

# English 280

## Introduction to Creative Writing

**Fall 2021**  
Prof. Walsh

“Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth. –Arthur Conan Doyle

Class Time: Tuesday & Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.  
Tarpley Building, Room 109  
August 15, 2022 through November 22, 2022  
Final Exam: NO FINAL EXAM  
Office: Lawson 124-B  
Office Hours: T-T 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Appointment only

\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE: **This syllabus is *subject to change*** as a result of various factors such as availability of the texts to arrive on time; how quickly each text is discussed; rate of speed during class; as well as other unforeseen issues. All attempts will be made to adhere to the schedule; however, if a change occurs, ***it will be noted during the class***. It is each student’s responsibility to update the syllabus at that time. No electronic versions are allowed in class, as well as no electronics of any kind. There is a tactile necessity to touching and feeling the *made thing* that cannot be substituted by electronics.

### Texts

- *Otherworld, Underworld, Prayer Porch* – David Bottoms (provided)
- *What the Living Do* – Marie Howe
- *The Color Purple* – Alice Walker
- *The Outsiders* – S.E. Hinton
- Handouts (to be supplied)

\*\*\* Please note: Each student ***MUST*** have a physical copy of these books for class. They should be available at the university bookstore; however, they are available online for only a few dollars. You ***CANNOT*** pass the class without the books. The final exam will include an open-book portion. Be prepared to write notes in your book so a library copy will not suffice. **No electronic versions are allowed in class, as well as no electronics of any kind.** There is a tactile necessity to touching and feeling the *made thing* that cannot be substituted by electronics. **You MUST have a copy of the books. No Exception.**

## Grades

• Class Participation/Quiz(s)	15%
• Creative Assignments	20%
• Mid-Term Exam	25%
• Creative Interview Project	40%

## Course Objectives

1. Learn to identify imagery, setting, diction, point of view, voice, tone, plot, literal and figurative language structure, insight and tension in poetry, fiction, and non-fiction.
2. Learn to comprehend and analyze characterization in poetry, fiction, and non-fiction.
3. Learn and apply literary terms to assigned texts.
4. Understand the nuances between the made thing (the text) of a poetic, fictional, and non-fiction text and how it changes with film and/or other media, and possibly answering *why*.
5. Understand some of the social and cultural manifestations of these texts.
6. Understand the nuances of the literary interview.
7. Learn to be an editor (or a better editor)
8. Have fun, learn a lot of interesting things, enjoy the learning process, etc.

## Attendance, Tardiness and Late Work Policies

**Don't miss class. Don't be late.** That's fairly easy. Show up ready to learn and have a great time learning interesting things. I do not accept assigned work that is late. Everyone has a 24-hour day so manage your time wisely. Turn in your work on time. Attend class.

## Academic Dishonesty Policy

If you plagiarize any work for this class, you will be dismissed and receive an F. I may choose to refer you to Judicial for punishment. Plagiarism is defined as presenting any work that is not your own work as your own. If you represent it as your own work, it is plagiarism, whether it is work written by another student, parent, or work copied from a written source or the Internet. Even if you reword it, it will be obvious to me. To avoid this: *Simply cite your sources!*

## Grading Criteria for All Assignments

- *I do not give grades—you **earn** your grade*
- Do not be late with your assignment!
- In all things you write for class, no misspelled words
- Read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss it in class
- Proofread, proofread, proofread—mistakes detract from the grade

- Nothing will ever be perfect, but try to get there with your work
- Edit, edit, edit. No typos or grammar errors
- When presenting your work for workshop critique, please bring printed copies for each student
- As Lord Chesterfield said, “Take care of the minutes and the hours will take care of themselves.
- Honor yourself with excellence
- **20% of your grade is Class Participation**, meaning that you need to be prepared to discuss the texts for that day per the syllabus. There may be a quiz on any day without notice. You **MUST** be prepared for class.

