

# ENG 318: Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction

CSUSB

Winter 2018

University Hall 058

TTh 2:00PM-3:50PM

**Professor:** Jason Magabo Perez, Ph.D.  
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**Office:** University Hall 301.35  
**Office Hours:** T 4:00PM-6:00PM  
Th 9:00AM-11:00AM  
& by appointment (*via Zoom*)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the study and practice of writing short fiction. Considering the *craft* of creative writing within a scholarly context, students will explore some basic elements of fiction writing such as: *Character*; *Setting*; *Point of View*; *Description*; *Plot*; *Dialogue*; and *Voice*. Through individual and collaborative reading and writing exercises, and through peer critique and small and large group workshop discussions, students will ultimately compose their own meaningful and effective works of short fiction.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Novakovich, Josip. *Fiction Writer's Workshop*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Writer's Digest Books, 2008.

All Additional Readings Available via Blackboard.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

Pen

Notebook/Journal

Access to Printer

Access to Computer w/ Internet and Word-Processing Software

*Always bring books/readings/notes to class!*

## COURSE GOALS

**WRITING:** Students will understand that writing is a process of social and intertextual engagement that requires writers to negotiate the possibilities and demands of participation within a given context. As writers, students will recognize and apply (and sometimes revise, critique, and resist) the elements of various genres and rhetorical and stylistic conventions in realizing their purposes.

**DIVERSITY:** Students will understand that the social, political, economic, and cultural value of different English literary, linguistic, and rhetorical conventions result from uneven power relations within a diverse society. Students will engage in meaningful collaborations and critical dialogues with peers and faculty from a range of communities and perspectives in order to analyze and produce various types of texts that examine (and sometimes revise, critique, and resist) the complex uses of and differences within the English language.

## GRADES

You are encouraged to keep track of your own progress by recording assignment grades below once I have graded and provided feedback on the assignment. Your final grade in this class will be based on assignments and active participation, which includes attendance, as follows:

Assignment	% of Final Grade	Your Grade
Short Fiction #1 (Draft + Final + Reflection)	20	
Short Fiction #2 (Draft + Final + Reflection)	30	
Critical Essay	20	
Data Visualization Project	10	
Peer Critiques (2)	10	
Participation & Attendance	10	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	

<i>Final Grading Scale:</i>	98-100: A+	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+	< 60: F
	93-97: A	83-86: B	73-76: C	63-66: D	
	90-92: A-	80-82: B-	70-72: C-	60-62: D-	

For each assignment, I will provide a detailed prompt and we will discuss grading criteria for each assignment at least one week prior to the due date of each assignment. Your assignments will be graded against a standard grading rubric, one that balances academic assessment with artistic evaluation. Please refer to the STANDARD GRADING RUBRIC posted on Blackboard course.

**FORMAT:** All written assignments must follow standard MLA format: 1" margins all around; double-spaced; 12-point Times New Roman Font; proper heading; proper paginations; and, when necessary, properly formatted Works Cited Page. Additionally, all written assignments must be saved and uploaded in PDF format.

Also, written assignments that do not meet the minimum length requirement (which shall be stated in each prompt) will receive a grade of no higher than a C+.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

Turn off all phones and any other distracting technologies. Keep all phones, etc. out of plain sight unless otherwise instructed. Be present. Stay present. I will not hesitate to ask students to leave due to disruptive behavior, which includes text-messaging and/or social-networking.

## LATE WORK POLICY

All assignments will be due via Blackboard on the dates listed in the Course Schedule. Late work will be penalized as follows: For every one day an assignment is late, I will reduce the final grade of the assignment by two grade marks. For example, an A paper that is one day late will receive a B+; an A paper that is two days late will receive a B-; an A paper that is three days late will receive a C. Assignments more than three days late will not be accepted. Assignments cannot be made-up unless the student provides official written documentation excusing her/his/their inability to complete the assignment by the deadline.

