

## CRW 2100: Advanced Fiction-Writing

[Wednesdays, 4-7 PM, Section 0121]

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*Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:00-12:00, Turlington 4307 (& by appointment over Zoom)*

Who doesn't like a good story? Somewhere along the line, we've all probably had a friend, or family member, or at least an encountered stranger, who knows how to tell 'em. They start, usually, somewhere before the beginning, with a nibble of context, of intrigue, some surprising detail which might, just might, re-inject itself at a crucial moment—and then they'll chatter along in the lunch room, at Thanksgiving dinner, in the break room, the playground, the bus stop, the quieter room of a party—anywhere voices can visit ears without too much trouble—and before we know it, we've happily deferred our minds to a different world, “hanging on to their every word,” “at the edge of our seat,” etc. Doubtlessly, some percentage of their speech is high-caliber bullshit created merely to entertain.

Writing a story isn't so different from telling it aloud—but we can expect more of an intentioned reader than we can an offhand listener, and we can take as much time as we like to put the tale together, so there are more options available to us as storytellers. We process more information with greater precision when we're reading: phrases, sentences, and entire stories can (and in the best cases *should*) be re-read—good writers account for this and create something overfull with possibilities. A story should be interesting and available to a casual reader (even the most subtly composed story should be *enjoyable* to hear aloud) but it should contain more than can be taken in all at once. A bit of mystery, a bit of difficulty or resistance—this is what “hooks” an audience and gives the story its method of internal propulsion.

In this class, we'll focus on writing very short stories. I won't have you write anything longer than 1,500 words—but this means the standards for every sentence are high. I expect that you not turn in any first, or in most cases second, drafts. Typos, grammar & usage errors, and sloppiness of any kind will severely impact your grade. Expect to read 100 to 150 pages per week and demonstrate comprehension via discussion posts and contribution to class discussion.

### Required Texts

1. Roberto Bolaño, *By Night in Chile* [Trans. Chris Andrews] (2000)
2. Stories & novel excerpts uploaded to Canvas.

### Note on Class Organization

This class will be held over Zoom. To (1) make our three-hour class period less painful and (2) increase the chance that you'll get a sense of who your classmates are, the class will be split into two groups. Group A will meet from 4:00 to 5:20, and Group B will meet from 5:40 to 7:00.

## Assignments Overview

### Stories

You will turn in six short stories (minimum of 750 words, no more than 1,500) over the course of the semester. I will grade your stories on effort, grammar, timeliness, and completion of the prompt, if there is one. Stories must be titled, double-spaced, in a not-ugly 12-point serif font like Times New Roman or Garamond.

*Note: It's pretty easy (for someone who spends a lot of time reading) to tell if a story comes from ChatGPT or any other LLM. If you try to pass off AI-generated text as your own writing, you will fail my class. Full stop, no re-dos.*

### Revisions

This is the “final.” You’ll pick one of your six stories to substantively revise and expand to a minimum of 1,500 words, and turn in your revision alongside a copy of the original, plus a 200-400-word artist’s statement clarifying your intentions and aspirations for the story.

### Canvas Discussion Posts

Short responses to the readings. Assignment content will vary by week. The purpose of these assignments is to show me that you have done the required reading—and done so thoughtfully. Typically, this means writing 250-500 words in response to some question or prompt and replying to three of your classmates’ posts.

### Points Distribution

If you (1) come to class, (2) participate, (3) do all the readings, and (4) thoughtfully complete all assignments, you can expect an “A.” On all assignments, students are graded individually and holistically. If, for instance, English is your second language, I may grade your writing mechanics with an eye to improvement rather than technical precision.