### **Creative Interview:**

You will become a better writer and student if you read and edit another student’s paper. Avoid costly mistakes. I prefer to give an A on a critical project, but careless mistakes nearly always chip away at the grade. There is no research paper or final exam; however, the final critical project will be an interview which should be 12-20 pages. Times Roman/12-point font, double-spaced, MLA format, and the paper should adhere to the thesis statement agreed upon between the student and professor. Your interview subject will be determined by the student and agreed upon with the professor. There is great flexibility for the student to choose their subject. It will be due the last week of the semester; however, it may be turned in early. If it is late, by 5:01 p.m. of the last class, an F will be assigned. Don’t miss the deadline.

### **Class Behavior**

My expectations for appropriate and acceptable classroom behavior are as follows:

1. Be on time.
2. Be prepared to discuss the text (s) or turn in workshop material.
3. Come with the appropriate books and written assignments (when applicable).
4. *Turn off cellphones and put them away. No text messaging. If I see you texting, I will ask you to leave the class. I will not tolerate cellphones in class.*
5. Be courteous and respectful of others during class discussion. At all times, I expect each student to use **Intelligence, Candor, and Goodwill** toward each other.
6. Have fun and enjoy learning! My motto: *If it’s not fun, why bother?*

**ONLINE TEACHING:** In the event the pandemic forces all classes to be moved online, we will do so without interruption. Classes will be moved to Canvas and will adhere to this syllabus. The only difference will be the platform for teaching the class.

## Week 1

Tuesday, August 16

Introduction, syllabus, teaching philosophy, discuss drama and plot.

Discuss Freytag's Pyramid in relation to the novel

Examples of Great Opening Sentences:

- Call me Ishmael. —Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick* (1851)
- Many years later, as he faced the firing squad, Colonel Aureliano Buendía was to remember that distant afternoon when his father took him to discover ice. — Gabriel García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967)
- Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way. — Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (1877)
- It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. —George Orwell, *1984* (1949)
- Through the fence, between the curling flower spaces, I could see them hitting. — William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (1929)
- Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself. —Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)
- You better not never tell nobody but God. —Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (1982)
- In the town, there were two mutes and they were always together. —Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940)
- When I stepped out into the bright sunlight from the darkness of the movie house, I had only two things on my mind: Paul Newman and a ride home. S.E. Hinton *The Outsiders* (1967)
- In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. —F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925)

**Assignment:** Fill out the Novel & Character Template – bring to class on Thursday

Thursday, August 19:

Discuss the Novel & Character Template

Discuss Freytag's Pyramid

**Assignment:** Begin reading *The Outsiders*

## Week 2

Tuesday, August 23

Choose a novel from the list below: Be able to discuss in class the main character(s) and how they proceed on the hero's journey. Does a stranger come to town? It is the hero's journey? Demonstrate to the class how the novel proceeds along the Freytag Pyramid. How do the minor characters orbit/influence the main character?

- *Tortilla Flat* – John Steinbeck
- *The Assistant* – Bernard Malamud
- *Sing, Unburied, Sing* – Jesmyn Ward
- *Mrs. Dalloway* – Virginia Woolf
- *Deliverance* – James Dickey
- *Wise Blood* – Flannery O'Connor
- *Apalachee Red* – Raymond Andrews
- *The Sun Also Rises* – Ernest Hemingway
- *Beloved* – Toni Morrison
- *Lakewood* – William Walsh
- *Ellen Foster* – Kaye Gibbons
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* – Harper Lee
- *The Rubyfruit Jungle* – Rita May Brown
- *The World According to Garp* – John Irving

Thursday, August 25

Student discussion of the novel—the analysis and *The Outsiders*

**Assignment:** Edit your Novel and Character Template based on what is learned

### Week 3

Tuesday, August 30

Student discussion of the novel—the analysis and *The Outsiders*

**Assignment:** Edit your Novel and Character Template based on what is learned

Thursday, September 1:

