

### Course Information

**Semester & Year:** SPRING 2021

**Course ID & Section #:** D1079

**Instructor's name:** Chrystal Helton

**Day/Time:** CORRESPONDENCE

**Location:** N/A

**Number of units:** 3

### Instructor Contact Information

**Office location:** CORRESPONDENCE

**Office hours:** CORRESPONDENCE

**Phone number:** 707-465-2380

**Email address:** chrystal-helton@redwoods.edu

### Required Materials

Handouts will be provided in weekly packets.

### Catalog 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.**

### Course Learning Outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate the use of literary techniques in the production of original works in fiction.**
- 2. Read professional and student texts actively and critically.**
- 3. Use the writers' workshop and/or peer review and instructor feedback to evaluate their own manuscripts as well as the manuscripts of others.**
- 4. Participate in a community of writers.**

### Evaluation & Grading Policy

Writing Exercises	20%
Reading Responses	20%
Original Stories	35%
Final Portfolio	25%

A 90-100% (exceeds expectations)

B 80-89% (meets expectations)

C 70-79% (meets most requirements; meets some expectations)

D 60-69% (may fulfill some requirements; does not meet expectations)

F Below 60% (does not meet requirements or expectations)

***Correspondence learning will require that we are all flexible. I understand that besides our everyday demands, there are other factors that might require assignment extensions. We will work through this together—but please communicate with me and include your name and on date everything! Use the weekly checklist to keep yourself on track.***

### **Special accommodations policy**

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 accommodations, please see me or contact [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#).

### **Student feedback policy**

Each minor writing assignment (mostly Reading Responses & Writing Exercises) will be graded within one correspondence week and feedback will be in the form of questions and “reader’s insight.”

Story feedback will include Working and Final Draft written feedback. Both Working and Final drafts will receive written feedback no later than two correspondence weeks after submission. Feedback will be driven by story rubrics, through writing craft lessons and practice, individual correspondence, writer’s workshops, and weekly writing activities.

### **Student Accessibility Statement and Academic Support Information**

These standards are required by federal regulation. Students will have access to this course that complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and College of the Redwoods policies. Course materials will include a text equivalent for all non-text elements; videos will include closed captioning, images will include alt-tags, hyperlinks will use descriptive/meaningful phrases instead of URLs and audio files will include transcripts. All text will be formatted for use with screen readers and all course materials will be understandable without the use of color. Students who discover access issues with this class should contact the instructor.

*Boozhoo! Hello, good to see you!*

## Welcome to English 33: Creative Writing: Prose Fiction

*"When we are young, the words are scattered all around us. As they are assembled by experience, so also are we, sentence by sentence, until the story takes shape."--Louise Erdrich*

### What You Will Be Doing: Course Requirements

#### WRITING EXERCISES

---

What would a creative writing class be without weekly writing opportunities? Each week, you will be assigned a Writing Exercise (WE) consisting of two options. Most of these will be reflective of the weekly concepts we'll be practicing and developing. Some of the most impactful stories I've read (and wrote) started with what seemed like an insignificant writing prompt or exercise. Think of the Writing Exercises as opportunities, not school work.

#### READING RESPONSES

---

Reading and thinking of others' creative writing is one of the fundamental activities we can do to grow our own creative minds. As William Faulkner once wrote, "Read, read, read. Read everything—trash, classics, good and bad, and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an apprentice and studies the master. Read! You'll absorb it. Then write." Each week, you will read fiction and poetry and will be required to write reading responses to deepen your understanding and inform your own writing.



#### WRITING WORKSHOPS

---

If we were in a face-to-face class, most of our class time would be spent working in pairs and small groups to “workshop” your writing. In a Writer’s Workshop, we typically use your own curiosity to drive the discussions and focus. Overall, though, it is an opportunity to share your writing and get feedback from actual readers. It’s an opportunity to challenge your writer-decisions and encourage your growth as a writer. Because of the pandemic and correspondence learning, we will only be able to do this with two of your Original Stories. We will practice how to give feedback. What you will need to bring to

the writer table is a genuine engagement with your classmates' story drafts. Your participation in this will fall under a Reading Response.

## ORIGINAL STORIES

---

You will submit three (3) Original Stories this semester. All of these stories' will be chosen by you. However, Story #2 will require attention to the conventions of Flash Fiction. Each story will have its own rubric to guide the grading expectations.

## PORTFOLIO

---

You are required to submit a final Portfolio of your work. **So please keep all drafts of your writing.** This Portfolio is not meant to only show your finished masterpieces, but is really meant to show your process and the work you put into creating your work. **For your Portfolio, you will be required to submit a written reflection of your writing and creative processes, highlighting your growth as a writer.**

<h3>Other Procedures and Policies</h3>
--

## Late Work

---

So far in my limited experience with correspondence learning, almost all students have done an exceptional job turning in assignments on their due dates. But there are always exceptions, especially when we are both powerless in how the mail is distributed at PBSP. That said, while there are due dates for a reason and you should work to reach those deadlines, there really is no late work unless you fail to turn it in completely. I'd rather you take an extra week to do give the work some of your quality attention than to turn something in you rashly. I trust you to make that determination.

