

CRW 2100, Spring 2016, Section 132A, DAU 0342, W 9-11

Fiction Writing

Instructor: Elliot Reed: elliott.w.reed@ufl.edu; Office Location & Hours:

TURLINGTON 4315 - Wednesdays - 1:30-3:30 pm

Goals of this class:

- You will leave this course writing better than you did upon entry.
- You will leave this course reading better than you did upon entry.
- You will leave this course with an understanding of the wide variety of styles, forms, modes, methods, tricks, traps, and tropes available to the short-story writer.
- You will leave this course with some semblance of an appreciation for the historical progression of the short story as a fictional form.

Course Policies and Requirements:

Required Text:

The Art of the Story: An International Anthology of Contemporary Short Stories edited by Daniel Halpern (Penguin)

I will furnish other texts as PDFs or handouts as needed.

Recommended Reinforcements:

Should you find you need practice in grammar or academic argumentative style, use:

1. Purdue's Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>
2. Strunk & White's *Elements of Style* handbook

General Requirements:

- This class involves some public speaking. You will be called on to read your writing.
- This class involves copious reading.
- This class involves copious writing.
 - Around 40 pages of critical writing
 - i. Part formal academic, part slightly-less-formal
 - Around 20 pages of creative writing
 - i. Part formal, part free-form
- This class involves a portfolio.

Specific Requirements Through Week Seven:

By the start of each class period, you are expected to have completed the following tasks:

1. Read one or more short stories
2. Compose a two-page critical response based on the reading (can be longer)
3. Compose a two-page attempt at narrative writing inspired by the reading

During each class period, you will be held accountable for your work in the following ways:

1. You will be asked to **read aloud** what you've written for class that day
2. You will be asked to complete a **quiz** based on the reading
3. You will be asked to **turn in paper copies** of the writing you did for the day

Specific Requirements, Weeks 7-14:

For each class period, you will have completed the following tasks:

1. Read four short stories written by your peers
2. Compose four one-page letters of constructive criticism in response to each of the stories written by your peers
3. Read one or more short stories, not written by your peers, assigned by me

During each class period, you will be held accountable for your work in the following ways:

1. Discuss the story I've assigned, or be quizzed on its content, if I've assigned one
2. Constructively and maturely discuss the works created by your peers

Classroom policies and procedures:

- No cell phones or laptops. If you use them, you will be asked to leave the class and you will be marked absent.
- Attendance is required.
 - You may miss one class for any reason.
 - When a second class is missed, you are maxed-out. Each further absence drops your grade by 5%.
 - 10 mins late = absent for that period
 - 2 tardies = 1 absence
 - A few absences due to illness or family crisis will be excused if documented to the instructor's satisfaction. Even documented absences will not be excused if many or prolonged. Students participating in a university-sponsored event (athletics, theater, music, field trip) will be excused if there is documentation from an appropriate authority. Students excused from an absence are not excused from the work assigned for a class session; the work must still be submitted on-time, usually, in the case of illness, electronically.
- Late papers are not accepted.
- You cannot make up reading quizzes.
- There are certain topics which you will not write about in this class. I will apprise you of these forbidden topics on day one.
- Assignments must be typed and printed or hand-written in legible (black or blue) pen or #2 pencil. However you choose to compose them, you must bring your assignments to class and have them on mydesk within 5 minutes of the start of class time in order to receive any credit.

TENTATIVE GRADING BREAKDOWN - 1000 POINTS TOTAL

Evaluated Item (# of item x worth of points)	Total Points
Reading quizzes (10x10 pts)	100
Metacognitive (1 x 50 pts)	50
Two-page critical response papers (6 x 25 pts)	150
Two-page narrative experimentation papers (6 x 25 pts)	150
Two to four-page short stories (2 x 100 pts)	200
One-page critical response letters (30 x 10 pts)	300
Revision of own short story (1 x 50 pts)	50
Total Points	1000

