ADVANCED FICTION WRITING / ENGL 4315-01 / ENGL 5800 (Spring 2016)
(CRN's 20401 / 21447) TR 3:35-4:50pm—T217 (Clayton Hall)

Dr. Brigitte Byrd
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Office Phone: (678) 466-4556
Office hours: TR 2:00-3:30 & by appointment

Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact
the Disability Services Coordinator, Student Center 255, 678-466-5445,
disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu.

Course Description:
3.0 semester credit hours (3-0-3)
Catalog Description: A workshop intensive instruction in fiction writing. Students will
study the fiction writing craft and technique and produce their own short fiction.
Course Pre-Requisites: ENGL 3800 with a minimum US grade of B
Course Objective:
* Understanding of and practice in fiction writing through a series of exercises focused
on specific elements of the craft.
* Familiarization with the work of major international and American contemporary
fiction writers as well as with new voices in today’s American fiction through student
presentations and discussions.
* Creating and composing a work of short fiction using the fiction technique studied in
class in view of building a writing portfolio / sample in creative writing.
* Experiencing literary readings/events by attending the CSU Visiting Writers Reading
Series reading and event by our guest fiction writer Micah Dean Hicks (April 7th, 2016)
* Practice of critical skills.
* Practice of communication skills.

NOTE: I will provide you with a schedule of literary events taking place during the
semester. Check the link on the English Department homepage for a schedule of the
Clayton State University Visiting Writers Spring 2016.

Computer Requirement:
Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook
computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the
student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For
further information on CSU’s Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to
http://www.clayton.edu/hub/itpchoice/notebookcomputerpolicy
Computer Skill Prerequisites:

- Able to use the Windows™ operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word™ word processing
- Able to send and receive e-mail using Outlook™ or Outlook Express™
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to use a Web browser

In-class Use of Student Notebook Computers:

Student notebook computers will not be used in the classroom except for presentations. Students must make sure their computers are compatible with the technology in our classrooms by making an appointment at the HUB. Computers are required to access course materials and to communicate with me.

Program Learning Outcomes:

English Program Outcomes: [http://www.clayton.edu/english/programoutcomes](http://www.clayton.edu/english/programoutcomes)

1. Analyze and evaluate texts that reflect diverse genres, time periods, and cultures.
2. Analyze the ways in which language and literature are related to class, culture, ethnicity, gender, histories, race, and sexuality.
3. Interpret texts from various perspectives by using close readings supported by textual evidence, and informed by critical theory.
4. Produce a variety of materials, including oral presentations, for a range of rhetorical contexts.
5. Conduct effective research and writing as it relates to the field of English studies, by using a variety of technological and information sources.

Course Learning Outcomes:

This course especially addresses the English program outcomes 2 & 4:

2. Analyze the ways in which language and literature are related to class, culture, ethnicity, gender, histories, race, and sexuality.
4. Produce a variety of materials, including oral presentations, for a range of rhetorical contexts.

Text Book Information:

Required Texts:

* Fiction Writer’s Workshop, (2nd edition), Josip Novakovich
* The Best American Short Stories 2015, ed. T. C. Boyle and Heidi Pitlor
* Electricity & Other Dreams, Micah Dean Hicks (do not purchase this book. I will distribute it to students for free early in the semester)

Fiction (Novels and Short-Stories Collections) for Group Presentation:

* Refund, Karen E. Bender (2015)
* All the Light We Cannot See, Anthony Doerr (2015)—Pulitzer Prize in Fiction 2015
* The Turner House, Angela Flournoy (2015)
* Fate and Furies, Lauren Groff (2015)
* Fortune Smile, Adam Johnson (2015)—National Book Award 2015
* Honeydew, Edith Pearlman (2015)
* A Little Life, Hanya Yanagihara (2015)
Additional Required Materials:
- A notebook
- Manila folders or envelops in which you will turn your assignments and portfolios
- Costs for printing and photocopying multiple copies of drafts of papers
- A CSU student email account that you check daily for changes, handouts, and announcements; a laptop computer (with the CSU standard software package installed). For further information on CSU’s Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to http://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm.
- Daily, reliable Internet access for GAView D2L.

