



ENGL 2307-102CL
Introduction to Creative
Writing
Spring 2024, Jan. 16, 2024 – May 09, 2024
LRC 275 Tuesday/Thursday, 1:30 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Instructor Information: Lisa Frase, lfrase@com.edu

Email: lfrase@com.edu

Phone: 409-933-8389

Office: LRC, Ste. B, #242

Student Hours:

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday	Thursday
7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	10:50 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
10:50 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. *I am also available between classes on your class day.	*You are welcome to stop by, but please be aware that I might have another meeting scheduled. Please email me to schedule a private conference.

Student Hours & Location: Monday/Wednesday, 12:30 p.m. – 1:50 p.m., LRC 248

Required Textbook: A purchased textbook is not required for this course. All reading content for this course will be available in D2L/Brightspace.

Required Supplies: writing notebook, writing instrument

Course Description: Practical experience in the techniques of imaginative writing. May include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, screenwriting, or drama. (From Texas ACGM/Catalog.)

Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 with a grade of “C” or better

Course Requirements & Grading Formula

Attendance and participation in this course are crucial to your success. In addition to writing assignments that you will complete outside of class, you participate in writing exercises, peer review, and robust discussions about the craft of writing in class. There will also be readings that you are expected to complete, and much of the reading and writing will be done outside of class per the standard model for higher education.

30% Writer's Notebook

You will create and keep a writer's notebook in this course. You will need a new, clean notebook, but you may choose any type of notebook that feeds your creative muse. Your notebook will include a Table of Contents and will focus on the following sections: Writing Exercises, Reading Reflections, Observations/Musings, and Ideas. It is important that you bring your notebook to every class. *Please note that most of your writing exercises will take place in class; therefore, personal responsibility will be part of the grading rubric (attendance, timeliness, participation, and professionalism).

50% Writer's Toolkit

You will turn in six creative writing assignments this semester that will function as part of your Writer's Toolkit, which is essentially a novel writing exploration and plan. By the time you complete your toolkit, you should be ready to embark on a novel writing journey. You may work on a current, previous, or new project for your Writer's Toolkit. All Writer's Toolkit assignments must be formatted in the MLA documentation style. The toolkit assignments include:

1. Narrative Scope
2. Character Development
3. Conflict
4. Setting
5. Dialogue
6. Scenes

20% Presentation

In addition to creating a Writer's Toolkit, you will select at least one novel in your chosen writing genre to read this semester. You will present your novel, Writer's Toolkit, and mini writing selections to the class at the end of the semester.

Extra Credit Opportunities

There are several extra credit opportunities available this semester. Extra credit points are TBD. You are highly encouraged to participate in the following activities:

- Join and participate in the Creative Writing Club and sponsored events.
- Attend (and/or participate) in the International Poetry Day event.
- Participate in the creative writing session at the GCIC Academic Symposium.

Participation in Our Writing Community

Perhaps you think of writers as alone in a cabin in the woods? It's true that writers need time to think, process ideas, and write without interruption; however, writers don't produce creative works in a vacuum. Writers are dependent on their writing community - critique partners, beta readers, editors, proofreaders, and advanced reading copy (ARC) readers for feedback. The writing process is complex and messy. We need other writers to bounce off ideas, to catch what we can't see for ourselves, to notice plot holes and awkward wording, and to provide constructive criticism that will help us improve our work and grow as writers. Reviewing other writers' work requires a certain amount of diplomacy. Our goal isn't to praise or nitpick the writer's work. Instead, we should push the writer out of their comfort zone by asking questions and providing our reaction to the work as readers. Of course, we should couch our suggestions in kindness, but writers should also learn that feedback isn't personal and is only intended to help the writer improve. Your work belongs to you. Ultimately, you get to decide to accept or reject feedback.

Attendance Policy

Since attendance and participation are critical for instruction and writing exercises for the Writer's Notebook, personal responsibility (attendance, timeliness, participation, professionalism) is part of the grade. Four or more unexcused absences or late arrivals will have a negative impact on your Writer's Notebook grade which counts for 30% of your overall average.

