

# REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO USE W-DESIGNATION

LSC # 254  
Action \_\_\_\_\_

## COVER SHEET: Request for Approval to Use W-Designation

### TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

- (X) Professor Dr. Chauna Craig Phone 357-4754  
(X) Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when?) IUP, May 2005  
(X) Proposal for one W-course (see instructions below)  
(X) Agree to forward syllabi for subsequently offered W-courses?

### TYPE II. DEPARTMENT COURSE

- ( ) Department Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Course Number/Title \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Statement concerning departmental responsibility  
( ) Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

### TYPE III. SPECIFIC COURSE AND SPECIFIC PROFESSOR(S)

- ( ) Professor(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Course Number/Title \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Proposal for this W-course (see instructions below)

### SIGNATURES:

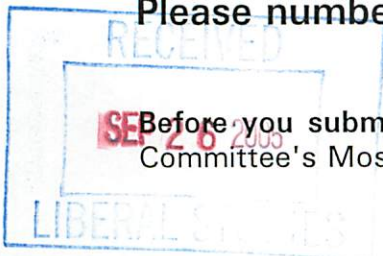
Professor(s) Craig  
Department Chairperson Jail Buel  
College Dean Aaron 9/28/05  
Director of Liberal Studies Theresa Sollen 10/5/05

### COMPONENTS OF A PROPOSAL FOR A WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE:

- I. "Writing Summary"--one or two pages explaining how writing is used in the course. First, explain any distinctive characteristics of the content or students which would help the Liberal Studies Committee understand your summary. Second, list and explain the types of writing activities; be especially careful to explain (1) what each writing activity is intended to accomplish as well as the (2) amount of writing, (3) frequency and number of assignments, and (4) whether there are opportunities for revision. If the activity is to be graded, indicate (5) evaluation standards and (6) percentage contribution to the student's final grade.
- II. Copy of the course syllabus.
- III. Two or three samples of assignment sheets, instructions, or criteria concerning writing that are given to students. Limit: 4 pages. (Single copies of longer items, if essential to the proposal, may be submitted to be passed among LSC members and returned to you.)

**Please number all pages.** Provide one copy to Liberal Studies Committee.

**Before you submit:** Have you double-checked your proposal against "The Liberal Studies Committee's Most Frequently Asked Questions"?



## Writing Summary for ENGL 326: Creative Writing: Fiction

1. English 326 is a course in which students practice fiction writing skills and critical thinking skills in responding to the fiction of professionals and peers alike. Writing itself is, of course, the central focus of the course, with reflective writing being an especially important measure of a student's self-assessment of learning.
2. Types of Writing Activities
  - a. **Informal Writing Exercises:** These are intended to keep students writing regularly and attempting new techniques introduced in class. I usually assign one per week, in or out of class, and expect a minimum of one page per exercise. Students often share these and use them as the basis for stories (or some aspect of them, i.e. character development), so there is always an opportunity to revise these. I grade these only on the basis of completion, and they are worth 5% of the total final grade.
  - b. **Midterm Portfolio:** Students turn in their best fiction work to date at midterm. These are stories (often "flash fictions" at this stage) that have been revised after receiving feedback from myself and other students. The midterm portfolio is intended to demonstrate what students have learned about fiction techniques to date. I expect 12-15 full pages at this point, and the work *must* show evidence of being revised through the drafts included. The portfolio is worth 20% of the total final grade and is evaluated based on the fiction showing an awareness and development of plot structure (especially related to "flash fiction" as a genre), point of view, characterization, diction and syntax, and effective editing and word choice.
  - c. **Final Portfolio:** As with the midterm portfolio, students turn in their best work, writing that has been substantially revised and edited and demonstrates how well students understand fiction techniques after completing the course. I expect 20-25 pages of prose writing, which may include revised work from the midterm portfolio, and all earlier drafts must be included. The final portfolio is worth 40% of the total final grade and is evaluated based on the fiction showing an improved awareness and development of plot structure (especially related to the traditional length story), point of view, characterization, diction and syntax, effective editing and word choice, and originality (or at least an avoidance of cliché.)
  - d. **Critical Paper(s):** I believe that students write better fiction when they understand and can explain how the techniques work in published stories and novels. To that end, I ask students to write four (4) craft studies, short papers in which they explain how the stories we read from our anthology demonstrate effective characterization, plot, etc. These are turned in to me for a preliminary grade (based on the student's ability to demonstrate understanding with specific detail and examples from the texts), but they

