ENGLISH 463.090 – Elements of Craft

MWF 12-1250

Fall 2017 Ferguson 177

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LAN 203
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Office hours: by appointment.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:
John Gardner, THE ART OF FICTION
Flannery O'Connor: Complete Short Stories
You are also responsible for all handouts (there will be quite a few) provided as assigned readings.

COURSE DESCRIPTION (from the General Bulletin): Analysis of selected examples (either prose or poetry) with emphasis on technical, generic, and aesthetic features.

OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to help writers improve their craft by reading superb examples by established writers. While it is understood that most of the students in the class will have skill sets already acquired, this course is intended to hone those skills and to provide new ones. Students should expect to learn to read deeply and sensitively, as any good writer should, and learn how to speak in terms of craft and to employ craft in their own work. Assignments include a presentation, two craft analysis papers, and two creative assignments (short stories, creative essays, or poetry packets). There will also be a midterm and a final. When you leave the course, you will certainly be better readers, but you will also be far more proficient and precise as writers.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1.) The student will demonstrate close reading skills and recognize strategies used by professional creative writers.
2.) The student will employ techniques and strategies for crafting carefully composed, competent creative work.
3.) The student will articulate useful, critical editorial advice for peer writers.

4.) The student will demonstrate strategic revision on completed creative work.

**GRADES:**

- Attendance 5%
- Participation 5%
- First Analysis 10%
- Second Analysis 10%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Presentation 10%
- Creative Submission #1 10%
- Creative Submission #2 10%
- Final Exam 20% Total 100%

**ATTENDANCE:**

Attendance and active participation in this course are absolutely necessary. I give every student two excused absences. More than two absences will affect your grade. Each additional absence beyond the excused two will lower your grade half a step (for example, from a B to B-). If you accrue more than eight absences, you will automatically fail the course regardless of your other work. If you are sick or otherwise unable to attend class, please get in touch with me. Being absent is not an excuse for missed information or assignments. You should either contact me or a classmate to find out what went on in class if you are not able to attend. You are responsible for the material discussed in class on the days you were absent.

**Warning:** I do not accept late work or give extensions on papers or stories.

Please do not be late for class.

**PARTICIPATION:**

Class participation is paramount in an open-conversation course. I grade class participation in 2 main ways:

- **Discussion:** Be prepared to talk about the readings on the day we discuss them in class. Do not be intimidated if you don’t understand the readings; discourse may include asking questions about the things you don’t understand. Anyone who tells you there is a right answer to a text is being untruthful. Invisibility in discussion will give you no more than a C in the course.
Listening: Respect is imperative; you will listen to what others have to say, and you will engage with them respectfully.

EXAMS: The first exam will cover topics discussed during the first half of the semester. The final will be comprehensive. The exams will be essay examinations—short answer and long answer.

PRESENTATION:
Each of you will choose an author and work and give a brief 10 minute presentation to the class about some aspect of the work you have researched outside of class discussion. This will not be a biographical overview.

PAPERS and CREATIVE WORK:
You will write two analytical papers and submit two creative packets. The essays will analyze a single element or technique employed by the author for a particular effect which you will explain clearly and succinctly. 3-4 pages is ample for those assignments.

Creative packets will be stories, creative essays, or packets of 5-6 poems. The stories will be anywhere from 2000-4000 words and you will be expected to write a brief preface to your work which explains how the reading you have done in the course has affected the decisions you made as an author. You should endeavor to use the techniques you’ve learned or to challenge those techniques via your own innovation.

All work must be typed—prose will be double-spaced in MLA format, which will be explained in class. You will be required to use parenthetical citation any time you cite.

Always keep copies of what you write for your own protection. In the event that your work should be lost, or misplaced, you want to make sure you have a back-up copy.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Please contact me if you are having any difficulties with the material due to a documented disability. The university asks us to include this information on all course policies:

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468 3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to: http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/
Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54):

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR (UNIVERSITY POLICY)

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

PLAGIARISM:

This really shouldn’t happen and, therefore, better not happen. Plagiarism will get you a quick F in the course:

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty  Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

SCHEDULE: TBA