



The mission of the University of Mount Union is to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work, and responsible citizenship.

Department of English College of Arts and Humanities

WRT 120A: Introduction to Creative Writing 4.0 Credit Hours

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

- Instructor Name: Dr. Rodney F. Dick, Ph.D.
- Instructor Campus Phone: 330.823.4792
- Email: dickrf@mountunion.edu
- Instructor Virtual Office Hours: Daily by appointment through *MS Teams*

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A course introducing students to the craft of creating fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction and drama. In this course we will explore the various techniques, decisions, styles and approaches used by creative writers. Students will read extensively and participate in exercises designed to develop the creative process.

COURSE PURPOSE:

Students will read and analyze works of poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction and drama from the perspective of creative writers. They will analyze these works to learn how various effects are created. For instance, how does a work of fiction create suspense? How is conflict created, heightened and resolved? How does a poet effectively use sensory images to create a desired emotional effect? Empathy is fostered by reading the works themselves and by writing pieces that will appeal to the emotions and intellect of their readers. Students will also read secondary sources about these genres which will be studied and analyzed. The purpose behind all of this is so students can write effective imaginative works.

Also, since this course is classified as an Integrative Core “Fine Arts” Foundations course at UMU, it will emphasize the development of written and oral communication skills, critical and creative thinking, complex problem solving, reflection as a learning tool, and will introduce the basic approaches of the Humanities as a means of understanding the world.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

- Burroway, Janet. *Imaginative Writing: The Elements of Craft*. 4th ed. Boston: Longman, 2014.
- Additional readings will be made available through D2L.

All course materials comply with copyright/fair use policies.

COURSE DELIVERY:

This course is delivered Online Asynchronously. Your instructor will provide materials for you in our learning management system (D2L). Some of the materials will be readings, lectures for viewing, assignments for completing, and exams for evaluation. You can access and satisfy these requirements on your own schedule, so long as you meet the expected deadlines. Some of the methods we employ for asynchronous online learning include self-guided lesson modules, pre-recorded video content, virtual libraries, lecture notes, and online discussion boards or other media platforms.

This course is organized in alignment with Mount Union University’s online course template. Each weekly lesson contains an overview and objectives, readings, and related materials, learning activities and assessments, as well as supplemental resources.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

After successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Analyze literature from a writer's perspective, articulating the elements of craft in creative writing with special emphasis on significant meaningful detail and apparent and deeper meanings.
2. Produce solid and effective short pieces of writing in each genre (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and drama).
3. Write metacognitively about their writing process by discussing the elements of craft in the genres.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate methods for class workshops and provide effective critiques during class workshops.
5. Learn what deep revision means and demonstrate an ability to revise deeply and on multiple levels to produce one revision of significance in a course portfolio.
6. Produce polished written and oral communication, integrating and citing credible, relevant sources following MLA citation guidelines.

MEASUREMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Each of the course learning objectives are aligned with weekly learning objectives. Each week students will be given resources, lectures, and activities to complete that align with the weekly learning objectives. After reviewing the resources and participating in the weekly activities, the student will be assessed to see if they have achieved the knowledge or skills described in the learning objectives.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS FOR ONLINE COURSES:

College coursework during these times requires students to be more responsible than ever in keeping up with reading and assignments, checking email and D2L frequently, and staying in regular communication with instructors. Technology access will therefore be critically important to your success in this course. The lecture presentations, links to articles, assignments, quizzes, and rubrics are located on the D2L site for the course. To participate in learning activities and complete assignments, you will need:

- Access to a working computer that has a current operating system with updates installed, plus speakers or headphones to hear lecture presentations.
- Access to a video/web camera.
- Reliable Internet access and a Mount Union email account.
- A current Internet browser that is compatible with D2L.
- Microsoft Word as your word processing program.
- Reliable data storage for your work, such as a USB drive or Office365 OneDrive cloud storage.

Please contact the IT Help Desk at (330) 829-8726 or Helpdesk@mountunion.edu if you need assistance with obtaining or using a device, any necessary software, or internet access at any time during this semester.

ASSIGNMENTS:

This is an asynchronous online course, meaning that assignments and course materials will be posted on D2L and that students can work at their own pace, as long as they meet the announced due dates. Assignment due dates will be posted at least a week in advance through the calendar feature of D2L. All course assignments must be submitted through D2L.

Reading Quizzes: Throughout the term, we'll be reading chapters in the textbook, which contain information about particular elements of craft as well as pieces of creative writing by a variety of authors. Quizzes will constitute part of your participation in the course.