are re-submitted (two at midterm, two in the final portfolio) so the student has a chance to learn from oversights, and the grade for these is then factored into the total portfolio grade.

I also ask students to choose a contemporary short story collection or novel on which to write a more sustained craft study, the critical review. Students have the opportunity to revise this paper after submitting the draft to me, but I don't require it.

- e. **Reflective Papers:** The midterm portfolio and final exam both feature some sort of writing that asks students to reflect on their own learning processes. The "learning letter" in the midterm portfolio is a 2-3 page reflection on what the student has learned from the assignments in the first half of the semester. This letter also teaches me how to read the student's stories (i.e. what choices were made and why). The final exam extends this self-reflective assignment to consider the whole semester and the nature of literary art by answering the question "Why write?" While the midterm learning letter is factored into the overall midterm portfolio grade, the final exam is its own grade weighted at 10%. It is evaluated on focus, depth and development of ideas, supporting details, and clarity of prose and grammar.

<b>Summary Chart of Writing Assignments*</b>					
<b>A. Writing Assignments</b>					
<b>Assignment Title</b>	<b># of Assignments</b>	<b># of total pages</b>	<b>Graded (yes/no)</b>	<b>Opportunity for Revision (yes/no)</b>	<b>Written Assignment represents what % of Final Grade</b>
Midterm portfolio	1	9-13	Y	Y	20%
Final portfolio (fiction = 20-25 pp; craft studies = 4 pp)	1	24-29	Y	Y	40%
Fiction Analysis Paper	1	5	Y	N	10%
Informal writing exercises	14 (1 per week)	Min. 14	N	Y	5%
Final Exam (take home)	1	3-5	Y	N	10%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>45-66</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>	<b>85%</b>

<b>B. Examinations (Complete only if you intend to use essay exams/short answers as part of the required number of pages of writing.)</b>			
<b>Exams</b>	<b>Approx. % of exam that is short answer</b>	<b>Anticipated # of pages for essay or short answer, or approx. word count</b>	<b>Exam constitutes what % of final course grade</b>
1.			
2.			
3.			
<b>Totals</b>			

\*Total writing assignments should contain at least 5000 words (approximately 15-20 typed pages) in two or more separate assignments; written assignments should be a major part of the final grade--at least 50% or more.

**ENGL 326: Creative Writing: Fiction**  
3 credits, prerequisite: ENGL 221

**Professor:** Dr. Chauna Craig  
**E-mail:** ccraig@iup.edu  
**Phone:** 357-2606

**Office:** 340 Sutton Hall  
**Hours:** MW 5-6p, T 8-9:30a,  
W 1-2:30p & by appt.

**Course Description:**

*A writing workshop for students who wish to write fiction under the guidance of an instructor. Focuses intensively on the writing and revision of prose fiction and on developing an audience for one's works. (IUP catalog)*

This course will focus on three aspects of contemporary short fiction: the reading of it, the study of it from the perspective of a writer, and the sustained practice of writing and revising it. Through in-class exercises, craft studies, group workshops, individual conferences and extensive writing, you can expect to develop your fiction writing techniques and your ability to think critically about short fiction forms in a supportive environment of writers. Whatever your personal interests and goals, you will think and perform like a writer this semester.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completing this course, the student should demonstrate the ability to

1. recognize conventions and innovations in fiction through course readings in order to apply them in practice
2. produce and revise multiple drafts of short stories
3. produce a polished portfolio of short fiction adhering to conventions in grammar and editing
4. give effective peer response to student stories
5. reflect on one's own learning and growth as a writer

**Texts and Supplies:**

Blythe, Will. Ed. *Why I Write: Thoughts on the Craft of Fiction*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1999.

