

# EH 205-B CREATIVE WRITING

*Myth, Memory, & Monsters*

M.K. Foster

TTH 9:30-10:50am

Classroom: Humanities 003

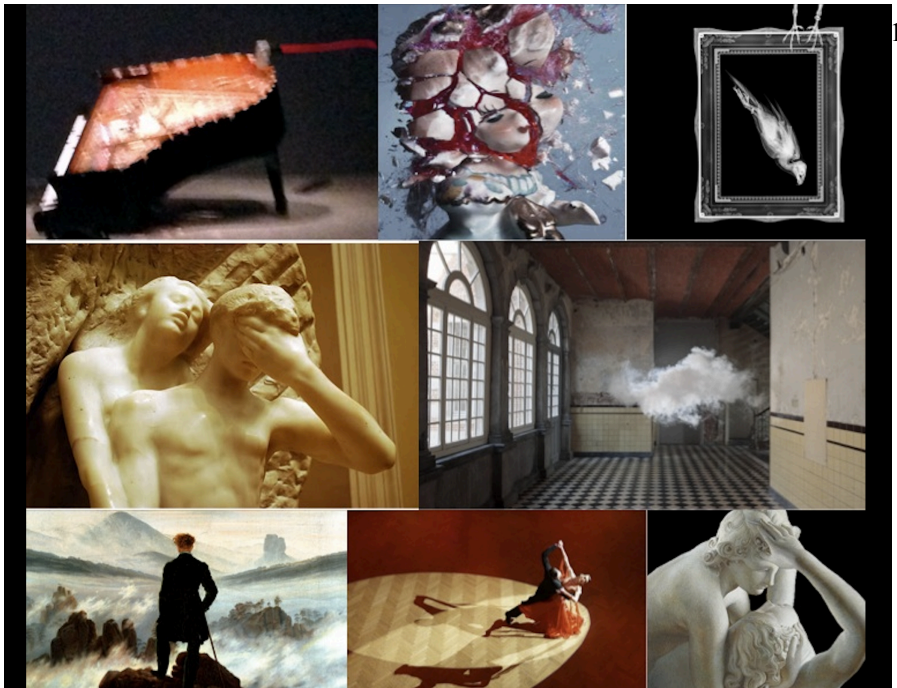
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Office Hours:

TTH 8-9am/11am-1pm,

& by appointment



Each of you has a “writer biography.” Some of you fell in love with fantasy worlds before you could name anything about this one. Some of spoke stories into life through the mouths of dolls and soldiers and animals. Some of you were utterly crushed into literary loathing when an evil grade school teacher crammed Shakespeare, Dickens, and Frost down your throats and told you that if you didn’t like, understand, or write the same thing as those writers, then you were a *failure*. Some have secretly written racy poems since you discovered Anaïs Nin in the restricted section of your public libraries, or fanfiction the day you stumbled upon AO3— which is all to say whatever your level of writing familiarity, *you’re safe now*. Success in this class only requires open-mindedness, curiosity, sensitivity, vulnerability, and more than a little bravery. All you need to do is bring your honest commitment to your own work and the ideas of your peers, as well as your passions and curiosities.

## Intro to Creative Writing Course Goals:

- ❖ To generate a wide range of writings in multiple styles and genres.
- ❖ To develop familiarity with your own writing practices.
- ❖ To nurture the growth of your own voice and style as a writer.
- ❖ To develop a dynamic palette for reading and exploring creative pieces.
- ❖ To exercise creation outside beyond familiarity and to take creative risks.
- ❖ To learn how to revisit, revise, and reflect critically on your own writings and process.
- ❖ To engage the works of other writers at an in-depth, critical level.
- ❖ To practice radical empathy and mindfulness.
- ❖ To work towards becoming deliberate, innovative creators.
- ❖ To bravely imagine our own and others’ lives complexly, generously, & compassionately.
- ❖ To ask questions, seek perspective, and, with perspective, ask even better questions.

## Required Books and Tools

- **REQUIRED: PDFs & Web Links:** All other readings and digital texts will be available on Moodle.
- **REQUIRED: Notebook and Folder:** You will need a small-ish self-contained notebook to use for collecting observations, taking notes, and drafting writings. You will also need a folder to keep track of handouts.
- **REQUIRED: Moodle:** We will be using Moodle extensively. Check back often. This is where the bulk of our class readings, links, activities, and assignment submission portals can be found.