Writing Exercises: As we read from the text, you will be required to participate in a number of writing exercises provided to spark your creativity, to practice the elements of craft, and to begin collecting snippets and beginnings of

possible pieces to develop more fully in the future. Mostly, exercises will be graded based on completion and will count as part of your participation in the course.

Discussion Board: Each week, students will be asked to post one unique comment and one unique question to the discussion board. Additionally, each student will be required to post two comments on peers' posts and/or answer the questions posed. This will constitute a portion of the "in-class" participation for the course.

Weekly Meetings: Each student will be required to meet with me four times in virtual one-on-one conferences. In these required meetings, we can discuss readings, exercises, the essay or presentation or anything else related to the class. Meetings are required in week 1 and week 2; then once in weeks 3 or 4; and once in weeks 5 or 6.

Element Analysis Essay: You will write a short (about 1000-1250 word) essay exploring the elements of craft in one piece of writing from our textbook. You will use MLA citation format and you should draw from Burroway liberally, citing information from her essays as well as the lines from the text you're analyzing. You will also be asked to do a bit of scholarly research (integrating Burroway and at least two additional credible scholarly sources).

Craft Assignments and Workshop: You will write four extended pieces of imaginative writing (in each of the genres-- CNF, poetry, fiction, and drama) that will focus on developing specified craft elements. Each piece should be 600-800 words (or about 20-40 lines of poetry). These drafts will undergo a peer critique workshop by your peers as well as receive feedback from me. Engaging in peer critique workshops will be folded into your grade for each piece.

Formal Presentation: You will have two options for your formal presentation:

Option #1: You will perform and record a short (5-7 minute) presentation in which you read some of your work (if a poem, you can read the entire thing) and then discuss it using the high points from your portfolio's reflective introduction. During this presentation you must discuss at least two craft elements central to your work as well as a verbal reference to a source discussing that element. You must reference Burroway and utilize at least two additional scholarly sources.

Option #2: Craft a scholarly presentation based on your element analysis essay. In this presentation, you will adapt your essay thesis and develop an argument about how the piece works, citing and using the craft elements you identified in your essay. You must reference Burroway and utilize at least two additional scholarly sources.

Final Portfolio: For your final portfolio you will create an electronic portfolio through *D2L* in which you compile your four original craft assignments, develop and revise one of the craft assignments (please read Burroway pages 209-19 regarding revising), and include one "public" (digitally recorded) reading (of either a poem or your dramatic monologue, including an oral "context"). The portfolio must also include a reflective introduction or author's statement (500-750 words in length) and reflective context tags for each original piece. The portfolio will be your final exam in the course.

DISCUSSION FORUM PARTICIPATION:

Each week, students will be asked to post one unique comment and one unique question rooted in the weekly readings to the discussion board. Additionally, each student will be required to post two comments on peer's responses and/or answer the questions posed. This will constitute a portion of the "in-class" participation for the course. Details will be provided on the discussion board.

Note: While research is not expected for the reading responses, if you do research or look anything up or cite from a text, you're expected to follow MLA citation expectations for citations in your responses. This will also be good practice for your essays and presentation.

COURSE GRADING:

Grades will be based on depth of personal insight, critical thinking, and application of theoretical concepts to scenarios being analyzed. Specific guidelines and grading criteria will be provided with each assignment. The following activities will be evaluated, and the relative weight of that evaluation is noted:

Assignments/Assessments	% of Final Grade
Reading Quizzes and Writing Exercises	25%
Discussion Board Participation and Weekly Meetings	10%
Element Analysis Essay	15%
Craft Assignments and Workshops	20%
Formal Presentation	15%
Final Portfolio (Final Exam)	15%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A	77-79%	C+
90-93%	A-	74-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-73%	C-
84-86%	B	67-69%	D+
80-83%	B-	64-66%	D
		60-63%	D-
		59% or less	F or fails

COURSE FLEXIBILITY:

This syllabus is designed to assist you in planning your studies and course work and will be followed as closely as possible. Nevertheless, every course syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. It is important to remember that your Mount Union email account is the official method of communication and will be used by University faculty and officials to communicate any notices, updates, or changes regarding your courses.

COURSE POLICIES/PROCEDURES/EXPECTATIONS**COURSE COMMUNICATION:**

All instructor and student communication will take place through email and all office hours and student conferences will take place through *MS Teams*. During the week, students should expect at least two emails per week.

Students are expected to check their Mount Union email account frequently for important course information. If you are having trouble understanding any aspect of the course, please contact me.

