

Syllabus for English 33: Prose Fiction– Eureka Campus

Semester & Year	Spring 2017	
Course ID and Section #	English 33 & E1362	
Instructor's Name	David Holper	
Day/Time	Friday: 1:00-4:10 pm	
Location	Humanities 114	
Number of Credits/Units	3	
Contact Information	<i>Office location</i>	Humanities 108I
	<i>Office hours</i>	TBD
	<i>Phone number</i>	707-476-4370
	<i>Email address</i>	david-holper@redwoods.edu
Textbook Information	<i>Title & Edition</i>	Bird by Bird
	<i>Author</i>	Anne Lamott
	<i>ISBN</i>	0-385-48001-6

Course Description

A study in developing the art of writing fiction, emphasizing communication, clarity, and economy. Students read and analyze many types of fiction while they generate, develop, critique, and revise their own and others' texts.

Student Learning Outcomes

- 1) Differentiate and utilize concrete detail and abstraction in fiction.
- 2) Control grammar and punctuation to clarify ideas.
- 3) Apply a process-oriented approach to writing fiction that involves inventing, drafting, revising, and editing.
- 4) Compose original written texts, using genre-specific structures and formal conventions.

Special Accommodations

College of the Redwoods complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request at least one week before the first test so that necessary arrangements can be made. No last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments will be made. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability related services and may need accommodations, please see me or contact [Disabled Students Programs and Services](#). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPPS at 707-476-4280.

Academic Support

Academic support is available at [Counseling and Advising](#) and includes academic advising and educational planning, [Academic Support Center](#) for tutoring and proctored tests, and [Extended Opportunity Programs & Services](#), for eligible students, with advising, assistance, tutoring, and more.

Academic Honesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct (AP 5500) is available on the College of the Redwoods website at: <http://www.redwoods.edu/board/Board-Policies/Chapter-5-Student-Services>, and scroll to AP 5500. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the college catalog and on the College of the Redwoods website.

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Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include, but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, he or she may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct (AP 5500) is available on the College of the Redwoods website at: <http://www.redwoods.edu/board/Board-Policies/Chapter-5-Student-Services> and scroll to AP 5500.

Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the college catalog and on the College of the Redwoods website.

Emergency Procedures for the Eureka campus:

Please review the campus evacuation sites, including the closest site to this classroom (posted by the exit of each room). The Eureka campus emergency map is available at:

(<http://www.redwoods.edu/aboutcr/Eureka-Map>; choose the evacuation map option). For more information on Public Safety, go to <http://www.redwoods.edu/publicsafety>. In an emergency that requires an evacuation of the building:

- Be aware of all marked exits from your area and building.
- Once outside, move to the nearest evacuation point outside your building:
- Keep streets and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel.
- Do not leave campus, unless it has been deemed safe by the Incident Commander or campus authorities. (CR's lower parking lot and Tompkins Hill Rd are within the Tsunami Zone.)

RAVE – College of the Redwoods has implemented an emergency alert system. In the event of an emergency on campus you can receive an alert through your personal email and/or phones at your home, office, and cell. Registration is necessary in order to receive emergency alerts. Please go to <https://www.GetRave.com/login/Redwoods> and use the “Register” button on the top right portion of the registration page to create an account. During the registration process you can elect to add additional information, such as office phone, home phone, cell phone, and personal email. Please use your CR email address as your primary Registration Email. Your CR email address ends with “redwoods.edu.” Please contact Public Safety at 707-476-4112 or security@redwoods.edu if you have any questions.

College of the Redwoods is committed to equal opportunity in employment, admission to the college, and in the conduct of all of its programs and activities.

