

CREATIVE WRITING, ENGL 119-01

TuTh 9:30; Room: LA-562

Fall 2008

<http://www.timtrask.com>

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Required Texts: (available in the college bookstore)

Negri, ed., *Great American Short Stories*. New York: Dover, 2002.

Bradstreet, et al., *101 Great American Poems*. New York: Dover, 1998.

Sophocles, *Antigone*. New York: Dover, 1993.

Johnston, ed., *Naming the World*. New York: Random House, 2007.

Recommended Texts (in addition to an English handbook):

Natalie Goldberg, *Writing Down the Bones*

Ray Bradbury, *Zen in the Art of Writing*

Course Description: "A course designed for those students who have mastered grammatical skills and who have a desire to express themselves creatively in fiction (short story or novel), drama (plays or screenplays), and/or poetry. The course is conducted as a workshop, with readings of the students' works followed by creative criticism. The objective of the course is to write for publication, so the course includes a realistic appraisal of the possibilities in the publishing market place."

Prerequisites: English Composition I & II.

Goals:

1. To develop daily writing habits.
2. To learn to give and receive creative criticism.
3. To gain an acquaintance with the imaginative writing field.

Objectives:

1. To complete at least two (2) short stories or two (2) chapters of a novel.
2. To complete at least three (3) lyric poems, one of them a sonnet.
3. To complete at least one (1) dramatic scene.
4. To begin a portfolio of writing.
5. To complete a self-assessment (in lieu of Final Examination).

Grading: Grades will be on a contract system, as follows:

A/A- At least 10,000 words of excellent writing and perfect attendance.

B+/B/B- At least 8,000 words of very good writing and nearly perfect attendance.

C+/C/C- At least 6,000 words of good writing and no more than four absences.

Minimum requirements for passing grade: 6,000 words.

Grades will be adjusted by up to a whole grade for class participation or lack thereof.

NOTE: Special "length" considerations will be made for poetry.

Teaching Method & Attendance: Since it is conducted as a workshop, participation in this class is *essential*. It is important that each student be present to listen to stories and poems and to critique them honestly, fairly, and with a desire to help other students improve their writing. Creative writing takes the very personal into a public arena. The class functions as our "publication" place. Also, while there are no planned examinations in this course, there will be in-class writing assignments, particularly if there are a number of students having trouble keeping up a steady writing pace. Attendance and participation count toward your grade. Any student missing more than four classes will be in danger of being dropped from the class.

Submissions: You may submit work at any time, but try to keep pace with the progress reports. Please double space all work except lyric poems, use one side of the paper only, and leave margins of 1" on all four sides. No cover sheets; no binders. Put your name and the date in the upper left corner of the first page and fasten the pages with a single staple in the upper left corner.

Academic Resource Center: Tutoring and assistance in writing is available in the ARC. I may suggest that you seek assistance in some particular area of writing. You pay for this assistance with your tuition and fees, so make use of it.

Library resources. The library at Massasoit is staffed by competent professionals. They can provide access to Internet, assistance in doing research, and help in finding materials.

Portfolio. You will be expected to type your work before handing it in for credit. Please do not give me the only copy. Make copies. Put them in a binder and begin a portfolio of your writing. During the final exam period, you will be instructed to bring this portfolio with you. I will check it against my own records and hand it back to you at that time.

Web resources: My web page for this class is www.timtrask.com/creative. During this semester, I will be adding materials to that site and will welcome suggestions for making the site richer and more useful.

Computer usage: I strongly recommend that every student make frequent use of the computer facilities of the college during the semester. I encourage email and the submission of papers as attachments to email provided that they are prepared using Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect. Whenever possible, we will be looking at each other's work using the computer and a projection monitor. If you want corrections, please submit your work on paper.

Disability Statement: Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in the classroom are encouraged to contact a disability counselor as soon as possible. Students with learning disabilities should contact Andrea Henry, at extension 1805. Students with physical disabilities should contact Mary Berg, at extension 1425. Students at the Canton Campus should contact Stan Oliver at extension 2468.

CREATIVE WRITING SYLLABUS

Tentative Calendar:

September		Fiction (bring book of stories to class each day during this section)
	2	Introduction; Creator & Editor; The Short Story; Poetry; Drama
	4	The function of fiction; “Rich Man, Poor Man”
	9	Getting started writing fiction; Johnston, “Getting Started.”
	11	Ideas workshop
	16	Characters; Johnston, “Character.”
	18	Dialogue in fiction (workshop); Johnston, “Dialogue and Voice.”
	23	The importance of conflict; (Deadline for first 2000 words)
	25	Videotape (writers); conflict workshop
	30	Plot and structure; Johnston, “Plot and Narrative.”
October		
	2	Plot workshop
	7	Setting and Atmosphere
	9	The importance of point of view; Johnston, “Point of View.”
		Poetry (bring book of poems to class each day during this section)
	14	The function of poetry (Deadline for first 4000 words)
	16	The sonnet and a few other poetic forms
	21	Reading poetry
	23	Reading poetry
	28	Reading fiction/poetry
	30	Reading fiction/poetry (Deadline for first 6000 words)
November		
		Drama (read <i>Antigone</i> in preparation for this section)
	4	Drama; dialogue
	6	<i>Antigone</i>
	11	Veterans’ Day (no classes)
	13	Reading scenes
	18	Workshop/reading; (Deadline for first 8000 words)
	20	Reading fiction/poetry/drama
	25	Scheduling for Brockton Classes (no classes)
	27	Thanksgiving Recess (no classes)
December		
	2	Reading fiction/poetry/drama
	4	Catching up
	9	Why we write
	11	Where to submit
	16	Reading fiction/poetry/drama (Deadline for 10000 words)

Particular reading will be assigned in class.

Assignments are subject to change.

Final exams December 17 - 22