LATE WORK POLICY:

All work is due by the day and time posted on the syllabus and course schedule. No late work will be accepted. As this is an online course, though due dates and deadlines are posted, the work is your to complete, and you'll need to find a work schedule that accommodates your lives. I encourage you to turn things in before the due deadline and not to wait until the deadline to ask questions.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic Integrity is at the heart of the mission and values of the University and is an expectation of all students. Maintaining academic integrity is a reflection of your character and a means to ensuring that you are achieving the outcomes of this course and that your grades accurately reflect your learning and understanding of the course material. Cutting corners or cheating in this class will result in cheating yourself out of learning.

Academic integrity is a partnership between me, as the instructor, and you, as the student. My role, as instructor of this course, is to facilitate learning and to provide you with clear guidelines and feedback to help you maintain your academic integrity. Your role in this course is to take responsibility for your learning and to complete all assignments in an honest manner and to ask for clarification from me if you are unsure of how to do so.

Students who are found responsible for committing academic dishonesty will receive a zero for the assignment. The academic dishonesty issue will also be brought to the Department Chair and the Office of Academic Affairs who may impose additional sanctions as provided in the University policy regarding Academic Honesty.

ONLINE LEARNING:

Attendance for an online or hybrid course is defined as an online presence demonstrated by active participation and engagement in all learning activities as required by the instructor. Failure to fulfill requirements within the parameters of each session will be construed as absence. Here are some examples of online expectations:

- For each major assignment (exams, essays, presentation), you will be required to attach a “statement of authenticity” that verifies you are the writer and that you’ve followed citation expectations. If you violate one of the standards in the University Academic Honesty statement, it will result in a zero for that assignment, and I am required to report it to the Office of Academic Affairs.
- While group studying and sharing of ideas is encouraged, you may not consult with other students about papers or other assignments in this course.

ONLINE CONDUCT:

Professionalism is always expected. Because the virtual classroom is a place designed for the free exchange of ideas, we must show respect for one another in all circumstances. We will show respect for one another by exhibiting patience and courtesy in our exchanges. Appropriate language and restraint from attacking those whose perspectives differ from your own is a minimum requirement. Bullying will not be tolerated. Courtesy and kindness are the norm for those who participate in my class. Think before you type or communicate. Remember, typing in all CAPS is the same as yelling, and sarcasm comes across differently when written.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

As a learning community, the University of Mount Union embraces the entrepreneurial mindset, creativity, and innovation. To support innovation, the University has an Intellectual Property Policy to help identify, protect, communicate, and commercialize innovation resulting in possible monetary rewards for the innovator at UMU. The University strongly encourages innovators to have an open discussion with the Office of Academic Affairs to discuss any innovations. The complete UMU Intellectual Property Policy is available on iRaider under “Policies -> Institutional Policies”.

PREFERRED CITATION STYLE:

We will be using MLA bibliographic and citation style for this course. Make sure you cite correctly and avoid plagiarism, including full oral and in-text citations, citations of sources and images on slides (when applicable), and a works cited/bibliography.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND GRIEVANCES:

Students have a right to equitable access for their course instruction, materials, and facility. Students also have a right to respectfully express their views and opinions in class discussion boards as well as in their writing and speaking assignments, without fear of ridicule or retribution. In addition, students have a right to safety and privacy during their course instruction that prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type by any person. Students also have a right to fairness in grading and learning objective assessment, as well as timely communication from the instructor. Any student who may feel that their rights have been violated may file a grievance regarding Title IX, civil rights, conduct, discrimination or harassment using the appropriate grievance procedure in the University’s student handbook available on the Mount Union website. Academic complaints, such as disputes over a grade, should be filed in accordance with the procedures laid out in the University Catalogue available on the Mount Union website.

UMU DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT:

At the University of Mount Union, we continuously strive to welcome, accept, and respect all people. We believe that through the union of disparate perspectives, we strengthen our community, facilitate global enlightenment, and enable collective self-discovery. As such, we embrace diversity and inclusiveness to facilitate the development of ideas, the advancement of global perspectives, and to create a greater understanding and acceptance of all people. We actively promote a diverse and inclusive environment that obliges mutual respect and positive engagement to effectively enrich learning and living for our students, faculty, staff, administration, and community.

As members of the University of Mount Union community, we pledge to:

- Acknowledge, respect, honor, and celebrate diversity.
- Work together to create an environment that is both diverse and inclusive.
- Take these inclusive attitudes with us as we continue our life journeys.

OTHER RESOURCES AND POLICIES

ABOUT THE DIGITAL WRITING AND ORAL COMMUNICATION (DWOC) STUDIO:

The Digital, Written and Oral Communication (DWOC) Studio is a writing and speaking tutoring center. The DWOC will be open during the summer for online consultations to accommodate students. For this online class, you can use the DWOC Studio by making “virtual” (online) consultations. Go to <https://www.mountunion.edu/dwoc> for more information.