Williford, Lex and Michael Martone. Eds. *The Scribner's Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction*. New York: Scribner's, 1999.

Notebook and pen—bring these everyday

Computer disks—save drafts of everything!

\$10-\$12 for photocopying for group workshop at semester's end

A book from the approved list, either purchased or borrowed

**Required Assignments and Grade Values:**

1. Midterm portfolio: 20%
  - midterm learning letter (2-3 pages)
  - 2 short shorts (3-5 pages each) finished & revised
  - first two craft studies (2 pages each)

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|--|-----|
| 2. Final fiction portfolio:  | 40% |
| -20-25 pages of revised, polished longer work (1-2 stories)  |     |
| -last two craft studies (2 pages each)   |     |
| 3. Fiction analysis paper and presentation on a book-length work of contemporary fiction (see list)                                      | 10% |
| 4. Participation   | 10% |
| -lead class discussion on a reading  |     |
| -active participation in group workshops   |     |
| -submit writing to either <i>New Growth Arts Review</i> or English awards or read work at the undergrad conference Feb. 27               |     |
| 5. Informal writing exercises/assignments  | 5%  |
| 6. Literary event  | 5%  |
| -attend and review of at least one reading or literary event this semester   |     |
| 7. Final exam  | 10% |
| -Your own “Why I Write” essay addressing work you’ve accomplished this semester; to be shared with the class during the final exam time. |     |

**Grading Scale:** 93-100%=A, 83-92.9%=B, 73-82.9%=C; 63-72.9%=D, below 63%=F.  
**Note:** I round up only in cases where participation is strong.

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance:** Missing more than three class periods will negatively affect your grade *regardless of your quality of writing*. For every absence after three, your grade will drop by a third, ie. A- to B+, etc.

**Late Work:** You may turn in any one assignment after the deadline with no penalty. (Exception: final portfolio.) After that, late work will receive penalties of *no less than* 10% of the grade.

**Civility:** A good writing class depends on an atmosphere of trust and support in our common goal of creating our best work. Be respectful of your classmates and what they want from their work. That doesn’t mean you can’t give critical, meaningful feedback—respecting work includes caring enough to see it improve. Just be aware that your tone and approach can make the difference between a writer returning to her work eager to revise or giving up. Along the same lines, keep the sensitive artist at home and put on your thickest skin for class critiques. You will only improve as a writer if you are open to learning.

**Schedule: ENGL 326: Creative Writing: Fiction**

*Note: Change happens, and not all informal or in-class assignments are listed.*

January

T (13): Syllabus & in-class writing

H (15): Discuss *Why I Write (WIW)* preface & 5-12; Cunningham “White Angel”

T (20): Discuss *WIW* 74-83; **Due: 3-5 page story draft** for small group workshop

H (22): Discuss Dybek “Pet Milk,” Kincaid “Girl,” Barthelme “The School”:  
**Due: Craft Study #1**

T (27): **Due: Revision or new short-short**; discuss Ozick “The Shawl” & Hansen “Nebraska”

H (29): Discuss *WIW* Johnson & Johnson “Emergency”

February

T (3): *WIW* Ford & Ford “Rock Springs” and student work

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H (5): Discuss Alexie “This is What It Means...”; **Due: Short-Short revision or new draft**

T (10): Discuss *WIW* Gilbert & Atwood “Death by Landscape”

H (12): Discuss McKnight “The Kind of Light...” and student work

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T (17): **Due: Midterm portfolios (short-shorts, craft study 1 and #2—your story choice)**

H (19): Discuss Proulx “Brokeback Mountain”; **Due: Craft Study #3**

T (24): **Due: Language Wrestling Assignment**; in-class lecture/writing

H (26): Discuss *WIW* Richard

March

T (2): Discuss *WIW* McMillan & Walker “Nineteen Fifty Five”