Assignment	Minimum Word Count	Points
Stories (x6)	750	100 (x6)
Participation & Attendance	N/A	250
Canvas Disc. Posts	Varies by Assignment, N/A	50 (x12)
Final Revision	1,500	150
Totals:	6,000	1,000

## Course Policies

1. Pay attention. If your video is off, I will assume you are not in class. If your video is on and I can tell that you are not paying attention, it is as if you are not in class (see attendance policy below at #4).
2. Participation is key, both to your grade and to the success of our class. This means you should come ready to share your thoughts on readings, be attentive during lectures, and provide considerate feedback on one another's writing. I will keep track of who speaks and who doesn't—and **if you do not speak (thoughtfully, with consideration and regularity), you do not get attendance credit.**
3. All submitted work must be your own. **If you turn in AI-written or AI-assisted work, your grade is immediately capped at an F (50%).** (And yes, I can tell if a story comes from ChatGPT.)
4. You must attend class. We're a small group (rather, we are two small groups), and we meet only once a week. If you aren't here, or are inattentive, the rest of us will suffer! You get one free unexcused absence, no questions asked—**any additional unexcused absences result in a 6.25% (1/16) deduction to your final grade per absence** (so, one additional unexcused absence brings you from an A- to a B, etc.).
5. Late work is not accepted. Things need to be turned in for the class to run smoothly. If you are facing an emergency and need more time for an assignment, let me know.
6. Be kind. Sharing creative work with others is an intimate thing. Be conscious of this fact, and conduct yourself with sensitivity and tact. Criticism is the point of workshop (no suggestions, nothing accomplished), but it should be specific and constructive. Try to mention a strength of the story before you say anything else.

## Schedule

Date	Agenda	Reading / Homework
Week 1 Jan. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• How to Read</li> </ul>	
Week 2 Jan. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Interest &amp; the Sound of Words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welty: <i>One Writer's Beginnings</i></li> <li>• Joyce &amp; Lispector</li> <li>• Evens: Submit Story 1</li> </ul>
Week 3 Jan. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fabulous Fictions</li> <li>• Evens' Workshop #1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheever, Kafka, Gogol</li> <li>• Odds: Submit Story 1</li> </ul>
Week 4 Feb. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plot &amp; Suspense</li> <li>• Odds' Workshop #1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• O'Connor, Melville, Gass</li> <li>• Evens: Submit Story 2</li> </ul>

Week 5 Feb. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funny Stuff</li> <li>• Evens' Workshop #2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pynchon, Twain, Johnson</li> <li>• Odds: Submit Story 2</li> </ul>
Week 6 Feb. 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Odds' Workshop #2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welty, Wallace, Schulz</li> <li>• Evens: Submit Story 3</li> </ul>
Week 7 Feb. 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Evens' Workshop #3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sterne &amp; Cervantes</li> <li>• Odds: Submit Story 3</li> </ul>
Week 8 Mar. 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Odds' Workshop #3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dostoyevsky &amp; Tolstoy</li> <li>• Evens: Submit Story 4</li> </ul>
Week 9 Mar. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Evens' Workshop #4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calvino &amp; Barthelme</li> <li>• Odds: Submit Story 4</li> </ul>
Week 10 Mar. 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK</li> </ul>	
Week 11 Mar. 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Odds' Workshop #4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Saunders &amp; Russell</li> <li>• Evens: Submit Story 5</li> </ul>
Week 12 Apr. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Evens' Workshop #5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paley &amp; DeLillo</li> <li>• Odds: Submit Story 5</li> </ul>
Week 13 Apr. 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Odds' Workshop #5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gurganis &amp; Cortazar</li> <li>• Evens: Submit Story 6</li> </ul>
Week 14 Apr. 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Evens' Workshop #6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bolaño</li> <li>• Odds: Submit Story 6</li> </ul>
Week 15 Apr. 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss Reading</li> <li>• Odds' Workshop #6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bolaño</li> </ul>
Week 16 Apr. 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NO CLASS, FINALS WEEK</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit Final Revision</li> </ul>

### Grading Scale

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	0-59

For information on UF Grading policies, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## General Education Objectives

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C) and 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. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 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.

## University-Specific Policies

1. UF's policy on Sexual Harassment: The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards all members of the community: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/>

2. Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.'" The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code->

[student-conduct-code/](#)) specifies several behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

UF Student Honor Code:

- a. Student must not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.
- b. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous submission of the student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the faculty to whom it is submitted.
- c. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.

3. Accommodations: Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>), which will provide appropriate documentation to give your instructor early in the semester.

4. Crisis: Students who are in distress or who need counseling or urgent help: please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to you. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center offers additional support: 352-392-1575, or contact them online: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

5. 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). Please contact Ms. Blount at [cblount@ufl.edu](mailto:cblount@ufl.edu) Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

6. Course Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages requesting that you do this online: <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>