English 33

Dave Holper

Office #: 707-476-4370

Email: david-holper@redwoods.edu

Website:

Office Hours in Humanities 108I:

Writing Center Hours:

College of the Redwoods SYLLABUS

"It is only the story that can continue beyond the war and the warrior... It is only the story... that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars into the spikes of the cactus fence. The story is our escort; without it, we are blind. Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we the story; rather it is the story that owns us." Chinua Achebe

Course Description:

This course involves analysis of literary models, prose, and literary writing, primarily short fiction, with student and teacher critiques.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Recognize writing fiction as a process that involves inventing, drafting, revising, and editing.
- Differentiate between concrete detail and abstraction and apply this knowledge effectively in writing stories.
- Apply basic grammar and punctuation rules to clarify ideas.
- Effectively portray scene, dialogue, and time.

Required Texts/Materials:

- 1) *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott. (This text is not on reserve at the library, nor is it in the Writing Center. You'll find it for sale in the bookstore.)
- 2) A class booklet.
- 3) A writer's notebook.
- 4) Enough 3 x 5 cards to do a synopsis during most of the weeks of the semester.

Triad:

Name: _____ Contact info: _____
Name: _____ Contact info: _____

Welcome to English 33! I'm excited to be your teacher, and I hope that each of us will enjoy and learn a great deal during this semester. This will be an intensive course because I will ask a lot of each one of you, but in return, I hope you will find this to be one of your most memorable writing classes. The primary goals of this course are to teach you how to develop your own distinct writing voice, to improve your creative writing skills in several different styles and forms, to learn how to critique other people's work fairly and in depth, and to find out how to submit your work for publication. Beyond that--and perhaps more importantly--I want you to learn to write more powerfully, passionately, and naturally.

Your Instructor: Dave has done a little of everything, including taxi driver, fire fighter, cook, soldier, house painter, and teacher. He took his BA in English at Humboldt State University, where he also studied journalism. After his graduation, he served for four years in the Army Military Intelligence Corps, then went on to take a Masters of Fine Arts in English at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he wrote a book of short stories. Since then, he has published a number of stories and poems. Currently he lives in Eureka and teaches full-time at CR.

Emergency Response: in the event of an earthquake, whether upstairs or downstairs, we will wait in the classroom (duck and cover under desks) until the shaking has stopped. Then if it's clear that the deck is sound, we will exit in an orderly way and exit out of the north end of the building, walk out to the lawn next to the pond (across the street). We will not go down to the parking lot until it has been determined that there is no tsunami risk. Cell phone use is fine, but keep in mind that cell phone circuits often overload in an emergency.

Syllabus Calendar: This will be posted on the course website every Thursday afternoon.

Required Reading: We will read approximately one-two sections a week from *Bird by Bird* by Anne Lamott and a story a week (from the class booklet). In addition, we will regularly do journals or exercises based on these readings. When we read stories, I'll ask you to write a synopsis of the story on a 3 x 5 card, which will be worth 5 points and is due at the start of the class session in which we'll discuss the story. You are strongly encouraged to mark up your books, save quotes in your writer's journals, and make notes all over the writing that you read.

PDFs and Printing: This semester the readings will be provided as PDFs or Word documents through the class web calendar. You'll need to find these documents, print them, and read and prepare for class.

Required Writing: We will do an exercise for each week of class (except when we are writing stories or revisions of stories). These exercises can be between 2-4 pages. They are worth 20 pts. each and are due as posted on the syllabus. In addition, there are two stories required for the semester, each worth 100 pts. Also, you will be expected to revise each of these stories at least one time: the revisions are worth 100 pts. apiece. A revision is more than correcting spelling errors; a revision should show significant progress in your approach to the narrative. If you turn in a revision that is generally the same as the earlier draft, you may get the second draft back as no credit (with a request that you accomplish a more substantive revision). At the end of the semester, you will be required to submit one polished piece of work for the class booklet, which will be between 5-20 pages of writing, and will be worth 100 pts. This last piece of writing should be the best quality work you've produced all semester.

Work Format: All work must be typed and labeled (whether it's an exercise, a story draft, or a polished piece of work). Word processors are available in the library. No cover sheets are necessary, nor are any type of folders, paper or plastic. Type your name, draft #, and date in the upper left-hand corner; also please include titles for your stories. Please remember to number your pages. Do not use scratch paper that has already been printed on, nor type on the front and backs of pages: use only one side of the page. Remember to double space your work, so your instructor can edit it.

