ENGL2351.01W: Introduction to Creative Writing  
Dr. Brian C. Billings  
Spring Semester (2015)  
Texas A&M University-Texarkana  
University Center 222  
3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. (M)  
903-223-3022  
brian.billings@tamut.edu  
3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. (T)  
3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. (W)  
3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. (R)  
(and by appointment)  

TEXT  

(ISBN: 978-0205012756)  

DESCRIPTION  

This course promotes the development of creative-writing skills by introducing and applying the core concepts for writing creative nonfiction, poems, plays, and short stories.  

OBJECTIVES  

1) Discuss representative texts as literary works and productions of craft.  
2) Examine the basic principles of creative-writing methodology.  
3) Write and revise essays, poems, scripts, and short stories.  

STUDENT-LEARNING OUTCOMES  

1) Develop a deeper understanding of craft concerns by participating in four online writing workshops and earning *five hundred and sixty of a possible eight hundred points*.  

2) Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information about creative-writing methodology by completing three of four long craft-oriented exercises and earning *five hundred and sixty of a possible eight hundred points*..  

3) Analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information about creative-writing methodology by completing ten of fifteen short craft-oriented exercises and collectively earning *five hundred and twenty-five of a possible seven hundred and fifty points*.  

4) Demonstrate an understanding of craft concerns by revising a text of any genre written during the semester and earning *four hundred and ninety of a possible seven hundred points*. 
PROJECTS

1) Short Exercises

Complete ten of a possible fifteen short craft-oriented exercises provided by the instructor. Collectively, short craft-oriented exercises are worth seven hundred and fifty points.

2) Long Exercises

Complete three of a possible four long craft-oriented exercises provided by the instructor. Collectively, long craft-oriented exercises are worth eight hundred points.

3) Workshops

Participate in four online creative-writing workshops. Each workshop begins when a unit starts and remains open until the semester concludes. Post a representative work in each workshop forum and make at least one lengthy comment on each student’s work per workshop unit. Collectively, workshops are worth eight hundred points.

4) Final Revision

Revise a text of any genre (one nonfiction essay no fewer than ten pages in length, one short story no fewer than ten pages in length, a batch of ten poems, or a script no fewer than ten pages in length) written during the semester. Submit this revision as your final project. The final revision is worth seven hundred points.

REQUIREMENTS

This course requires numerous readings, ten short writing-intensive exercises, four long writing-intensive exercises, four writing workshops, and a final revision of any text developed during the semester. A student must read texts by their assigned dates on the syllabus.

SUBMISSIONS

This class is a web-based course. Students must be familiar with submitting assignments via Blackboard. Students who have difficulties using Blackboard should review the appropriate tutorials or submit technical questions to the IT help desk at helpdesk@TAMUT.edu. Submit each assignment by the appropriate due date printed on the syllabus. The instructor will accept assignments up to twenty-four hours past the deadline for half credit.
ATTENDANCE

A student should miss no more than one week of course content to maintain a passing grade. Dropping the course is the student’s responsibility.

DROP DATES (SPRING 2015)

February 4, 2015  This day is the last day to drop without receiving a grade.
April 17, 2015  This day is the last day to drop with a W.

CELLULAR PHONES

N/A

CONFERENCES

Students should contact the instructor using Blackboard e-mail for assignment clarification or immediate writing feedback. Face-to-face conferences are available during the instructor’s office hours or by special appointment, and Blackboard Collaborate conferences are available by special appointment. Please arrange a date and a time for a face-to-face or Blackboard Collaborate conference by sending a request to the instructor using Blackboard e-mail.

UNIVERSITY DROP POLICY

To drop this course after the twelfth class day, a student must complete the Drop or Withdrawal Request Form located on the university’s Web site (http://tamut.edu/registrar/droppingwithdrawing-from-classes.html) or obtained in the registrar’s office. The student must submit the signed and completed form to the instructor of each course indicated on the form for his or her signature. An obtained signature is not an approval to drop but confirmation that the student has discussed the drop or withdrawal with the faculty member. The student must submit the completed form to the registrar’s office for processing in person, by e-mail (registrar@tamut.edu), by mail (7101 University Avenue, Texarkana, Texas  75503) or by fax (903-223-3140). The registrar’s office will not accept or process drop or withdrawal forms missing any required information. Responsibility rests with the student to ensure that the registrar’s office receives a properly completed form. If a student stops participating in class (attending and submitting assignments) but does not complete and submit a drop or withdrawal form, that student will receive a final grade based upon whatever completed work exists.
ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students enrolled in this course should practice academic honesty. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, and plagiarism (the copying or undocumented use of materials from any source) constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of F in this course or disciplinary action. Each student is responsible for reading and understanding the University Policy on Academic Integrity (UPAI).

