

University of Florida
Department of English CRW: 11869
Advanced Seminar Workshop
in Fiction Writing

Instructor: K. Blasco Solér
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Office Hours: TBD
Zoom Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/my/kblascosoler>

Class Location: Flint Hall Rm 0113
Mondays Period 9-11 (4:05-7:05 PM)
Office Location: via Zoom / by appt

Course Description

This small creative writing intensive is geared toward those who have been developing their craft in previous workshops and who want to deepen their experience of fiction writing. A significant part of the course is devoted to building writerly community, which includes fostering open discussion and the negotiation of mutual trust, cultivating tactful and constructive feedback, and encouraging creative risks. We will engage with each other's writing and writing life in an attentive, patient, and comprehensive way that addresses elements of storytelling, style, and inspiration. There will be opportunities for generative writing experiments and reflections on habitus (how we perceive ourselves as writers). *To hear each other (the sound of different voices), to listen to one another, is an exercise in recognition.* – bell hooks

Workshops

Writers will offer two new fiction short stories or novel excerpts (one piece per two rounds of workshops for everyone). Round one will be scheduled during the first half of the semester and round two during the final half of the semester in the same order to ensure that there is plenty of time for thoughtful revision. Each class will feature three writers for workshop. Alternatively, longform novelists may choose to workshop a larger excerpt—in which case we would dedicate one double-block workshop to that writing instead of two separate workshops.

Collaboration and Discussion

We will devote two hours of each class to workshopping stories with a break in between. The remaining class time will be for discussing additional readings and issues of craft, content, or writing life, and/or writing experiments. Workshop credo/etiquette, the schedule, min/max pages, mode of sharing, and a plan for additional readings for discussion and writing exercises will be developed by consensus during the first few class meetings. Participants are encouraged to ask questions and nominate beloved short stories and novel passages, pieces that elude understanding, and essays on craft or the writing life. The instructor will facilitate. See also Recommended Reading on page 5. Selected essays and short stories will be made available via PDF in the Files section of the Canvas course.

Style and Formatting

Stories must be distributed one week before scheduled workshop day to allow enough time for thorough reading and reflection. Specific questions or areas of focus for a particular workshop should be announced at that time. *All manuscripts must be presented in MLA Style* (with a heading that features the writer's name, submission date, title for the piece, page numbers, etc.—all typed, double-spaced, and in a legible, 12-point font. This requirement is primarily for accessibility purposes but also supports our writerly commitment and discourse community.

Reading and Critique

Read every piece in full once and then once or twice more for immersion and to get beyond first impressions and biases. Make it a sacred trust. To acknowledge how writing is an embodied experience, writers will read 1-2 pages of their piece aloud. This will offer further insight (for both readers and writers) before the workshop begins. For round one of workshops, the writer will receive one page of thoughtful feedback from all readers that pertains to multiple elements of storytelling and style. Round one will also include in-text annotation (and line-editing at the writer's request). Critique for the second round of workshops, once everyone is familiar with each other's work, can consist of in-text annotation and a brief global comment. Discussion will naturally be more focused according to the direction and needs of the writer.

Final Portfolio

All writers, including longform novelists, will revise 10-15 pages for the final and discuss them in small groups on the last day of class/celebration. Finals will be submitted on the last day of class along with a one-page revision statement that discusses important choices, influences, and key shifts in thinking that occurred during workshop and next steps for your writing.

Attendance and Grading

In this course, we will dedicate ourselves to not only our own work but that of others. Attendance is therefore mandatory and missing two or more workshops is an automatic failure of the course. To quote Professor Uwem Akpan, once you commit yourself to a workshop, *little short of death should deter you from fulfilling that commitment*. In the spirit of creative freedom, first drafts will not be graded. Half of your grade will be based on the quality of your revisions. The other half of your grade will depend on your oral and written contributions to our workshops and discussions.

Workshop Schedule

This schedule is only a preliminary guide and is subject to change upon the start of the course.
See the Canvas Module titled Online Schedule for up-to-date information.

