I. Basic Course Information

A. Fall 2009
B. Instructor: Carr Kizzier
C. Office: E319
D. Phone: 443-840-1638    Email: carr@kizzier.com
E. Office Hours: MWF 11:15-12:15; T 11-2; 4-5:30; or by appointment
F. Pre-requisite: ENGL 101 or consent of instructor

II. Course Goals

A. ENGL 211 – Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction provides the opportunity to learn and practice the craft of fiction. Students will actively engage in the process of writing fiction both in and out of class. And they will examine the work of modern and contemporary short story writers and the forms and techniques essential to fiction.

B. Overall Course Objectives -- Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
   1. identify the sources of their own imagination
   2. apply a composing process that begins with a notion (memory, image, phrase, etc) and ends with a short story
   3. control point of view
   4. write extended dialogue
   5. use setting to establish a sense of reality
   6. create plots that are significant and dramatic
   7. critique the work of other students constructively
   8. identify what is useful in the critiques of your own work by other students
   9. analyze the stories of modern and contemporary short story writers
   10. develop a coherent portfolio of short stories

III. Evaluation

A. Requirements

1. Short Stories: At the end of the semester each student will submit a portfolio of at least four completed short stories.

2. Reading Assignments: In this class, the assigned readings will form the basis of our literary discussion, analysis, and writing. With this in mind, then, you will be assigned some reading material for every class: material from the texts; stories brought in from outside sources; and the work of you and your fellow students. You are required to read thoroughly and be prepared to discuss each of these readings before you come to class. Occasionally I will give
you short quizzes to augment your test-taking skills. In addition, we will have writing exercises assigned for each week.

3. **Workshops**: In order to facilitate our growth as writers, each week we will conduct a workshop in which we review and discuss our work. Therefore, during the course of the semester, **each student must present at least two original short stories for workshop.** These stories must be distributed to the class **ONE WEEK PRIOR to the scheduled workshop via email.**

4. **Reviews/Blogs**: In addition to our workshops, during the course of the semester you will be writing reviews of the student poems and stories that you read. The basic format is to provide a summary and response to the reading (see handout). The **minimum requirement is one review per workshopped fiction writer each week, plus one response-only poem review.** You will bring **two hard copies of your reviews to class. After class, post your reviews to the class blog,** where you will read the reviews of your colleagues and provide feedback.

5. **Class preparation/participation**: English 211 is by nature a participatory course. Writing is not something that can be taught to students by an instructor giving a lecture. In order to develop your writing skills, you must **write, read, and rewrite,** and we will be doing all three in class. It is essential, then, that you come to class prepared, which involves the following:

   a. **Be punctual.** Entering late is distracting to the entire class.
   b. **Please bring your work** – texts, journals, reviews, dictionary, pens or pencils, diskettes, and blank paper – **to every class.** **Students who do not bring their texts and assignments will be asked to leave and will be marked absent (unexcused).**
   c. **Complete all assignments** – particularly your reviews – **on time,** before you come to class. If reading is assigned, be prepared to discuss it or take a quiz on it as soon as you enter class.
   d. **Participate fully in all class activities.** **Each student must contribute at least once in each class**

**B. Grading Policy**

1. Your short stories and essays will carry the greatest weight in determining your final grade. In addition, **all stories and essays must be completed in order to achieve a passing grade.**

   Assuming you have fulfilled the attendance requirements, then, your final grade will be determined according to the following formula:
2. Late Work: It is imperative that students a.) **attend class** and b.) **complete all work on time**. Thus the following policy regarding late work:

**Workshop Stories** must be distributed **ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE of your workshop via email**. Stories submitted late will result in a **5% reduction in overall workshop grade for each day late** (thus a story submitted two days late will reduce final workshop grade by 10%). **Late reviews will not be accepted.**

C. **Attendance Policy**

Regular attendance is crucial to success in this course. Many of the activities we engage in during class time – the discussions, peer workshops, writing exercises — can’t be “made up”, with the result that students who miss class submit weaker stories. In the end, poor attendance almost always results in a disappointing outcome for the student. That said, there are always circumstances in which you will find yourself unable to attend class. **If you know ahead of time that you will miss a class, let me know in person, leave a message on my phone, or email me.** Keep in mind, however, that **poor attendance can also directly affect your grade.** Missing one class will most likely not affect your grade. **Students missing 2 classes, however, can receive no better than a B for their final grade. Students missing 3 classes can receive no better than a C for their final grade. Finally, students who miss more than three classes will receive a failing grade.**

**Late Policy:** Because we meet for three hours, if you are going to be late I encourage you to come to class. However, I will charge you a **partial absence for each hour that you are late**. Thus coming to class from 1-60 minutes late will equal 1/3 of a class absence; 61-120 minutes late will equal 2/3 of a class absence, etc.

IV. **Course Procedures**

A. **Texts and Materials**

**Recommended:**
- *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah
- *American Short Story Masterpieces* ed. Raymond Carver and Tom Jenks
- *Making Your Own Days* by Kenneth Koch
- *The American Heritage* or any good **college dictionary**
B. Other Procedures

1. Classroom Etiquette – It is expected that adult college students will exhibit courtesy, respect, and cooperation during class toward the instructor and toward fellow students. Please remember the sacrifices that others make to attend college, and that everyone is entitled to an orderly and scholarly environment. With this in mind, then, please turn off all cell phones and pagers before entering the classroom, and please refrain from bringing food with you to class. **Don’t text in class**

2. Academic Honesty Policy – Academic honesty is expected of all students. Work submitted by students as their own must be their own, and materials taken from any other source must be clearly identified as such. Intentional falsification of source materials, plagiarism, obtaining advance information about exams, and other violations of academic honesty are not acceptable. The usual penalty for academic dishonesty is failure on the paper or exam for the first offense. A second instance of academic dishonesty will result in failure of the course. Any subsequent violations of the academic honesty policy will result in the student’s dismissal from the program or from the college. A student may appeal any action taken under this policy.

3. Extra Assistance –
   a. Instructor Office Hours: If you are having a problem with an assignment, need some extra help, or simply want to discuss class-related topics, please feel free to schedule an appointment with me for time outside of class. I am available to help. JUST ASK.
   b. The Writing Center: In the Writing Center, located in E338, faculty tutors are available to help you with your writing projects/problems. Walk-in assistance is available, though making an appointment by calling 443-840-1799 is preferable. The Writing Center also serves as one of the open computer labs on campus.