INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE WRITING /ENGL 3800-01 (Spring 2012)
(CRN 24904) TR 11:15-12:30pm—G227 (A&S Bldg)

Dr. Brigitte Byrd
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Office: A&S 214A
Office hours: TR 1:30-3:30pm (main campus), M 5:30-6:00pm (PTC) & by appointment

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.

Course Description:
3.0 semester credit hours (3-0-3)
Catalog Description: Introductory study in imaginative writing emphasizing both selected readings in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction and student writing in these genres.
Pre-Requisites: ENGL 1102 with a minimum US grade of C

Course Objective:
* Introduction and study of the writing craft in prose and poetry through reading assignments and attendance to readings in both writing disciplines.
* Understanding and practice of the craft in prose and poetry writing through exercises: specificity and detail, characterization, dialogue, point of view, rhythm of sentences, image and metaphor, concreteness vs. abstraction, imagery, sound, rhythm, shape, etc.
* Understanding of the laborious nature of the craft by practicing constructive criticism through workshops and by revising pieces submitted to the workshop.
* Production of midterm and final portfolios.
* Understanding what makes “good” writing by staging the adaptation of a piece of writing and performing it into a different medium (in collaboration with a small group of peers).
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 2012.

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://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm.

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://a-s.clayton.edu/english/program_outcomes.htm
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:
Three Genres, Stephen Minot & Diane Thiel
The Best American Short Stories 2011, ed. Geraldine Brooks & Heidi Pitlor
The Best American Poetry 2011, ed. David Lehman & Kevin Young

Additional Required Materials:
A notebook
Manila folders in which you will turn your assignments and portfolios
$25 for copying expenses

Evaluation:
In order to receive a C in this course, you must turn in all the written work below on time, actively contribute to all workshops, participate in a group performance, and attend 3 readings (preferably from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series).
*Remember that attendance is required and that after 4 excused or unexcused absences, your overall grade starts dropping. Similarly attendance is mandatory to all workshops, all performances, and 3 readings. By “mandatory” I mean that failing to comply with any of the previous requirements will result in dropping one letter grade from your overall grade.

Midterm Portfolio (30%):
- Participation: 10%
- 10 typed reading journals: 10%
- 4 finished, typed & revised exercises: 10%

Final Portfolio (60%):
- Participation: 10%
- 8 typed reading journals: 10%
- 5 finished, typed & revised exercises: 10%
- Final draft of chosen work: 20%
- Notes on works from BAS & BAP: 10% (weeks 11-15)

Final Exam (10%):
- Group Performance: 10%

NOTE: The final portfolio MUST include the first draft of your chosen work with my comments (CNF essay, short-story OR poems—5 page for each, and if you write poems, start a new page for each poem), the process memo, & the 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 28, 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, which occurs on February 28.

Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link.
The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is March 2, 2012.

Course Policies:
**General Policy:** Students must abide by policies in the [Clayton State University Student Handbook](http://adminservices.clayton.edu/student-life/student-handbook) and the [Basic Undergraduate Student Responsibilities](http://adminservices.clayton.edu/student-life/student-handbook).

**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.

**Course Attendance Policy:** Attendance is expected for all class periods. Attendance is mandatory for all presentations, workshops, and 3 readings from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series (or if unable to attend these, to 3 events from other reading series). 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 4 excused or unexcused absences will affect your participation grade. After 6 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, presentations, distribution of work before workshops, written comments due on workshop days, as well as journal responses, exercises, & notes before the portfolios are turned in—see “Late Work Policy” below).

**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. 5 instances of 15 minutes or more tardiness to class will result in 1 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 Student Life/Judicial Affairs. Judicial procedures are described at [http://adminservices.clayton.edu/judicial/](http://adminservices.clayton.edu/judicial/).