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Date	Assignments Due	Reading Assignments Made
1/6		On the Golden Porch—Tolstaya The Green Man-Winterson
1/13	2 pg. critical response 2 pg. narrative attempt	TB A
1/20	2 pg. critical response, 2 pg. narrative attempt	TB A
1/27	2 pg. critical response, 2 pg. narrative attempt	TB A
2/3	2 pg. critical response, 2 pg. narrative attempt	TB A
2/10	2 pg. critical response, 2 pg. narrative attempt	TB A
2/17	2 pg. critical response, 2 pg. narrative attempt, 4 pg story (4x)	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
2/24	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
3/2	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
3/9	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
3/16	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
3/23	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA

3/30	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
4/6	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg Stories Anthology: TBA
4/13	4 pg story (4x), 4 pages of critical response	4x4pg stories Anthology: TBA
4/20	Last day or workshop	

GENERAL WRITING GUIDELINES

for the critical and narrative writing you 7/ be doing in CRW2100

Critical essays:

- These are essays about craft primarily, theme secondarily
 - o How does the author talk, not: what does the author talk *about*?
 - o How do the characters talk, not: what do the characters talk *about*?
 - o "Formal" over "thematic"
- If you address thematic elements, you must say something new and interesting
- Your instructor has ZERO interest in reading summary
- There are four grades possible (points reflected in case of 2pg assignments)
 - o 25
 - If themes addressed, new ideas were presented
 - Where craft addressed, observations were followed by 'so, what'
 - Paper provided insight into craft that is useful to an aspiring author
 - Meets two-page minimum length (500 words)
 - Zero or very near zero sentences were summary
 - o 22, B+
 - Does not meet minimum length.
 - Themes addressed, maybe too much so, or maybe the ideas were simplistic
 - "This story is about a broken hearted man."
 - o Vs
 - "This story shows how small moments can revive the pain of a heartbreak that occurred in the past, how something very small trigger something very big."
 - o Vs
 - Craft was addressed, but not with enough 'so, what,'
 - "Carver used dialogue well." **(this says nothing)**
 - o Vs
 - "Carver used clichéd dialogue to show how doomed Leo was—effectively foreshadowing his demise and increasing the tension in the story." **(this is an "A" paper comment)**
 - Where craft was addressed, the insights could hardly be useful to an aspiring author

- "Trevor has his characters speak jargon because he's from Ireland and that's what he grew up with so it sounds very realistic."

- o Vs

- "Trevor's characters speak in a way that reflects their class and upbringing. In this way, simple dialog can do major characterization work."

- o 18, C

- The author provided two pages of mostly comprehensible meditations, expressed in written English, which reflected, in some general way, the fact that the author had read the assigned short story. Themes may have been addressed at length. Summary may have been provided.

- o 0-18

- Not turned in, or partially done and turned in, or mostly done but mostly incomprehensible, or totally done and near-totally incomprehensible

Narrative Experiments—If it's not fun to read it can't have been fun to write

- 25

- o Author wrote an entertaining, clean narrative, or

- o Author wrote a story that reflected tactic or voice learned from an assigned story, or

- o Author wrote a story that was, independent of the assigned stories, **good**

- Good in this case means free of mechanical errors, free of tense confusion, free of cliché, free of paper-doll characters, and felt new.

- 22

- o Author wrote an entertaining story that was not so clean

- o Author wrote a story that was perfectly clean but not very entertaining

- Author did not have fun or challenge him or herself while authoring

- Author evidently made work at the last minute

- o Author wrote a story that could in some way be defended as having sprung from the fingerprint of an assigned story, but nonetheless was not very entertaining and that could not have been much fun to write

- o Something is vibrant, whether it be voice, character, plot, or setting.

- 18

- o The author provided two pages of mostly comprehensible meditations, expressed in written English, which reflected, in some general way, the fact that the author had attempted to write a short story. There may have been some kind of a plot, or character, or setting, but none of these could be described as vibrant.

- 0-18

- o Not turned in, or partially done and turned in, or mostly done but mostly incomprehensible, or totally done and near-totally incomprehensible

Also, note the following:

- This is a General Education course providing student learning outcomes listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.
- This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities. For more information, see:
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/uqrad/current/advising/info/general-education-requirement.asp>
- This course can provide 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing. For more information, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/uqrad/current/advising/info/gordon.aspx>
- The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>
- UF provides an educational and working environment that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment for its students, staff, and faculty. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/sexual/>
- All students must abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>
- Students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant. Appealed grades may result in a higher, lower, or unchanged grade.