Evaluation:
In order to receive a C in this course, you must turn in all the written work below on time and actively contribute to workshops and presentations. Remember that attendance is required and that after 4 absences, your overall grade starts dropping. Attendance is mandatory for all workshops and presentations. Attendance to 2 literary readings/events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series (or from another series, if needed) AND the Cygnet 2016 launch party. By “mandatory” I mean that failing to comply with the previous requirements will result in dropping one letter grade from your overall grade.

Midterm Portfolio (30%):
- 6 reading responses 10%
- 5 finished & typed exercises 10%
- Participation 10%

Final Portfolio (70%):
- 14 reading responses 10%
  
*Note: the last three reading responses will be your response to the three events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Series (or other reading series, if needed) you are required to attend this semester.*
- Notes on Electricity & Other Dreams 10%
- Individual presentation 10%
- Group presentation 10%
- Finished, typed and thoroughly revised short story PLUS addendum on revisions 20%
- Participation 10%
- PLUS mandatory items below:

  Exercise 6 typed and revised
  First draft of short story brought to the workshop
  Process memo
  Peer response evaluation sheet

Grading:
A  90 - 100%  Outstanding Achievement: **Significantly Exceeds Standards**
B  80 - 89%  Commendable Achievement: **Exceeds Standards**
C  70 - 79%  Acceptable Achievement: **Meets Standards**
D  60 - 69%  Marginal Achievement: **Below Standards**
F  below 60%  **Failing**
Mid-term Progress Report:
The mid-term grade in this course, which will be issued on February 29th, reflects approximately 30% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term. Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link.

[http://www.clayton.edu/registrar/withdrawal](http://www.clayton.edu/registrar/withdrawal)  
The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is March 4th, 2016.

Course Policies:

General Policy:
Students must abide by policies in the Clayton State University Student Handbook [http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/46/docs/student-handbook.pdf](http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/46/docs/student-handbook.pdf) and the Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities [http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/5/BasicUndergraduateStudentResponsibilities.pdf](http://www.clayton.edu/Portals/5/BasicUndergraduateStudentResponsibilities.pdf)

University Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students’ ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or failing grades.

Course Attendance Policy: Attendance is expected for all class periods. Attendance is mandatory for all presentations and workshops. Attendance to two literary readings/events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series (or if unable to attend these, to two events from other reading series) AND to the Cygnet 2016 launch party is also mandatory. By “mandatory” I mean that failing to comply with the previous requirements will result in dropping one letter grade from your overall grade. Any absence after 2 excused or unexcused absences will affect your participation grade. After 4 excused or unexcused absences, your overall grade for the course will drop one letter grade. Remember that I do not accept late work (this includes portfolios, group presentations, distribution of work before workshops, comments on works due to workshop, as well as notes, journal responses and exercises before the portfolios are turned in (see “Late Work Policy” below).

**You will notice that I have canceled two class meetings this semester in order to make up for your attendance to the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series Fall 2016 and the Cygnet 2016 launch party as these events are scheduled outside of class meetings.**

Tardiness:
Although I understand that circumstances may occur so that a student may be 5 minutes late to class, being repetitively late 15 minutes or more to class disturbs class. Four instances of 15 minutes or more tardiness to class will result in one absence.
Late Work Policy: I do not accept late work. Late work will receive a zero unless arrangements are made between us before a planned absence or immediately after class, in the case of a personal emergency. Once we have made arrangements, you will turn the work in question directly to me.

Academic Dishonesty: Any type of activity that is considered dishonest by reasonable standards may constitute academic misconduct. The most common forms of academic misconduct are cheating and plagiarism. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero for the work involved. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Community Standards. Judicial procedures are described beginning on page 19 in the section of the Academic Catalog and Student Handbook titled, Procedures for Adjudicating Alleged Academic Conduct Infractions.

Plagiarism Detection Software: Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. You should submit your papers in such a way that no identifying information about you is included.

Disruption of the Learning Environment: Behavior that disrupts the teaching and learning processes during class activities will not be tolerated, and a disruptive student may be dismissed from the course and may receive a grade of WF. More detailed descriptions of examples of disruptive behavior are provided in the Clayton State University Academic Catalog and Student Handbook starting on page 14. According to the Student Code of Conduct, behavior that disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated.