**Disruption of the Learning Environment:** Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening 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. A more detailed description of examples of disruptive
behavior and appeal procedures is provided at http://a-s.clayton.edu/DisruptiveClassroomBehavior.htm

Writing Assistance: The Writers’ Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing tutors about your writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your paper, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a tutor or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember: you, not your tutor, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit. http://a-s.clayton.edu/english/Writers%20Studio/index.html

Other Policies (Specific to This Course):
Reading Journals:
You will respond to each reading assigned.
Prose Unit: I am looking for an engagement with the text, and most particularly for a study of the technique (rather maybe of one particular aspect of it) employed by its author. As you read each essay or short-story with a chapter on the writing technique, I recommend that you focus on the particular aspect of the craft discussed in the chapter in question. I do not want a synopsis of the text: we all read the text thus know what it is about. Length: half a page single-spaced.
Poetry Unit: I am also looking for an engagement with the text in this unit, with study of the technique employed by the poet in relation to the particular aspect of the craft we are studying as you read the poems. Length: half a page single-spaced.
Exercises:
After starting most of the exercises in class, you will finish them at home, type and edit them before placing them in your folder. These exercises are designed to prompt you into writing a longer piece eventually.
Performances:
Performances will occur at the end of the semester. These are group projects. Each group will choose a text we have read in class and perform this text creatively using a different medium.
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.
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.
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, and what changes you made to your work as a result of the workshop).
Visiting Writers Reading Series:
Mandatory attendance to at least three events from the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series. If your school schedule or your work schedule prevents you from attending the Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series, you need to see me by September 30th so that we may make other arrangements. Remember to add the list of the readings/events you attended (with comments) to your final portfolio.

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**Course Schedule:**
NOTE: I will refer to the following texts as indicated below.
   TG for Three Genres
   BASS for *Best American Short Stories 2011*
   BAP for *Best American Poetry 2011*

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.

**Week 1**
1/10 Introduction to course and peers
1/12 Creative writing genres review

**Prose Unit: Literary Nonfiction**

**Week 2**
1/17 TG chapters 1 & 3 (overview & reflective mood), reading journal 1 on “Unwired”
1/19 TG chapter 4 (real place), reading journal 2 on “On Leaving Florida,” in-class exercise 1 (real place/setting/structure/historical references/narrative)

**Week 3**
1/24 TG chapters 5 & 6 (creating your own lit. nonfiction), reading journal 3 on “Westbury Court”
1/26 Exercise 1 due in class for peer review

**Prose Unit: Fiction**

**Week 4**
1/31 TG chapters 7 & 8 (freedom to invent & fresh material)
2/02 TG chapter 9, reading journal 4 on “Escapes”, in-class exercise 2 (2 character profiles)

**Week 5**
2/07 TG chapter 10 & 11 (viewpoint), reading journal 5 on “Rwanda,” **revised essay from exercise 1 due**
2/09 TG chapters 13 & 14 (structure), reading journal 6 on “A Simple Matter of Hunger,” in-class exercise 3 (plot: cards w/3 settings & 3 conflicts + 2 character profiles)

**Week 6**
*Glen Retief reads at Clayton State on Thursday 2/16 at 7:00pm (Atrium in Continuing Education Bldg)*
2/14 TG chapters 16 & 17 (setting), reading journal 7 on “Obst Vw”
2/16 TG chapters 18 & 19 (dialogue & characterization), in-class exercise 4 (dialogue)

**Week 7**

2/21 No class for attending a reading from Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series—Read TG Chapter 26 (Trouble Shooting Guide: Fiction)

2/23 TG chapters 20 & 21 (imagination & flash fiction), reading journal 8 on “The Bank Robbery,” reading journal 9 on “Stockings,” & and reading journal 10 on “Girl,” Midterm portfolio due (10 journal responses & 4 exercises), sign up for workshops

Group 1: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 2: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 3: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 4: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 5: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 6: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 7: __________________; __________________; __________________
Group 8: __________________; __________________; __________________

**Poetry Unit**

**Week 8**


3/01 TG chapter 30 (images), selected reading from chapter 28: reading journal 3 on “Anger Sweetened,” reading journal 4 on “The Mapmaker’s Daughter”

**Week 9**

3/06 SPRING BREAK
3/08 SPRING BREAK

**Week 10**

*Carrie Bennett and Jeff Newberry read at Clayton State on Thursday 3/15 at 7:00pm (Atrium in Continuing Education Bldg)*