- **REQUIRED: Reliable Internet Access.**
  - **REQUIRED: Reliable Printer Access:** Assignment printing issues will never count as an excuse for late work or tardiness to class.
  - **REQUIRED: Cloud Back-Up Drive (ex: DropBox, Grammarly, OneDrive, and/or Google Drive) → YOU ARE REQUIRED TO DRAFT YOUR WORK FOR THIS CLASS IN CLOUD DRIVES.** Crashed laptops or thumb drives and/or lost files are unacceptable and will result in loss of credit.
  - **REQUIRED: Stapler**→ Any hardcopies of two or more pages must be stapled upon submission.
  - **REQUIRED: Multi-Vitamins, Lysol Spray, and Hand Sanitizer!** Unless you have health conditions which prevent you from doing so, I ask that you **stick with a regular regimen of multi-vitamins** (this can even be gummies or Flintstone vitamins. Just take them.) **Purchase a can of Lysol**, and spray down your backpack every evening. **USE hand-sanitizer, and WASH YOUR HANDS before class.** **And STAY UP ON YOUR VACCINES, INCLUDING THE FLU VACCINE.** This is about the health and wellbeing of our community.
  - **Why?** → This is college. Your dietary health will crash. You will be exhausted. You will be stressed. ALL of these factors will destroy your immune system. It will suck. All of these factors make you vulnerable (especially those in dorms) to vicious colds and infections that can easily knock you out of class for weeks. **Defend your health.** Take vitamins. Lysol your backpacks and phones. Use hand sanitizer.
  - **Recommended: Buddy System:** Get to know one or more of your classmates, and swap some form of contact information with them so that you can exchange notes if absent, workshop outside of class, and text if you're running super late and might miss roll call.
  - **Recommended: Grammarly.com:** this is a free cloud-based system that checks your grammar and spelling and recommends edits and revisions. You can also invest in a premium version of this system that can also track language patterns and check your citations. These are recommended support devices, especially if you struggle with grammar and syntax.
- NOTE: \*Please bear in mind that the items on the syllabus are subject to change at any time, in which case you will be notified and provided with an updated document.\***



### **Attendance & Presence Policy**

- **Be Prompt, Be Prepared, Be Present.**
- You should strive to attend every class meeting.
- Be in class. Be on time to class. Be prepared for class. Be emotionally, mentally, and physically present in class. **Stop texting or messaging on all digital devices.** **Turn off any iMessages, iPhones and/or iGadgets.** **Shut down your WiFi.** **Stay awake.**
- If you do miss class for any reasons, it will be **your responsibility** to find out what you missed. **Read the syllabus, read the course schedule, look at Moodle, email your classmates, and read the class emails that I send.**
- **I do not host make-up sessions to go over absentee material and will never reply to “what did I miss/ what is the homework” emails.** Moreover, **missing class or arriving late will impact your participation grade,** as well as the quality of your work. See **“Quantitative and Qualitative Participation” Policies.**



- Simplified attendance policy: **Be. Here.** Regular attendance equals success. Also, according to the BSC website, the average total “Cost of Attendance 2019-2020” is \$30,640, and if you are taking 4-ish courses per semester, the total cost of tuition/fees/room/meals that make each course possible is \$3,830. There are 14 weeks in the spring semester (excluding Spring Break and including Exams Week), and if you are in a 2-day/week class which meets about 28x in the semester, you’re basically trashing \$136.78 every time you oversleep.
- Occasionally, you may have to miss class. Sickness happens. Life happens, etc. So this is my policy:
  - ❖ **For starters, IF YOU ARE SICK, PLEASE STAY HOME.**
  - ❖ **You should not miss more than four class (4) meetings.**
  - ❖ You are considered absent any time you are not in class—no matter what the reason. This includes sickness, oversleeping, Starbucks lines, airport runs, and Beyoncé concerts.
  - ❖ This is an 9:30am class on Tuesdays and Thursdays → Gauge. Your. Energy. If you need 8 hours of sleep and 30 minutes to get up and get to class, plan accordingly.
  - ❖ Exceptions to this policy: 1) religious observances, in which case please privately disclose these absences by the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of class; 2) special cases of Extreme Extenuating Personal Circumstances. See “EEPC” policy below.

**\*\* Your final grade will drop by 5 points for every class missed after 4 absences. Ex: if your final grade calculates to a 90 (A-), a 5<sup>th</sup> absence would drop the grade by 5 points to an 85 (B).\*\***

#### What You Can Make Up

- Making up missed work does not an absence erase. Again, attend every class meeting.
- You may arrange to turn in major-grade work in advance or online only if allowed by your instructor.

#### What You Can’t Make Up

- Class discussions, Bell Ringer Points, in-class writing, or other daily class work in a writing class cannot be reconstructed. Missed daily class work will have a negative impact on your grade. See “Quantitative and Qualitative Participation” Policies.

#### **In the event of a Missed Class:**

- **Please literally copy/paste/fill in/ send the following template email** with info suited to your situation:
  - “Dear Professor Foster, I will not be in class *[fill in day/time]*. I will check in with a friend in the class for information about our homework and class discussions. I hope to be back in class on *[fill in day/time]*. Thank you so much! Best Wishes, *[fill in your name]*”
- This note will give me peace of mind that you are okay because **your emotional, intellectual, and physical wellbeing is my priority**, but please don’t disclose anything else. Please.
- This kind of absence note is a strong, professional practice for other classes, as well, and I encourage you to use the same or a similar note, formatted accordingly.
- **I will not respond to these absence emails, but rest assured that I received them.**
- **Please don’t apologize. If you’re absent, you’re absent.**
- **PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE DO NOT write a long, graphic accounts of your illness. PLEASE.**
- Please just read the syllabus, read the course schedule, email your classmates with questions, and read the class emails that I send. Complete the assignment to the best of your ability, get better, and come back to class. If you still have questions after that, I will answer them after class.



- Again, you are responsible for all materials due the day you return.
- Again, I never reply to “what did I miss/ what is the homework” emails.
- Also, I really do not appreciate “Did you get my email?” emails if I’ve already made clear that I do not respond to “what did I miss” emails.
- Again, see “Quantitative and Qualitative Participation” Policies.
- Also, I get it. *Some days you’re the lady. Some days, you’re the pangolin.*→
- Either way, just be good to yourself.



### Tardiness and Preparedness

Please make every effort to be as prompt as you are prepared. We all run late from time to time, but please be advised that in this class, tardiness is considered disrespectful.

