

English 481

Advanced Workshop in Creative Writing

Spring 2010

Mark Anderson
Office: Craig-Lee 351
e-mail: manderson@ric.edu

Office phone: 456-8804
Office hours: Mon. 3-4,
Thurs. 4-5, & by appt.

This is the capstone course for undergraduate students in creative writing. Class meetings will be conducted as workshops, and every week each student will be expected to hand in some significant work (whether new drafts or revisions), with the ultimate goal a publishable portfolio at the end of the semester. (This does not mean that everything handed in must tend toward publishability—I expect some experimentation and exploration—but it also does not mean that you can spend the entire semester on one story or a handful of poems: I expect to see some significant work done every week, meaning at least a few pages of good writing.) There will be no textbooks, but I will ask you to read and discuss some reprinted articles on various aspects of writing, and may ask you to do some individualized reading based on your project for the semester. I will not preset any length or content requirements on the project; we will define each one individually, but with the understanding that it must represent a whole semester's effort.

As an advanced student in creative writing, you should already be aware of the importance of the workshop, and the fact that committed participation in it is a requirement of the course and a major factor in your final grade. In this course, the workshop should go beyond its function in lower level courses—the discussion and analysis of our responses as readers to particular, individual works—to assist in developing ideas for each class member's project, as we become more familiar with the work and how individual poems or stories might be related to others.

Final grades will be based on my assessment of the whole semester's portfolio, with emphasis on the works that succeed and therefore best characterize your present ability, on your contribution to the workshop, and on individual goals and progress toward them.