

Model Course/Program Outcomes Guide

May 2013 (Last updated SP 2015)

Course/Program Title: English 209 Creative Writing

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Learning Outcomes:

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will be able to

1. Employ writer's craft tools to write fiction and poetry with effective characterization, plot, thematic conflict, structure, setting, and style.
2. Differentiate among readers' expectations of the short-short story, short story, novel, metered poetry, and prose poetry.
3. Utilize a personalized writer's plan that focuses on avoiding writer's block by sustaining enthusiasm and engagement as a piece makes its journey from scattered ideas to marketable lyric or fiction.

COURSE CONTENT OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

1. Complete exercises in and outside of class that will encourage both the generation of new ideas and the revision of already written pieces.
2. Write a short-short story and a short story or novel chapter.
3. Write a metered poem and a prose poem.
4. Participate in group workshops as both giver and recipient of constructive feedback on creative writing.
5. Create three-dimensional characters who interact to form natural plots.
6. Familiarize themselves with short pieces of literature and published writer's craft advice.
7. Submit work to the HCC literary magazine, *Hedge Apple*, as well as to one other literary publication of their choice.

Assessment

“Writing exercises assigned for homework will focus on specific craft issues, and you will know exactly what I’m looking for before you complete the assignment; therefore, grades will be assigned as to whether you are able to display that specific skill. For example, I may ask you to format standard dialogue or write a paragraph in a specific point of view. The grading will be objective: did you successfully complete the assignment?”

Workshop activities and exercises will be graded strictly. I will ask specific questions of you, and I want you to answer these questions in a comprehensive written manner, trying your best to assist your classmates in achieving the specific goals set forth in their writing. By the time we workshop, you will know what I’m looking for.

Group writing exercises in class will be given completion grades. Either you are present and actively participating or you aren’t. These are no-stress activities meant to get your creativity flowing.

Rough drafts will be given completion grades. Either you turn them in on time or you don’t.

Final drafts will be graded with respect to narrative craft, but you shouldn’t be worried about your grade on final drafts. Instead, try to challenge yourself to the best of your capabilities.”

90 - 100 = A, 80 - 89 = B, 70 - 79 = C, 60 – 69 = D, 59 and below = F (Failing)

UPDATE SP 2015: The attached rubric was used in SU 13, SP 14, and SU 14. The class is not offered in the Fall semesters.

Validation and Results

In previous semesters, no rubric was used to grade the common assessment, which is a 2000-3500 word piece of writing. All students who submitted an appropriate final writing assignment passed with an A or a B. In most classes, a “C” should designate an average assignment attempt, but this type of grading is counterproductive to a creative writing class, in which students should be encouraged to experiment and take risks.

However, in an attempt to standardize grading and give students more objective goals for their diverse writings, a rubric was designed in June 2013.

At some point, faculty may consider designating ENG 209 as a pass/fail class if college-wide trends move in that direction.

UPDATE SP 2015: (data for SU 13, SP 14, and SU 14)

SU 13: There were 9 students enrolled in SP 14.

Ideas/Content 4 A's, 5 B's, 0 C's

Organization 3 A's, 6 B's, 0 C's

Voice 1 A's, 7 B's, 1 C's

Word Choice 2 A's, 6 B's, 1 C's

SP 14: There were 14 students enrolled in SP 14.

Ideas/Content 10 A's, 4 B's, 0 C's

Organization 5 A's, 8 B's, 1 C's

Voice 4 A's, 8 B's, 2 C's

Word Choice 3 A's, 10 B's, 1 C's

SU 14: There were 14 students enrolled in SP 14.

Ideas/Content 10 A's, 4 B's, 0 C's

Organization 6 A's, 7 B's, 1 C's

Voice 4 A's, 8 B's, 4 C's

Word Choice 1 A's, 10 B's, 3 C's

The data from the last three semesters suggests that most students are able to produce a piece of writing at an accomplished level when finishing this course. In a college-level creative writing class, this is appropriate.

Follow-up

Beginning in August 2013, we will have data and can evaluate student learning in creative writing.