## A Healthy Learning Environment:

---

While we are not meeting face-to-face, we are still a community of writers, and I'll add that anyone you share your work with this semester is part of that community as well. If we were in class, we'd discuss the importance of building a healthy learning environment that addresses the multitude of learning needs we have. Below are a few basic concepts that have come up in other courses that resonate with me even in correspondence **learning:**

- **Clear communication:** *I'll try and be as clear and concise as possible when telling you what I need from you, and I will need you to do the same with me. I trust you know what you need and am not just open, but am eager, to hear about your needs as a budding writer.*
- **Trust:** *You trust me, I trust you, we trust each other to give helpful, respectful, insightful feedback. This also requires that we check our tones, a critical part of trust. There is intention and there is impact. We need to be aware of how our word choice could impact our classmates' writing and thinking.*
- **Good relationships:** *In correspondence mode, the relationship most nurtured will be between you, the writer-student, and me, the instructor. This will require the all of these concepts and in both of our willingness to be straight with each other.*
- **Keep an open mind!** *Think of our class as an "intellectual safe space" where you are free to be curious and question what we are doing and how you can make it work for you, while recognizing that others have different approaches and strengths.*

*The policies and procedures outlined in this syllabus are subject to change.*



# English 33 Schedule

UNIT ONE: WHY WRITE STORIES?	
<b>WEEK ONE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions &amp; Expectations</li> <li>• Why Write?</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Joy Williams’s “Uncanny the Singing That Comes from Certain Husks”</li> <li>○ George Orwell’s “Why I write”</li> <li>○ Barry Lopez’s Blog “On the Purpose of Writing”</li> </ul>
<b>Assignments</b>	<b>WE #1</b> <b>RR #1</b>
<b>WEEK TWO:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why Stories?</li> <li>• Elements of Fiction</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sherman Alexie’s “Superman and Me” &amp; “Every Little Hurricane”</li> </ul>
<b>Assignments:</b>	<b>WE #2</b> <b>RR #2</b>
UNIT TWO: IDEAS, IMAGES, and CHARACTERS	
<b>WEEK THREE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where do Ideas Come From?</li> <li>• Writing Process</li> <li>• WORDS!</li> <li>• Intro to Story #1: Writer’s Choice</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Neil Gaiman’s “Where Do You Get Your Ideas?”</li> <li>○ Josip Novakovich’s <i>Fiction Writer’s Workshop</i>, “Chapter 1: Sources of Fiction”</li> <li>○ Langston Hughes’s “Salvation”</li> <li>○ David Sedaris’s “Let It Snow”</li> </ul>
<b>Assignments:</b>	<b>WE #3</b> <b>RR #3</b>
<b>WEEK FOUR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CREATING IMAGES &amp; SETTINGS               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Our Senses</li> <li>▪ Similes and Metaphors</li> <li>▪ Foreshadowing</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heather Sellers’s <i>The Practice of Creative Writing: A Guide For Students</i>, “Chapter Four: Images”</li> <li>○ Sandra Cisneros’s “The Monkey Garden”</li> <li>○ Ely Shipley’s “Magnolia”</li> <li>○ Kate Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour”</li> </ul>
<b>Assignments:</b>	<b>WE #4</b> <b>RR #4</b>

<b>WEEK FIVE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● CHARACTERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Types</li> <li>○ How do we portray them?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Josip Novakovich’s <i>Fiction Writer’s Workshop</i>, Chapter 3: Character”</li> <li>○ Yaa Gyasi’s “Ness,” in <i>Homegoing</i></li> </ul>
<b>Assignments:</b>	WE# 5 RR #5 STORY #1 Draft Due
<b>WEEK SIX</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Revision is Re-seeing</li> <li>● Revision Strategies: Student Story Workshop</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heather Sellers’s <i>The Practice of Creative Writing: A Guide For Students</i>, “Chapter Nine: Revision”</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	RE-SEE your story (aka REVISE)
<b>UNIT THREE: FLASH FICTION</b>	
<b>WEEK SEVEN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Writing FLASH FICTION: Intro to Story #2</li> <li>● BRIEF LOOK AT SCENES</li> <li>● POV Play</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heather Sellers’s <i>The Practice of Creative Writing: A Guide For Students</i>, “FLASH”</li> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul>
<b>Assignments:</b>	WE #6 RR #6 STORY #1 Final Due
<b>WEEK EIGHT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● THE CONCRETE &amp; ABSTRACT</li> <li>● Point of View (POV)</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gloria Anzaldúa’s “To Live In the Borderlands”</li> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul>
<b>Assignments:</b>	WE #7 RR #7 Story #2 Draft Due ( <i>your story will be distributed to a classmate in next week’s packet for feedback</i> )

*Weeks 9-15 schedule will be distributed on or before March 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Schedule is subject to change.*