

CRW1101, Beginning Fiction Writing, Class #13093, Spring 2019

Meets: Mondays 12:50 p.m. to 3:50 p.m.. Matherly 0151

Instructor: Elizabeth Yerkes

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Office Hours: Mondays 4:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.; Thursdays 8 a.m. to 9 a.m.; and by appointment

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Description:

This course will concern itself with short fiction.

In the first half of the course, we will discuss readings to understand how short stories are made and how they function. In the second half of the course, we will continue to develop our understanding of how stories work, and we'll conduct workshops of student writing. We will apply the same critical skills to student work that we apply to readings.

Students will write one short story and a revision. Almost every week, students will write a critical response.

Please note:

1) I assume students use a dictionary and style guide. Suggested: Merriam-Webster dictionary; The Chicago Manual of Style.

2) In the event that I make changes to assignments, I will let you know in advance.

Objectives: for students to read as writers and to make better fiction than when they began the class.

General Education Objectives:

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C), and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- *Composition courses* provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. Written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6,000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.

- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Course Policies:

1. Credit: You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.

2. Attendance: You are allowed one absence without explanation, but do not miss the class in which your story will be workshopped. Only those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics, band, and religious holidays are exempted from this policy. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor prior to the date that will be missed.

Skipping your workshop class will result in a failing grade for that story.

Missing a second class reduces your final grade by a full letter. You will fail the course if you miss a third class. Arriving late twice to class will count as an absence.

3. Assignment Format and Submission:

Format: Double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font. Pages must be numbered. One staple goes in the upper left-hand corner. Title everything. Your name goes on Page One.

Submission: Hard copy. Bring enough copies of your workshop story for all in the class. Late assignments will not be accepted.

4. Classroom Behavior: Please keep in mind that UF students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some texts that we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diverse backgrounds and provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal—and accordingly, absence—from the class.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are not allowed in class. You may not text in class. You may not have your phone out on your desk during class. Please put your phone away.

Laptops, etc.: Laptops, iPads etc. are not allowed in class (see cell phone policy above). If you have a special reason you must use a laptop or an iPad, please let me know before the course begins.

Missed class: The best way to catch up is to get notes from a classmate.

5. Paper Maintenance Responsibilities: Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester ends.

Course Policies: Additional Information:

6. Academic Honesty: Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

7. Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352) 392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/, which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.

8. **UF Grading policies:** see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

9. **Grade Appeals.** In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

10. **Course Evaluations.** Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

11. **Counseling Center:** Students who face difficulties completing the course or who are in need of counseling or urgent help may call the on-campus Counseling and Wellness Center (352) 392-1575, or contact them online: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

12. **Harassment:** UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty: <http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/recruitment-staffing/institutional-equity-diversity/resources/harassment/>

Grading scale:

- A: 93-100
- A-: 90-92
- B+: 87-89
- B: 83-86
- B-: 80-82
- C+: 77-79
- C: 73-76
- C-: 70-72
- D+: 67-69
- D: 63-66
- D-: 60-62
- E: 0-59

Texts:

Making Shapely Fiction, Jerome Stern
Short stories – on Canvas

Format:

Reading: Short stories, chapters from text, classmates' workshop manuscripts

Writing: 6,000 words of critical response, one story and one revision

Discussion: Critiquing texts, essays, stories, and the work of your classmates

Graded Assignments:

Class Participation: 20%

Reading comprises half of the assignment, in-class discussion the other half.

Ten Critical Responses: 60%

Choose one literary term listed at the end of this syllabus and analyze the reading for the week using that concept. If more than one reading is assigned that week, read all assignments but write a response to one of them.

Each response should be 600 words (no more, no less.) By the end of the semester, this will account for 6,000 words of critical analysis. See p. 2, formatting requirements, "Course Policies/Assignment Format & Submission".

Please turn in hard copies at class on the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted.

I'll evaluate critical responses by: demonstrated reading of the stories/chapters; critical thinking; depth of analysis; engagement with the discussion of craft. See p. 7, for a General Rubric.

Ideal critical responses will do several things:

- *Make a claim about our reading based on Stern's ideas or those we discussed in class. The claim should attempt to get at the effect of the story through a discussion of the choices the writer made in telling the story.

- *Provide support for the claim from within the story.

- *Cite specific words in the text that made you think what you thought and that support your point.

- *Analyze the claim and the text. Answer the question, "So what?" i.e. what does this mean within the context of the work as a whole? How does this section contribute to the writer's overall intent?

De gustibus non est disputandum: Please do not rate stories with remarks based on taste, such as "I liked this."

Short Stories: 20%

Students will write one short story and one revision. Each is worth 10%. The story and revision will be graded according to the same criteria as the writing exercises (see above). Stories should show clarity, attention to language, and a developing understanding of the building blocks of fiction writing as discussed in Stern's text and in class.

Manuscripts must be delivered to the class the week before they are to be workshopped. There is no late delivery. There is no switching. If you are unable to turn in the story on time, a full letter grade will be deducted from your final grade. Please bring enough copies for everyone.

On workshop days, it is expected that you will have read the submitted piece carefully, at least once, and spent time formulating responses to it. Write your responses on the hard copy of the story to return to that week's submitter(s). Please do not use your time to copy-edit or proofread your classmates' pieces.

This class, and especially the workshop, will be a safe place where everyone should feel encouraged and welcome to share their thoughts. Participation of those who fail to respect their classmates' thoughts/feelings will be graded accordingly.

This is creative work in development. Please do not discuss classmates' stories outside of class unless it is with the concerned party.