⚠ Arrive to class on time and stay until class is dismissed. Strive to attend every class.

⚠ Communication is crucial. Please email me ASAP if you must miss class and provide proof of your absence. If you are experiencing a life event that prevents you from attending or showing up on time, you need to come talk to me. Excused absences **require proof** and are **subject to my discretion**. Exceptions may include illness with a doctor's note, funeral, or a personal/family emergency.

Grading Scale:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	Below 60
FN	F earned by excessive absences

Determination of Course Grades: To pass this course, all work must be completed and turned in by the established due dates.

*Students' work will be assessed with grading rubrics.

Late Work Policies

Assignments for this course are due by date and time on the Assignments' Calendar. There is a two-day grace period for emergencies with a 10-point grade deduction per day. Once the grace period ends the assignment dropbox will close permanently. All assignments must be completed and submitted by the final due date. There is not a grace period for Week 16.

 The grace period is in place for those moments when life happens. Do **not abuse the grace period** by using it excessively; I reserve the right to refuse frequent flyers the opportunity to turn in late work. **Do not ask to turn in work after the grace period.*

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Email me regarding questions, concerns and personal circumstances that may interfere with attendance or turning work in by the deadline. I generally check my email at least twice a day; however, I may not be able to reply right away. Please allow at least 24-hours during the school week. I may or may not be able to reply on weekends. Do not expect an immediate response after 5:00 p.m.

 *Check your COM Outlook email account, course announcements, and course activity feed daily.*

Required Technology

- Internet access
- Google Chrome
- Computer access
- Office 365
- OneDrive
- Flash drive
- F2F classes may want to bring their own ear phones to listen to required videos.

All COM students have free access to Office 365, which includes Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and OneDrive. You will need Microsoft Word for your ENGL 1302 course.

It is important that you can always access all your work electronically. Save your work on a flash drive, in OneDrive, and on your personal computer. You can also email your work to yourself.

SAVE EARLY · SAVE OFTEN · SAVE IN MORE THAN ONE PLACE

Course outline: The course calendar is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Assignments are due by the due date/time indicated on the assignments' calendar.

*Short reading selections will be assigned intermittently throughout the semester to prepare for discussion and writing exercises.

Week	Assignments
Week 1	Bring your Writer's Notebook to class on Thursday to set it up, then bring it to class daily to use for writing exercises.
Week 2	
Week 3 Due Sunday, 2/4/24	Writer's Toolkit: Narrative Scope
Week 4 Due in Class, Both Days	
Week 5 Due in Class, Day 2	Writer's Toolkit: Character Development
Week 6 Due Sunday, 2/25/24	Writer's Toolkit: Conflict
Week 7 Due Sunday, 3/3/24	
Week 8 Due Sunday, 3/10/24	Writer's Toolkit: Dialogue
Week 9 Due Sunday, 3/24/24	
Week 10 Due Sunday, 3/31/24	Writer's Toolkit: Setting
Week 11 Due Sunday, 4/7/24	
Week 12 Due Sunday, 4/14/24	
Week 13 Due Sunday, 4/21/24	Writer's Toolkit: Scenes
Week 14 Due Sunday, 4/28/24	

Week 15 Due in Class, Thursday	Presentations
Week 16 Due in Class, Tuesday	Writer's Notebook Mini Conferences

Academic Dishonesty: Any incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams is an extremely serious offense and will result in a **grade of zero** on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a very serious offense and is not acceptable in this course.

Copying someone else's words and claiming them as your own is plagiarism.

Paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting someone else's words without proper citations is plagiarism.

Using someone else's images (still or moving), data, audio, interviews, etc. without proper citations is plagiarism. You may **not** use copyrighted or trademarked images even with citations.

All essays will be submitted to TurnItIn in D2L/Brightspace –a software that checks papers for plagiarism and artificial intelligence (AI).

