfully participate in "workshop" sessions with their peers. (CK-1, SR-2)
6. Locate possible publishing outlets for their creative work. (CK-1, PS-2, GP-1)
7. Understand basic differences between creative and expository writing. (CK-1, CS-1)

Teaching Methodology:

The classroom is considered a discourse community in which students collaborate in the learning process. Students will be involved in peer work, group discussions, pre- and rewriting activities, and conferencing. There will be intervention in students' creative writing process, and response to student writing, by both the instructor and other students. To be successful, students must come to class prepared, which means having all reading and writing assignments done *before* they are due. **Note:** "Creative Writing: Fiction" is not an "easy" class. Writing quality short stories is every bit as challenging as writing quality essays. Moreover, even though there is a strong emphasis on writing in creative writing, analytical reading is also a major part of the course. To be an effective writer, you must be an effective reader.

Course Requirements:

Attendance: As in every other class, absences will negatively affect your grade. To avoid class disruption, students must be seated by 6:00. Arriving between 6:00 and 6:05 will be considered a "late" (three lates equal one-half hour absence); between 6:05 and 6:30, one-half hour absence; between 6:30 and 7:00, one hour absence; etc. Missing an entire class session equals 4.0 hours. *Missing six hours is an automatic F, regardless of a student's current grade.*

Your goal should be to attend all classes and to have an absence only when it is a true emergency. If you know you are going to be absent (or late), you should contact me as early as possible. This will not "excuse" the absence, but it is considered the appropriate behavior in college. College is like a job in this respect: If you were going to miss work, you presumably would call your supervisor in advance -- you would not simply fail to come to work, then wander in the next time you were scheduled (if so, you would not be scheduled a next time).

You are responsible for making multiple copies to share with the instructor and your classmates when the syllabus requires it; and, by the same token, if you are absent on a day when you are to distribute your work, it is your responsibility to get the copies to your instructor and your classmates. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a zero for the assignment. If providing multiple copies of your work is a problem, speak to me in *advance* (NOT the evening they are to be distributed).

Behavior: Be attentive to the instructor and your classmates. Private conversations and jokes are rude and disruptive. Turn off your cell phone too.

Work:

1. Completion of all assigned readings and writings according to given deadlines.
2. In-class and out-of-class assignments (approximately 25 to 30 pages of written work).
3. Participation in peer activities, sharing of written work, and group discussions.
4. Active involvement in mechanics of all writing projects.

5. Conferences regarding writing assignments.
6. Final project.

Evaluation Criteria:

There are numerous required activities for this course, and not all of them will be graded. Work (generally described as "homework") that does not receive a numerical score, may be given one of three grades: A check mark indicates an assignment was completed in an acceptable and timely manner; a plus signifies that an assignment was completed with special thoroughness and accuracy; a minus signifies that an effort was substandard. Each check is worth one point; a plus 1.5 points, and a minus .5; the total will be multiplied by an appropriate number determined by the instructor to establish a homework grade. *Students are expected to complete all assignments, graded or not.*

Points will be deducted for issues of misspelling and nonstandard mechanics according to the *SCI English/Speech Department Guidelines for the Evaluation of Formal Composition* (unless the departures from standard written practice are knowingly done for creative effect).

Assessment will be an on-going part of the course. In addition to providing feedback on essays and homework assignments, the instructor will ask that you complete a [Quick Response form](#) at the conclusion of each class period. Your responses may be shared with the class if the instructor determines that it would be useful to do so.

Instructor assessment: You are invited to visit RateMyProfessor.com, and give your instructor an informal evaluation. This is purely for the instructor's own use; your rating has no bearing on his employment with the college; nor will it affect your grade since it is completely anonymous.

Late papers will not be accepted, and each will be scored as a zero. Assignments are due even if you are not physically in class.

Plagiarism -- presenting the ideas or words of another as if they are one's own -- is literary dishonesty and will not be tolerated. Nor will others forms of academic dishonesty be tolerated. In creative writing, "poetic license" does allow for some use of others' work, but such use is very limited and you should discuss with me in advance any time you are tempted to employ such license. If the instructor deems that the plagiarism is a willful attempt to cheat, the student will receive a zero for the paper with no opportunity to revise, and the SCI administration will be notified.

Midsemester grades will be based on work completed and graded at that time.

Final Grade will be based on a percentage of the total score: A- to A+ = 90 to 100%; B- to B+ = 80 to 89%; C- to C+ = 70 to 79%; D- to D+ = 60 to 69%. Note that plus and minus will be affixed to the letter grade as deemed appropriate by the instructor based on various factors, including attendance, work ethic, attitude, and overall participation.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Springfield College in Illinois provides individuals with disabilities reasonable accommodations to participate in educational programs, activities and services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in college-sponsored programs, activities, and services or to meet course requirements should contact the Dean of Student Affairs as early as possible.

Directions for Written Work:

Keep all assignments, formal and informal, prewriting, revisions, and final drafts until final grades are received.

On Short Story #1, students may earn back all points deducted for errors by making the appropriate corrections and submitting the revised story along with the previous draft within one week of its being returned to the student.

Assignments will be shared with the class for the purposes of critique (i.e., "workshop").

Story Requirements:

Each short story must be . . .

