**ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**

**Humanities Division**

**ENG 169 – Creative Writing**

**Course Outline**

**Course Number & Name:** ENG 169 Creative Writing

**Credit Hours:**  3.0 **Contact Hours:**  3.0 **Lecture:** 3.0 **Lab:**  N/A **Other:**  N/A

**Prerequisites**: Grade of “C” or better in ENG 101

**Co-requisites:** None **Concurrent Courses:** None

**Course Outline Revision Date:**  Fall 2010

**Course Description**: This course is designed to provide practice, guidance, and criticism to those interested in becoming creative writers of prose and poetry. Conducted as a seminar, this course will emphasize the development of creative talent through structured assignments, independent writing, and analysis of selected literary works.

**Course Goals:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. write and analyze poetry; and

2. write and analyze short fiction.

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)**: Upon successful completion of this course, students should specifically be able to do the following:

1. Write and analyze poetry:

* 1. *choose an appropriate subject based upon a writing assignment;*
  2. *develop a topic within the subject;*
  3. *recognize the elements of poetry through the reading, discussion, and analysis of poems;*
  4. *write poems using a variety of techniques;* and
  5. *revise and edit drafts in the development of an appropriate final copy*

2. Write and analyze short fiction:

2.1 *identify the difference between fiction and creative non-fiction through reading, discussion, and analysis of various texts;*

2.2 *recognize and use the elements of fiction including plot, characterization, and dialogue;*

2.3 *develop an outline and synopsis of short writing projects;*

2.4 *write short fiction and creative non-fiction using various techniques;* and

2.5 *revise and edit drafts in the development of an appropriate final copy*

**Methods of Instruction**: Instruction will consist of lectures, discussions, and the development of a Creative Writing Manuscript and Writing Portfolio.

**Outcomes Assessment:**

1. Rubrics will be used to evaluate coherence, diction, syntax, and artistic consistency of student writing.
2. A survey administered at Midterm will evaluate student progress and preparedness in completing the Creative Writing Manuscript and Writing Portfolio.

3. Checklist rubrics will be used to evaluate the various elements/techniques of poetry and prose used in student writing.

**Course Requirements:** All students are required to:

1. Write a variety of structured poetic exercises and create several well-developed poems.

2. Write a number of structured fiction exercises and provide at least one well-developed short story.

3. Keep a journal that must be presented at Midterm and at the end of the semester.

4. Read one’s own work aloud during class sessions as requested.

**Methods of Evaluation:** Final course grades will be computed as follows:

**% of**

**Grading Components final course grade**

* **Participation/Punctuality/Attendance 10 – 20%**

Students must be present and participate to benefit from the guidance of the instructor and the constructive criticism of their peers.

* 5 or more well-developed Poems (to be assigned by instructor) 25 – 40%

Poems will show evidence of the extent to which students meet course objectives including, but not limited to, choosing an appropriate subject, developing a topic, using various poetic techniques, and showing evidence of editing and revision.

* 1 well-developed Short Story (to be assigned by instructor) 30 – 40%

The short story will show evidence of the extent to which students meet course objectives including, but not limited to, developing an outline and synopsis, using elements of fiction such as plot, characterization, and dialogue, and revising and editing a final copy.

Note: The instructor will provide specific weights, which lie in the above-given ranges, for each of the grading components at the beginning of the semester. The Creative Writing Manuscript and Writing Portfolio will consist of the poems and the short story. Also, instructors will grade subjectively as an on-going attempt to develop standards of literary quality.

**Academic Integrity:** Dishonesty disrupts the search for truth that is inherent in the learning process and so devalues the purpose and the mission of the College. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* plagiarism – the failure to acknowledge another writer’s words or ideas or to give proper credit to sources of information;
* cheating – knowingly obtaining or giving unauthorized information on any test/exam or any other academic assignment;
* interference – any interruption of the academic process that prevents others from the proper engagement in learning or teaching; and
* fraud – any act or instance of willful deceit or trickery.

Violations of academic integrity will be dealt with by imposing appropriate sanctions. Sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty could include the resubmission of an assignment, failure of the test/exam, failure in the course, probation, suspension from the College, and even expulsion from the College.

**Student Code of Conduct:** All students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible and considerate adults who respect the rights of others. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. All students are also expected to attend and be on time for all class meetings. No cell phones or similar electronic devices are permitted in class. Please refer to the Essex County College student handbook, *Lifeline*, for more specific information about the College’s Code of Conduct and attendance requirements.

**Course Content Outline:** based on the text (required for adjunct instructors/optional for full-time faculty) by Jason, Philip K. *Creative Writer’s Handbook, Fifth Edition.* New York: Longman, 2010. ISBN-13 #: 978-0-13-605052-0; and the book by Salinger, JD. *Nine Stories*. New York: Little Brown, 1981. ISBN-13 #:978-03-16769501

**Week Content/Topics**

1 **Part One: A Writer’s Concern**

Working Like a Writer

The Writer Participates in Writing

Working Habits

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

2 **Journal/Research/Invention**

Why Keep a Journal?

Your Journal/Reading Journal Excerpts

The Relationship Between Invention & Research

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

3 **Point of View**

Who Will Do the Telling?

The Decision and Its Consequences

The Range of Perspectives

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

4 **Language Is Your Medium**

There Is No Such Thing as a Synonym

Choosing Well

Some Diction Problems

Figures of Speech

Style

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

5 **Part Two: The Concerns of the Poet**

The Elements of Poetry

The Line: Meter, Rhymes, Free Verse

Lines in Combination

Imagery

Sound Patterns

Off-Rhyme

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

**Week Content/Topics**

6 **Practicing Poetry**

Imitation

Fixed Forms

Memory, Formula, Ritual, and List Poems

Dramatic/Character Poems

Event, Personification, Epistolary, and Time Warp Poems

Advice, Picture, Music, Poem on Poems, and Found Poems

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

7 **Poetry Problems**

Out of Tune

Archaic Diction

The Anonymous Voice

Appalling Abstraction, Unintentional Humor

Jarring Diction/Rhyme

The Clash of Poetic Elements/Writing Past the Poem

Treasure Burying/Saying Too Much

The False Start/Punch-Line Endings

Ineffective Line Break/Out of Order/Derivative Drivel

Poetry Manuscript Preparation: From Drafting to Revision to Submission, Deadline Setting

8 **Part Three: The Concerns of the Storyteller**

The Elements of Fiction

The Nature of Fiction

Plot and What It Does

Setting

Point of Attack

Character and Characterization

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

9 **Narration and Its Techniques**

Exposition

Flashbacks

Scene and Summary

Verisimilitude

Problems

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

10 **Creative Nonfiction**

The Nature of Creative Nonfiction

How the Writer Convinces the Reader

Virtues of Nonfiction

Problems in Creative Nonfiction

Finding Materials

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

**Week Content/Topics**

11 **Stories and Nonfiction**

Selected Readings

Response Writings

Short Story Manuscript Preparation: From Drafting to Revision to Submission, Deadline Setting

12 **Part Four: The Concerns of the Playwright**

Elements of Drama

The Nature of Drama

Storytelling with People and Things

Characters: Stock and Development, Time and Place, Beats and Setting

Selected Reading/Writing Exercise

13 **Dialogue and Its Problems**

Principles and Common Errors

Reading/Response Writing

14 **Final Creative Writing Manuscript and Portfolio Presentation and Review**

15 **Final Creative Writing Manuscript and Portfolio Submission**