ASSIGNMENTS CRW 1101: Fiction Writing, Class# 13093, Spring 2019

Week	<i>Topics / Assignment</i>	Due
1	<i>Introduction. Claims.</i> / Read the syllabus. Bring a hard copy of it to class.	
2	<i>Day in the Life. Gathering.</i> Workshop dates assigned. Stern: pp. 25-29 William Trevor: “Torrige” – Required Amy Hempel: “The Rest of God”- Recommended	CR1
3	<i>Facade.</i> Stern: pp 79-138; pp. 5-7 Padgett Powell: “Mao” & Eudora Welty: “Why I Live at the PO” – Required Trevor: <i>A Complicated Nature</i> – Recommended	CR2
4	<i>Aha.</i> Stern: pp. 139-198; pp. 40-44 Trevor: “The Dressmaker’s Child”– Required Ernest Hemingway: “The Short Happy Life Of Francis Macomber”– Recommended Janette Turner Hospital: “A Little Night Music”– Recommended	CR3
5	<i>Aha .ctd.</i> Stern: pp. 199-255 Edwidge Danticat: “Without Inspection”– Required Anne Enright: “The Portable Virgin”– Required K.J. Orr: “The Shallows”– Recommended Grace Paley: “Wants”– Recommended	CR4 Workshop Stories1 for next week
6	<i>Blue Moon. Journey. Visitation.</i> Stern: pp. 31-39, 51-53, 61-76 Joy Williams: “Lulu”; “Stuff”. – Required Workshop stories 1	CR5 Workshop Stories2
7	<i>Journey. Visitation. ctd</i> Stern: pp. 33-39 Edward Loomis: “Young Love”– Required Miranda July: “Something that Needs Nothing”– Recommended Rebecca Makkai: “The November Story”– Recommended Workshop stories2	CR6 Workshop Stories3
8	<i>Last Lap. Trauma. Satire.</i> Stern: pp. 15 – 21 Denis Johnson: “The Starlight on Idaho”– Required Nikolai Gogol: “The Nose”– Recommended Workshop stories3	CR7 Workshop Stories4

9	No Class – Spring Break	
10	<i>Juggling.</i> Stern: pp. 8-11 Peter Taylor: “The Gift of the Prodigal”– Required Hempel: “The Afterlife”– Recommended Workshop stories4	CR8 Workshop Stories5
11	<i>Frame Story. Vignette. Short shorts. Flash.</i> Stern: review pp. 135-137 Guy De Maupassant: “The Hand”– Required Hempel: “In The Animal Shelter”– Required Christine Schutt: “Where You Live, When You Need Me”– Required A. M. Homes: “Things You Should Know”– Recommended Makkai: “Other Brands of Poison”– Recommended Ashton Politanoff: “One End and Aim”– Recommended Workshop stories5	CR9 Workshop Stories6
12	<i>Short story. Novel. Humor.</i> Carmen Maria Machado: “The Husband Stitch”– Required Brian Evenson: “Any Corpse”– Recommended Workshop stories6	CR10 Workshop Stories7
13	<i>Onion.</i> Stern: pp. 30-32 Hospital: “Isobars”– Required Clarice Lispector: “The Crime of the Mathematics Teacher” – Required Workshop stories7	Workshop Stories8
14	<i>Specimen. Endings. Experiment.</i> Stern: pp. 21-24; review pp. 124-126 Flannery O’Connor: “Good Country People”– Required Barry Hannah: “Water Liars”– Recommended Alain Robbe-Grillet: “The Beach”– Recommended Workshop stories8	Workshop Stories9
15	<i>Final class. Encouragement.</i> / Review Stern: pp. 55-57; Final Workshops9	
16	(Thursday) Revision due by 12 noon in my Turlington mailbox	Revision

Terms for Critical Response

Accuracy	Imagination	Premise
Ambiguity	Immediacy	Psychic Distance
Anti-Hero	Interior Monologue	Realism
Atmosphere	Irony	Resolution
Beginnings	Metaphor	Revision
Character	Mise-En-Scene	Scene
Cliche	Motif	Sentimentality
Convention	Names	Showing and Telling
Crisis	Narrative	Simile
Description	Narrator	Stereotype
Dialogue	Negative Positive Knowledge	Subtlety
Diction	Objective Correlative	Suspense
Endings	Plot	Suspension of Disbelief
Epiphany	Point of View	Symbolism
Exposition		Tension
Flashback		Texture
Frame Story		Transitions
Hero		Voice
Imagery		

Critical Response Evaluation Rubric

A: Contains extended analysis of the texts and develops original, sophisticated ideas. Has exceptionally well-crafted paragraphs, a thesis, a persuasive organizational structure (e.g., brief introduction, body, brief conclusion), well-supported claims, and appropriate and effective stylistic elements.

B: Contains extended analysis of the texts and develops original, sophisticated ideas. Has well-crafted paragraphs, a thesis, a persuasive organizational structure (e.g., brief introduction, body, brief conclusion), well-supported claims, and appropriate and effective stylistic elements.

C: Contains some analysis of the texts and develops some original ideas about them. Has adequately well-crafted paragraphs, a thesis, a persuasive organizational structure (e.g., brief introduction, body, brief conclusion), adequately-supported claims, and some appropriate stylistic elements.

D: Contains minimal analysis of the texts. May lack well-crafted paragraphs, a thesis, and/or a persuasive organizational structure. Fails to adequately support its claims and/or use appropriate stylistic elements.

E: Lacks analysis of the text, and therefore fails to demonstrate reading and/or comprehension.