PLAGIARISM POLICY FOR ENGLISH CLASSES

Any student who plagiarizes work in an A&M-Texarkana drama class will automatically fail that drama class.

ADA STATEMENT

Students with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations through the Texas A&M University-Texarkana Disability Services Office (UC255A) by calling 903-223-3062.

E-MAIL STATEMENT

After applying to and being accepted into a program by Texas A&M University-Texarkana, an individual will receive an A&M-Texarkana e-mail account. Instructors and university officials will deliver official university correspondence to this account. Each individual is responsible for information sent and received via his or her university e-mail account, and each individual must check his or her official A&M-Texarkana e-mail account completely and frequently. Faculty members and students must use their university e-mail accounts when communicating about coursework.

GRADING

Each assignment corresponds to a given point value. The instructor calculates grades by dividing a student’s accumulated points by the number of points possible.

Points by Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Exercises (Ten)</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Exercises (Four)</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops (Four)</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Revision</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade Computation (Example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Exercises (Ten)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Exercises (Four)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops (Four)</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Revision</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totaled Points: 2250 3050

Grade = 2250/3050 = 73.7% ~ 74% = C

Scale for Grades

- 90%-99% = A
- 80%-89% = B
- 70%-79% = C
- 60%-69% = D
- 0%-50% = F
Tentative Schedule

Week I: Read “A Few Things You Should Know about Poetry” (pgs 14-
        Read “The elements of poetry” (pgs 19-
        Read “The short poem: Three models” (pgs 20-
        First Short Exercise Due
        Poetry Workshop Begins

Week II: Read “Lines and Stanzas” (pgs 24-
        Read “Meter and rhythm” (pgs 31-
        Read “The music of poetry” (pgs 38-
        Second Short Exercise Due

Week III: Read “Images, symbols, and figurative language” (pgs 42-
        Read “Diction, syntax, and the language of poetry” (pgs 50-
        Read “Poetic Forms” (pgs 55-
        Third Short Exercise Due
        First Long Exercise Due

Week IV: Read “A few things you should know about the short-short story” (pgs 98-
        Read “The elements of fiction” (pgs 100-
        Fourth Short Exercise Due
        Fiction Workshop Begins

Week V: Read “The short-short story: Three models” (pgs 101-
        Read “Structure and design” (pgs 108
        Fifth Short Exercise Due

Week VI: Read “Creating characters” (pgs 116-
        Read “Writing dialogue” (pgs 124-
        Sixth Short Exercise Due

Week VII: Read “Setting the scene” (pgs 129
        Read “Deciding on point of view, developing tone and style” (pgs 133-
        Seventh Short Exercise Due
        Second Workshop
        Second Long Exercise Due

Spring Break
Week VIII:  Read “A few things you should know about short creative nonfiction” (pgs 170-
Read “The elements of creative nonfiction” (pgs 174-
Read “Short creative nonfiction: Three models” (pgs 175-
Eighth Short Exercise Due
Creative Nonfiction Workshop Begins

Week IX:  Read “Organizing creative nonfiction” (pgs 185-
Read “Telling the truth” (pgs 190-
Ninth Short Exercise Due

Week X:  Read “Creative nonfiction as narrative” (pgs 194-
Read “The poetry of creative nonfiction” (pgs 199-
Ninth Short Exercise Due
Eighth Response Due

Week XI:  Read “Writing yourself into creative nonfiction” (pgs 203-
Read “Ethics and edicts” (pgs 206-
Tenth Short Exercise Due
Third Long Exercise Due

Week XII:  Read “A few things you should know about the ten-minute play” (pgs 233-
Read “The elements of playwriting” (pgs 238-
Eleventh Short Exercise Due
Playwriting Workshop Begins

Week XIII:  Read “The ten-minute play: Three models” (pgs 239-
Read “Structuring the ten-minute play” (pgs 261-
Twelfth Short Exercise Due

Week XIV:  Read “Creating believable characters” (pgs 266-
Read “Writing convincing dialogue” (pgs 272-
Thirteenth Short Exercise Due

Week XV:  Read “Crafting a theme” (pgs 280-
Read “Onstage: The elements of production” (pgs 284-
Read “Playscript Format: A Model” (pgs 297-
Fourteenth Short Exercise Due
Fourth Long Exercise Due
Final Revision Due