Other UMU resources and Policies can be found on the [UMU Common Syllabus Elements](#) page. Elements found on this page are:

- Academic Integrity
- Accessibility
- Resources for Student Success
- Student Rights and Grievances
- Technology Support

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE SCHEDULE

COURSE SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE BY THE INSTRUCTOR BASED UPON STUDENT NEEDS

Week	Day	Readings	Assignments
Week 1	Monday	Introduction to the course	
	Tuesday	Element: Image Read: Burroway, Chapter 1 (p. 1-14); Chapter 2 (p. 15-27)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Wednesday	Image, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Thursday	Element: Voice Read: Burroway, Chapter 3 (p. 47-61)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Friday	Voice, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Sunday	Element: Character Read: Burroway, Chapter 4 (p. 94-109)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
Week 2	Monday	Character, cont.	Writing Exercise

	Tuesday	Element: Setting Read: Burroway, Chapter 5 (p. 135-147)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Wednesday	Setting, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Thursday	Element: Story Read: Burroway, Chapter 6 (p. 166-175)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Friday	Story, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Sunday	Element Analysis Draft Due	Element Analysis Draft Due
Week 3	Monday	Genre: Creative Nonfiction Read: Burroway, Chapter 8 (p. 225-237); Gerard "Hallmarks" (posted on D2L)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Tuesday	CNF, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Wednesday	CNF, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Thursday	CNF, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Friday	CNF Craft Piece Due	Peer Critique Workshop
	Sunday	Element Analysis Final Due	Element Analysis Final Due
Week 4	Monday	Genre: Fiction Read: Burroway, Chapter 9 (p. 259-269); Additional Reading TBD (Google Docs/D2L)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Tuesday	Fiction, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Wednesday	Fiction, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Thursday	Fiction, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Friday	Fiction Craft Piece Due	Peer Critique Workshop
Week 5	Monday	Genre: Poetry Read: Burroway, Chapter 10 (p. 297-317); Appendix A: "A Basic Prosody" (p. 373-382)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Tuesday	Poetry, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Wednesday	Poetry, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Thursday	Poetry, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Friday	Poetry Craft Piece Due	Peer Critique Workshop
	Sunday	Formal Presentation Draft Due	Formal Presentation Draft Due
Week 6	Monday	Genre: Drama Read: Burroway, Chapter 11 (p. 328-340)	Reading Quiz Writing Exercise
	Tuesday	Drama, cont.	Writing Exercise

	Wednesday	Drama, cont.	Writing Exercise
	Thursday	Drama Craft Piece Due	Peer Critique Workshop
	Friday	Portfolio Draft Due	Portfolio Draft Due
	Saturday	Formal Presentation Final Due	Formal Presentation Final Due
	Sunday	Portfolio Due (Final Exam)	Portfolio Due (Final Exam)

APPENDICES

Essay Rubric

Criteria	Exceptional/Good (A/B)	Acceptable (B-/C)	Unacceptable/Absent (D/F)
Opening and central message	The opening is engaging and thoughtful; there's a central argument or main idea that is interesting or insightful; Central message reveals something insightful about the literary text being considered	There is an opening, but it's not engaging and thoughtful; The central argument is present, but is not fully developed, interesting and/or insightful; Central message makes sense of the literary text being considered	The opening is underdeveloped or absent; Central argument is underdeveloped or absent and/or does not connect to literary text
Interpretive pattern	An interpretive pattern is provided that shows the development of the central idea through the entire essay; Offers an insightful reading of the significant moments and parts of the story or poem; And applies all or most relevant literary elements (POV, plot, symbol, etc.) to reveal insight of how the story or poem works	An interpretive pattern is present but may be underdeveloped; Doesn't offer a reading of the significant moments and parts of the story/poem; Doesn't apply relevant literary elements to interpretation	There is little to no pattern in the interpretation of the literary text; few to no significant moments/parts of the story/poem are discussed; Little to no application of literary elements to interpretation
Concrete details and literary language	Analysis uses adequate and effective concrete details from the story to support the reading of the story; Writer consistently uses the language of literary analysis and defines necessary terms for an unfamiliar audience	Analysis uses some concrete details but involves mostly summary; Some references to literary language present but not consistent; Writer inconsistently uses and/or defines terms	Use of concrete details is inconsistent or absent; entirely summary; Few to no references to literary language; Writer makes no attempt to define terms
Transitions and closing	Transitions are used effectively to connect ideas and guide the reader through the analysis;	Transitions are present but not effective; Closing is present but not engaging or thoughtful	Transitions are inconsistent or absent; closing is underdeveloped or absent