### Withdrawal

If you need to withdraw from the class, no worries. Life happens. You do you. Just keep an eye on the Drop/Add dates and Withdraw time limits on the schedule.

### Grading Policy

“A” work is generally regarded as excellent; “B” work is good; “C” work is competent; “D” work is marginally below college standards; and “F” work is clearly below minimum college standards. Work that does not follow the assignment (though otherwise acceptable) will also receive an “F.” Work that is not done or not turned in is recorded as a zero. All major papers will be graded and returned before the next major assignment is due.

- ❖ Paper grades can be converted to percentages like this:
- ❖ A=94-up, A-=90, B+=88, B=84, B-=80, C+=78, C=74, C-=70, D+=68, D=64, D-=60, F=50.
- ❖ Final numeric grades will be converted to letter grades like this:
- ❖ 94-up =A; 92-90=A-; 89-88=B+; 87-83=B; 82-80=B-; 79-78=C+; 77-73=C; 72-70=C-; 69 and below=NC
- ❖ **BSC does not give out A+ grades.**

Note About Class Average: If you are keen on watching your average on an assignment-by-assignment basis, it is your responsibility to track of your letter-grade/percentage average, as I may not always be able to calculate your average when you ask. Please log all grades, including participation assignment scores, in your notebook or in a computer file. Amazing Grade Calculator can also help you: <http://www.conquercollege.com/gradecalc/>

### Grading Disclaimer and Notes:

- **As far as evaluation goes: “C” is for “Correct & Complete”; “B” is for “Beyond Correct-Complete”; “A” is for “Above Beyond-Correct-Complete.”**
- Just meeting class or assignment requirements, completing them, and doing them correctly is a minimum effort and is evaluated with a grade **starting at** a “C/ 74%” average, **until merited** Beyond or Above.
- **Ex: If you do everything “right” by an assignment’s criteria and meet the word count, your grade starts at a “C” and gains credit as it goes “Beyond” or “Above,” which means your assignment does not start at an “A” and “lose credit.”**
- Please read (or watch or listen to!) my comments fully and carefully after receiving a graded assignment; please refrain from contacting me **for at least 24 hours** after receiving a graded assignment.
- The average assignment-grading turn-around time is roughly 2-3 weeks. You will always receive your assignment back in advance of any upcoming assignment, with sufficient opportunity to revise your current work or conference with me.



- In this class, receiving a grade on an assignment affords you assignment commentary from me; you may also request a private conference with me to discuss specific aspects of your assignment, as they relate to your *performance* in the class. If you request a conference to discuss a graded assignment, please come ready to talk about a specific part from your assignment.
- I reserve the right to cancel unprepared conferences of any kind, per graded assignments or otherwise.

**\*Note About Final Grades: They are final. They will not be changed.\***

### **Department Protocols**

#### **Late Instructor**

If I am late and there is no notice on the door or email from me, please wait ten (10) minutes then send someone to the Main Office on the second floor of the Humanities Building to tell them I was not in class and to check on me.

#### **Chain of Command**

If you have a problem with anything that happens in this class, please see me first. If we are not able to resolve the problem, we will schedule a conversation with Dr. Tynes Cowan.

#### **Interest in Majoring or Minor in English or Creative Writing? ☺**

Are you or is someone you know interested in majoring in being a badass English major/minor? If so, please ask me, your local English major badass, for information.

### **Writing Center**

Get assignment support! For free! From amazing writers! Like You! The Writing Center, located on the first floor of the Humanities building, is a wonderful resource! They do not proofread your work for you, but they can help with overall structure, organization, development, and mechanics. All you have to do is go downstairs, and knock on the door. Take a copy of the writing assignment sheet and any work you've completed toward the assignment if you go.

### **Academic Integrity and the Honor Code**

At Birmingham-Southern College, you are bound by the Honor Code to academic integrity in this and every class. Academic dishonesty, whether it is submitting someone else's work as your own, submitting your own work completed for another class, or otherwise violating breaking academic integrity in the class will not be tolerated in any form, regardless of knowing or unknowing participation. Note: Such events usually occurs in the case of a belated paper or a misunderstood assignment. Hence, please plan accordingly before major assignments are due to complete work in advance and to feel confident in the goals of the assignment, and contact me for an appointment if you are struggling on these or other fronts. I am here to help you.

### **Policy on Missed/ Late/Incomplete Coursework:**

- ❖ For starters, late or incomplete assignments are disrespectful. You will have ample opportunity in this class to draft, revise, meet with me, and work with your peers. Within reason and ability, there is no reason you cannot work through the assignments for this class in a timely manner.
- ❖ Secondly, major work for this class will be submitted electronically. Your paper either goes through TurnItIn, or it doesn't. If your paper goes through, TurnItIn will send you a receipt within a few minutes. If you're unsure, you can email your paper to me just to be safe. But I read, comment on, and grade papers through TurnItIn only.
- ❖ Thirdly, if I cannot find your assignment online, I will count it as a zero. Also, if you upload a corrupted link or file and I cannot open it, I will count the assignment as a zero. Furthermore, I consider any dishonesty about the status of a paper to be a violation of the Honor Code, and I will report you accordingly.