- While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, some include arriving late or leaving early, interrupting others, eating in class, playing music or using electronic devices, texting, and doing homework for another class.
- More serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening language and/or behavior.
- A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed from class.
- A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal.
- If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF.

Writing Assistance: The goal of the Writers’ Studio is to give rise to better writers, not just to better writing. People who love to write, people who struggle mightily with it, and people who fall anywhere else on the spectrum can find a place at The Writers’ Studio—a place for students to come for writing guidance and feedback. Each student may receive up to 90 minutes of assistance per day and 3 hours per week. Furthermore, both appointments and walk-ins are welcome. Here’s The Writers’ Studio’s contact information:

Location: Arts & Sciences Building, Room G-224
Phone: 678.466.4728

Commented [j1]: Required. Include a statement similar to this in your syllabus. Use the links provided in this example.

Commented [j2]: Required. Explicitly state the penalty for instances of academic dishonesty in the syllabus. If Judicial Affairs is called upon to make a decision involving academic dishonesty (student requests adjudication by Judicial Affairs or on appeal), any penalty applied is at their discretion unless the syllabus provides guidance.

Commented [j3]: A penalty for academic dishonesty cannot be applied unless a specification of charges form is completed. The form is located at http://www.clayton.edu/student-conduct/conductforms.

Commented [jc4r3]: The section has been changed to reflect the pdf version of the Academic catalog and Student handbook.

Commented [j5]: Optional – Writing intensive courses may wish to provide this information. Statement revised in Fall 2015.
Visit The Writers’ Studio at http://clayton.edu/writersstudio or schedule your appointment online at http://clayton.mywconline.com (Note: first-time users need to complete a one-time registration prior to using the online appointment website).

Operation Study
At Clayton State University, we expect and support high motivation and academic achievement. Look for Operation Study activities and programs this semester that are designed to enhance your academic success such as study sessions, study breaks, workshops, and opportunities to earn Study Bucks (for use in the University Bookstore) and other items. http://www.clayton.edu/operation-study

Other Policies (Specific to this Course):

Reading Journals (20%):
You will respond to each reading assigned. I am looking for an engagement with the text and most particularly for a study of the technique employed by the author (actually, I recommend that you focus on the specific element of technique scheduled for study at the time we read a story). I do not want a synopsis of the text. Length: half a page single-spaced, turned in D2L.

Exercises (10%):
After starting most of the exercises in class, you will finish them at home, type and edit them before turning them in D2L.

Individual Presentation (10%):
You will present one of the stories we will study. When presenting a story look at the craft, style, etc. and be ready to lead the class discussion. It may help for you to take notes on setting, viewpoint, characterization, dialogue, plot (give a plot line), conflict, imagery, structure of sentences, etc.

Notes on Electricity & Other Dreams (10%):
As you read Electricity & Other Dreams, take notes on setting, viewpoint, characterization, dialogue, plot, conflict, imagery, structure of sentences, and more if you wish!

Group Presentation (10%):
You will present a novel or a collection of short stories from the list provided. When presenting a book, focus on the author’s work, his/her craft, style, etc. Find out about influences. Remember to read and use reviews of the book.

Note on presentations evaluation:
1. Research your topic carefully and provide your sources to the audience.
2. Come prepared for presentation (computer compatibility checked by the HUB, notes in hand, all electronic material tested and ready to project)
3. Professional attire (Your clothes communicate identity, personality, and image. Attire is the first thing your audience will see during your presentation. They will be more open to your message if you carry yourself with confidence. And you’ll feel more certain of yourself if you’re dressed in appropriate yet comfortable clothing. The most important principle is to match your appearance to the occasion and the audience. If
you're giving a presentation to a class, dressing slightly more formally than you do every day is fine. Don’t dress as if you’re headed to a wedding or a nightclub!