Do not use AI without instructor permission and guidance. Do not use Grammarly to edit your work (Grammarly contains a generative AI tool that is flagged as plagiarism by TurnItIn). Do not use ChatGPT, Quillbot, or other AI generators, paraphrasing tools, or rephrasing tools for academic essays without instructor permission and guidance. *You may use the style, combo, and grammar tools in ProWritingAid to edit your work; however do not use the Rephrase tool.

Claiming someone else's words as your own (copy/pasting or turning in a borrowed or bought paper) is *completely unacceptable*. Students who blatantly plagiarize will receive a grade of 0 and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate disciplinary action.

At the instructor's discretion, accidental plagiarism will be dealt with in the following manner: The instructor will counsel the student regarding improper or missing citations. The student will be given an opportunity to revise their work to include the proper citations. The corrected work will receive reduced credit.

(COM) Access this link to learn [How To Avoid Plagiarism](http://en.writecheck.com/ways-to-avoid-plagiarism/) or <http://en.writecheck.com/ways-to-avoid-plagiarism/>

Caveat on Plagiarism for Creative Writing: Many first-time novelists have found their careers ruined after bits and pieces of their novels have been revealed to have been plagiarized, so it's important to emphasize the danger of this temptation. Plagiarism is

plagiarism, and working in the creative realm does not excuse one of responsibility, even though the context does change the expectations a bit. Additionally, the use of AI in writing and art is getting a lot of bad press. Visit any writer’s group to get an understanding of how the writing community feels about AI.

As we will discover this semester, however, there is a difference between plagiarizing and learning to write through imitation of famous authors. Many budding fiction writers copy Hemingway’s style, for instance. This does not mean they are guilty of plagiarizing Hemingway, unless they steal his story or words. Also, accepted literary devices such as allusion, homage, and parody would not be considered plagiarism. Reworking older, public-domain works (like *Pride and Prejudice*) into new, obviously comic forms (*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*) or writing sequels of older works (*Finn*, a dark sequel to *Huckleberry Finn*) also allows for some creative leeway. In a broader sense, also, all creative work is influenced by everything that came before it. As writers, we are aware that completely new ideas and original plots are somewhat rare, and we know that we are working within story-telling and literary traditions that stretch back thousands of years. We will treat this potential problem as an area for open discussion and learning. We will also be discussing, at some point, the difference between plagiarism and copyright violation. Also, because this is a workshop class at least grounded in the idea that process is valued, I understand as an instructor that you will be building on your own previous work, in this class and before, so we will not have the usual prohibitions against “self- plagiarism.” However, generally speaking, the work you produce for this class should be new work, unless you have an ongoing writing project on the side that you’d like feedback on. *Full disclosure: Parts of this syllabus were written by Dr. Brian Anderson. He gave his permission to use it.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Brian Anderson at 409-933-8186, banderson@com.edu.

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. To learn established techniques in crafting fiction and poetry.	Personal Responsibility	Writer’s Notebook Writer’s Toolkit
2. To hone writing skills using a variety of exercises, open-ended assignments, and journal writing.	Personal Responsibility	Writer’s Notebook

3. To gain an understanding of creative writing theory, including terms, poetic forms, poetic elements, story genre, plotting, and character development.		Writer's Notebook Discussion Peer Review
4. To gain an appreciation of the importance of revision in the creative writing process.		Writer's Toolkit Presentation
5. To critique the creative prose and poetry of others and to learn to offer and receive constructive criticism in a collaborative workshop environment	Critical Thinking	Peer Review
6. To evaluate and analyze the elements of successful fiction and poetry.		Reading Reflections (Writer's Notebook) Discussions Presentation
7. To reflect on the purposes of ethical responsibilities of creative writing in society.	Social Responsibility	Discussion

Other Objectives

1. To foster attitudes and practices conducive to creative thought and imaginative self-expression. To learn to see and live like artists. To see the value in this.
2. To explore other forms of creative writing, including creative nonfiction, drama, and prose poetry. To consider how technology and other forces have changed the writing process and the literary marketplace.
3. To build on previously learned composition skills, focusing on considerations of diction, coherence, consistency of style, and mechanics. To reflect on the differences between creative writing and other forms of writing aimed more at clear communication.

