



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE – FALL 2013

EN 2950: INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING – 3 (3-0-0) 45 HOURS

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Anna Lapointe **PHONE:** 780-539-2992

OFFICE: C420 **E-MAIL:** alapointe@gprc.ab.ca

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:30-12:30, or by appointment

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE: Six credits of Junior English and consent of instructor based on some demonstrated attempt at creative prose submitted to the instructor at least 9 days before the first class.

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

Goldberg, Natalie. *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*. New Edition. Shambhala Press, 2005.

All other course materials will be posted on Moodle.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: At an introductory level, this course emphasizes the principles and practices of writing publishable prose. Students are allowed to write in various genres aimed at traditional publication or other markets

DESCRIPTION OF THIS COURSE: This class will introduce students to writing creatively for an audience. Students will examine the structures of writing and develop new work in response to class assignments. However, the core of the course is the necessary practice of critique for editing. When we cease to write only for ourselves,

we confront a new and sometimes frightening question: How can this be better? There is always an answer, and often several. No work is perfect in itself. Students will learn to read their own work and the work of others with revision in mind, to offer constructive criticism to their peers, and to return to their own writing with a determination to revise and edit their initial creation into a finished story.

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3 (3-0-0) 45 hours

DELIVERY MODE(S): Seminar/Workshop

TRANSFERABILITY:

University of Alberta

University of Calgary*

University of Lethbridge

Augustana Faculty, University of Alberta

Concordia University College

Other

* An asterisk (*) beside any transfer institution indicates important transfer information. Consult the Alberta Transfer Guide.

** Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability

GRADING CRITERIA:

Grading for this class differs from a standard English course. There is no single standard which students are expected to meet. Students enrolled in this course differ in experience and skill levels; those will not be the primary source of evaluation. Instead, students will be evaluated on the following criteria: contribution to class workshops, completion of course work, thoughtfulness of critiques, incorporation of critiques into edited work, and overall improvement. These criteria are intended to emphasize commitment to the process of writing and improvement over the course of the term.

Although they are not ideal for this process, grades are a necessary part of university-credit courses. Assessments will be given as letter grades.

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE			
GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A ⁺	4.0	90 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	85 – 89	
A ⁻	3.7	80 – 84	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B ⁺	3.3	77 – 79	
B	3.0	73 – 76	GOOD
B ⁻	2.7	70 – 72	
C ⁺	2.3	67 – 69	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	63 – 66	
C ⁻	1.7	60 – 62	
D ⁺	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

EVALUATIONS:

25% Mid-term portfolio

25% Final portfolio

40% Participation

- in-class critiques (all criticism must be constructive and detailed)
- presentation of work for critique
- attendance
- submission of weekly assignments

10% Self-evaluation

Portfolios to be graded both on quality of work and incorporation of feedback

Please note that this course has no regular final exam. Instead, students will submit their final portfolios at the exam time in the exam space (both TBA).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Attendance. Even more than a regular English class, this course requires your presence. The workshop process relies on its participants on both sides. Showing up is fundamental.

2. Presentation of work for critique. Twice in the course, students will bring a sample of their work for class critique. It is essential that you provide your sample to class members by the Sunday night before the class meeting for which you are scheduled.

3. Critiques of work. It is each student's responsibility to read the writing samples for that week's class at least twice, to take notes on them, and to offer constructive suggestions for the editing process.

4. Submission of weekly assignments. Students will be given writing prompts each week, for submission the following week. These are intended to keep students writing new work, and thinking about the writing process. Students are required to

submit eight of these in the course of the term. They will only be accepted on their due date. All assignments will be returned the following week with comments and suggestions. Because of the volume of material involved, I cannot accept late assignments.

5. Respectful dialogue. The workshop process is essential to professional writing, and to the development of writing communities. Rudeness, power plays, hate speech, and personal attacks will not be tolerated. It is important to remember that our focus is on the work and not the author. Don't be personal.

6. Receptivity. All writers have moments of resentment in the workshop process. I call this process "You don't understand my genius!" This is a normal feeling, but keep it to yourself. Be prepared to listen to critiques thoughtfully and politely, and be prepared to incorporate comments into your edited works.

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITTEN WORK

Being able to follow formatting requirements is a standard skill for professional writers. Here are the expectations for this course:

- Make sure your work is free of typos
- Put your name on it
- Double space
- Use a 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. (Courier New and Arial are also acceptable. No Helvetica will be tolerated.)
- Mark breaks in text clearly with three centred asterisks (***)

- Print on one side of the page only (leave the back for readers' notes)
- Number pages clearly
- Printed materials should be stapled
- Digitally-distributed pieces (as for weekly critiques) **must** be distributed as PDF files to ensure that all formatting is preserved

Assignments are due in class and on paper. Multi-page assignments must be stapled (this is not optional; unstapled works will not be accepted). Remember to print on one side of the page only. The library printers' default is to double-side; learn to adjust the settings more than five minutes before your assignment is due.

Late submissions of weekly assignments are not accepted under any circumstances.

Portfolio submissions are subject to late penalties of one third of a letter grade per day. This means that a portfolio due Wednesday night and submitted Thursday morning will see its grade reduced from (for example) a B+ to a B, with a subsequent deduction for each additional day late. Weekends count as one day.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, submission of work in one course which has already been submitted in another, failure to cite sources, attempts to communicate with other students during exams, impersonating another student, and purchasing papers online. (This is not a complete list. See the GPRC Academic Calendar pp. 44-45 for details and a list of penalties.*)

*Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

Within this course, plagiarism includes submitting another person's work as your own and submitting work done for a previous course as new work for this one. Literature has slightly different expectations for plagiarism; we will discuss these standards, and explore how to establish artistic integrity in our own work.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Schedule will be updated after first class to show workshop schedule

Sept 11 – Introduction to the course; signup for workshops

Sept 18 – reading “Hills Like White Elephants”

Sept 25 –

Oct 2 – reading “Hairball”

Oct 9 –

Oct 16 – reading “The Things They Carried”

Oct 23 –

Oct 30 – mid-term portfolio due

Nov 6 – reading “The Commitment”

Nov 13 –

Nov 20 – reading “The Change in Me”

Nov 27 –

Dec 4 –

TBA (Week of Dec 12-20) Final portfolio due