- ❖ Finally, I get it. Again, life happens. You're going to be fine. Here the deal on late assignments:
  - For starters, I'd rather have late work than plagiarized work. You're going to be fine.
  - Next, please. Just tell me. You're going to be fine. **Here is my protocol for assignment extensions:**
    - **Early:** Most of our assignments will have Sunday night 11:59PM deadlines. If you're still feeling rough about your assignment in class the Thursday before, just meet with me, and we'll work through the parts that are still holding you up. **If you meet with me in person and work out an extension plan in advance, I will not take points off.** You're going to be fine. Note: please bear in mind that I am only on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays and have my greatest email availability Tuesday morning through Thursday night.
    - **Email:** Any time up to the deadline, it's a loss of 5 points from the assignment's final grade, and I require that you make an appointment with me before or after the following class so that we can determine a new deadline for you. **Please email me, say you need an extension, and then ask to set up an appointment time with me. No long descriptions necessary.** I might not email back immediately, but know that I hear you and that I've got your back. You're going to be fine. **If you do not make an appointment, miss your appointment, or fail to meet your extension deadline, the assignment will receive a zero.**
    - **None of the Above:** *If you do not turn in your assignment by or email me before the deadline, I deduct 10 points for every 24 hours* that your essay is not submitted and require that you make an appointment with me as soon as possible.

### **"Revise and Resubmit" Policy**

- ❖ Putting one word after another is easy. Crafting a thoughtful, lovely creative work by using carefully selected words and images to convey a visceral constellation of experiences and emotions— is hard and scary.
- ❖ Never fear: writing is a process. And part of that process is revision. Hence, there is also a "Revise and Resubmit" opportunity attached with every assignment:
  - You may revise any assignment from our semester and submit it to me for re-evaluation for a possibly different grade, one that may be higher, lower, or the same, as your initial grade.
  - Here are the rules:
    - 1) If you would like to "Revise & Resubmit," please make an appointment with me.
    - 2) Bring copies of your original drafts from class and your submitted/graded essay with my comments. We will then discuss ways for you to make your essay stronger.
    - 3) You will then revise your assignment and submit it to me by email along with a copy of your original essay and an attached analysis of the changes that you made to your essay.
    - 4) All revisions have the same due date: our last class of the semester.
    - 5) I will not leave extensive comments or endnotes when I review your "R&R" paper. If you would like to further discuss your work, please make an appointment with me.
    - 6) Each assignment may only be "Revised & Resubmitted" once, but if you want to double-down on your revision, I highly encourage you to make multiple appointments with me and also with the Writing Center.



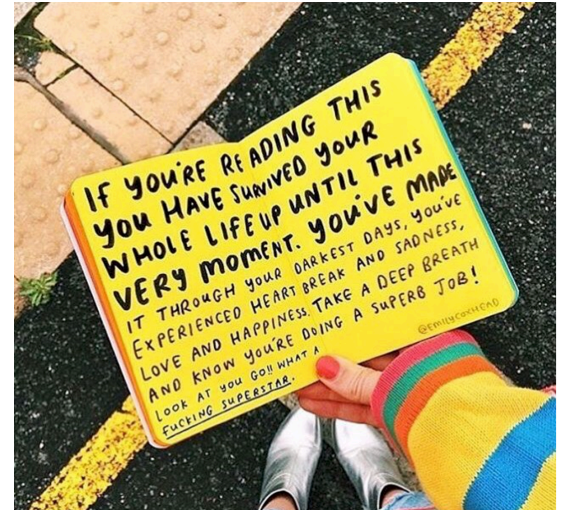
### **Personal Pronouns**

My personal pronouns are **she/her/hers**. I am committed to building as inclusive a classroom community as possible, and as such, I am committed to addressing everyone as they wish to be addressed, which includes using everyone's preferred personal pronouns. If you prefer one set of pronouns to another, I invite you to let me know

that I might address you as you wish to be addressed. Additionally, if you would rather be addressed by one set of pronouns in the classroom and another in conference or office hours, I'm happy to support you in this way, as well.

### **!!! "EEPC" Policy→ \*\*\*Extreme Extenuating Personal Circumstances\*\*\***

Life happens to us all, especially in college. If you have any chronic, sudden, or simply a long-term life situation, extreme extenuating personal circumstances (ex: critical illness, personal loss, pregnancy, hospitalization, difficult medical diagnoses, depression, anxiety, family crisis, a newborn baby at home, etc.), please know that you are NOT legally obligated to share these details and encouraged to share specifics only with your advisor, but you are asked to communicate with me in broad terms so that I will know if you need support. **Communication is everything** in this course in this capacity, as it is in so many others. Ipso facto, the sooner you communicate, the greater the odds that we can decide on accommodations for your circumstances. **You are not alone here at BSC**, and if you need support, please reach out.



### **Safe Spaces**

Writing is a very personal, deeply vulnerable act, and we owe it to one another to work together to build a community of proactive kindness and active empathy in this class, on campus, and in our world today. This classroom, as well as my office (HU 326), are both safe spaces for all students, and I will do everything I can to ensure your emotional, physical, and intellectual wellbeing and growth. **I reserve the right to dismiss from class any persons who put the safety of the class community at risk**, and I reserve the right to call upon the college's administration, if I feel the class is unsafe for my students because of the behaviors of one or more students.

Please know that you are not, nor ever will be, obligated to disclose any personal information about your life or identity, and please know that on this campus, you are protected by Title IX and have my support if ever you need to contact Title IX resources on campus.



