General Course Description
English 119 is a workshop designed to equip students with the critical tools necessary for the creation and revision of original fiction and poetry. Students will create new work and critique one another’s work.

Required Texts
*The O’Henry Prize Stories 2015*, edited by Laura Furman  
*Best New Poets 2015: 50 Poems from Emerging Writers*, edited by Tracy K. Smith and Jazzy Danziger  
Other required reading materials will be made available on D2L (in “Content” and “Links”). You should come to class prepared to discuss the readings. **This means you should 1) have a copy of the material with you (laptops/tablets are fine) and 2) bring discussion questions and comments to share.**

Required Materials
Standard supplies (i.e., lined paper, writing utensils, etc.)  
Digital storage device for documents (e.g., a USB thumb drive)  
Access to a printer, the Internet, and email

Specific Requirements
**WRITING:** Students will submit for workshop appraisal two complete stories and two complete poems. Unless otherwise instructed, there is no minimum or maximum word count for poems. Stories must be approximately 1500 words. Note: longer is not necessarily better. When it’s your turn to submit a poem/story, you should bring with you to class 21 copies (one each for yourself, your classmates, and your instructor).  

Unless otherwise instructed, there are no formatting requirements for poems. All stories must be double-spaced, with 1” margins, in a legible (12 point), proportional font. The first page of the manuscript should display, in the upper left-hand corner, the name of the writer, the writer's contact information (an email address is sufficient), the class name, the instructor's name, and the date of the scheduled critique. The first page should also display the working title of the piece. Each page must be numbered.  

Story and poetry grades will be determined by evidence of the students’ substantial investment of time and effort in the construction of each submission, by the clarity of the writing, and by the manuscripts’ effectiveness in achieving their artistic ambitions. Manuscript preparation (presentation of an error-free manuscript) plays a significant role in the grade.

**CRITICISM:** Students will engage actively in the critique of fellow students’ work and in the conversational business of the class. They will return marked copies of the manuscripts to the writers, noting the highs and lows, successes and failures of the work. Students will also provide a succinct paragraph of criticism of each submitted piece to the writer of the piece. Critiques should be subjective (e.g., “I laughed out loud when the tyrannosaur ate Jessica” or “I was bored during the long passages on the history and origins of Sanskrit”) as well as objective (e.g., “Proper punctuation is missing throughout; as a result the story is difficult to read”). Be specific. Be clear.

Contributions that are not valued in workshop are either too vague (“I liked it,” without any meaningful explanation as to why) or mean (“This is a terrible story”).

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Mary Kate Varnau  
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Faner 2232 (office hours: T/Th [9:45-11:00])
PRESENTATIONS/PAPERS ON CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS: During the poetry unit and the fiction unit, you’ll be assigned a contemporary author to research. You’ll read some of their creative writing, research their past, and compose a paper that tells me what kind of work they produce, what themes they’re interested in, where they’ve been published, what their educational history is, what makes you excited about their work, and what tricks of the trade they’ve mastered that you can steal for your own work, and so on. You’ll then give a three-minute presentation in class on your author.

PORTFOLIO: On the last day of classes, students submit a hardcopy portfolio of their work. The portfolio will contain revised copies of all the writing you’ve submitted to workshop throughout the semester. This means that you’ll be required to edit your pieces after workshop, making improvements at both the sentence and structural levels according to the comments you received from your peers and your instructor.

**Grading**

20% -- Class Participation
20% -- Critiques
10% -- Story Manuscripts (2)
10% -- Poetry Manuscripts (2)
20% -- Presentations/papers on contemporary authors
20% -- Portfolio

**The Workshop Method**

THE GENERAL IDEA: The writing workshop proceeds simply: A student produces a manuscript, which is distributed to the members of the workshop.

OUT OF CLASS: Students read the manuscript in private and make critiques of it that are conducive to its revision. The writer prepares a short reading from the manuscript.

