Course Description: This second semester course is designed as a follow-up course to Imaginative Writing I, which should have been taken as a prerequisite, unless the student can submit a portfolio of either fiction or poetry to show that s/he is ready for the demands of this class. This course differs from the first one in that the poets or fiction writers will work strictly on their own specialty and not cross over assignments as happened in the first semester. This allows for greater generation of material, better focus on revision and completion of projects, totally 20 pages of quality material—chapters of a novel, new short stories, or a chapbook of poetry. While it is possible to do both assignments for the whole semester, it is better for students who know their interest—poetry or prose—to stick to their main, and most comfortable, medium. Two other major objectives of this course will be the booklet we will put together at the end of the term with an emphasis on sending out material to get it published outside of the school booklet. These will be elaborated on as the semester progresses. Also, I will ask each of you to take a short story from the Writing Fiction book or a long poem from the Writing Poetry book and write up a one-page analysis of the elements present in it and then explain those elements to the rest of the class.

Required Texts and Supplies:
-- Writing Fiction, by Janet Burroway, 6th Edition
-- Writing Poetry, by Barbara Drake, 2nd Edition
-- access to a typewriter or computer for all official assignments
-- a three-ring binder in which you can keep all your assignments
-- a Three-hole punch for preparing work to keep in three-ring binder
-- small photocopy budget!!!!

Late Work: It is important to turn in all your work on time for at least two good reasons: one, I will be able to respond to your work and thus get it back to you faster if it is on time, thus allowing for greater improvement in subsequent assignments; two, you need to get used to meeting deadlines if you ever want to publish anything.

Inclement Weather: If the college is closed due to inclement weather, the announcement will be made on the local radio/TV stations or you can call #619-4377. Be sure to check before driving in any hazardous conditions. (As I will be coming from Fayetteville, I will be doing the same.)

Attendance: As described in the NWACC College Catalog, attendance is very important in this course. Since this class is a workshop and every meeting is important, after THREE absences, you will automatically FAIL this course. If you are sick, you should contact me and find out what you missed—being absent is no excuse for missing assignment deadlines. Call and leave a message for me, and I will get back to you. Staying in contact, whether you miss all or part of a class, is the best way to keep up with the work load. This attendance policy is for this class and should not be compared to any other, especially one which emphasizes more of a lecture format. In order to make this policy fair for everyone, it is NOT NEGOTIABLE under any circumstances, for any reasons.
Grading system: I will use a portfolio grading system for this course. By this I mean that each individual poem or scene, or revision of either, will not receive a letter grade. Instead, I will give you extensive written feedback on how to revise the scene and possibly how to edit it for greater strength and precision of language. (I will act more as an editor in this course, but I will still act as a coach, encouraging you to explore, improve and try out new ideas and methods to see how they work in your writing.) This class, like many other writing workshops, will attempt to develop a sound creative and editing process which will remain with you long after the semester ends. The portfolio system allows you to arrange your work from best to worst and to worry about improving the material rather than the grade. At the end of the term, you can arrange your work from strongest to weakest or from best to worst or any other scheme you design. This gives you a greater sense of control over your own grade and the final self-assessment you will write in lieu of a final exam will add to this arrangement your own logic and overview of your own performance. Grading in this manner should help de-emphasize competition and help foster cooperation, which is necessary for any workshop to function well.

Since this is a workshop, half of your grade (50%) will be determined by how you perform in class--critiques of each others’ work, class participation, reaction and responding to homework, etc. The other half of the grade (50%) will be based on the writing assignments of the course--the poems OR the short story with particular emphasis on revision. Be sure to keep everything you write all term long, no matter how little you might like any particular version of any piece. In no way will any work ever be compared to any other student’s work, so the Portfolio System emphasizes improvement from one assignment to the next, from one version of an assignment to another. No improvement and satisfactory completion of all assignments would mean a grade of “C” for the writing component of the course. Vast improvement from one assignment to another or from one version of an piece to another would assure an “A” grade in this component of the course.

If you ever have any questions about this method or want an approximate grade on any assignment, feel free to talk to me during office hours or leave a message on my voice mail and I will be sure to get back to you. Remember both the Quality and the Quantity of your work that determines how well you do in this class.

***NOTE: While I intend this class to be fun, I hope that you take it seriously. Please remember that you are in a workshop where the feeling of others are exposed in their work. Treat each other courteously and you will receive the same and the workshop will run more smoothly. If you get into personal friendships or grievances which exclude others, the whole nature of the workshop is diminished. Some of you will be new to this course based on portfolio placement and will need time to get to know the rest of the students in class. If at any time you feel as if the class is running around you instead of with you, let me know or address the class as it happens.

Most of you, however, will know each other and me from the previous term. This can be a hindrance or an aid. Be sure to welcome the new people and to change seats each week as you sit in class, not sitting with and talking to the same people week after week. In order for a workshop to run smoothly, everyone needs to be comfortable with each other. Get to know the new people and make new friends--feel as comfortable with them as the people you already know from the last term.

Finally, if you ever feel that I have done something inappropriate or written something you don’t like or understand on one of your pieces, please see me during office hours rather than in class. If my office hours are inconvenient, set up a special appointment. Times before, during or after class are really inappropriate for a private discussion of your work. Class time needs to be devoted to the entire class and the activities that will benefit everyone.