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English 201/01
Introduction to Fiction Writing
Fall 2013
Tue/Thu: 12.30-1.45pm
Barrett 214

Required Text: Writing Fiction, 8th Edition, Janet Burroway

Overview: In this course we study introductory narrative form and theory while applying what we learn to our own writing of short fiction. By the end of the course we should have a good introductory level knowledge of the key elements of fiction writing and we should be able to apply what we have learnt to our own writing. The following elements make up the foundation of the course:

The Writing Process
Showing and Telling
Characterization
Dialogue
Setting & Time
Form, Plot & Structure
Point of View
Revision

Literary Fiction: In this class we read, write, discuss and revise literary fiction. Literary fiction aims to disclose aspects of experience in a moving and artful way. Literary fiction strives for seamless mimesis while simultaneously making creative and aesthetically appropriate use of various aspects of storytelling, all through the tool of language. For the purposes of this class you cannot write so-called genre fiction, that is, fantasy, science fiction, mystery, children's or young adult fiction, and so on.

Work Load: While we read and discuss published work by a number of writers, much of our time will be invested in critiquing your own writing exercises. In addition to writing exercises, you will write one short story (with a 2000 word minimum word count, a 3500 word maximum word count) that will be critiqued three times during the second half of the semester.

Assignments: You will turn in your own original work. All work must be typed in twelve-point font and double-spaced. All work must be handed in (sent out via email) on time. Late assignments will be disqualified from submission and will not be graded unless you have an advance agreement with me. *As this is a workshop that depends on your dependable participation while also testing and developing your ability to write and produce text on deadline, it is unlikely that I will allow assignments to be handed in beyond deadline.*

Final Portfolio: At the end of the semester you hand in a final portfolio. The Portfolio will comprise your writing exercises together with the final version of your short story. I will not return your portfolio to you unless you specify to me, in writing, that you will collect it during the first two weeks of the following semester. Students who wish to discuss their portfolios the following semester are encouraged to do so, by making an appointment to see me.

Quizzes, Tests & Exams: There are no scheduled quizzes, tests or exams for this class. However, if class discussion lags or if, in my opinion, work is not up to scratch, I shall include any of these methods of assessment. Scores for any such unscheduled assessment will be included in your

participation grade. *Should you miss any such tests for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to reschedule with me.* If you do not reschedule you will receive a zero for the test.

Attendance: As this class is based on participation, you are allowed three excused absences but *no unexcused absences*. Absences are not excused unless you have offered me a reasonable motivation such as illness, disease or disaster *before class*. A fourth absence means your grade will automatically go down by one third of a letter, for example, from a B+ to a B. Being late for workshop will be severely frowned upon. Three late arrivals for class will constitute an absence. If you miss six workshops, you automatically fail the course.

Grade:

Class Participation:	25	(10% of which is peer evaluation)
Writing Exercises:	25	
Short Story Earlier Versions:	25	
Final Portfolio:	25	
TOTAL:	100	

Make sure to write your own name with the comments on the manuscripts you hand back to your fellow workshopppers: this will stand your grade in good stead during peer evaluation.

The Hours of Writing: This course requires a substantial amount of reading and writing. I suggest you will have to do at the very least an hour of writing per day in addition to extensive reading in order to complete the course with a reasonable grade.

Classroom Language and Culture: This is a creative writing space. As such, imagination and creativity are encouraged and celebrated. This means we will at times be working with provocative material, subject matter and language that may be uncomfortable to some of us. As a teacher I will aim to maintain a safe and respectful space while also at times making use of provocative remarks and language aimed at stimulating debate, inquiry and creativity. You are free to come and discuss the classroom culture with me if you are experiencing problems in this regard.

Plagiarism: All work is assumed to be the student's own and produced exclusively for the course in which it is submitted. Papers written for one course, even if revised, are not to be submitted in another without the instructor's prior approval. Borrowing of ideas or language from other sources (including published material, other student papers, the internet or other electronic resources, etc.) must be carefully documented. Students are advised against posting their work on the Internet since doing so may lead to suspicion of plagiarism. Students are advised to maintain drafts of their work to verify its originality. Cases of suspected plagiarism may be referred to the Honor Council, and the student if convicted will receive a grade of F in the course in addition to sanctions assigned by the Council. Clear evidence of plagiarism (failure to use quotation marks around verbatim or copied language, failure to adequately paraphrase, and failure to cite the source of quoted, paraphrased, or borrowed text and ideas), regardless of the Council hearing outcome, may likewise result in failure of the course. Carelessness in documenting sources, even if not technically plagiarism, will be penalized as the instructor deems appropriate. If you are uncertain about how or whether to document sources, consult your teacher.