Late Work: If you miss a class, you should make up the work before the next class and put it in the instructor's box. Don't wait until the next class to turn it in. If you fall behind several weeks, coupled with absences (see below), this pattern may result in the instructor no longer accepting late work at all, which may result in your failing the course.

Attendance/Promptness: Students at the College are expected to attend all sessions of each class in which they are enrolled. Students may not miss more than two weeks of class. For example, if a class meets once a week, students should not exceed 2 absences for the semester. If a student exceeds the limit on absences before week 11 of the semester, an instructor will notify the student that he or she has been dropped. After week 10, excessive absences will likely result in failure.

In addition, I strongly discourage your coming more than 10 minutes late or leaving more than 10 minutes without first clearing it with me. Such practices are disruptive for you and everyone else. If you do come late or leave early (more than 10 minutes) or unprepared that will count as ½ an absence. If you miss a class, please remember, it is your responsibility to find out from another student what you missed by calling someone on the phone list.

Before Census (Week 3): Be aware that if you've missed two classes and have not turned in work, your name will be cleared from the class roster following in Week 3 (Census Week). If you're in this boat and haven't talked to Dave yet about your situation, you should do so as soon as possible. It's fairly easy to be reinstated if you're accidentally dropped, but it's easier still to avoid being dropped in the first place.

Conferences and the Final: To encourage you to participate in both these activities, there are 20 pts. for the midterm conference; there are 50 pts. for the final.

Your Portfolio: Please save all your work (and drafts) this semester so that you can see what happened this semester, as well as have stories or exercises to revise; and, in case I accidentally do not record the grade, you'll have a copy of the graded work. More importantly, you'll probably want

to look back on this work later, so save, save, save; backup, backup, backup.

Grading

This is one of the few CR courses that may be taken for pass/no pass rather than for a grade. You are encouraged to take advantage of this option to free yourself to write without worrying about a grade. For a grade of pass, you must apply in the Admissions & Records office before (TBA) for the credit/no credit option. Not completing the credit requirements described would result in a no pass grade if you had applied for the pass option. If you had not applied for this option, it would mean a grade of D or F.

If you do not apply for the pass/no pass option, your grade will consist of

- 1) Weekly exercises: 20 pts. each
- 2) Stories drafts: 100 pts. each
- 3) Revised story drafts: 100 pts. each
- 4) Conferences: 20 pts. each
- 5) Polished piece for class booklet: 100 pts. each
- 6) Attendance at final: 50 pts.

Note: This syllabus may be modified during the course of the semester, as needed. If there are corrections or additions, these will be posted on the syllabus calendar, which can be found on the course website.

Guidelines to Sharing Fiction & Critique

For the Writer:

- 1) Once you've read your story or had your story read, please listen attentively and do not interrupt the other class members or instructor.
- 2) Do not rebut the criticisms either during or after a discussion.
- 3) Just because it's true is not enough.
- 4) If you get criticism about poorly typed or edited copy, that's a clear sign to you that you need to spend more time preparing your texts for class.
- 5) It is a good idea to take notes on a copy of the story so that you don't forget what is being suggested.
- 6) You have the right to stop the discussion if it becomes too personal or painful; however, you should not use this right lightly. Once you have stopped a discussion on a story, it may not be discussed again in class.
- 7) Revise while the ideas are still fresh.
- 8) If there are too many different ideas on how to revise, you might treat the ideas like a shopping list--buy what appeals to you. If you can't decide what to do, come see the instructor for a personal conference.

For the Class Participants:

- 1) Comment always with the mind to help. It's best if your responses are given out of a loving sense of trying to help.
- 2) Look for something good first.
- 3) It is not necessary to have the perfect or longest response to a story. Often times it's better to listen carefully and comment selectively, no matter how much you feel you know. A balanced discussion will be better for all of us than a discussion dominated by a few.
- 4) Everyone is entitled to an opinion in this class, even if you don't agree with another person.