4. To reinforce attitudes toward writing as a process, emphasizing that a creative work is never truly finished.
5. To distinguish and evaluate academic and popular standards for “literature” and to understand the purposes and conventions of genre.
6. To reflect on the possibilities for creative writing as a tool for personal growth.

Special Course Policies & Procedures

Community of Writers Guidelines: We are trying to foster the right environment and vibe for a community of writers in a relatively short amount of time. This means building a sense of trust and mutual respect that will allow for an honest and respectful exchange of ideas and the enhancement of personal craft and creative inspiration. The following behaviors and attitudes are important for building a community of writers:

- a. Respect your writing community by showing up on time, prepared and ready to write.
- b. Be respectful. Constructive feedback is welcome but think about your word choice when providing suggestions for improvement.
- c. Don't take constructive criticism personally.
- d. Give each writer your full attention during writer's workshop.
- e. This class is a no phone zone unless we are using phones for a specific exercise.
- f. Avoid demeaning and condescending language and stereotyping, such as words generally considered offensive. Don't dismiss a writer's word because of age, ethnicity, gender, life experiences, etc. It's acceptable to share a reader's perspective or sensitivity language, but let the writer form their own conclusions.
- g. Don't try to rewrite the writer's work.
- h. Don't focus on grammar. Works in this class are considered drafts.

Content in College-Level Creative Writing: As a college-level class for adult-age learners at a public, secular institution of public learning, we will not have formal limitations on content or language. We are interested in fostering a free marketplace of ideas and vibrant creative expression. This also aligns, hopefully, with our ideals and constitutional protections related to freedom of speech and the life of the artist. Although there are limits even to the near-absolute ideals of freedom of speech, we will discuss some of those possible limitations and ethical dimensions (your responsibilities as a writer) as part of the class and in a broader academic context. Naturally, in the workshop environment in particular, your classmates are also free to express objections to aspects of expression, and you as a writer are free to counter those objections. All of this should be done with professionalism and respect, assuming the good intentions of all those involved. (The instructor/workshop facilitator is responsible for deciding when intentions do not seem honest or when some other intervention might be warranted; this includes my legal responsibilities as an instructor and mandated reporter for certain types of crimes or violations involving students. I will speak more on this topic in class.)

Trigger Warnings: Please be aware that writers in this class may choose to write pieces that may be deemed triggering or offensive. As a writer, please consider warning reviewers regarding any potential triggers in your work before sharing it in class.

Recordings: Please note that you do not have permission to record (audio or video) this class. This is especially important for protecting the sanctity of the creative writing classroom. If you need additional notes, please discuss an alternative solution with me.

Caveat on Grading. The instructor reserves the right to make subjective decisions on student grades and assessment based on his own expertise and judgment in the subject matter. The instructor also reserves the right to assign a final grade based on a student's overall mastery of the material and improvement over the course of the semester.

Syllabus Changes. The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and/or schedule as needed. Readings may also be added, but no major assignments will be added unless needed due to a weather emergency or other outside circumstances. You will be duly notified of any such changes.

Brightspace (D2L). Even though this is not an online course, some assignments and learning materials may be released through the online learning management system (Brightspace). Information and resources will also be made available there. Let me know if you need assistance.

Classroom Conduct Policy: College of the Mainland requires that students enrolled at COM be familiar with the Standards of Student Conduct, which can be found in the on-line [Student Handbook](#) (and in college policy). Any breaches of the Code of Conduct will result in a referral to the Office for Student Conduct and may result in dismissal from this class or from campus.

Unwritten Policies: Please also note that this document does not cover every eventuality or possible circumstance in a class. Just because something is not covered here doesn't mean it is or is not "allowed." In addition to college policies and procedures, we also follow the common rules of society and many other unwritten rules specific to our educational situation. Please talk to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Institutional Policies

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or klachney@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is February 28. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 22. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is May 1. The last date to withdraw for spring mini session is May 29.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu

