NOTE: To be considered for enrollment for this course, please contact the professor by email. Students must meet the prerequisite and will be asked to submit a writing portfolio via email for consideration for approval to enroll.

Fall 2011
English 4523: 001: Advanced Fiction Online Workshop
Online Blackboard
(For organizational purposes, after the first week of classes, the course is scheduled around a Tuesday class period.)

Creative Writing-Advanced Fiction Online Workshop

Instructor: Dr. Catherine Kasper
The best and quickest way to contact the instructor is via email: Catherine.Kasper@utsa.edu
Office MB 2.484
Office Hours on Blackboard (chat room): Tuesdays, 11 to 12 noon

Content and Goals:
This course assumes the student has previous experience writing the short story and has taken an introductory university-level course in creative writing, such as English 2323 or 2333, 3423, or an approved equivalent. Students will have the opportunity to engage in the rigors of a serious writing workshop online. Students will have the opportunity to discuss relevant works of fiction in an online forum, and to engage in a number of writing exercises employed to generate ideas and improve writing through extended practice. Revision being crucial to writing improvement, students will be required to turn in substantial revisions of their work. Students must be open to traditional and experimental writing, and to learning more about the genre, and to improving their work through participation in an online writing class. Students are required to have regular access to computers that support UTSA’s Blackboard system, to be responsible for maintaining communication online, and to adhere to the UTSA Blackboard and Creative Writing Workshop codes of conduct in all their online work.

Requirements:
Class participation in online discussions (which means regular attendance and informed discussion are a crucial part of your grade), regular writing assignments; one longer short story, story critiques, final revision and writing assessments. All homework assignments must be typewritten/word processed according to the posted guidelines.

Texts:
The following texts are required for this course: You will have reading and discussion assignments that require your knowledge of the following:
Recommended Books: These books are not required. *The Elements of Style* may provide grammatical assistance while at the same time being an interesting text and image edition. *Flash Fiction* will give a chance to read very short stories to get familiar with this genre. *The Rule of Thumb* may provide moral/emotional support for your struggle as a writer. This book features published writers’ comments and experiences so you can see that they struggle, just like you. It’s out of print, but copies can be found at used bookstores.

- Michael Martone & Neville editors, *Rules of Thumb: 73 Authors Reveal Their Fiction*
- *Writing Fixations*, Writer’s Digest Books

All assignment attachments need to be posted in Mac-readable Word docs, double-spaced, in 12 point Times Roman or Garamond fonts only. Each assignment MUST have YOUR name at the top, and the course number and date, and pagination and your name and assignment as the name of the doc file.

**IMPORTANT NOTICES:**

Please consult the [UTSA Student Code of Conduct](http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html) regarding the penalties and policies on plagiarism, scholastic dishonesty, and expected conduct as well as the BLACKBOARD requirements and code of conduct. Any student not following these codes will be removed from the course without a refund and will be restricted from participating in the Creative Writing Concentration. Online Courses are UNIVERSITY COURSES, not Blogs or websites, and you need to remember to participate with professionalism at all times.

It is the student’s responsibility to have access to the applicable computer equipment. Computer problems will not be accepted as a reason for late assignments or problems completing course work. In the first week of class, be CERTAIN you can access Blackboard and have uninterrupted time set aside to be online for the course discussions. If you have technological problems, please contact the computer and technology departments of the university. The course instructor is able to provide instruction in creative writing only.

**UTSA POLICY LINKS** (You are responsible for reading these and adhering to their guidelines and rules):

- Academic dishonesty: [http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html](http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html) under section 203
- Disability: [http://www.utsa.edu/disability/students.htm](http://www.utsa.edu/disability/students.htm)
- Roadrunner Creed & Honor Code: [www.utsa.edu/about/creed](http://www.utsa.edu/about/creed)
- [www.utsa.edu/about/creed/honorcode.html](http://www.utsa.edu/about/creed/honorcode.html)

Note: University support services, including registration assistance and equipment, are available with documented disabilities through the Office of Disabled Student Services, MS 2.03.18. Students are encouraged to contact that office at 458-4157 prior to starting classes to make arrangements.
Grade Distribution*

Weekly Assignments (Online discussion participation, creative writing exercises, etc.)
- Discussion of Grace Paley Stories I 5 points
- Discussion of Grace Paley Stories II 5 points
- Discussion of Calvino Stories I 5 points
- Discussion of Calvino Stories II 5 points
- Discussion of Woods Stories I & II 5 points

Writing Exercises #1 through #6:
- 6 imaginative writing exercises 5 each = 30 points

1 midterm writing assessment 5 points

Critiques 10 points
- Online Discussion of Workshop Stories 10 points
- One extended short story 10 points
- Final Story Revision and Writing Evaluation 10 points

_______________________
total: 100 points*

*Also see the grade descriptions below. Your grade includes the points you earn, your attendance, and your behavior in the class.

