

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for ENG 12A

CRAFT OF WRITING FICTION

Effective: Fall 2013

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ENG 12A — CRAFT OF WRITING FICTION — 3.00 units

Practice in writing fiction. Developing internal and external sources for stories and novels; biographical sources, characterization, plot, points-of-view, narrative techniques; analysis and criticism of published writing and individual's own work. 3 hours.

3.00 Units Lecture

Strongly Recommended

ENG 11 - Introduction to Creative Writing
with a minimum grade of C
and

- Eligibility for ENG 1A -
or

Grading Methods:

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:

- A. ENG11
- B. -Eligibility for ENG 1A

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. demonstrate and develop the basic skills of fiction writing: description, dialogue, characterization, point of view control, plotting, and theme
2. identify elements of craft within published fiction--such as character, plot, theme, setting, and point of view --and how they are developed within a story.
3. identify source material for fiction
4. complete at least two short stories or novel excerpts, at least eight pages each, and revise them based on criticism from the instructor and the class
5. locate markets in which to publish his or her fiction and follow proper submission guidelines

V. CONTENT:

- A. Controlled assignments to enable the student to practice specific elements of fiction and writing techniques
- B. An analysis of the works of professional writers to study the craft of fiction, including the elements of fiction, genre, form, and necessary vocabulary for criticism and self-evaluation of work;
- C. Lecture, discussion, and exercises related to identifying and developing sources for stories;
- D. Workshop of student fiction: The analysis and discussion of student writing by the class and instructor, and the rewriting of one piece based on feedback
- E. Discussion of marketing and submitting fiction to magazines, contests, publishers, and agents.

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Audio-visual Activity** - B. Audio/video 1. presentations of professional writers discussing topics like craft and the life of a writer; 2. recordings of professional writers presenting their work.
- B. **Lecture** - A. Lecture and discussion 1. Presentation of forms, strategies and elements of fiction; 2. Study and discussion of professional work through close textual analysis; 3. Individual and group exercises practicing the elements of fiction; 4. Discussion of student work by the class and instructor; 5. Written feedback about students' craft within their own fiction.

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Read "Everything That Rises Must Converge," by Flannery O'Connor, and write a one page critique of the story, explaining what worked and didn't work for you, using the vocabulary of the elements of fiction. B. Write a two-page beginning for a story in third-person about a child and parent getting ready to go out to a particular function. Establish that there is a political or moral conflict between the characters, but reveal through dialogue, flashback, background, and/or action that the root of the conflict, or the passion behind the conflict, is a result of the parent/child relationship. If you extend the story, explore how this might eventually challenge the feelings of the characters when the relationship fails or falters because of the political or moral conflict, as it does in "Everything That Rises Must Converge," by Flannery O'Connor. C. Turn in a story, or novel excerpt, of yours to be workshopped by the class. 1. The story should be between eight and twenty pages (or a combination of stories equal to this amount), double-spaced, and the pages should be numbered. 2. If the piece is a novel excerpt and not the first chapter, please provide a one-page synopsis of the events preceding the piece you've submitted. 3. After receiving feedback from the class, rewrite the piece as instructed by the teacher, including a one-page summary of the feedback and your changes.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Quizzes
3. Portfolios
4. Papers
5. Class Participation
6. Class Work
7. Home Work

B. **Frequency**

Weekly readings and writing assignments-- 2 pages of exercises per week, and a minimum of 16 pages of workshopped work in the semester. Frequency of exams and quizzes is up to the individual instructor. In-class exercises weekly. Students should contribute to in-class discussion and every workshop on a weekly basis. Group projects if desired by the instructor. A portfolio of work, first and revised draft of at least one story, should be submitted at the end of the semester.

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Burroway, Janet *Writing Fiction*. 8th ed., Longman, 2012.
2. Perrotta, Tom, Ed. *The Best American Short Stories, 2012.*, Houghton Mifflin, 2012.
3. Gardner, John *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers.*, Vintage Books, 1991.
4. Lamott, Anne *Bird by Bird: Some Instruction on Writing and Life.*, Anchor, 1995.
5. Gioia, Dana and R.S. Gynn, Ed. *The Art of the Short Story.*, Longman, 2005.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Writing Material—paper and pen/pencil or computer
- B. Use of Blackboard