ENGLISH 468.001
Creative Writing Senior Thesis
Spring 2018
Thursdays, 6-8:30PM Ferguson 177

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Office hours: 11-Noon (MWF), 9:30-11:00AM (TTH) and by appointment.

Course Description:
A two-semester progression of senior thesis culminating in a well-crafted book-length creation of either poetry or prose.

Prerequisites
✓ The student has 15 credits of creative writing, including ENG 459, ENG 461 or ENG 462
✓ The student has consent of faculty adviser.

OBJECTIVES

The official Program Learning Outcomes for this course include:
✓ The student will demonstrate close reading skills and recognize strategies used by professional creative writers.
✓ The student will employ techniques and strategies for crafting carefully composed, competent creative work.
✓ The student will demonstrate strategic revision on completed creative work.
✓ The student will compose and sustain a complete, polished manuscript of substance in the focus-genre.

The Student Learning Outcomes for this senior level project are:
☞ Ability to discuss elements of fiction in one’s own work
☞ Ability to discuss the influence of strategies used by professional, contemporary writers on one’s work
☞ The ability to improve a body of work (short stories or novella) through revision
☞ The ability to complete a significant part of a finely polished full-length work.
GRADING BREAKDOWN
ATTENDANCE (of meetings) 10%
DRAFT (for first semester students) 50%
REVISION OF MANUSCRIPT 40%

ATTENDANCE (of meetings) 10%
The student will attend scheduled meetings with instructor. If the meeting must be cancelled, twenty-four notice must be given and an alternative meeting time must be scheduled.

ROUGH DRAFTS 50%
A thesis should be roughly 100-plus pages of prose or 40-50 pages of poetry to be considered substantial. Rough drafts must be of complete stories or poems, not fragments. A novel project, clearly, moves via a clear progression of chapters.

REVISION OF MANUSCRIPT 40%
The entire manuscript will go through an edit for the final of the course. The manuscript must be arranged in a cohesive fashion. It should be presented professionally, spiral-bound and clean. There must be a title page, table of contents and a one-page introduction/discussion of the completion of the manuscript.

Grading:
☞ All work MUST be turned on assigned due dates. Otherwise, you will receive an F for that assignment.
☞ All stories/chapters will be graded on professional format, spelling, etc.
☞ All drafts must be typed on clean paper.
☞ Make sure you follow professional format.
☞ All comments will focus on how well you employ the elements of fiction and can improve the story/novel.

A For prose students: compelling plot with well-drawn characters, consistent point of view and well-established conflict, well written dialogue and excellent details, professionally presented in correct format. For poets, an excellent sense of craft and originality.
B A well-defined plot with good characters, consistent point of view and good conflict, well written dialogue and good details, professionally presented in correct format. Not as exceptional as an A but could get there with revision. Poetry—well-crafted, but not as original or polished as “A” work.
C Simplistic or derivative plot, flat characters, conflict needs to be developed or point of view is inconsistent, professionally presented in correct format. Average poetry: competent, but not compelling.
D Poorly developed plot, characters, conflict or dialogue, minimal details OR incorrect format, errors in terms of grammar or in terms of meeting assignment requirements. Incoherent or technically flawed poetry.
F plagiarized, grammatically unreadable, incomplete, does not fulfill assignment, not handed in.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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.

PLAGIARISM

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.
Tentative Calendar

*For first semester students, the goal is to produce as much work as possible, so you are in a comfortable by the beginning of the second semester. For second semester students, the goal is revision of the final manuscript.

WEEK ONE
Go over Syllabus/Policies. Set up meeting times. The following weeks will be largely dependent on the size of the project, the pace of the student’s writing, and the demands of revision. These are simply suggestions which will change depending on the needs of the project.

WEEK TWO
Discuss first half of project and how much to achieve in the semester. HW: Write Story 1 or first chapters for collection/8-10 pages.

WEEK THREE
Turn in work. HW: Read suggested material.

WEEK FOUR
Discuss Story 1. HW: Write Story 2/8-10 pages.

WEEK FIVE
Turn in work. HW: Read suggested material.

WEEK SIX
Discuss Story 2. HW: Write Story 3/8-10 pages.

WEEK SEVEN
Turn in work. HW: Read suggested material.

WEEK EIGHT
Discuss Story 3. HW: Write Story 4/8-10 pages.

WEEK NINE
Turn in work. HW: Read suggested material.

WEEK TEN
Discuss Story 4. HW: Write Story 5/8-10 pages.
WEEK ELEVEN
Turn in work. HW: Read suggested material.

WEEK TWELVE
Discuss Story 5. HW: Figure out order of manuscript and type up one-page of missing components and/or stories (outline for full-project). Start Revising

WEEK THIRTEEN
Continue progress.

WEEK FOURTEEN
Discuss final edits and 1-page outline for full project. HW: Finish final version of manuscript of first half of project, editing & outline.

WEEK FIFTEEN
Discuss final edits & format. Plans for second semester of course.

WEEK SIXTEEN
Turn in final manuscript Monday of finals week.