	the closing is thoughtful and engaging		
Grammar and punctuation; MLA style	Effective use of both the literary text under consideration and appropriate scholarship and other research; Writer introduces and establishes the credibility of all source materials; Follows MLA style for citations (on slides and orally) and works cited list with few obvious errors; obviously proofread	References the literary text under consideration, scholarship and other research, but credibility is not consistently established; Follows MLA style for citations and list of works cited with some noticeable errors	Infrequent or few references to literary text under consideration and/or scholarship and other research not present or well-integrated; MLA style improperly used; Works cited incomplete or absent; Frequent errors (obviously not proofread)
Sources	Integrates more than the minimum number of acceptable scholarly sources that help the writer interpret the text and support the argument	Integrates the minimum number of acceptable scholarly sources that help the writer interpret the text and support the argument	Integrates fewer than the minimum number of (or no) acceptable scholarly sources that help the writer interpret the text and support the argument
Miscellaneous	Clear, effective, and thoughtful title; name and page numbers appear on all pages; Essay formatted properly; meets or exceeds page length requirement	Title is present but not thoughtful; name is present on first page; Essay formatted properly with some noticeable errors; Meets page length requirement	Title is absent; name and/or page numbers absent; Essay not formatted properly and/or has frequent errors; Does not meet page length requirement

Presentation Rubric

Criteria	Exceptional/Good (A/B)	Acceptable (C)	Unacceptable/Absent (D/F)
Opening and central message	The opening is engaging and thoughtful; there's a central argument or main idea that is interesting or insightful; Central message makes sense for the literary text being considered	There is an opening, but it's not engaging and thoughtful; Central argument is present, but is not fully developed, interesting and/or insightful; Central message may not make sense to the literary text	The opening is underdeveloped or absent; Central argument is underdeveloped or absent and/or does not connect to literary text
Interpretive pattern	An interpretive pattern is provided that shows the development of the central idea throughout the entire literary text, taking into consideration all or most of the significant elements	An interpretive pattern is present but may be underdeveloped or doesn't consider the major elements of the story	There is little to no pattern in the interpretation of the story
Concrete details and language	Analysis uses adequate and effective concrete details from the literary text to support the	Analysis uses some concrete details but involves mostly summary; Some references to	Use of concrete details is inconsistent or absent (entirely summary); Few to no references

	reading; Speaker consistently uses the language of literary analysis and defines necessary terms for an unfamiliar audience	literary language present but not consistent; Speaker inconsistently uses and/or defines terms	to literary language; Speaker makes no attempt to define terms
Organization	Uses a detailed and consistent organizational pattern that is tied to the literary text, central message and interpretive pattern; Transitions are used effectively to connect ideas and guide the reader through the analysis; The closing is thoughtful and engaging	Organizational pattern is present but not consistently tied to the literary text, central message and/or interpretive pattern; Transitions are present but not effective; Closing is present but not engaging or thoughtful	Organizational pattern is inconsistent or basic and/or not at all tied to the literary text, central message or interpretive pattern; Transitions are inconsistent or absent; closing is underdeveloped or absent
Delivery	Delivery techniques makes the presentation interesting; Speaker is comfortable (obviously practiced); Little to no reading from notes/slides	Delivery techniques make the presentation understandable but not interesting; Speaker is tentative and/or uncomfortable (some practice noticed); Relies too much on reading from notes/slides at times	Delivery techniques seem unpolished; Speaker is not comfortable (obviously unrehearsed); Relies heavily on reading from notes/slides for most or all of the presentation
Supporting material and citation demands	Effective use of both the literary text under consideration and appropriate scholarship/research; Speaker introduces and establishes the credibility of all source materials; Includes more than the minimum number of sources; Follows MLA style in citations (on slides and orally) and works cited list with few obvious errors	References the literary text under consideration, scholarship/research, but credibility is not consistently established; Includes the minimum number of sources; Follows MLA style in citations (both on slides and orally) and works cited list with some noticeable errors	Infrequent or few references to literary text under consideration and/or scholarship/research not present or well-integrated; MLA style improperly used; Includes fewer than the minimum number of required sources; Sources not cited (on slides and/or orally); Works cited list incomplete or absent
Miscellaneous	Clear, effective and thoughtful title; Name is clearly stated early in the presentation; Well-designed slides enhance presentation rather than distract from it	Title is present but not thoughtful; Name is stated during the presentation; Slides support the presentation but are not well-designed and/or creates some distraction	Title is absent; name absent; Slides are not well-designed and/or get in the way of the presentation and/or overshadow the presenter