4. Turn in a presentation outline at the beginning of your presentation
5. Speak clearly. If you read from a document, make sure to lift your gaze from your paper regularly and make eye contact with your audience.
6. Use technology to show images and/or film/video excerpts and to play music.
7. If you choose to use a power point, do not read from the screen. Your presentation needs to be entertaining.
8. Involve your audience in the presentation by asking questions.
9. Stay on topic
10. Respect the time frame allotted for your presentation

**Short Story (20%)**:
You will write a short story which will be workshopped to allow you ample time for revisions before you turn in your final product in D2L.

*Note on evaluation of short stories: include each one of the elements of the craft such as setting, characterization, dialogue, point of view, scenes, tension, plot, imagery, word choice, authenticity and voice. The first paragraph will include: a strong first sentence acting as a hook, the main characters, and a sense of tension. The plot will move forward according to a series of rising conflicts (remember to use scenes). The last paragraph will include a strong image that will remain with the reader.*

**Addendum to the Short Story:**
Write a thorough explanation of the changes you made to your short story during the revision process resulting from the feedback you received during the workshop.

**Process Memo:**
Write a few paragraphs in which you reflect on the effect of the workshop on your writing and assess your progress in writing (i.e. what you have learned in this course, how it has affected your composition and writing process)

**Peer Response Evaluation Sheet:**
You will evaluate the comments each one of your peer gave on your work. Obviously, each student is expected to provide constructive comments to his/her peers. This evaluation is not based on personal agreement or disagreement but on the quality of feedbacks.

**Visiting Writers Reading Series:**
Required attendance to 2 literary readings/events (preferably from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series) AND to Cygnet 2016 launch party. If your school and/or work schedule prevent you from attending the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series, you need to see me by January 31st so that we may make other arrangements. *Remember to add the list of the readings/events you attended to your final portfolio.*

**Conferences:**
I encourage students to visit me during my office hours. By making appointments in advance during my office hours, you make sure that I have reserved a particular time for our meeting.
Course Schedule:
NOTE: I will refer to the following texts as indicated below.
FW for Fiction Writer’s Workshop
BASS for Best American Short Stories 2015
EOD for Electricity & Other Dreams

As most writers do, you will keep a small notebook with you at all time during this term so that you can record thoughts, dreams, observations, and start a list of words. Your notebook then becomes a pool of words and ideas for you to use in your creative work.

ENGLISH MAJORS: REMEMBER TO KEEP YOUR FINAL PIECE (SHORT ESSAY, SHORT SHORT-STORY, OR GROUP OF POEMS) FROM THIS CLASS SO THAT YOU MAY USE IT IN THE REQUIRED CAPSTONE CLASS AND ADD IT TO YOUR PORTFOLIO BEFORE GRADUATING!

Knowing the proper terminology for fiction writing will allow you to use it clearly inside and outside the classroom, and it will prepare some of you to exit exams or GACE, for instance.

All written work is due in D2L
(reading responses, exercises, midterm & final portfolios, et.)

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<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>1/12</th>
<th>Course introduction</th>
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<td>1/14</td>
<td>Introduction to peers / writing genres review</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>1/19</th>
<th>FW “Introduction” and “Sources of Fiction” 4-20</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/21</td>
<td>FW O’Connor 256-65 (reading journal 1), exercise 1 started in class (#3 in FW 21), sign up for individual presentations</td>
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<th>Week 3</th>
<th>1/26</th>
<th>Exercise 1 due in class</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>FW “Setting” 26-39, FW Cisneros 310-13 (reading journal 2), exercise 2 started in class (# 13 in FW 43)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>2/02</th>
<th>FW Ha Jin 266-76 (reading journal 3), exercise 2 due in class</th>
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<td>2/04</td>
<td>FW “Character” 45-58, start exercise 3 (#9 in FW 61)</td>
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>2/09</th>
<th>FW Hemley 278-84 (reading journal 4), exercise 3 due in class</th>
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<td>2/11</td>
<td>Bring 1 copy of exercises 1, 2 and 3 finished and typed for small group workshop</td>
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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>2/16</th>
<th>FW “Plot” 64-80, exercise 4 due in class (#10 in FW 83), BASS “Fingerprints” by Justin Bigos (reading journal 5)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2/18</td>
<td>FW “Point of View” 87-103, exercise 5 due in class (either #1 in FW 103 OR # 8 in FW 106)</td>
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Week 7
2/23  FW “Dialogue and Scene” 110-24, ________ BASS “Moving On” by Diane Cook (reading journal 6)
2/25  Midterm portfolio due, presentation of short stories collection by graduate student, sign up for workshop and group presentations

