

General Education Course Proposal

Proposed Course: Engl 43 Fiction Writing Units 4
Prefix No. Title

Department: English School: Arts and Humanities

GE Category (Indicate one category only):

Foundation: A1___; A2___; A3___; B4___
Breadth: B1___; B2___; C1 x; C2___; D___; E___
Integration: B___; C___; D___; International/Multicultural___

Existing Course x; Revised Course___; New Course___

Course Included in Current GE Program x

New courses require the Undergraduate Course Proposal form in addition to this form.
Revised courses require the Undergraduate Course Change Request in addition to this form.

Proposed catalog description: Limit course description to 40 words using succinct phrases. Include prerequisites, limitations, lecture/lab hours. Indicate former course number, e.g., (Former Biol 105)

Beginning workshop in the writing of fiction;
appropriate reading and analyses.

Enrollment limit per section: 25

Expected number of sections per semester – Year 1 1-2; Year 3 1-2

Attachments:

1. A statement presenting the ways in which this course meets the Specifications provided in the appropriate section of the General Education Policy as well as in the Policies for Inclusion and Evaluation of General Education Courses.
2. A statement of elements common to all sections of this course, identifying content, objectives, required student activities, grading policy, representative texts, and an approximate schedule for the course. Required student activities include such things as papers, research projects, homework, laboratory and/or studio performance, recitations, participation, attendance, and exams.
3. A typical syllabus for a particular offering of the course.
4. Any special cost factors associated with this course.

Approval for Inclusion in General Education

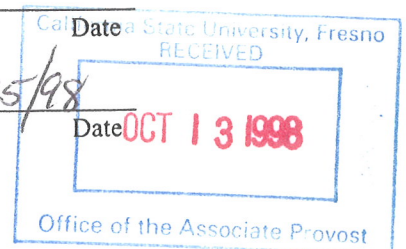
Andrew Smith 2-17-98
Department Chair Date

School Curriculum Committee

School Dean Date

Paul Curran 12/15/98
General Education Subcommittee

Brandt Kehoe 12/22/98
Associate Provost Date



Attachment # 2: Statement of elements common to all sections of the course
Proposed course: Engl. 43 Fiction Writing

English 43 Fiction Writing 4 units

Catalog Description: Beginning workshop in the writing of fiction; appropriate reading and analyses.

Content: Engl. 43 is a course in the theory and practice of writing fiction. The focus of the course is on the students' own writing and the process involved in that writing, including discussion of the interrelationship between form and content and instruction in aspects of fiction such as narrative structure, setting, character, and point of view. Much of the course is conducted as a workshop in which students critique each other's work. Based on this critique, students revise their stories. Students also read, discuss, and analyze published stories from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. In addition, assigned writing exercises provide students with the opportunity to try many techniques and approaches to fiction writing.

Objectives:

Students will:

- gain practice in the writing of short fiction
- gain experience in analyzing and critiquing the fiction of others as well as their own and receive constructive critique of their fiction
- have the opportunity to read a wide variety of stories and discuss and analyze those stories
- become aware of major publication outlets for contemporary fiction
- be encouraged to read widely and deeply, including contemporary fiction and "classics"
- gain an awareness of the role of narrative structure, setting, character, and point of view in fiction and a awareness of the interrelationship between form and content
- gain an awareness of the universality of art as well as the connection of creative expression to a cultural context

Required student activities:

- reading and discussion of assigned short stories
- completion of fiction writing exercises tied to reading assignments
- one paper (minimum of 5 pages or 1,000 words) and oral report: analysis and critique of a collection of stories by a contemporary writer; paper and oral report will receive written critique from instructor
- writing, revision, and submission of one story (at least 10 pages in length for a total of at least 2,000 words); each student is responsible for xeroxing enough copies of his/her story for the entire class; rough draft of story will receive workshop critique from fellow students and instructor; final draft of story will receive written critique from instructor
- participation in workshop discussion of student stories
- required attendance

Revised 10/13/98

Attachment # 2: Statement of elements common to all sections of the course
Proposed Course: Engl. 43 Fiction Writing

Grading policy: The grade for the course is based on a combination of the grades on the paper, oral report, and short story; completion of assigned writing exercises; participation in class discussions and workshops; written critiques of student work; and attendance. Each syllabus will contain a grading policy.

Representative texts:

Proulx, E. Annie, ed. The Best American Short Stories of 1997. (or comparable anthology of contemporary short fiction)

Burroway, Janet. Writing Fiction.