Week 1 (Monday 8/26)

- Introductions, review of syllabus, collaboration regarding schedule, readings, etc.
- To do: send an email to the facilitator noting your preferences by the end of the week
- Writing experiment: One thing to plant / one thing to bury

Week 2 (Monday 9/2)

- *****IMPORTANT***** No class will be held due to UF Holiday—Labor Day

Week 3 (Monday 9/9) Start of Round One Workshops

- Workshop 1: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 2: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 3: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Readings: *Walking on Alligators: A Book of Meditations for Writers* by Susan Shaughnessy (nonfiction book)

Week 4 (Monday 9/16)

- Workshop 4: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 5: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 6: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: “The Metamorphosis” by Franz Kafka (short story)

Week 5 (Monday 9/23)

- Workshop 7: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 8: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 9: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: “On Keeping a Notebook” by Joan Didion (writing life/craft essay)

Week 6 (Monday 9/30)

- Workshop 10: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 11: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 12: Featured Writer TBD
- Writing Experiment: Re-Visionary Practices

Week 7 (Monday 10/7)

- Workshop 13: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 14: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 15: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: “You Don’t Know Anything.” by Toni Morrison (writing life/craft essay)

Week 8 (Monday 10/14) Start of Round Two Workshops

- Workshop 1: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 2: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 3: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: *Letters to a Young Poet* by Reiner Maria Rilke (nonfiction/epistolary book)

Week 9 (Monday 10/21)

- Workshop 4: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 5: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 6: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: “The Danger of a Single Story” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and “We’re All Someone’s Freak” by Gwendolyn Ann Smith (writing life essays)

Week 10 (Monday 10/28)

- Workshop 7: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 8: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 9: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: *Solaris* by Stanislaw Lem (longish-form sci-fi novel) first half

Week 11 (Monday 11/4)

- Workshop 10: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 11: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 12: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: *Solaris* by Stanislaw Lem (longish-form sci-fi novel) final half

Week 12 (Monday 11/11)

- ***IMPORTANT*** No class will be held due to UF Holiday—Veterans Day

Week 13 (Monday 11/18)

- Workshop 13: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 14: Featured Writer TBD
- Workshop 15: Featured Writer TBD
- Additional Reading: Excerpt from *The Writing Life* by Annie Dillard (nonfiction book)

Week 14 (Monday 11/25)

- ***IMPORTANT*** No class will be held due to UF Holiday—Fall Break

Week 15 (Monday 12/2)

- Final day of class—Small Group Workshops / Celebration!
- Final Portfolio Due

Recommended Reading

- *Writing Down the Bones* by Natalie Goldberg (nonfiction book)
- “Prose Architectures” Renee Gladman (writing life/experimental craft essay)
- “The Laugh of the Medusa” by Hélène Cixous (writing life/craft essay)
- “My Mother’s House & Sido” by Colette (short stories)
- “I Am Both. I Am Neither.” by Michelle Naka Pierce (writing life/craft essay)
- “How to be a Writer” by Rebecca Solnit (writing life/craft essay)
- “Rules of the Game” by Amy Tan (short story)
- *Teaching and Writing Fiction* by Wallace Stegner (nonfiction book)
- *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* by Milan Kundera (longform novel)
- *House of Leaves* by Mark Danielewski (experimental/ergodic text novel)
- *Garments Against Women* by Anne Boyer (lyric prose)
- “Bartleby, the Scrivener” by Herman Melville (short humor story)
- *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy (longform novel)

- *100 Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez (longform novel)
- *Nervous Conditions* by Tsitsi Dangarembga (longform novel)
- *Trans(re)lating House One* by Poupeh Missaghi (experimental/historical fiction)
- *Remembrance of Things Past* by Marcel Proust (very-longform novel)
- *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace (very-longform novel)
- [We will add to this list once the semester begins]

Additional Information

Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism:

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

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

For information on UF Grading policies:

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

Accommodations:

Students who experience learning, reading, and writing barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Office of Students with Disabilities and thereafter provide the instructor with a letter of accommodation as early in the semester as possible. Phone: 352-392-8565 Website: <https://disability.ufl.edu/>

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

UF Writing Studio:

The University of Florida Writing Studio is an excellent resource for improving writing skills. It is available to all UF students and located in Turlington 2215. Free appointments can be made up to twice a week either in person or online: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

Recording Policy:

Class lectures may only be recorded for purposes defined by House Bill 233/Section 1004.097. A class lecture does not include academic exercises involving student participation, including writing workshops and reading discussions. Recording and publishing under these circumstances are not permissible for any reason. Publishing is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but

not limited to another student within the same class section. A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Students in Distress:

For guidance during distressing situations, contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office, which can help students navigate resources and procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues. Resources and contact information:

U Matter We Care: <http://umatter.ufl.edu>, umatter@ufl.edu, 352-294-2273 (CARE)

Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261

Counseling & Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 3190 Radio Rd (352) 392-1575

Field and Fork Pantry: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208

Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161