Workshop Groups:
Group 1: ____________, ____________
Group 2: ____________, ____________
Group 3: ____________, ____________
Group 4: ____________, ____________
Group 5: ____________, ____________
Group 6: ____________, ____________

Group Presentations:
Group 1: ____________, ____________
Group 2: ____________, ____________
Group 3: ____________, ____________
Group 4: ____________, ____________
Group 5: ____________, ____________
Group 6: ____________, ____________

Week 8
3/01  exercise 6 due in class (# 2 in WF 125), ________ BASS “The Largess of the Sea Maiden” by Denis Johnson (reading journal 7) (bring 2 copies of exercise 6 for small group workshop (remember to keep this exercise for your final portfolio)
3/03  FW “Beginnings and Endings” 130-46, ________ BASS “About My Aunt” by Joan Silber (reading journal 8)

Week 9  SPRING BREAK

Week 10
3/15  FW “Description and Word Choice” 151-65, ________ BASS “Mr. Voice” by Jess Walter (journal 9)

Week 11
3/22  FW “Revision” 190-202, ________, EOD “The Sister’s War” (journal 11), group 1 distribute short stories to class
3/24  No class meeting to make up for attending one reading from the VWRS or other (I will be at a conference)

Week 12
3/29  Workshop group 1, group 2 distribute short stories to class, Notes on Electricity & Other Dreams (focus on parts II, III, IV and V) due in D2L
3/31  Workshop group 2, group 3 distribute short stories to class

Week 13  VWRS: Micah Dean Hicks (see schedule on English department site)
4/05  Workshop group 3, group 4 distributes short stories to class
4/07  Class attends Micah Dean Hicks’s reading (UC 416)

Week 14
4/12  Workshop group 4, group 5 distributes short stories to class
Workshop group 5, group 6 distributes short stories to class

**Week 15**
- Cygnet 2016 Launch Party on 4/19 (details TBA)
- Workshop group 6
- 4/21 No class meeting to make up for attending Cygnet 2016 Launch Party

**Week 16**
- 4/19 Workshop group 6
- 4/21 No class meeting to make up for attending Cygnet 2016 Launch Party
- Work on group presentations, **Final portfolio due in class** (make sure to include addendum to revised short-story, process memo, peer response evaluation, and remember that reading journals 8, 9 & 10 are one paragraph each on reading events you attended!)
- 4/28 Work on group presentations

**Week 17 (Finals week)**
- Final exam
  - Graduate student presents a novel or collection of short-stories from the list.
  - Undergraduate students present a novel or collection of short-stories from the list in groups.
Advanced Fiction Writing
Character Profile 1 Form

Name:
Age:
Place of Birth:
Residence:
Occupation:
Appearance:
Dress:
Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Obsessions:
Ambition:
Work Habits:
Education:
Hobbies:
Illness:
Family:
Parents:
Kids:
Siblings:
Friends:
Pets:
Politics:
Tics:
Diet:
Drugs:
Favorite kinds of coffee, cigarettes, alcohol:
Erotic history:
Favorite books, movies, music:
Fears:
Most traumatic event:
Most wonderful experience:
Major struggle, past and present:
Yearning (the character’s intense longing for . . . ):
Advanced Fiction Writing
Character Profile 2 Form

Name:
Age:
Place of Birth:
Residence:
Occupation:
Appearance:
Dress:
Strengths:
Weaknesses:
Obsessions:
Ambition:
Work Habits:
Education:
Hobbies:
Illness:
Family:
Parents:
Kids:
Siblings:
Friends:
Pets:
Politics:
Tics:
Diet:
Drugs:
Favorite kinds of coffee, cigarettes, alcohol:
Erotic history:
Favorite books, movies, music:
Fears:
Most traumatic event:
Most wonderful experience:
Major struggle, past and present:
Yearning (the character’s intense longing for . . .):