### **Disability Statement**

I am committed to building an inclusive classroom experience for all, and I believe in “universal design” classrooms. If there is any way that I might be able to better support your learning, please do let me know. I'm happy to work with you. Birmingham-Southern College complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations must make their request by contacting the Office of Accessibility in-person, via email ([accessibility@bsc.edu](mailto:accessibility@bsc.edu)), or by calling 205-226-7909. The Office of Accessibility is located in the Counseling and Health Services Suite of Norton Center Room 241. Students who are registered with the Office of Accessibility are responsible for providing faculty with a copy of their accommodation letter and scheduling a meeting to discuss how their approved accommodations will apply to this course. Visit the [Office of Accessibility website](#) for additional information or contact Angela Smith at [awsmith@bsc.edu](mailto:awsmith@bsc.edu). If you are registered with BSC's Accessibility Office, **it is your responsibility to make an appointment with me as soon as possible or to come by during office hours** immediately to submit your documentation for my records and to privately discuss only any course accommodations that may be necessary.



**\*\*During this discussion, you are not expected to disclose any details concerning your disability, though you may discuss these details at your discretion. These same policies and protocols apply to conditions related, but not limited to chronic, volatile physical illnesses or other EEPCs, in which case you are also encouraged to contact the Provost's Office.\*\***

### Title IX

Birmingham-Southern College is committed to the creation and maintenance of a safe learning environment for students and the campus community. The College forbids any type of sexual or gender-based misconduct among its students, faculty, and staff. The College encourages all members of the academic community to report suspected sexual and gender-based misconduct to the appropriate authorities so that it can be investigated, remedied, and eliminated. Such misconduct is prohibited whether the actor is a student, faculty member, staff member, contractor, visitor, or another member of the College community. BSC forbids retaliation against any person who has opposed, reported or participated in an investigation concerning sexual or gender-based misconduct.

In accordance with federal policy, all College employees are required to report information related to discrimination and harassment which includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual harassment. For this reason, if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the Title IX coordinator. As a student, you can report allegations of sexual misconduct to officials in Student Development (Assistant Dean of Students, Dana Bekurs; Associate Dean of Students, W. David Miller; Vice President for Student Development, David Eberhardt), Campus Police, or confidential resources in Counseling Services, Health Services, and Religious Life. Please refer to the [Title IX section](#) of the BSC website for more information on filing a report and available resources.

### **Emergency/Disaster Academic Communications Policy**

In the event of an emergency cancellation of class, I will use Moodle to provide additional course information to you all and provide instructions for how we will convert our class plans to an online forum.

### Class Safety and Emergency Protocol

If I determine the safety, health, or wellbeing of the whole class to be at risk, I will dismiss everyone for the day, and we will reconvene online on Moodle. If I dismiss the entire class on the basis of a major crisis or emergency, please leave the building, and call **Campus Police (205) 226-4700.**

### Weapons Policy

For the wellbeing of all, **I completely forbid all weapons in my class. ALL.** Please, practice your knife juggling at home.



**Technology Policy: Please memorize::** For the purposes of accommodating student learning needs, laptops and tablets are allowed in the classroom for taking notes and reading downloaded PDF files, unless instructed for other use. However, cell phone/ iPhone PDFs are NOT ACCEPTABLE. Only exceptions\*: “EEPC” cases and students with documented accommodations.

Best Practice: Turn your phone ALL the way OFF. Punch the button. DONE.

Furthermore, if you are iMessaging, Instagramming, Tweeting, Facebooking, Emailing, Ebay-ing, or DOING HOMEWORK FOR ANOTHER CLASS during our class, I reserve the right to dismiss you from class for the day with a single request and to count it as an unexcused absence. I encourage you to download your materials ahead of time and disable your Internet and messaging systems during class. Everything that we need for class will be available to you before class or in class. See also, the Participation Policy at the end of this syllabus for details about how violating this policy can harm your grade and damage the class community.

With the above-noted persons\* excepted, **I do not allow phone or iMessage use in the classroom. Ever.** Turn off your phones and messaging systems completely off at the beginning of class. **OFF MEANS OFF.** If you are texting or iMessaging during class, I reserve the right to dismiss you from class for the day with a single request and to count it as an unexcused absence. Policy also applies to the use of iWatches/Apple watches/ smart watches.



**Note: “Hide-texting” on your phone or laptop messaging system is awkward and painful to watch, so I reserve the right to call you out in front of the whole class and embarrass the moment accordingly.**

### **Class Environment**

Disclaimer the First: Adult Content and Perspectives— This class is designed for the expansion and advancement of adult minds, and some course materials and conversations may include, but are not limited to, blunt discussions of profanity, violence, sex, gender, class, race, and sexuality. Each text has been purposefully selected to support the academic goals of the course.

- NOTE (I): The views within the texts provided are not necessarily those of the instructor and are intended only to promote dimensional inquiry and dialogue. You are free to express your point of view; you are not free to express your point of view at the cost of invalidating or threatening other points of view. Again, firmly, this is a space of civility, respect, kindness, generosity. I reserve the right to dismiss from class without daily credit any persons determined to be disrupting and/or posing a threat to the emotional and psychological wellbeing of the class.
- NOTE (II): To be clear: any idea expressed in this class will never itself receive an evaluation; but the technique and skill with which the idea is expressed and executed will receive an evaluation— and that is our goal: deliberate, innovate writing that fully and dimensionally articulates our ideas via sophisticated inquiry and complexly imagined discourse.
- NOTE (III): These texts are not marked with trigger warnings; however, if you feel sensitivity towards a particular text or issue, you are welcome to contact me in advance of class so that we can make alternate arrangements for your learning; under such circumstances, you are not obligated to disclose any personal information to me at all.