Student discussion of the novel—the analysis

**Assignment:**

- Edit your Novel and Character Template based on what is learned
- Begin reading *WHAT THE LIVING DO* – Marie Howe
- Write a poem – no longer than 20 lines

### Week 4

Tuesday, September 8:

Read/Workshop student poems

Discuss *WHAT THE LIVING DO*

**Assignment:** Read *WHAT THE LIVING DO* – Marie Howe

Thursday, September 8:

Discuss *WHAT THE LIVING DO*

**Assignment:** Write a new poem/and or edit the first poem to be edited by the professor for a grade

## Week 5

Tuesday, September 13:

Pre-reading discussion on *The Color Purple* (discussion on Celie's Orbit)

Discuss *The Color Purple*/examine the form (*epistolary*) and how it functions for the narrator and why Walker employs this form

Discuss Man vs. Man, Man vs. Nature, Man vs. Himself in literature

**Assignment:** Read *The Color Purple* (up to page 110)

Thursday, September 15:

Discuss *The Color Purple*

**Assignment:** Read *The Color Purple* (up to page 200)

**Assignment:** Write a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of a fictional epistolary. Must include *no more than* two characters, a dramatic situation, inciting incident, conflict, plot, one comic element, a flashback that is no more than four sentences in length, must incorporate a dog into the story. No longer than two pages.

## Week 6

Tuesday, September 20:

Discuss *The Color Purple*

Discuss students' creative writing (epistolary)

A daily grade will be assigned for your work as an editor

**Assignment:** Finish reading *The Color Purple* (to page 288)

Thursday, September 22:

Continue the discussion of *The Color Purple*

Discuss student's creative writing (epistolary)

## Week 7

Tuesday, September 27:

Discuss student creative writing (epistolary)

Continue/Finish the discussion of *The Color Purple*

**Assignment:** Read 1956 Interview with William Faulkner by Jean Stein (to be provided)

Thursday, September 29:

Finish discussing student creative writing (epistolary)

Discuss the Faulkner Interview

Discuss the interview process/techniques (non-fiction creative work)

Discuss the Interview assignment – FINAL PROJECT

**Assignment:** Read Denise Duhamel Interview (to be provided)

## Week 8

Tuesday, October 4:

Discuss Duhamel Interview

Discuss interviewing techniques, research, procedures, nuances, the interview process (non-fiction), editing for brevity, clarity, continuity, maintaining a professional distance from the subject

Discuss Student Interview project ideas

**Assignment:** For the next class, bring your idea for your interview subject (counts as a quiz grade)

**Assignment:** Begin reading *Unbroken* through chapter 5

Thursday, October 6:

**NO CLASS – FALL BREAK**  
**October 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>**

## Week 9

Tuesday, October 11

**Mid-Term Exam**

Thursday, October 13

Discuss *Unbroken*/Creative non-fiction writing/Student led discussion on non-fiction

**Assignment:** Read *Unbroken* (Chapters 6-17) /Zamperini's Experience as an Ocean Castaway

**Assignment:** Conduct a one-page interview with the person of your choice—only 4 or 5 questions. Transcribe the interview and bring it to class

## Week 10

Tuesday, October 18

Discuss the 1-page interviews and demonstrate how to turn the interview into a non-fiction essay for publication

**Assignment:** Turn the 1-page interview into a 1-page creative non-fiction essay.

Thursday, October 20

Continue the discussing of the 1-page interviews and demonstrate how to turn the interview into a non-fiction essay for publication

## Week 11

Tuesday, October 25

In-class workday for the interview process/class-led discussion, suggestions, conflicts, issues regarding the project, especially formatting for a professional presentation. Choose a person to interview. Understanding the format and adhering to the guidelines.