Approximate schedule for course: During the first half of the course, the class focuses on reading a variety of short stories by contemporary writers and on practicing various aspects of fiction writing through assigned writing exercises. Throughout the first half of the semester students work on their own short stories with the due date for those stories approximately halfway through the semester. During the last half of the semester, the class focuses on workshop discussion of student stories. Near the end of the semester, the paper on the work of a contemporary writer is due and students make their oral presentations which are based on their papers. Revisions of short stories are due during final exam week.

Revised 10/13/98

Attachment # 3: Typical syllabus

Proposed course: Engl. 43 Fiction Writing

English 43
Fiction Writing
T/Th 10:10-12

Liza Wieland
PB 449/ 8-2660
hours:T/Th 12-2&T5-6

required texts:

Burroway, Janet. *Writing Fiction*-- a textbook, which treats the short story writer's primary formal concerns (plot, character, setting, point of view) chapter by chapter.

Proulx, Annie, ed. *Best American Short Stories, 1997*-- an anthology of the 20 best stories published in magazines in the last year.

course requirements:

1. **writing:** You will write and revise two stories this semester. Each individual story won't be graded, but I will comment on them, and we will discuss as much of your work in class as possible. As a final exam, you will be asked to turn in your best revised story at the end of the semester. Required length for stories is at least ten pages (2,000 words).

You will also be responsible for a report, both written and oral, on a collection of contemporary short fiction. See me for suggestions. In this report you will discuss the writer's sense of the short story: what parts of a story (character, setting, plot) does he or she seem most interested in? Who are his or her influences? Why are the stories ordered as they are in the collection? Which stories do you think are most successful? Why? Report should be at least 5-7 in length or 1,000 words.

2. **reading:** We will read and discuss chapters from the Burroway text and stories from the Proulx anthology. Reading assignments will be made once the class' enrollment and needs are clear. You will also be expected to read and respond to your classmates' writing. You should also read stories on your own, in magazines at the library and in the bookstores. Seek out books by writers you come to like and try to figure out why you like these stories. This will help you in determining a fiction writer to report on.

3. **participation:** Class will be run as part lecture and part workshop at first, and will become almost entirely workshop by the end of the semester. I expect you to show up on time, stay the entire class period and contribute to class discussion. Anyone who misses more than four class periods will have his or her grade lowered by one letter. Tardy counts as half an absence.

how the workshop works: each class member will receive a copy of at least one of the stories written by each of his or her classmates. The class will be divided into groups of two, and students will prepare responses to stories according to the course calendar. During the workshop, the student whose story is being discussed is expected to keep silent (no whining, no "but what I meant was...") and *listen* to the comments of class members. Those commenting are expected to be helpful and brief, and to be able to justify their sense(s) of what is or isn't working in the story

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Grading: as follows

60% stories. The primary basis of judgement will be the quality of the work itself. Effort, enthusiasm, imagination, originality, craft and improvement will all be considered. Students will receive written critiques from the instructor.

20% general class participation. This includes attendance, attitude, seriousness in regard to critiques, willingness to help others improve their stories.

20% oral presentation/paper. The paper will be graded according to usual essay standards; the presentation will be judged for clarity and brevity.

plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please refer to the catalog and the schedule of classes for the University's policies regarding cheating and plagiarism.

disabilities: Students with disabilities should identify themselves to the instructor so that reasonable accommodations can be made.

Course Calendar

January

27 Introduction

29 Lecture: Story Form and Structure; History and Tradition of the Short Story
readings: Burroway pp. 29-43; in BA (Best American) "Saboteur"

February

3 Lecture: Showing and Telling exercises in scene-making

readings: Burroway pp. 7-40 ; BA: "Under the Pitons"

5 Lecture: Character; exercises in creating a character

readings: Burroway pp. 99-110/ 135-146; BA "Shipmates Down Under"

10 Lecture: Point of View; exercises in 1st 2nd and 3rd person narration

readings: Burroway pp. 199-212/229-241; in BA "Missing Women:

12 Lecture: Place; exercises in creating a setting **first stories due**

readings: Burroway pp. 171-186; in BA "St. Martin"

17 workshop

19 workshop

24 workshop

26 workshop

March

3 workshop

5 workshop

10 workshop

12 workshop

17 workshop

19 workshop

24 workshop

26 workshop **second stories due**

31 workshop

revised 10/13/98

April

2 workshop

7 Spring Break

9 Spring Break

14 Lecture: Contemporary American Fiction and Culture or Why Have I Spent Most of the Semester Bad-Mouthing Stephen King and John Grisham?

16 workshop and oral reports

21 workshop and oral reports

23 workshop and oral reports

28 workshop and oral reports

30 workshop and oral reports

May

5 workshop and oral reports

7 workshop and oral reports

12 conclusion

Final revision due in accordance with the University examination schedule

Revised 10/13/98