

CRW1100, Summer 2016, Section 4229, MAT 0251, Weekdays, 10:40 AM

Introductory Fiction Writing

Instructor: Elliot Reed: elliott.w.reed@ufl.edu

Office Location & Hours: Turlington 4315, hours TBA

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 a greater 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) 0140296387

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

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.
 - o Around 40 pages of critical writing during the semester
 - i. Part formal academic, part slightly-less-formal
 - o Around 20 pages of creative writing
 - i. Part formal, part free-form during the semester
- This class involves a portfolio.

Please note:

Some of the work we will read may contain content that some students may find offensive or upsetting. No one will ever be forced to read something aloud in class that they find offensive or upsetting. If, however, you do not wish to encounter such content at all, please do not take this class.

Specific Requirements, part one:

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 one-page critical response based on the reading (can be longer)

3. Compose a one-page attempt at narrative writing inspired by the reading
4. Take a short, online quiz over the content of the day's stories

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 **turn in paper copies** of the writing you did for the day

Specific Requirements, part two:

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

1. Read up to four short stories written by your peers
2. Compose up to 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
 - a. You will electronically submit your "workshop letters"

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 may be used during class meeting times. If you use them, you will be asked to leave the class and you will be marked absent.
- Attendance is required.
 - o You may miss three classes for any reason.
 - o When a third class is missed, you are maxed-out. Each further absence drops your grade by 5%. Punctuality counts, and is binary—you are either on time, or you are late.
 - 10 mins late = absent for that period
 - 2 tardies = 1 absence
 - o 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.**

Class Participation: 10% (100 points)

Doing the reading is only half the assignment. In-class discussion of the material is the other half. Students who do not bring to class hard copies of stories we are reading or work that is due for that class meeting will be marked absent.

On workshop days it is expected that you will come to class having read each piece carefully *at least once*, and that you have spent time formulating a **written and printed** response to it. I urge you to read the piece once, without marking it, before writing your marginal notes during the second read. In addition to your marginal comments in ink or pencil, attach your written response to the author's story with a staple. In addition, provide me with a copy of your written response. These written responses will form part of your participation grade.

In-class discussion, preparedness (including timely response to all class emails), and (especially) engagement/attitude are all parts of participation. A writing workshop should be a safe place where everyone should feel encouraged and welcome to share their thoughts—the participation of those who fail to respect their peers' thoughts/feelings will be graded accordingly.

formatting:

Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman

Each assignment will be submitted at the beginning of class in double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman (Or Calibri or Courier New) font. Pages must be numbered. One staple goes in the upper-left-hand corner. There must be a title, something beyond "First Critical Analysis." (For critical analyses the title must be interesting and informative; for stories, well, do your best.) You are responsible for photocopying your workshoped stories. Each formatting failure will result in a 5% deduction on the grade of that assignment. Assignments that are not stapled will not be accepted.

TENTATIVE GRADING BREAKDOWN - 1000 POINTS TOTAL

| Evaluated Item | Total Points |
|---|--------------|
| Reading quizzes | 100 |
| Metacognitive | 50 |
| Participation | 100 |
| One-page critical response papers | 150 |
| One-page narrative experimentation papers | 150 |
| Two to four-page short stories | 150 |
| One-page critical response letters | 300 |
| Total Points | 1000 |

GENERAL WRITING GUIDELINES

for the critical and narrative writing you'll be doing in \ORW1100;

Commented [HTA1]: CRW 1101?

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 a summary of the text
- There are four grades possible
 - o Best
 - 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 Better
 - 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 can trigger something very big."
 - 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 Average
 - The author provided 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 Poor
 - 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

- Best
 - 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.
- Better
 - 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.
- Average
 - 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.
- Poor
 - 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/uarad/current/advisina/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/uarad/current/advisina/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/scsr/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.

A LIST OF KEYWORDS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR CRITICAL ANALYSES

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