**Assignment:** Work on your interview project

Thursday, October 27

Provide essay on “Reality of the Contemporary Poem”

**Assignment:** Read David Bottoms: Sections 1 and 2 in *Otherworld*, *Underworld*, *Prayer Porch*/Concentrate on image, narrative quality, and metaphor

**Assignment:** Read “Reality of the Contemporary Poem”

## Week 12

Tuesday, November 1

Discuss *Otherworld*, *Underworld*, *Prayer Porch*

- **Assignment:** Read *Otherworld*, *Underworld*, *Prayer Porch* – each student will choose one poem and present a Power Point and discuss in class (10-minute analysis), pointing out the nuances and craft of the poet, with a concentration on

the Subject, Conflict, and Metaphor within the poem, and any other interesting and valuable details about the poem and the poet.

Thursday, November 3

Power Point Poetry Presentations: *Otherworld, Underworld, Prayer Porch*

**Assignment:** Each student will write a poem between 10-20 lines in length (no rhyming poems)—turn it in.

### **Week 13**

Tuesday, November 8

Power Point Poetry Presentations: *Otherworld, Underworld, Prayer Porch*

Turn in your poem.

Thursday, November 10

Power Point Poetry Presentations: *Otherworld, Underworld, Prayer Porch*

### **Week 14**

Tuesday, November 15

In-class interview workshop, discussion: issues, problems, successes, formatting

Thursday, November 17

Work Day – No class. Use this time to work on your interview project.

### **Week 15**

Tuesday, November 22 (LAST DAY of CLASS)

➤ Wrap up loose ends

**Final Exam: There is NO FINAL EXAM**

**Turn in your final interview portfolio**

**No later than**

**Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.**

## A Few Important Things Required on the Syllabus

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is located in the basement of Lawson Building. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters.

### **Reinhardt University Credit Hour Policy**

In defining a credit hour, Reinhardt University adopts the Federal Definition of a Credit Hour (described in 34 CFR 600.2, effective July 1, 2011) as follows:

For purposes of the application of this policy and in accord with federal regulations, a credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates:

1. Not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time, or
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as outlined in item 1 above for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

This credit hour policy applies to all courses at all levels (undergraduate, graduate, and professional) that award academic credit on an official transcript regardless of the mode of delivery including, but not limited to, fully online, hybrid, lecture, seminar, laboratory, studio, directed study, or study abroad. Academic units are responsible for ensuring that credit hours are awarded only for work that meets the requirements outlined in this

policy.

The expectation of contact time inside the classroom and student effort outside the classroom is the same in all formats of a course whether it be in online, a hybrid of face-to-face contact with some content delivered electronically, or one delivered in lecture or seminar format. Similarly, the expectation of contact time inside the classroom and student effort outside the classroom is the same for regular semesters and shortened sessions (i.e., Spring I or Spring II Sessions).

Courses that have less structured classroom schedules, such as research seminars, independent studies, directed studies, internships, practica, studio work, as well as courses offered in shortened sessions or in online or hybrid formats, at a minimum, should state clearly expected learning outcomes and workload expectations that meet the standards set forth above.

## Covid 19

### **Important:**

All students, faculty, staff and administration at Reinhardt University are subject to changes in policies if mandated by the State of Georgia. Current policies and procedures can be found at : <https://www.reinhardt.edu/back-to-campus>

If you have any questions, please refer to the website or contact Reinhardt University at the numbers below.

Campus Nurse within the Student Health Center

[nurse@reinhardt.edu](mailto:nurse@reinhardt.edu), 770-720-5542 or [www.reinhardt.edu/nurse](http://www.reinhardt.edu/nurse).

Public Safety

**Non-Emergency Phone:** 770.720.5789

**Emergency Phone:** 770.720.5911

[publicsafety@reinhardt.edu](mailto:publicsafety@reinhardt.edu)

Dean of Students

[deanofstudents@reinhardt.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@reinhardt.edu), 770-720-5540

Office of the Provost

[provost@reinhardt.edu](mailto:provost@reinhardt.edu), 770-720-9102