1. Typed (printed) in 12-point, Times New Roman font, double-spaced.
2. Presented in standard manuscript format (see handout given in class or this [link](#)).
3. Between five and fifteen pages in length and represent a "completed" story.
4. Submitted to turnitin.com prior to its due date.

Class ID: 1501900

Enrollment Password: english21670

Conferences:

The week after your story has been workshopped you must have a conference with me either before class (15 minutes) or after class; the purpose of the conference is to discuss your story, how others reacted to it, and how you feel about possible revisions to the story. Conference times will be set the previous week. *Conferences are required.*

Three Keys to Success:

- * Attend all classes and be on time.
- * Turn in all assignments on time.

- * Ask for help when you need it.

One or More of the Following Will Lead to Failure:

- * Miss class and/or consistently be late.
- * Fail to turn in assignments or to turn them in on time.
- * Not asking for help when you need it.

Weekly Assignments: (Note: All page numbers refer to *Writing Fiction*. This schedule is based on 12 students in class; it will be adjusted based on the actual roster. Syllabus is subject to change. There may be reading quizzes over the weekly reading assignments.)

<p>May 11</p>	<p><u>Before first session:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read "To Students: About the Writing Workshop" (xiv) * Read Ch. 1: "Whatever Works: The Writing Process" (1) * Read "Shitty First Drafts" (18) * Write a one- to two-page journal entry in which you describe a recent event (something significant or mundane) and focus on using sensory details (i.e., adjectives that appeal to the five senses) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Course introduction * View excerpt from film: <i>Alex & Emma</i> * Discuss readings * Share parts of journal writing * Quick Response
<p>May 18</p>	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read Ch. 2: "The Tower and the Net: Story, Form, Plot, and Structure" (30) * Read "Silver Water" (57) * Read "Happy Endings" (64) * Read Ch. 3: "Seeing Is Believing: Showing and Telling" (74) * Read "The Things They Carried" (90) * Write journal entries (#1 - focus: character details; #2 - focus: scene vs. summary) <p>Note: Students 1, 2, 3 & 4 may turn in their entries May 25.</p> <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Summarize and discuss readings * Share journal entries * Students 1, 2, 3 & 4 distribute their first short story * Quick Response

May 25	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read/Critique stories by Student Writers * Read Ch. 4: "Building Character: Characterization, Part I" (118) * Read: "Gryphon" (132) * Read Ch. 5: "The Flesh Made Word: Characterization, Part II" (157) * Read "Hills Like White Elephants" (181) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <u>Workshop stories by Students 1, 2, 3 & 4</u> * Summarize and discuss readings * Students 5, 6, 7 & 8 distribute stories * Quick Response
	<p><i>Note: Morrissey out of town June 1 - 9 grading Advanced Placement literature exams at the invitation of the College Board. As a class, we'll have to decide the best way to make up the two class sessions.</i></p>
June 15	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read/Critique stories by Student Writers * Read Ch. 6: "Long Ago and Far Away: Fictional Place and Time" (198)* Read "Bullet in the Brain" (248) * Read Ch. 7: "Call Me Ishmael: Point of View, Part I" (254) * Read "Lectures on How You Never Lived Back Home" (282) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <u>Workshop stories by Students 5, 6, 7 & 8</u> * Summarize and discuss readings * Students 9, 10, 11 & 12 distribute stories * Quick Response
Tentative: June 16 <u>Friday</u>	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read/Critique stories by Student Writers * Read Ch. 8: "Assorted Liars: Point of View, Part II" (287) * Read "Jealous Husband Returns in Form of Parrot" (306) * Read Ch. 9: "Is and Is Not: Comparison" (325) * Read "Eyes of a Blue Dog" (351) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <u>Workshop stories by Students 9, 10, 11 & 12</u> * Summarize and discuss readings * Students 1, 2, 3 & 4 distribute their second short story * Quick Response

June 22	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read/Critique stories by Student Writers * Read Ch. 10: "I Gotta Use Words When I Talk to You: Theme" (357) * Read "A Man Told Me the Story of His Life" (361) * Read Ch. 11: "Play It Again, Sam: Revision" (395) * Read "Dud" (407) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <u>Workshop stories by Students 1, 2, 3 & 4</u> * Summarize and discuss readings * Students 5, 6, 7 & 8 distribute stories * Quick Response
June 29	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read/Critique stories by Student Writers * Read "Girl" (67) * Read "20/20" (70) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <u>Workshop stories by Students 5, 6, 7 & 8 /</u> * Summarize and discuss readings * Students 9, 10, 11 & 12 distribute their second short story * Quick Response
Tentative: June 30 <u>Friday</u>	<p><u>Before Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Read/Critique stories by Student Writers * Read "The Last Class" (handout from instructor) <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * <u>Workshop stories by Students 9, 10, 11 & 12</u> * Revision of either Story 1 or Story 2 due * Analysis of publication possibilities * Conferences with instructor

Grades:

Story 1 . . . 300 points

Story 2 . . . 300 points

Revision of 1 or 2 . . . 300 points

"Homework" . . . 100 points

Total . . . 1,000 points

Links of interest to fiction writers:

[The Paris Review](#)

[The New Yorker](#)

[Web Del Sol](#)