**Course:** ENGL 102, Creative Writing

1. Date of application: 10/8/12
2. Name, Department of Proposer: Marilyn Abildskov, English
3. Name of Department housing course: English
4. Name of Department Chair: Carol Beran
5. How often is course taught: typically two sections per semester
6. Course prerequisites: none
7. Unit value of course: 1
8. Normal class size: 18
9. Number of sections expected to be taught in Spring 2013: 2
10. Number of sections expected to be taught in Fall 2013: 2
11. Is the course appropriate for first-year students: no
12. Chair will oversee submission of student work: yes
13. Chair will oversee instructor participation in norming & assessment exercises: yes

**Core Learning Goal:** Artistic Understanding

**Application for Core Status:** English 102, Creative Writing
(in Fiction, Poetry, Creative Nonfiction, Drama or Screenwriting)

**Attachment 2: Learning**

**English 102, Creative Writing,** allows for an intensive exploration of the ideas, techniques and forms of creative writing with a primary emphasis on the careful analysis and discussion of student works-in-progress. Students read, analyze, and critique in writing a wide array of works by established writers that illustrate particular forms and demonstrate techniques as well as the manuscripts of work in progress by their peers, and in doing so, students grapple with questions relevant to a given genre: voice, point of view, dramatic movement, structure, rhythm, and imagery, as well as with any issues of art and craft that arise from individual manuscripts. Typically, students produce original work by turning in writing exercises every week and then revise between 10 and 20 pages of original work, using the forms and techniques discussed throughout the semester. By the end of the course, the students should develop the terminology and the critical skills for revising work in progress, and should develop a solid understanding about issues and trends in the given genre.

**How the course will guide students toward achieving the learning outcomes in artistic understanding:**

1 a) **Look at or read works of art:** Over the course of the semester, students read published literature by established writers in a given genre.

1 b) **Analyze/interpret form and meaning:** Over the course of the semester,
students write short critical papers analyzing how published writers employ the techniques studied in class. These critical writing assignments require students to demonstrate their understanding by citing specific examples from the texts and explaining these examples using the technical vocabulary introduced in the course.

1 c) Apply discipline-based vocabulary: In addition to the writing described above, which requires the use of technical vocabulary, students are required to explain the decisions made for their own revised work using this established vocabulary, often in the form of an author’s note.

1 d) Explore the artistic piece’s significance within appropriate contexts: In the creative writing classroom, the context is craft itself. While historic or other cultural contexts may be referenced in discussion, we present works of literature as products of a creative process undertaken by human beings. Thus, the question isn’t so much what a given work means but rather how a given work works—how it was crafted or put together and to what effect.

2 a) Participation in Creative Process: Students produce exercises designed to practice particular craft issues as well as manuscripts to be critiqued by the workshop participants as a whole. They also write critical responses on published work and to one another during writing workshops, focusing on specific techniques.

2 b) Production of an artifact appropriate to the discipline: Students revise their work for a final portfolio (typically 10 to 20 pages) to be turned in at the end of the semester. This piece or pieces are evaluated using professional criteria, typically articulated like this:

- **D**=Final draft differs little from the original exercise. (No significant additions, subtractions, rearrangements. No evidence the writer has applied the techniques presented in the class.)
- **C**=Final draft shows some development compared with the first and some attempt to apply the techniques presented in class. However, changes have not been smoothly integrated to make a coherent, polished whole. In addition, the piece may not accurately follow formal conventions as defined in the text or may suffer serious mechanical errors.
- **B**=Final draft shows significant development from the original exercise, by adding, deleting and re-arranging material. The writer has consciously applied lessons and techniques from class.
- **A**=Publication material. The final draft leaves little room for improvement because the writer has used the appropriate techniques, taken significant risk and followed the initial idea beyond the obvious.
Attachment 3: Learning

The Creative Writing Workshop is a literature-based workshop that introduces students to a particular genre of creative writing (fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, drama or screenwriting) and the primary techniques of craft within a genre: conflict and action, voice and character, setting and imagery, and so on. Some instructors use anthologies (such as In Brief: Short Takes on the Personal, edited by Judith Kitchen, or The Scribner Anthology of Contemporary Short Fiction edited by Lex Williford and Michael Martone); some use two or three books by different authors or six to eight plays or a course packet of materials culled from various sources. The reading list for each course provides the instructor with a concrete opportunity to introduce students to a range of writers and descriptions of the genre, and each list gives rise to extensive creative writing prompts that guide students to use readings as examples of how to write. Students read, analyze and critique these exemplary works through discussion and in writing. Students also revise work generated in the exercises to produce expanded and polished essays, stories, poems and dramas.

How coursework will be used to measure student learning in each of the core outcomes:

This course requires three different kinds of writing from students: brief analytic essays, open-ended exploratory creative writing exercises, and carefully revised original work. Each category of writing requires its own assessment criteria.

1. Critical, analytical essays are assessed with criteria that are similar to the Seminar and Composition rubrics.

2. Because the quality of creative work is subjective and instructors want to encourage students throughout the semester to take risks, work in progress is often graded according to the completion of the written work and how well a student follows directions. To evaluate final portfolios, some instructors use grades (A, B, C, D) while others use point systems or assessment criteria that correspond with grading criteria, such as a four-point scale equivalent to letter grades.

1=Fails to demonstrate an understanding of the exercise’s purpose

2=Demonstrates some understanding of the exercise’s purpose in the attempt to execute a technique or write in a particular form

3=Clearly demonstrates a grasp of the exercise’s purpose, successfully executes the technique or form.

4=Demonstrates a grasp of the exercise’s purpose, successfully executes the technique or form. Portfolios ranked 4 will show much evidence of initiative and
imagination characterized by a willingness to take risks, to go beyond what’s assigned and follow creative sparks where they may lead.

3. Assessing revised work requires examination of the “total package” students submit: the original exercise, feedback from peers and/or the instructor, interim drafts, final draft and author’s note. The author’s note requires students to reflect on the process that produced the work and to demonstrate how they are applying the lessons of the course. Some instructors use grades (A, B, C, D) and others use a numbering system that corresponds with grading criteria:

D / 1=Final draft differs little from the original exercise. (No significant additions, subtractions, rearrangements. No evidence the writer has applied the techniques presented in the class.)

C / 2=Final draft shows some development compared with the first and some attempt to apply the techniques presented in class. However, changes have not been smoothly integrated to make a coherent, polished whole. In addition, the piece may not accurately follow formal conventions as defined in the text or may suffer serious mechanical errors.

B / 3=Final draft shows significant development from the original exercise, by adding, deleting and re-arranging material. The writer has consciously applied lessons and techniques from class.

A / 4=Publication material. The final draft leaves little room for improvement because the writer has used the appropriate techniques, taken significant risk and followed the initial idea beyond the obvious.