## ATTENDANCE

Your consistent attendance and participation is crucial not only to your individual success in this course but also to the success of the course itself. This course depends on your brilliant insight. The course depends on your participation in building and sustaining a community of rigorous learning. Be punctual. It is your responsibility to drop all classes that you are no longer attending. Students who have *4 consecutive absences* or *6 absences total* will be strongly encouraged to withdraw from the course. Should either of these conditions be met after the published withdrawal deadline (*see link to Registrar below*) the student will receive an evaluative letter grade based on her/his/their participation and performance. Tardiness or early departure of any increment of time will count as 1/2 absence. Come to class! And come to class on time!

## DROPPING/WITHDRAWING FROM THE COURSE

It is your responsibility to withdraw from courses you are no longer attending or are anticipating not completing. Please check-in with me if you have concerns about our class. Also, familiarize yourself with the policies and deadlines set by the [Office of the Registrar](#). [Here is a list of important dates.](#)

## STRICT E-MAIL PROTOCOL

The main methods of communication this semester will be e-mail and Blackboard. All e-mail correspondence must properly include a greeting, a body, a salutation, and your full name, and possess few to zero grammatical errors. In other words, you must put forth your best effort in writing and sending proper e-mails, even if you are sending e-mail via a mobile device that requires you to type with only your thumbs. Each e-mail subject heading should include the following information only: English 318: Question/Concern. If you dare to write a choppy, hastily and haphazardly-executed, grammatically incorrect e-mail message, I, the professor, without the slightest hesitation, will not only refuse to reply but will also delete your message. Then, I, the professor, will empty my trashcan. This is a writing course! Practice effective writing habits at all times. No exceptions.

## PEER CRITIQUE

Peer critique is often a very useful element of writing courses. It provides you the opportunity to receive feedback from multiple readers, not just from the professor. Peer critique also heavily relies on all readers actively participating and providing thoughtful and engaging responses. This activity can often greatly benefit you, but depends on the willingness of all students to put forth their best effort when engaging and critiquing each other's writing. This quarter, you will explore different types of peer critique activities. The structure of the peer critique and workshop activities will be discussed during the first week of class.

## THE WRITING CENTER

Students seeking additional support with writing assignments should inquire with [The Writing Center](#).

## LIBRARY RESOURCES

The [John M. Pfau Library](#) offers a variety of ways to get research help. Get 24/7 online assistance, view videos and guides, visit the reference desk, or attend a workshop. [Learn more here.](#)

## **NOTE ON PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism, presenting another author's words, ideas, organization, or conclusions as one's own, will not be tolerated. Students who borrow another writer's material must document their sources according to the Modern Language Association (MLA) guidelines. Students who have committed plagiarism on any assignment will receive *zero credit* for the assignment. Multiple offenses will result in additional disciplinary measures. Accidental plagiarism will still be treated as an offense of academic dishonesty, so please ask if you are in any doubt as to how to acknowledge or use a source. For more information, please see the [University Policy on Misconduct in Research and Authorship](#).

## **SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this class are encouraged to approach the professor in confidence and contact [Services to Students with Disabilities \(SSD\)](#) as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. The phone number for SSD: 909-537-5238. SSD is located in University Hall 183.

## **TITLE IX NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER OR SEX**

The California State University does not discriminate on the basis of gender, which includes sex and gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation in its education programs or activities. [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972](#), and certain other federal and state laws, prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender or sexual orientation in employment, as well as in all education programs and activities operated by the University (both on and off campus). The protection against discrimination on the basis of gender or sexual orientation includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and gender based dating and domestic violence and stalking.

## **ABOUT THIS SYLLABUS**

This document is offered as a contract between the student and the professor regarding this course. We will abide by these policies and schedules as closely as possible; however, unforeseen circumstances may arise and we may need to make some changes. We may need to revise our schedule, drop some readings, add some readings, combine assignments, change the world, and become better at changing the world.