Please contact the instructor by email immediately if you have a documented emergency.

UTSA NEW GRADING SYSTEM

*Below is the chart of UTSA's plus/minus grading system and corresponding course points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UTSA GPA</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>4523 Points Equivalents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>95-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-87</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81-84</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71-74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-70</td>
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<tr>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>61-64</td>
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<tr>
<td>0.00</td>
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<td>60-0</td>
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The Blackboard online course experience is a unique classroom environment. Because of the flexibility it allows, there should be very few absences. Sometimes emergencies occur. If this happens, please notify the instructor immediately. You will be given two “free” late postings of a class discussion OR class assignment for a grade of an A or B. After that, lateness begins to affect your grade (see below.) After the two “free” late postings, all other late postings will be marked down 2 points for each 24 hour period that it is late. All assignments will post due dates and times.

*GRADING
(see previous page for point equivalents for this course)

“A”
Regular attendance; no more than two absences/late postings; student is prepared for every class, shows that he/she has read the assignments, participates in every class in a positive and constructive way; student’s writing is virtually free of grammatical and spelling errors, is thoughtful, creative, interesting, and above all, original; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework on time and student’s revision is substantial and polished; student demonstrates enthusiasm in class and concern and dedication to the course itself; student is adult and responsive to others’ work and is encouraging and supportive to all other writers; student’s comments show both sensitivity and honesty, respectful language, and complete adherence to the Blackboard code of conduct and the UTSA student code of conduct.

“B”
Regular attendance; no more than two absences/late postings; student is prepared for every class, shows that he/she has read the assignments, participates in every class in a positive and constructive way; student’s writing is thoughtful, creative, interesting, and above all, original; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework on time and student’s revision is substantial and polished; student demonstrates enthusiasm in class and concern and dedication to the course itself; student is adult and responsive to others’ work and is encouraging and supportive to all other writers; student’s comments show both sensitivity and honesty, respectful language, and complete adherence to the Blackboard code of conduct and the UTSA student code of conduct.

“C”
Regular attendance; no more than three absences/late postings; student is prepared for every class, shows that he/she has read the assignments, participates in every class in a constructive way; student’s writing has some grammatical errors, and lacks originality; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework on time and student’s revision is adequate or minimal; student often demonstrates enthusiasm in class; student is adult and responsive to others’ work and is encouraging and supportive to all other writers, student’s comments show both sensitivity and honesty, respectful language, and complete adherence to the Blackboard code of conduct and the UTSA student code of conduct.

“D”
Regular attendance; no more than three absences/late postings; student is usually prepared for class, participation is lacking in quality; student’s writing has frequent grammatical errors, lacks originality; and/or is not turned in on time; student has turned in all required in-class writing and homework and student’s revision is minimal or adequate; however, student fails to show interest in other’s writing or in the class materials; student’s comments show respectful language and complete adherence to the Blackboard code of conduct and the UTSA student code of conduct.

“F” is any performance less than that of a “D”
Advanced Fiction ONLINE Workshop Schedule

Fall 2011

**Week One: Week of August 24th:** Introduction to the class, conduct and assignment requirements, the syllabus and schedule. You must complete the Blackboard tutorial first, then read and complete the Creative Writing Workshop Contract according to the directions in order to take this course.

There are a number of assignments this week, posted on Blackboard, due by next week. This includes a reading assignment, preparation for discussion of the stories, and other work. Please email me or use the Mail section of Blackboard with any questions concerning the course.

This course is divided into two sections:
- **Class Part I:** Discussing fiction selections to gain knowledge, exploring imaginative and critical writing exercises, generating new ideas for your work and providing foundational works for later expansion/revision.
- **Class Part II:** Fine-tuning your work: Workshopping the extended short story, revising, editing, and personal assessment.

**Week Two: Tuesday, August 30th:** Discussion of Paley short story selections listed on Blackboard. Answer Blackboard discussion questions and post to Discussion board corresponding area by Tuesday Sept 6th by 5 pm. Complete Writing Exercise #1 due by Tuesday, Sept. 6th by 5 pm.

**Week Three: Tuesday, Sept. 6th:** Discussion of Paley short story selections. Answer questions and complete writing exercise #2. Writing exercise #2 is due Tuesday, Sept. 13th by 5 pm. PLEASE double-check due dates and times posted on Blackboard. Email me with any questions.