- 5) Don't interrupt one another.
- 6) Don't attack one another's responses.
- 7) Don't use humor or sarcasm as a weapon.
- 8) Avoid name calling at all costs.
- 9) If you see someone become discouraged by a critique, go up to that person afterwards and encourage him/her.
- 10) Don't use comparison to published work as a means to show someone the "right way"; the writer must find his/her own way.

Calendar

Note: this calendar may be adjusted as needed. Please pay attention to weekly updates.

Week 1

Introductions, some basic ideas about fiction

HW: Buy your materials, write exercise 1, and read story 1

Week 2

Lesson 1: shaping a plot, share exercises in small groups and turn in.

HW: Write exercise 2, read story 2, read BBB Introduction and Ch. 1

Week 3

Lesson 2: types of irony, copy editing marks, dialogue rules and techniques. Reading from the stack, discussion of BBB, discussion of story 2, and share exercises in small groups and turn in.

HW: Write exercise 3, read story 3, BBB pp. 16-32, favorite recipe.

Week 4

Lesson 3: Three dimensionality in characterization, distribute recipes, discussion of BBB, discussion of story 3, and share exercises in small groups and turn in.

HW: Write Story 1 draft 1, read story 4, and BBB pp. 32-63. Bring a book to trade.

Week 5

Holiday

Week 6

Lesson 4: Crafting sentences. Trade books, reading of stories from the stack, discussion of BBB, discuss story 4, distribute story drafts to small groups and turn in a clean copy to instructor.

HW: Read and comment on peer story drafts, read story 5, and BBB pp. 64-84.

Week 7

Lesson 5: Submissions and rejection; hero's journey. Return story drafts and comments to one another, story drafts returned from instructor, Xerox of four stories distributed for next week, discussion of BBB, and discussion of story 5.

HW: Revise Story 1 draft 1, read story 6, and read and comment on four stories in the Xerox packet for next week.

Week 8

Lesson 6: Writers' routines. Group critique of four stories, discussion of story 6, and revisions of story 1 collected.

HW: Last four students revise story 1, read story 7, write exercise 4, read BBB pp. 85-109.

Week 9

Lesson 7: The business end of writing. Last revisions of story 1 collected, discussion of story 7, BBB discussed, and share and turn in exercise 4.

HW: Write exercise 5, read story 8, BBB pp. 110-130.

Week 10

Lesson 8: Simile and metaphor. Discussion of story 7, discussion of BBB, and share and turn in exercise 4.

HW: Read story 8, BBB 133-161, write story 2 draft 1.

Week 11

Lesson 9: Revision and tightening your prose. Discussion of story 8, discussion of BBB, and distribute story 2 drafts to one another, as well as turn one in.

HW: Read and comment on story drafts, read story 9, BBB 162-182.

Week 12

Lesson 10: Applying hero's journey structures to plot. Discussion of story 9, discussion of BBB, return story drafts to authors and turn in a clean copy to instructor, and receive a Xerox of four student stories.

HW: Read and comment on Xerox of four student stories, revise story 2 draft 1, and read story 10.

Week 13

Lesson 11: Preparing a manuscript for submission. Polished piece directions, draft of artwork, discussion of story 10, and discussion of four student stories in the Xerox packet.

HW: Finish all revisions of story 2, prepare a polished piece for turn in next week, read story 11, read Stephen King's chapter on revision.

Week 14

Organize final, collected polished pieces and booklet, discuss story 11, discuss Stephen King's chapter on revision.

HW: Read story 12, write exercise 5, BBB finish in next two weeks, come with sufficient funds to purchase the polished piece booklet.

Week 15

Discuss story 12, discuss BBB, polished piece reminders, final reminders, share exercise 5 and turn in. Class feedback

HW: Buy polished piece booklet and prepare for final

Week 16

Final

