

English 301-02/Schottenfeld

Writing requirements:

- a) 3 short stories (each 12-15pgs).
- b) 1 short story revision (due at end of semester).

Your final portfolios should consist of all three of your stories (*with my written comments*) and one revision.

Deadlines: On the day your story is due, you should email the story (as an attachment) to the class. The address is 18092@rhodes.edu. You should also provide a hard copy of the story to me.

Your stories must be sent by 4:30pm.

Any late work will result in a 1/3 letter-grade deduction per day.

Grades: You'll get written feedback on all assignments, but not letter grades. (You will, of course, get a final letter grade – and a midterm one.)

In terms of your final grade, the bulk of it (90%) will consist of your writing. Each story counts as 25%; the revision is 15%. The other 10% consists of class participation – both in-class participation and take-home responses to your peers' work – and attendance. Attendance is a must. The class is simply too small, your feedback too important, to account for absences. I'll allow two absences. After that, you'll need a doctor's note, a good excuse, etc. Excessive absences will directly affect your grade.

Plagiarism: the use, citation, or paraphrase of someone else's words or ideas without attribution. If you are uncertain what constitutes plagiarism, please talk to me.

Please Note: All writing in this class must be original material, not reworked from previous semesters.

William Strunk, Jr. (from Elements of Style): "If those who have studied the art of writing are in accord on any one point, it is on this: the surest way to arouse and hold the attention of the reader is by being specific, definite, and concrete. The greatest writers...are effective largely because they deal in particulars and report the details that matter."

Jerome Stern: (from Making Shapely Fiction): "The success of a story lies in its immediacy. If the story seems to be happening right there, it will work. If it seems to be a remote reminiscence, it won't."

Joyce Carol Oates (from The Paris Review):

Interviewer: How do you describe the perfect state in which you can write from early morning into the afternoon?

Oates: One must be pitiless about this matter of "mood." In a sense, the writing will create the mood. If art is, as I believe it to be, a genuinely transcendental function -- a means by which we rise out of limited, parochial states of mind -- then it should not matter very much what states of mind or emotion we are in. Generally I've found this to be true: I have forced myself to begin writing when I've been utterly exhausted, when I've felt my soul thin as a playing card, when nothing has seemed worth enduring for another five minutes...and somehow the activity of writing changes everything."

V.S. Naipaul (in letter to father): "The essential thing about writing is writing."