**Week Four: Tuesday, Sept. 13th:** Discussion of Calvino short story selections. Answer questions and complete writing exercise #3. Writing exercise should be posted to Blackboard by Tuesday, Sept. 20th by 5 pm.

**Weeks Five and Six: Tuesday, Sept. 20th:** Discussion of Calvino short story selections. Answer questions and complete writing exercise #4 and post to Blackboard by Oct. 4th, by 5 pm.

**Friday, Sept. 23rd:** Creative Writing Reading Series, Bruce Machart (fiction writer) Reading, UCIII 2.212, 7:30pm. Make plans to attend this reading if possible.

**Tuesday, Sept. 27th:** Blackboard discussion area on literary readings. Start writing short story for class workshop part II.
**Week Seven: Tuesday, Oct. 4th:** Discussion of Woods’ book. Answer questions and complete writing exercise #5 and post to Blackboard by Oct. 11th by 5 pm.

**Week Eight: Tuesday, Oct. 11th:** Discussion of Woods’ book. Answer questions and complete writing exercise #6. Post Writing #6 to Blackboard by Tuesday, Oct. 18th by 5pm. Midterm writing assessment questionnaire handed out.

**Week Nine: Tuesday, Oct. 18th:** Midterm Writing Assessment Questionnaire due by 5pm to Blackboard. Discussion of Workshop critique guidelines, format, and procedure.

**Week Ten: Tuesday, Oct. 25th:** Extended Short Story (1500 word count: approximately five-seven pages double-spaced) Due for class workshop/discussion. See guidelines. All Short Stories Must be Posted by Tuesday, Oct. 25th by 5pm. Workshop schedule posted on the Discussion Board.

**Workshop of Short Story**
Post Critique Comments/Discussion/According to Guidelines
Critiques are due by 10 AM the Tuesday of Workshop.

**Week Eleven: Tuesday, November 1**
1. 
2. 
3. 
4.

**Week Twelve: Tuesday, November 8**
1. 
2. 
3. 
4.

**Week Thirteen: Tuesday, November 15**
1. 
2. 
3. 
4.

**Week Fourteen: Tuesday, November 22**
1. 
2. 
3. 
4.
Week Fifteen: Tuesday, November 29
(Handout of Writing Evaluation questions for Final personal writing assessment assignment.)

1.
2.
3.
4.

Discussion Board on Final Portfolio will be available this week.

Week Sixteen: Tuesday, December 6th, 2011 by 5pm:
Final Personal Writing Assessment Assignment due and ALL REVISIONS DUE: No Exceptions. Work Not Turned in by the Due Date cannot be counted toward your grade. You receive a zero for anything missing.

The instructor reserves the right to amend this schedule as necessary by Blackboard notification and reposting of any changes.
ONLINE DISCUSSIONS

When you participate in online discussions, all of your facial gestures are lost, and your words (like in your writing) can take on different meanings. Because of this, I will be asking two things:

1. That you do not send any comments until you EDIT and REVIEW them making sure that they are entirely professional, free of swear words (yes, use this as a chance to expand your language skills as writers) and are respectful of all members of class, following the university rules of respect for all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and political affiliations. Online courses are not blogs or places to vent. These are still university courses and they require your utmost professionalism. Also keep in mind, that everything you post in this class is open to being reviewed by the university/state government, since this is a state institution and server.

2. That you add TONE comments whenever you think they might be helpful. For example, we all know that we can send an email that the receiver thinks sounds angry, but is really not. (meant to be helpful). Sometimes, adding an ending tone comment, (friendly), helps.

Through experience, I have found that if everyone adheres to these rules, we will be able to learn and accomplish much in a safe and respectful environment that is essential for writers and artists to produce good work.

BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS: FORMATTING

Your written assignments require that you use a Word document, save it, and load it as an attachment to the Assignment Area for each assignment. In rare instances, you may have trouble and for the Writing Assignments 1 through 6, you may save your work as a pdf and load that. However, for the class workshop, we will need to be able to use Track Changes for comments on your stories, and will need a Word document. Please be sure to contact the technology/Blackboard technicians for help with this and any other computer problems you encounter.

Since I have hundreds of files I'll be downloading (from several classes), in order that your files won’t be lost:

ALL attachments must be saved as follows: YOUR LAST NAME, assignment number or story title, 4523Fall2011. For example:

KasperWA5Fall20114523.doc OR KasperStoryTitle4523Fall2011.doc

[end]