

Professor: Mark Behr  
Office Phone/Voice Mail: 843 3979  
[behrm@rhodes.edu](mailto:behrm@rhodes.edu)

Office: Palmer Hall 308  
Office Hrs: Tue/Thu: 4 - 5pm  
& by appointment

**English 301/01**  
Intermediate Fiction Writing  
Fall 2011  
Tue/Thu: 2.00pm--3.15pm  
Clough 300

**Required Texts:**

Writing Fiction, Eighth Edition, Janet Burroway  
Selected Texts on Fileserver [\\Fileserver1\acad\\_dept\\_pgm\English\Behr\\_Mark\Public](\\Fileserver1\acad_dept_pgm\English\Behr_Mark\Public)

**Overview:**

This course builds on and revisits material from the Introduction to Fiction Writing Workshop. By now you are comfortable with the use of elements and concepts of fiction such as Showing and Telling; Characterization; Place; Time; Form, Plot & Structure as well as Point of View. The aims of this class are to ensure that you write and rewrite short Short Stories (Sudden Fiction) as well as Short Stories that display integrated knowledge of the aforementioned elements of fiction. The greater part of our time will be spent writing and critiquing work by members of the workshop. In addition, the purpose of this course is to encourage you to begin living the life of a writer by cultivating attentiveness to the discipline of writing, to language, to literature, and to self and other. By the end of the class you will have produced two stories that are as close to complete as you are, at this point, able to achieve.

**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 one flash fiction (above 501 but under 1001 words), you will write one short story (with a 2500 word minimum word count, a 4500 word maximum word count) that will be critiqued a number of 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 on time. Late assignments will be disqualified from submission and will not be graded unless you have an advance agreement with me.

However, as this is a workshop that depends largely 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 the first versions (at times referred to as drafts) along with final versions of both your stories. 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.

**Attendance:**

You are allowed three excused absences. Absences are not excused unless you have offered me a reasonable motivation such as illness, disease or disaster *before class*. After three unexcused absences 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 will constitute an absence. *Please note there are two compulsory public readings you are required to attend. November 15 and 16.*

**Grade:**

Class Participation:	25	(10% of which is peer evaluation)
Flash Fiction:	25	
Short Story:	25	
Final Portfolio:	25	
TOTAL:	100	

**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 must be 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:**

Work handed in for this class is governed by the Honor Code. All work you hand in during the semester must be entirely your own and produced exclusively for this class. Plagiarism is the act of presenting as one's own the work done by anyone else. This act defeats the purpose of education and carries severe penalties. The use of anyone else's ideas or expressions requires giving that person explicit credit. Penalties for plagiarism may include: failing grades for those assignments which were plagiarized; failing grades for the course; suspension from school.

**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: 08/25: Read through Syllabus in class  
For next week, read: Flash Fiction, on Fileserver  
[\\Fileserver1\acad\\_dept\\_pgm\English\Behr\\_Mark\Public](\\Fileserver1\acad_dept_pgm\English\Behr_Mark\Public)
- Week 2: 08/30: On Fileserver:  
Oscar Wilde: The Artist  
Amy Hempel: Housewife  
Ernest Hemingway: For Sale  
Margaret Atwood: Affair  
Richard Brautigan: The Scarlatti Tilt  
Dave Eggers: The Accident  
Jamaica Kincaid: Girl  
Mark Behr: Boy
- Week 2: 09/01: On Fileserver:  
Edwidge Danticat: Night Women  
Luisa Valenzuela: I'm Your Horse In The Night  
Raymond Carver: Popular Mechanics  
Sandra Cisneros: My Name  
Pam Houston: Symphony  
Luke: The Prodigal Son  
Monica Ware: Mislaid Plans  
Alfia Rifaat: Distant View of a Minaret
- Group A: Send out Flash Fiction on Sunday by 6pm.  
Group B: Send out Flash Fiction on Sunday by 6pm.
- Week 3: 09/06: We Workshop Group A: Flash

Group C & D: Send out Flash Fiction by Sat at 6pm.

Week 3: 09/08: We Workshop Group B: Flash

Week 4: 09/13: We Workshop Group C: Flash

Week 4: 09/15: We Workshop Group D: Flash

Week 5: 09/20: We Discuss Showing and Telling (Chapter 2)  
 Stuart Dybek: We Didn't (p 42)  
 Dan Chaon: Yhe Big Me (p 51)  
 Group A sends out Short Story by Wed at 12 pm

Week 5: 09/22 We Workshop Group A: Short Story  
 Group B sends out Short Story by Sunday at 12pm

Week 6: 09/27 We Discuss: Characterization (Chapter 3)  
 Junot Diaz: Fiesta (p 90)  
 ZZ Packer: Every Tongue Shall Confess (p 100)

Week 6: 09/29 We Workshop Group B: Short Story  
 Group C sends out Short Story by Sunday at 12pm

Week7: 10/04 We Discuss: Characterization (Chapter 4)  
 Tobias Wolff: Bullet In The Brain  
 Richard Bausch: Tandolfo The Great

Week 7: 10/06 We Workshop Group C: Short Story  
 Group D sends out Short Story by Sunday at 12pm

Week 8: 10/11 We Discuss: Setting/Place (Chapter 5)  
 Eudora Welty: A Visit of Charity  
 Thomas Glave: The Final Inning (On Reserve)

Week 8: 10/13 We Workshop Group D: Short Story

Week 9: 10/18 Fall Break  
 Group A: Revised Short Story by Fri, Oct 14, 8 am

Week 9: 10/20 We Workshop Group A: Revised Short Story  
 Group B sends out Revised Short Story by Sat, 12pm

Week 10: 10/25 We Discuss: Time (Chapter 6)  
 Jill MCCorkle: Hominids  
 Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni: Mrs. Dutta Writes A Letter  
 John Gould: Feelers

Week 10: 10/27	We Workshop Group B: Revised Short Story Group C sends out Revised Short Story by Sat, 12 pm
Week 11: 11/01	We Discuss: Form, Plot and Structure (Chapter 7) Sherman Alexie: What Pawn I Will Redeem Ron Hansen: My Kid's Dog
Week 11: 11/03	We Workshop: Group C: Revised Short Story Group D sends out Revised Short Story by Sat, 12 pm
Week 12: 11/08	We Discuss: Point of View (Chapter 8) June Spence: Missing Women Gish Jen: Who's Irish? Robin Hemley: Reply All
Week 12: 11/10	We Workshop: Group D: Revised Short Story Group A sends out Revised Flash Fiction by Sat, 12pm
Week 13: 11/15	We Discuss: Revision (Chapter 9) Ron Carlson: Keith (All texts on the reworking of 'Keith') <i>Compulsory Evening Event: Antjie Krog</i>
Week 13: 11/16	<i>Compulsory Evening Poetry Reading: Antjie Krog</i>
Week 13: 11/17	We Workshop: Group A: Revised Flash Fiction Group B: Revised Flash Fiction by Mon, 22 Nov, at 8am
Week 14: 11/22	Thanksgiving Break
Week 14: 11/24	Thanksgiving Break
Week 15: 11/29	We Workshop: Group B: Revised Flash Fiction Group C sends out Revised Flash Fiction by Wed 8am
Week 15: 12/01	We Workshop: Group C: Revised Flash Fiction Group D sends out Revised Flash Fiction by Wed 8am
Week 16: 12/06	We Workshop: Group D: Revised Flash Fiction
Week 16: 12/08	Reading Day
Week 17: 12/12	Final Portfolio Due
End ...	