GROSSMONT COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Curriculum Committee Approval: 05/18/2021

GCCCD Governing Board Approval: 06/15/2021

ENGLISH 131 – SHORT FICTION WRITING II

1. Course Number Course Title Semester Units

ENGL 131 Short Fiction Writing 3

Semester Hours

3 hours lecture 48-54 total hours 96-108 outside-of-class hours 144-162 total hours

2. Course Prerequisites

A “C” grade or higher or “Pass” in English 130 or equivalent.

Corequisite

None

Recommended Preparation

None

3. Catalog Description

The second in a four-course sequence, this intermediate level class is designed to further skill development in the study, analysis, and application of tools, techniques, principles, and forms used by established and contemporary authors of short fiction. By composing and submitting original short fiction, students use the writers’ workshop to further develop competency as critics and writers of short fiction. Students have opportunities for recognition, publication and public readings of their own work. Students may enroll in this class without having to enroll in the later courses in the sequence.

4. Course Objectives

The student will:

a. Identify and analyze, both orally and in writing, the tools, techniques, and forms used by professional practitioners of short fiction writing, including plot construction, point of view, setting, description, characterization, dialogue, and theme;

b. Identify and employ techniques of invention;

c. Craft short fiction utilizing tools, techniques, and a variety of forms;

d. Evaluate benefits of criticism of their own work and demonstrate application in consequent revisions;

e. Demonstrate competency to critique other students’ short fiction, both orally and in writing;

f. Identify and describe aesthetic criteria for short fiction;

g. Performatively read their own writing aloud;

h. Demonstrate competency in college-level grammar, punctuation, and mechanics used in short fiction writing.

5. Instructional Facilities

Standard Classroom

6. Special Materials Required of Student

a. Access to a computer, the Internet, and word processing with capacity to save/export as Portable Document Format (.pdf) and/or Microsoft Word (.doc, .docx).

b. Collegiate dictionary and thesaurus.

c. Writing materials and copies of texts for workshop.

7. Course Content

a. Invention, composition, and revision of short fiction at an intermediate level, amounting to approximately 12,000 words per semester.

b. Various tools, techniques, and forms of short fiction, including point of view, setting, character, theme, narration and plot, language and style, and structure.

c. Written and oral critical commentary of peers’ original short fiction.

d. A diversity of short fiction by emerging, established, and contemporary writers, in print and/or online chapbooks, books, anthologies, literary magazines, and journals.

e. In-class writing exercises.

f. Critical essays on the discourse of fiction writing.

g. Strategies for performatively reading short fiction.

h. Practice in assembling a portfolio of short fiction.

i. Research and activities pertaining to publishing.

8. Method of Instruction

a. Lecture by instructor, visiting writers, and media.

b. Writers’ workshop: Students sit in a circle. Selected writer reads original short fiction aloud and discussion follows. A student may be designated by the instructor to commence discussion for each work. Generally, selected writers do not speak until work has been discussed by peers and addressed by instructor. Once short fiction is workshopped, the writer has the opportunity to respond and ask questions. Lastly, manuscript with written commentary is returned to its author. Cycle repeats with next selected writer.

c. Discussion and writing exercises based on tools, techniques, and forms of short fiction.

d. Discussion and reading aloud of short fiction by emerging, traditional, and/or contemporary authors.

e. Individual conferences.

9. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance

a. Student writing and revision of short fiction.

b. Participation in writers’ workshop, both orally and in writing.

c. Participation in class discussion and writing exercises, such as modeling based on published authors.

d. Completion of short fiction portfolio (including exercises, drafts and revisions)as a final project.

e. Performative reading of original works composed for the class, presented as part of a final examination.

10. Outside Class Assignments

a. Reading and studying of work by emerging, established and/or contemporary short fiction writers.

b. Composing and revising works of short fiction.

c. Reading and writing critiques of classmates’ short stories.

d. Researching material for works of short fiction.

e. Craft and imitation exercises.

f. Attending and/or participating in campus and community literary events and readings.

g. Submitting manuscripts to the Grossmont College literary journal, *Acorn Review*, as well as researching markets for online and print publication opportunities.

11. Representative Texts

a. Representative Text(s):

1) *Acorn Review Literary Journal.* 2019-2020. Grossmont College.

2) Bradburn, Richard. *Self-Editing for Self-Publishers: Incorporating—A Style Guide for Fiction.* Reen Publishing, 2020.

3) Brown, Renni, and Dave King. *Self-Editing for Fiction Writers*. 2nd ed. HarperCollins Publishers, 2006.

4) Burroway, Janet, and Elizabeth Stuckey-French and Ned Stuckey-French. *Writing Fiction: A Guide To Narrative Craft*. 10th ed. University of Chicago Press, 2019.

5) DeMarinis. Rick. *The Art and Craft of the Short Story.* Open Road Distribution, 2016.

6) Jones, Amy. *Novel and Short Story Writer’s Market 2020*. Writer’s Digest Books, 2020.

7) Mills, Mark. *Crafting the Very Short Story: Anthology of 100 Masterpieces*. Prentice Hall, 2002.

8) Sittenfeld, Curtis and Heidi Pitlor, Eds. *The Best American Short Stories 2020.* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2020.

b. Supplementary texts and workbooks:

1) Brewer, Robert Lee, ed. *Writer's Market 2020.* Writer's Digest Books, 2020.

2) Strunk Jr., William. *The Elements of Style*. Ed., Michele Poff. Tip Top Education/Curriculum Publishing, 2017.

Addendum: Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, our students will be able to do the following:

1. At an intermediate level, identify and employ elements of short fiction and use specific details from memory, imagination, knowledge, and research to invent, draft, revise, and reflect upon short fiction in a variety of forms.

2. Use the writers’ workshop to evaluate their own manuscripts as well as the manuscripts of others (both orally and in writing) to continue growth as critics and writers of short fiction.

3. At an intermediate level, discuss and assess the content and form of works by emerging, established, and/or contemporary authors.