IN CLASS: We begin workshop with the author reading either the full poem or a two- to three-paragraph excerpt of his/her story. Each story or poem will have assigned a “first critic.” This student should prepare a one- to two-page, single-spaced assessment of the piece’s strengths and weaknesses and will present on his/her ideas for about five minutes at the beginning of the workshop. Then the rest of the group jumps in. We discuss constructively the merits and flaws of the manuscript under consideration, always with an eye toward providing the writer with ideas for the manuscript's improvement. The writer is silent throughout his/her workshop. The instructor will guide the course of conversation and contribute as necessary. All comments should be text-driven and must be supported by specific reference to the text. Refer liberally to your written critiques for topics of conversation. Be concise and clear. When the time for discussion is finished, critics will hand a copy of their written critiques to the writer. I would like to emphasize here that 20% of the points are reserved for participation, which means sitting silently during discussion WILL affect your final grade.

**Short Statement of Principle**

A creative writing workshop is the creation of all of its participants. It is a community of mutual responsibility: writers fulfilling the duty of producing original, lucid, interesting manuscripts; readers fulfilling the critical duty of taking each manuscript as seriously in the editing as the writer has taken its creation. You will all in your turn fulfill both roles. Behave accordingly.

**Class Attendance/Late Work**

You have four free absences. A fifth absence means automatic failure of the course. Please arrive on time. The workshop format demands that work be submitted punctually. No unexcused late submissions will be accepted.
**Policy on “Incompletes”**
An INC is assigned when, for reasons beyond their control, students engaged in passing work are unable to complete all class assignments. An INC must be changed to a completed grade within a time period designated by the instructor but not to exceed one semester from the close of the term in which the course was taken, or graduation, whichever occurs first. Should the student fail to complete the course within the time period designated, not to exceed one year, or graduation, whichever occurs first, the incomplete will be converted to a grade of F and the grade will be computed in the student’s grade point average. Students should not reregister for courses in which an INC has been assigned with the intent of changing the INC grade. Re-registration will not prevent the INC from being changed to an F.

**SIUC Writing Center**
The Writing Center offers free tutoring services to all SIUC undergraduate and graduate students and faculty.

**Morris Writing Center:** 453-1231  
Morris Library Room 236  
Monday through Thursday 9am to 4pm and 6pm to 8pm  
Friday 9am to 2pm

**Disability Support**
Students who require accommodations for physical or learning disabilities should contact the Disability Support Services office (453-5738). The Disability Support Services office will provide Accommodations Agreements that students with differing needs may return to me.

**SIUC Email Policy**
Students are required to check their official email address provided by the University on a regular basis and to respond to messages in a timely manner. This email address will be an official mechanism for instructors to correspond with students. Students should familiarize themselves with the complete Official SIUC Student Email Policy by visiting the website at http://policies.siu.edu/policies/email.htm.

**Emergency Procedures**
SIUC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in every building on campus and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. It is also available on BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu and on the Department of Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Policy on Accommodating Religious Observances of Students**
Students absent from classes because of observances of major religious holidays will be excused. Students must notify the instructor at least three regular class periods in advance of an absence from class for a religious holiday and must take the responsibility for making up work missed ahead of time. Students should familiarize themselves with the complete Policy on Accommodating Religious Observances of Students in the Undergraduate Catalog.
**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**
See the Morris Library Guide on plagiarism (http://libguides.lib.siu.edu/plagiarism). As defined by the SIUC Student Conduct Code, acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

1. Plagiarizing or representing the work of another as one’s own work;
2. Preparing work for another that is to be used as that person’s own work;
3. Cheating by any method or means;
4. Knowingly or willfully falsifying or manufacturing scientific or educational data and representing the same to be the result of scientific or scholarly experiment or research;
5. Knowingly furnishing false information to a university official relative to academic matters;
6. Soliciting, aiding, abetting, concealing, or attempting acts of academic dishonesty.

**Saluki Cares**
The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in distress. By working closely with faculty, staff, students and their families, SIUC will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. Contact Saluki Cares: Call 618-453-5714 or Email: siucares@siu.edu

**Important Dates**
Last day to drop course with W: Sunday, April 3