H (4): **Due: Story #1**: small group workshop

8-12: *No class: Spring Break*

T (16): Discuss Diaz “Fiesta 1980” & Baxter “Gryphon”

H (18): **Paper/Presentation Due**

T (23): In-class writing activities

H (25): *Professor at AWP conference in Chicago*: students prepare for presentations

T (30): "Why I Write" text presentations  
April H (1): **Due: Story #2**: small group workshop

T (6): Discuss Moore "You're Ugly, Too" & Hempel "In the Cemetery..."  
H (8): Discuss Wideman "Fever": hand out workshop stories for 4/13

T (13): Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ H (15): Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_

T (20): Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_ H (22): Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_

**Final Exam Time: April 29, 10:15-12:15: Due: Final Portfolios with "Why I Write" final**



Midterm Portfolio Assignment  
ENGL 326/Craig

In a folder:

- 2-3 page learning letter
- 12-15 pages of revised, polished fiction
- All drafts with my or your peers' comments

The Learning Letter:

Write a letter to me reflecting on what you've learned so far this semester from your reading, your own writing, and class activities. Think about the techniques we've studied and practiced. How have the stories in our anthology helped you understand something about characterization, dialogue, image, etc.? What revisions have you made to the stories in your portfolio because of what you've learned from your reading or from your peers or myself?

Because everyone learns differently, your letters will emphasize different things. Just be sure you address all three areas (reading, writing, class activities) and give me specific evidence of your learning. For example, if you claim that you now develop characters better through detail, provide examples from your stories and elaborate on why you revised as you did. Show me that your changes are *informed* changes, not just an automatic response to my comments.

I will read this letter first, and it will serve as my guide for how to understand what you've achieved in the midterm portfolio. Give it the same attention (including peer review and revision) that you've given your fiction.

The Fiction:

This should be a selection of your best work to date, short shorts or a full-length story that you've revised with considerable attention to the techniques we've studied. I may suggest further revisions for the final portfolio, but the work should show development from earlier drafts. Save your rough, late-night first drafts for a future workshop.

The Drafts:

These are very important as they help demonstrate to me the work you've put into your fiction so far. Please include genuinely revised drafts, especially those with peer or professor comments, not just copies where you've changed a misspelling or two. Handwritten exercises that developed into stories are also welcome.

### **326—Critical Paper: Fiction Analysis** (approx. 5 pgs)

By now, we've discussed several elements of literary fiction (character, point of view, theme, setting, plot, dialogue) and the techniques and style that help create the overall effect of the short story. Write a paper analyzing your chosen novel or short story collection as a fiction writer would. How does this writer build and develop a convincing "fictional dream"? To some extent you'll be reviewing the book—what you liked and/or didn't like about it, but your justifications for your overall evaluation should be rooted in the decisions of craft the writer has made. If a character leaves you cold but is well-drawn and developed, your dislike is a matter of personal taste, and you should be able to distinguish that from weaknesses in craft.

#### **Tips and Hints**

--Start with some general description of the storyline, especially if you chose a novel, but do not merely summarize in your paper. In the case of short stories, focus on only a few stories in your paper (note in the front pages which have been published or received honors), but be prepared to discuss any of them in your presentation.

--You will not be able to analyze every aspect of fiction in your book in such a short paper. Focus on what stands out most to you. Does the plot follow in a causal sequence that builds suspense? If so, how? Is the resolution satisfying to you as a reader considering everything that precedes it? If not, why not? Is the dialogue believable and effective? Describe how.

--As with any literary analysis, I expect brief passages from the text to support your analysis. As with any college-level paper, I expect it to be smoothly written and error-free.

--Since all fiction elements build together to create theme, I do expect you to discuss what themes you see emerging in the novel or stories you read and how the various elements contribute to theme.

--Feel free to use Gardner. His comments on types of fiction, etc. may be useful in framing your analysis. Also, take advantage of my office hours. I'll happily go over drafts with you and suggest revisions.