Disclaimer the Second: Vulnerability—By nature of the fact that writing is, the rawest of the arts, the material both read and written in this class will involve adult language, issues, and content and will also come from deeply personal, vulnerable places, both real and imagined. I expect full maturity and sensitivity in every capacity and require that each member of the class uphold BSC’s commitment to a safe environment of civility and respect within which we can all aspire to become deliberate, innovative, and versatile scholars and writers.

Again, I reserve the right to dismiss from class without daily credit any persons determined to be disrupting and/or posing a threat to the emotional and psychological wellbeing of the class.

- A Quick Note About “Bad Writing” & Mindfulness— As you will hear me say over and over, *“There is no such thing as “bad writing;” but there are such things as “young/green writing” and “inappropriate writing.”* In the case of “young/green writing,” I’m talking about writing that is still very new and working on becoming stronger, because literally no one starts off writing mind-blowingly “good” work. Again, writing is a craft and a practice; it takes time. In the case of “inappropriate writing,” I’m not talking about “sensitive content” like profanity, PG-13 scenes, graphic descriptions of trauma within personal narratives, or obscure fetishes. I’m talking about writing content that comes from a place of complete wrecklessness, brazen insensitivity, hatred, and/or violence or writing that is willfully ignorant and/or purposefully triggering and harmful— which is all to say, I am not here to censor you; but I am here to maintain the emotional safety of the class, so I’m asking you to be mindful of the experiences of others. If you’re nervous about something you want to write or have written, please come by my office, and check in with me.

Disclaimer the Third: Effort/Skill Levels—Performance (and ultimately final grades) in a writing class is usually the direct product of personal effort in the class, entirely beholden to evidence of critical growth and development, and degrees of professionalism, including spelling, grammar, and formatting— not necessarily by the degree of a student’s previous academic successes and/or inherent ability. Translation: hard work will always beat talent that’s not working hard.

Disclaimer the Fourth: Professionalism— Please be observant of professional manners of addressing the class, the instructor, the environment of the classroom, and the course. Please address me as “Professor Foster,” and please only contact me using my BSC email address. *Please take time to prepare yourself professionally, in addition to your assignments.* For example: please do not come to class barefoot; do not come to class in your pajamas or your swimsuits. Exception: zombie costumes.

Disclaimer the Fifth: FERPA— the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: by federal law, I am prohibited from discussing or disclosing your collegiate school records with or to third parties beyond the jurisdiction of the university’s authority. If your parents or guardians have questions, comments, or concerns about your school or academic records, it is your responsibility to communicate with them. If you personally need clarifications for matters concerning your school record, please communicate first with me about your specific questions before communicating with your respective third parties.

### **Assignments, Word Counts, Grade Distribution**

-Non-Fiction Folio.....	15%
-Poetry Folio.....	15%
-Fiction Folio.....	15%
-Apprenticeship Project.....	20%
-Final Portfolio & Craft Essay...	10%
-Quantitative Participation.....	20%
-Qualitative Participation.....	5%

### **Assignment Overview:**

**-Non-Fiction Folio (15%):** For this folio, you will assemble all of your non-fiction pieces and your responses into a single, page-numbered document and submit it to Moodle. The grade for this Folio is based on the completion of the folio and your revising one of your pieces. The revision must include 1) a draft of the



original with markings/annotations, 2) the new draft, and 3) a two-page write-up about the changes that you made and how you re-shaped the piece.

**-Poetry Folio (15%):** For this folio, you will assemble all of your poems and your responses into a single, page-numbered document and submit it to Moodle. The grade for this Folio is based on the completion of the folio and your revising two of your poems. The revisions must include 1) the drafts of the original with markings/annotations, 2) the new drafts, and 3) a two-page write-up about the changes that you made and how you re-shaped both pieces.

**-Fiction Folio (15%):** For this folio, you will assemble all of your fiction pieces and your responses into a single, page-numbered document and submit it to Moodle. The grade for this Folio is based on the completion of the folio and your revising one of your fiction pieces. The revisions must include 1) the draft of the original with markings/annotations, 2) the new draft, and 3) a two-page write-up about the changes that you made and how you re-shaped both pieces.

**-Apprenticeship Project (20%):** The “Apprenticeship Project” will take over half of the semester to build and is worth 20% of your final grade. For this assignment, you will identify (around mid-terms) a writer whose work you enjoy, and then, for the rest of the semester, you will study/work with their writings as their “apprentice”—shadowing their style, getting to know their voice, analyzing their craft, etc. The only criteria for selecting a writer is: 1) the author of their own original work, 2) I ask that you clear your decision with me in a meeting around mid-term, and 3) you may not switch writers after making your selection. These criteria aside, you do you. Figure out someone whose work really gets to you, and go from there. The menu is wide open to include: poets, novelists, short-story writers, playwrights, screenwriters, singer/songwriters, slam poets, slam storytellers, humorists, hybrid genre creators, journalists, Op-Ed columnists, historians, biographers, essayists, critics, children’s book authors, satirists, podcast writers, YouTube essayists, documentary writers, etc. The writer may be super young or super dead, English-speaking or in translation, any background, any identity—anything/ anyone, so long as they’re a writer who writes their own work. The final version of the “Apprenticeship Project” includes the following components, totaling 100 points:

- (25 points): Presentation (10 minutes total): brief reading from craft/close reading essay, anthology, and imitation
- (25 points): Craft & Close Reading Essay (5pgs. min; in which you discuss their work and how you engage it)
- (10 points): Mini-Anthology (hand-typed, 8-10 pgs. min.)
- (40 points): Imitations: (5 pg. min; which can be any combination of prose/poetry)

**-Final Portfolio & Craft Essay...10%:** For your Final Portfolio, you will submit all of your writings from the semester in a single document with pages numbers and a table of contents. This includes all of your writings from each of the genre assignments, all of your responses, all of the pieces from your “Apprenticeship Project,” and all of your revisions. You will also include a “Craft Essay” as part of this assignment. The assembled portfolio (submitted on time, electronically, with all of the required pieces) will receive 30 points of quantitative participation credit. The “Craft Essay” within the portfolio is worth 10% of your grade. Your “Craft Essay” (5 pages) is a reflective essay that focuses on your writing and analyzes the themes and images that have been a part of your craft this semester. Think of it as a “close reading” of your own writing.

#### **-Daily Homework & Other Participation Grades:**

**1) Notebooks:** Over the course of the semester, I require that you keep a physical notebook with you for the purpose of collecting ideas, drafting thoughts, and sketching out reactions to readings. I do

not require that you turn this in or even show me what you've written, but I will expect to see your notebook with you in class and being used as part of your class engagement. The notebook is largely a qualitative grade (see policy at end).

**2) Class Discussion:** you will all take turns leading class discussion on the readings for each day, but I promise you, this is nothing scary. All I ask is that you lead and guide discussion for the day, talking about the work you've written, describing your thoughts on the works we've read for the day, and keeping us all on track in our discussions. Everyone needs to lead class at least 1x. This is worth 20 points of class participation.

**3) Creative Writings/Responses:** your daily homework after each class is to::

- 1) **write an original creative piece** of your own based on the day's theme
- 2) **write a short 100-word "account"** of how you engaged the theme in your piece; and
- 3) **write a 150-word response** to one of the next day's readings, in which you:

-Describe 1-2 things about the piece that stand out to you.

-Ask Questions: describe what questions does this piece bring to mind?

-React: how does the piece make you feel? what does it make you think? why?

Please submit all of these pieces in a single Word doc uploaded to our homework portal on Moodle by 11:59pm the night before our next. Please also bring a hard-copy of your homework to class for me to collect. Ex: if on Tuesday we discuss elegiac poetry, your homework is to write your own elegiac poem and an "account" of what you wrote your elegiac poem about; and if we're reading villanelle poems for Thursday, your homework is also to write a short response to one of the assigned villanelles for Thursday.

-In short, all of our classes and themes are always linked together and building upon one another.

**4) Sharing Work & Workshop:** there will be an opportunity in each day's class to share your new original creative work. I ask that you do your best to speak up to share once a week. This said, I recognize the difficulties of social anxiety and the vulnerability of the works we're writing, and I will not force anyone to speak. But again, I do encourage you to embrace the class community and share. Also, in this particular creative writing class, we will not be practicing "large workshop;" instead, you'll be workshoping one-on-one with me during our conferences. However, early in the semester, I would really love to pair up everyone interested in workshoping outside of class. Please let me know if this is something you're interested in.

### **Turnitin**

BSC is committed to helping students uphold the ethical standards of academic integrity in all areas of study. Students agree that their enrollment in this course allows the instructor the right to use electronic devices to help prevent plagiarism. All course materials are subject to submission to TurnItIn.com for the purpose of detecting textual similarities. Assignments submitted to TurnItIn.com will be included as source documents in TurnItIn.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. TurnItIn.com will be used as a source document to help students avoid plagiarism in written documents.

### **Office Hours and Contact:**

I'm only on campus on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but when I'm here on campus, I'm here for you. I will hold office hours in my office (Humanities 326) on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00am-9:00am, and 11am-1pm, or

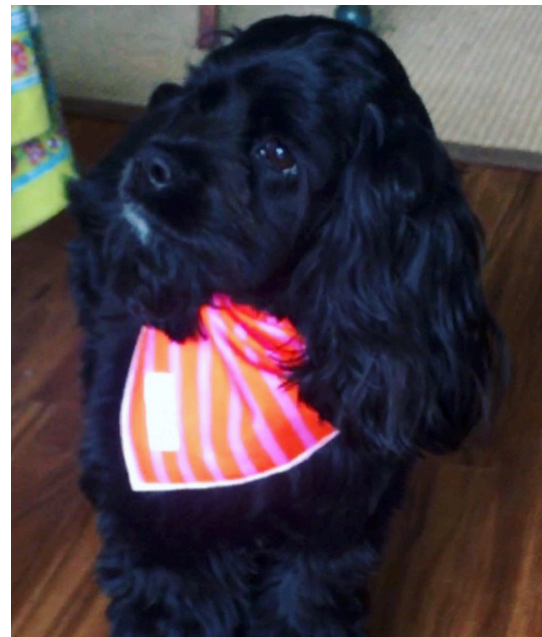
by appointment; but I usually stay in my office until 1:30pm every TU/TH. Office Hour subject to change on days with Common Hour Activities.