Letters of Recommendation: Students frequently request letters from professors to assist them in being selected for graduate schools and/or into careers in later life. To write an honest, thorough, sincere and appropriate letter of recommendation takes time, effort and focus. In addition to the most basic gesture of respect such as giving your referee ample advance warning and therefore time to compose a meaningful letter and make submissions, you may consider the use of an occasional note of thanks, or, of keeping your referee abreast of the outcomes of whatever you have applied for. (I turn fifty this year and I'm still occasionally asking former colleagues and teachers for letters of recommendation). As you may be requesting letters for years to come, it may stand you in good stead to keep your referees abreast of major developments in your professional life.

Disabilities: Rhodes College makes every effort to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students may request accommodations by making an appointment to speak to Melissa Butler, the Coordinator of Disability Services.
Phone: 843 3944. E-Mail: mbutler@rhodes.edu

Schedule of Classes:

Week 1: 08/22: Class Introductions
The Writing Process

Week 2: 08.27: The Writing Process (Chapter 1)
Showing and Telling (Chapter 2)
Group A: send out Exercise Nr 3, p 71 on Tue by noon. (Send out to everyone in class)

Week 2: 09/29: We workshop Exercise Nr 3, p71
I select a few of these to discuss in workshop (every week)
Your comments go to each of the writers (every week)

Week 3: 09/03: Characterization & Dialogue (Chapter 3)
Group B members send out Exercise Nr 3, p 114 on Tue by noon

Week 3: 09/05: Workshop Exercise Nr 3, p 114

Week 4: 09/10: Characterization (Chapter 4)
Group A sends out Exercise Nr 5, p 162

Week 4: 09/12: Workshop Exercise Nr 5, p 162

Week 5: 09/17: Setting and Time (Chapters 5 & 6)
Half of Group B sends out Exercise Nr 4, p 207
Half of Group B sends out Exercise Nr 4, p246

Week 5: 09/19 Workshop both Exercises 4 on pp 207 & 246

Week 6: 09/24 Form, Plot & Structure (Chapter 7)
Group A sends out Exercise Nr 1, p 298

Week 6: 09/26 Workshop Exercise Nr 1, p 298

Week7: 10/01 Point of View (Chapter 8)
Group B sends out Exercise Nr 3, p 339

Week 7: 10/03 Workshop Exercise Nr 3, p 339

Week 8: 10/08 Revision (Chapter 9)
Everyone sends out one revised Exercise

Week 8: 10/10 Fall Break

Week 9: 10/15 Fall Break

Week 9: 10/18 Finalize Work on Short Stories
The Meerkats: First Version of Short Story by Sat Midnight

Week 10: 10/22	We Workshop: The Meerkats The Nudibranchs: First Version of Short Story Wed 8 am
Week 10: 10/24	We Workshop: The Nudibranchs The Ostriches: First Version by Sat Midnight
Week 11: 10/29	We Workshop: The Ostriches The Baobabs: First Version by Wed 8am
Week 11: 10/31	We Workshop: The Baobabs The Meerkats: Second Version by Sat Midnight
Week 12: 11/05	We Workshop: The Meerkats The Nudibranchs: Second Version by Wed 8am
Week 12: 11/07	We Workshop: The Nudibranchs The Ostriches: Second Version by Sat Midnight <i>7pm: Attend reading by poet: Dana Levin</i>
Week 13: 11/12	We Workshop: The Ostriches The Baobabs: Second Version by Wed 8am
Week 13: 11/14	We Workshop: The Baobabs Meerkats hand in Sat
Week 14: 11/19	We Workshop: The Meerkats: Third Version Nudibranchs hand in Wed
Week 14: 11/21	We Workshop: The Nudibranchs: Third Version
Week 15: 11/26	Thanksgiving Break
Week 15: 11/28	Thanksgiving Break Ostriches hand in latest Sat Midnight, Nov 30
Week 16: 12/03	We Workshop: The Ostriches: Third Version Baobabs hand in Wed
Week 16: 12/05	No course exams: We Workshop: The Baobabs: Third Version
Week 17: 12/11	Final Portfolio Due
12/13	Final Grades Due
End ...	