

## Advanced Creative Writing- Prose Syllabus and Course Schedule

**Course:** ENGL 4133/5133

**Time:** MW 12:30-1:50

**Place:** PY205

**Instructor:** Dr. John Schulze

**Office:** BW 212

**Office Phone:** (940) 397-6249

**Email:** john.schulze@msutexas.edu

**Office Hours:** MW- 11:00 -12:30; TR- 11:00 -12:30; or by appointment

*"Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass."*

— Anton Chekhov

### Course Description:

This course is cross-listed as a senior level creative writing course for undergraduates and as a graduate course for those students intending to compose a creative thesis for the completion of their degree requirements. This course is intended to help students further hone and polish skills in narration, characterization, setting, plot, theme, dialogue, point of view, revision, and editing. It is also intended to help students become a more perceptive and sophisticated readers of fiction and/or creative nonfiction.

### Course Objectives:

- Build on writing skills including clarity, vividness, and accuracy.
- Develop skills necessary to write longer works.
- Conceptualize and determine the appropriate scope for a piece of creative writing.
- Sharpen critical thinking and critical reading skills.
- Practice the skills needed to self-edit and the ability to critique and the writing of others.
- Recognize the personal qualities necessary to be an effective writer.
- Enhance language skills as part of a well-rounded education.
- Polish effective communication skills.

### Required Text:

*The Artful Edit* by Susan Bell

*Best American Short Stories 2015*

### Course Requirements:

Undergraduates: each student will produce approximately 30 pages of polished prose.

Graduate Students: each student will produce a minimum of 40 pages of polished prose.

All students will have three opportunities to workshop their submissions, which may range in length from 8 to 12 pages for undergrads and 10 to 14 pages for graduate students. Graduate students will also lead a class discussion of one of the assigned readings.

All students are expected to type a one-page balanced critique of each workshop submission and are also expected to note areas of concern and admiration on the submitted manuscript. These materials must be completed prior to the scheduled workshop date of the piece.

All students will submit a final portfolio that will consist of the following items:

- An original workshopped draft
- A one-page, single-spaced critical introduction to the workshopped submission detailing your drafting process, revision process, overall vision for the piece, and any struggles you may have had during the process.
- Revision of workshop submission.

**Workshop/Class Participation:**

Your participation grade will be determined by how thoughtfully and constructively involved you are in any discussion or course related activities. This includes reading all assigned material in preparation for class and considering all seed-questions meant for discussion. As a habit, you will need to be prepared to examine and reflect on all the stories and essays assigned in this class. In so doing, you will hone your reading skills as both a reader and writer. Additionally, each student is expected to type a one-page balanced critique of each workshop submission. These critiques will make up the majority of your participations grade. Failure to have your written responses ready the day of the workshop will adversely affect your Workshop Participation grade.

**Participation:**

Workshop participation will be based on an end-of-the-semester evaluations made by your workshop peers and my evaluation of your written comments included in each portfolio.

**How your grade will be determined:**

Final Portfolio -	30%
Workshop Participation -	30%
Completed Workshop Drafts -	30%
<u>Reading Response of Local Literary Reading -</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total –	100%

**Letter Grade System**

A = 90-100	B = 80-89
C = 70-79	D = 60-69
F = 0-59	

**My attendance policy:**

The only way to pass this class is to attend the scheduled class meetings. You are allowed three (3) absences. After that, each absence will drop your final grade by half a letter grade (5 out of 100 points). Tardiness is also unacceptable. Class begins at the scheduled time, and if you arrive after roll has been called, you will be counted absent. I do have a heart, however, and will make exceptions to this rule on days when the weather might affect your punctuality.

**Academic Integrity/Intellectual Property/ Plagiarism Policy:**

Any student found submitting work other than his or her own will fail the course. There are no exceptions to this policy. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing in "Works Cited") whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. It is a theft of intellectual property and will not be tolerated, whether intentional or not.

**Student Honor Creed**

"As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so."

As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception. Thus, we, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student. We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed.

-- *Written and adopted by the 2002-2003 MSU Student Senate.*

**Students with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.

**Safe Zones Statement**

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is my expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

### Campus Carry Statement

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at: <https://mwsu.edu/campus-carry/rules-policies>.

### Course Schedule

I reserve the right to modify this schedule at any time

#### Week 1

8/22- Introductions and Syllabus Distribution

8/24- No Class

#### Week 2

8/29- **Read:** "Happy Endings" by Kevin Canty (*BASS*)  
**Read:** "Introduction" & "Gaining Perspective" pp. 1-16 (*TAE*)

8/31- **Read:** "M & L" by Sarah Kokernot (*BASS*)  
**Read:** "Gaining Perspective" pp. 16-33 (*TAE*)

#### Week 3

9/5- **Read:** "A Good Man in Hard to Find" by Flannery O'Connor (handout)  
**Read:** "The Big Picture: Macro-Editing" pp. 42-51 (*TAE*)

9/7- **Read:** "The Big Picture: Macro-Editing" pp. 51-87 (*TAE*)  
**Listen:** "Bullet to the Brain" by Tobias Wolfe (New Yorker Fiction Podcast)  
**Due: Drafts for first workshop**

#### Week 4- Workshop #1

9/12- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

9/14- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 5**

9/19- **Read:** The Details: Micro-Editing pp. 95-135 (TAE)  
"North" by Aria Beth Ross (*BASS*)

9/21- **Read:** "The Big Cat" by Louise Erdrich (*BASS*)  
**In-class exercise**

**Week 6**

9/26- **Read:** "Fingerprints" by Justin Bigos (*BASS*)  
**In-class exercise**

9/28- **Read:** "Kavitha and Mustafa" by Shobha Rao (*BASS*)  
**In-class exercise**

**Week 7**

10/3- **Read:** "Madame Lazarus" by Malie Meloy (*BASS*)  
"The Largesse of the Sea Maiden" by Denis Johnson (*BASS*)

10/5- **Listen:** "How to Date a Brown Girl" by Junot Diaz (New Yorker Fiction podcast)  
**Due: Drafts for second workshop**

**Week 8- Workshop**

10/10- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

10/12- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 9- Conferences**

10/17- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

10/19- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 10- Cinema about Writing**

10/24- **Watch:** *Wonder Boys* (Based Michael Chabon’s novel)

10/26- **Watch:** *Wonder Boys*

**Week 11**

10/31- **Read:** “You’ll Apologize if you Have To” by Ben Folkes (*BASS*)

11/2- **No Class- ASAT**

**Week 12**

11/7- **Field Trip- WFMA- bring a notebook and pen/pencil**

11/9- **Field Trip- Rare Book Collection- Moffett Library  
bring a notebook and pen/pencil**

**Week 13**

11/14- **Read:** “About My Aunt” by Joan Siber (*BASS*)

11/16- **Listen:** “Day-Old Baby Rats” by Julie Hayden (New Yorker Fiction podcast)  
**Due: Drafts for final workshop**

**Week 14- Thanksgiving Holiday**

11/21 & 11/23- No Class

**Week 15- Final Workshop**

11/28- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

11/30- 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Words and Course Evaluation**

**Final Draft Due in D2L dropbox by Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.**