3/15 TG chapter 33 (stanzas), selected reading from chapters 28 & 38: reading journal 7 on “Shakespearean Sonnet,” reading journal 8 on “Always the One Who Loves His Father Most,” in-class exercise 3 (sonnet/pantoum), also read from BAP “God’s Promise” 55-56, “A Voice on an Answering Machine” 65 & “Pears” 71

**Week 11**

NOTES FOR FINAL PORTFOLIO: Starting this week, you will read 1 short-story from BASS and 5 poems from BAP for the next 5 weeks and write notes on each one of these assignments. See reading list for notes at the end of the class schedule.

3/20 No class for attending a reading from Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series

3/22 TG chapter 34 (free verse), in-class exercise 4 (lyric poem), short story due

**Week 12**
3/27  In-class exercise 5 (prose poem), group 1 distribute work to class, sign up for group performances

Group 1: ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________
Group 2: ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________
Group 3: ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________
Group 4: ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________
Group 5: ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________; ____________

3/29 Workshop group 1, group 2 distribute work to class

**Week 13**

4/03 Workshop group 2, group 3 distribute work to class
4/05 Workshop group 3, group 4 distribute work to class

**Week 14**

*Ed Pavlic reads at Clayton State on Thursday 4/12 at 7:00pm (Atrium in Continuing Education Bldg)*

4/10 Workshop group 4, group 5 distribute work to class
4/12 Workshop group 5, group 6 distribute work to class

**Week 15**

4/17 No class for attending a reading from Clayton State University Visiting Writers Reading Series
4/19 Workshop group 6, group 7 distribute work to class

**Week 16**

4/24 Workshop group 7, group 8 distribute work to class
4/26 Workshop group 8, **FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE IN CLASS (except group 8):** list of 3 readings/events you attended with comments, 8 journal responses, 5 exercises, notes (5 notes on BAS & 15 notes on BAP), final work (post-workshop and thorough revisions), process memo, peer response evaluation sheet, & original draft of work (pre-workshop) with my comments.

**Week 17 (Finals week)**

5/01 **GROUP 8 FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE IN MY OFFICE BY NOON TODAY**
Final date TBA (check Registrar site for date)

In this class, the final exam is the group performance.

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**Reading List from BASS and BAP for NOTES**

You need to read 5 poems a week and 1 short-story per week for weeks 11 to 15 (included) and write notes on each one of the poems or short-stories you read. Organize these as “NOTES” and arrange them by week. So here it is:

BAP is Best American Poetry 2011
BASS is Best American Short Stories 2011

**Week 11**

BASS “Housewifely Arts” 14-31
BAP “Postcard from Her Alternate Lives” 89-90
BAP “Bugcatching at Twilight” 95-96
BAP “Provenance” 106-07
BAP “Ghost Aurora” 108
BAP « The Smallest » 114

**Week 12**
BASS “La Vita Nuova” 87-95
BAP “Nineteen Thirty-Eight” 115
BAP “Pantoum for the Imperceptible” 125-26
BAP “Elegy” 136-37
BAP “The Latch” 141
BAP “A Hundred Bones” 146-47

**Week 13**
BASS “Peter Torrelli, Falling Apart” 179-209
BAP “When at a Certain Party in NYC” 8-9
BAP “The Sink” 13
BAP “Here and There” 18-19
BAP “Coffee” 23-24
BAP “From the Lives of My Friends” 25-27

**Week 14**
BASS “Dog Bites” 231-43
BAP “My Strip Club” 28
BAP “Stays” 30-31
BAP “In November” 32-33
BAP “Morning on the Island” 36
BAP “Everything Is Nervous” 37-38

**Week 15**
BASS “ID” 244-61
BAP “Just As, After a Point, Job Cried Out” 51
BAP “The Cloudy Vase” 54
BAP “The Funeral Sermon” 57-58
BAP “Notebooks” 61-62
BAP “The Pilgrim Is Bridled and Bespectacled” 68-69