### **What are Office Hours?**

Office Hours are times just for you! If it's a busy week, our meetings might be shorter than usual— But! Please, I welcome you to come talk with me about your work and to get feedback on your writing! And while we're at it, we can rage about all the cool things we're reading in class! I'm also always down to talk about writing, nerd culture, fanfiction, ships, Lady Gaga, life, the Renaissance, and my little doggo Liberty Belle (see right→) among other pressing matters.

*I will try to promptly respond to emails and messages, between the hours of 8am and 5 pm, but **PLEASE do not ever ask me if I received your email or send me even more emails to see if I received your first email, which is incredibly rude and disrespectful.** Please give me 24 hours to respond during weekdays and 48 hours to respond on weekends.*

Note: Your best bet for answered questions, homework help, research wisdom, etc. is to meet with me in my office on Tuesdays or Thursdays or to email me between Tuesday morning and Thursday evening.



### **Conferences**

We will have at several scheduled one-on-one conferences in my office (see the Course Schedule for conference days). These meetings are *mandatory*. If you cannot attend our scheduled conference, please email me at least 2 hours before our planned time. Note: time prevailing, make-up conference times may or may not be available.

### **EH 205 Participation Policies**

- Exercise **respect, vulnerability, and kindness.**
- Exercise full maturity and professionalism.
- Reserve all judgment.
- Attend every class.
- Complete all reading, homework, and assignments; bring your work to every class.
- Abide by the policies written on the syllabus and spoken as verbal agreements in class.

Complete and engaged participation is essential to the design and function of this course and will count for 25% of your final grade (20% quantitative; 5% qualitative), which, by the numbers, can mean a difference of letter grades. In addition to point values from your reading responses and class work, I will take the following things into account in determining your final qualitative participation grade in a holistic impression:

-Being Prompt: Consistent Attendance and Punctuality. No tardiness.

-Being Prepared.

-Completed reading and assignments

-Bringing your texts and your notes to class

-Hard copies of assignments and electronic documents submitted on-time

-Being prepared to present your work in a group or on your own

-Keeping your phone, email, and social media off.

**-NOTE: TECHNOLOGY CANCELLATION POLICY: if I see one cell phone or instance of social media/ personal technology abuse from anyone, I will warn everyone. Any additional phone or social media/personal technology abuse I see will result in the loss of technology use for the whole class for the semester.)**

-Take out your earbuds. Turn off your music.

-Participate in class work

-Actively sharing comments and asking questions about the reading or what you have written



- Listening and responding to your classmates in respectful and constructive ways
- Staying awake and being physically attentive→ (Note: If one person falls asleep in class, I will wake them and dismiss them for the day without credit.)
- Being healthy & NOT SHOWING UP SICK→ if you pose a health risk or disturbance to others or yourself, I reserve the right to excuse you from class to go directly to the Health Center. This includes coming to class with flu, fever, cough, or cold. As with the above-dismissals, you will receive no credit if I have to dismiss you for health.
- Being Engaged outside of class:
- Being on-time to conferences and appointments.
- Staying in contact if you have questions or need support in completing an assignment or if you have questions about the texts

### Qualitative and Quantitative Participation

As a note by way of formally and contractually clarifying participation score calculation, your engagement and effort in class and outside of class are all weighted into your participation grade at the end of the semester.

\*QUANTITATIVE PARTICIPATION: Part of this grade comes from a hard, quantifiable score based on points possible from your reading responses, your class work, extra credit, etc. Losing points on 1-2 quantitative assignments will not destroy this average, but losing multiple points on multiple assignments could easily cost your final grade the difference between half and whole letter grades. Please take these points seriously. If you feel like you're behind in points, please consider taking advantage of some of the extra credit opportunities in the class, such as the movie nights and plays.

\*QUALITATIVE The other part of this grade is a qualitative average that I assign based on my semester-long impression of afore-mentioned engagement, attendance, effort, adherence to course policies stated in the syllabus, and general behavior and etiquette, therein. Again, in this context, attendance and handing in assignments is minimum qualitative engagement, averaging a "C" (75%) at the end of a semester; by the same token, in this context, the regular vocalism does not guarantee a top average, either.

Note: *In this context, then, the most valuable engagement, in my professional estimation, comes from thoughtful, consistent, evident commitment to the class, its members and goals, alike, which can take forms including, but not limited to: active listening and note-taking, precise and well-timed contributions to discussions, generosity towards your classmates in discussion, efforts towards office hours meetings and appointments with me, and demonstrated energy towards advancing your critical handlings of our readings. Additionally, if you are someone who is very reserved in class, please talk to me at the beginning of the semester, so that we can work out a system for qualitative participation that will best serve you. All grades will abide by the grading scale set above in the syllabus.*

### Verbal Agreements

At the start of each class roll call, I will say, "When I call your name, please tell me 'TRUE' on your honor at Birmingham-Southern College 1) that you have turned off your phone and messaging, 2) that you have completed the reading and response, and 3) that you are well and ready to participate in class." The list may change based on our readings and assignments, but the organization of this list will stay the same. If all of these things are True, please say "True" to audibly affirm for me and your peers that (on your Academic Honor at BSC) you are Present and Prepared for the day. This is a daily, professionally binding affirmation from you and confirms your observance of the class and your respect for all of its persons and policies.

And again, always remember in this class:

**We're here to become deliberate, innovative creators.**

**We're here to bravely imagine our own and others' lives complexly,  
generously, & compassionately.**

**We're here to ask questions, seek perspective, and, with perspective,  
ask even better questions.**

