COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 119 offers an introduction to the art and craft of writing fiction and poetry. Expect to write a great deal, both in and out of class. Expect to read a great deal, both published and unpublished work. Expect to read your own work aloud in class. We will begin by studying the elements that are common to both fiction and poetry, and then we will concentrate on each genre.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

2. *Please Excuse This Poem: 100 New Poets for the Next Generation*, by Brett Fletcher Lauer

We will also use a website where I will post supplemental readings that are available online or through library eReserves. You are expected to come to class with these readings in hand. You may choose to print them out or access them digitally with a laptop or tablet.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

1. *The Elements of Style, Fourth Edition*
   William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White

This is an excellent book. Its rules of usage and principles of composition apply not only to fiction and poetry but to every essay, business letter, and email you will write.

OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- A folder for your portfolio
- A single-subject notebook
- Access to course website, the Internet, email, and a printer
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Class participation, workshop comments, informal assignments, and Writer's Notebook (20%)
- Poetry Workshop (15%)
- Fiction Workshop (15%)
- Final Workshop (15%)
- Final Portfolio (35%)

COURSE GUIDELINES:

Class Participation: This class will function as a reading and writing community. Your active, respectful and engaged presence in class is required. I expect that you prepare by carefully reading all assigned texts and marking them with your own notes, and that you speak up in class. Sitting silently will have a negative impact on your grade.

Workshop is a space where students will share poetry and fiction they are serious about, work that expresses them. You will each have one chance to submit fiction (6-12 double-spaced pages), one chance to submit poetry (2 poems), and a final workshop in the genre of your choice. One class period before it's your turn for workshop, you must print out enough copies of your poems or story for each member of the class and distribute them.

On workshop days, everyone will come to class with the story or poems annotated with handwritten comments throughout, as well as summative comments (one-half to one page, typed, single-spaced), a copy for the writer and a copy for me. Failure to respond to another student's writing will result in the offending student being marked absent. Responses should be honest, respectful, and productive. Criticism is directed at the work, not at the author. We strive to discuss the work not just in terms of personal taste – what we might like or dislike – but technique. Why is the piece working or not working? What is the author going for and how did he or she achieve a particular effect?

Members of class will also maintain a Writer's Notebook in which to record free-writes, ideas, dreams, observations and drafts, as well as other informal assignments. Bring this notebook to class every day. I will check it at random times throughout the semester.

Fiction and Poetry: Your creative work should demonstrate that you have invested time and effort into your poetry and fiction and that you have paid attention to readings and class discussions on formal techniques.

Portfolio: At the end of the semester, each student will submit a portfolio containing revised creative work, your drafts, and a brief reflective introduction. You must revise in order to receive credit. There will be no final exam.
COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance: Regular attendance in class is required. More than six unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. Absences will be excused only for documented medical reasons or, in the case of religious observance, if I am notified at least two regular class periods in advance. If you come to class more than ten minutes late or leave before class is dismissed, you will be marked absent.

Late work: This class will only run smoothly if each student turns in work for workshop on the day he or she is assigned. No unexcused late submissions will be accepted. Printer and computer problems will not excuse a late submission. You will know in advance when your manuscript is due: start writing and revising early, save everything to a flash drive or OneDrive, print a day ahead of time – whatever you need to do.

Plagiarism: This is a creative writing class. Submitting others' poetry or fiction as your own is counterproductive to the goals of the class. Apparent violations of SIU’s plagiarism standards will be referred to the Director of Writing Studies, and a substantiated accusation of plagiarism will result in a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade for the class, or a referral to the Chair of the English Department or Dean of the College of Liberal Arts for more severe disciplinary action. Please review MLA citation guidelines when working on your critical piece and see me if you have any questions.

Cell Phone Use: Any student who brings a phone to class is responsible for silencing it and putting it away before class begins. In case of an emergency that requires you to keep your cell phone on (for instance, if you are in the middle of a family crisis) please inform me before class. You may not text or use your phone to access the internet during class under any circumstances.

Disability Support: If you are registered with Disability Support Services, please arrange to meet with me the first week of class so that we can discuss any accommodations you will require. More information is available at: www.siu.edu/dss.

RESOURCES:

The Writing Center offers free tutoring services at the following locations to all SIUC undergraduate and graduate students and faculty. For more information about the Writing Center and to make an appointment online, please visit its website at: http://write.siu.edu/