UPDATE SP 2015: The data suggests that students are learning what they should be learning in creative writing. Grading should be used to motivate students in this class, rather than to deter them from taking chances and experimenting. The rubric has been useful in explaining the qualitative aspects of creative writing.

Budget Justification

Professional development funds for full time faculty and stipends for adjunct faculty will be needed. These will go toward conferences, webinars, and training/norming sessions for full time and adjunct faculty.

Files referenced and attached:

- 209 Common Assessment
- 209 Rubric

Common Assessment:

Final Writing Assignment in Creative Writing

This writing assignment should be either a short story or an excerpt from a novel. Please let us know which it is. Try to stay between 2000 and 3500 words. If you submit a novel excerpt that is not the beginning of a novel, include a brief synopsis.

The topic and style are yours to choose, but please view the rubric for grading information. Most importantly, every aspect of the piece should show evidence that the piece was carefully and purposefully crafted. If short, choppy sentences and low diction help communicate the “feel” of your piece, then by all means, use this style. If unconventional formatting helps communicate the experience of your protagonist, then by all means, use it. However, each and every choice should feel like it was a careful choice rather than simply what came out when you sat down to draft. Choices should be made with consideration of the overall effect of this particular piece rather than because you feel comfortable with a particular style or “it just felt right.”

This piece will be peer-critiqued and instructor-critiqued at the rough draft stage, and students will research possible markets for this piece. The final draft will be critiqued according to the rubric provided.

	Beginning	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary
	1(D)	2(C)	3(B)	4(A)

Ideas and content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Focus on topic is not clearly defined. * Limited, or disconnected details show virtually no understanding of the subject. * Approach is common. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Focus on topic is somewhat defined. * Underdeveloped details show little knowledge and are too general to create a picture. * fresh approach attempted, but lacks supporting details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Focus on topic is clear. *Sufficient detail creates a picture showing some knowledge and insight *Fresh approach adds something to reader's understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Focus on the topic is clear and well defined. *Rich sense of detail creates a vivid, authentic picture of both environment and action, showing knowledge and insight. *Fresh approach holds reader's attention.
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Introduction /conclusion may be absent or lack focus. * Sequencing of details is not clear. * Transitions are not evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Introduction and conclusion attempt to establish focus. * Sequencing of details is limited. *Transitions are limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Effective introduction and conclusion are clearly linked (may be explicit or implicit connection) and establish focus. *Sequencing of details is logical. *Transitions attempt to tie the ideas of the paper together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Memorable introduction and conclusion are clearly linked (may be explicit or implicit connection) and establish focus. * Sequencing of details is effective and logical. *Transitions effectively tie the ideas of the paper together.
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer's personality is not evident. *Commitment to topic is lacking. *Connection to audience and purpose is lacking. *Writing evokes minimal emotion in the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer's personality pokes through; confidence and feeling fade in and out. *A commitment to the topic is apparent. *Connection to audience and purpose is appropriate. * The writing evokes some emotion in the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Writer's personality is undefined; writing is cautious. *Commitment to topic is limited. *Connection to audience and purpose is limited. *Writing evokes limited emotion in the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The writer's personality is expressed; confidence and feeling are apparent. * Individual, powerful commitment to the topic is obvious. * Connection to audience and purpose is excellent. *Writing evokes strong emotion
Word Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Limited vocabulary *Verb and noun choice is weak. *Adjectives and phrases lack definition. *Language choice and phrasing is inappropriate, repetitive or lacks meaning. * Dialogue, if used, is limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ordinary word choice attempts to create a picture in the reader's mind. *Verbs, nouns, adjectives, and phrases are adequate. * Language choice and phrasing lack inspiration. * Dialogue, if used, sounds forced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Correct, adequate word choice creates a clear picture in the reader's mind. * Lively verbs, specific nouns, and appropriate adjectives and phrases add to the meaning. *Some colorful language and unusual phrasing encourage reflection. * Dialogue, if used, sounds appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Precise, vivid, natural language creates a clear and complete picture in the reader's mind. *Powerful verbs, precise nouns, appropriate adjectives and phrases enhance meaning. *Original phrasing and memorable language prompt reflective thoughts and insights. *Dialogue, if used, sounds natural.

