CRW 1101—Beginning Fiction Writing
Section 0218, Class 11961, Fall 2023

Instructor: Olivia Burnett
Course meeting times & locations: Tuesday, 9–11 (4:05–7:05 PM), Matherly 0005
Office location & hours: TBA
Course website: Canvas (https://elearning.ufl.edu/)
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Course Description:

In this course, we will practice reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing fiction through assigned readings, class discussions, and eventually workshops. This course will ask you to consider the purposes of short fiction, the effectiveness of specific choices within assigned short stories, and your own personal writing process. Reading will be a large part of this course; most writers will agree that reading well is essential to writing well. However, you don't need to have any experience reading or writing fiction to enjoy and succeed in this course.

Beginning mid-semester, you will be asked to compose one (or two) original piece(s) of short fiction that will be workshopped in class by myself and your fellow writers. This class will be interactive and discussion-based, so come to class prepared and ready to participate. I decided to pursue an MFA based on the wonderful experiences I had in my own undergraduate workshops, so I want this to be an equally enjoyable experience for you, whether or not you plan to pursue writing in the future.

Required Texts:

There is no textbook required for this course. Weekly readings will be posted on Canvas. Assigned readings are subject to change; I will let you know in advance if/when this is the case. There might also be the occasional in-class reading in addition to those assigned on Canvas.

Course Policies:

1. All assignments must be completed to receive credit for this course.
2. **Attendance:**
    1. **If you are planning to be absent from class, let me know in advance.** This will allow us to plan ahead and will result in greater flexibility in making up work.
    2. **Students will be permitted two absences from class meetings. If these absences are exceeded for reasons that do not constitute an excused absence, the result will be a 5-point deduction from your final grade for each additional unexcused absence.**
    3. Unexcused absences will result in a 0 for class participation that day.

1. **Tardiness:**

1. Students should be on time for class. Arriving to class late or leaving early will be counted as a tardy. Latecomers should see me after class so I know you attended.
   2. **Missing more than twenty minutes of class (either by arriving late or leaving early) will be counted as an absence for the day.**
   3. 3 tardies = 1 absence.

1. Classroom behavior:
   1. Students should be present, prepared, and ready to participate in class discussions.
   2. Students who exhibit disruptive or disrespectful behavior aimed at the instructor or other students will be asked to leave the classroom and will receive an absence for the day.
   3. **Cell phone use is not permitted during class time and may result in a 0 for participation or even an absence for the day.**
   4. Laptops may be used to take notes. However, if laptops become a distraction, we will switch over to only hand-written notes for the remainder of the semester.

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 any and all members of the community: https://titleix.ufl.edu/about/title-ix-rights/

1. Late Papers/Assignments:
   1. **Late work will not be accepted more than 3 (calendar) days after the due date, and will receive a 10% deduction for each day until then.** (Note that late work will not be accepted in some cases, which I will specify beforehand—for example, toward the end of the semester when grades are due.)
      1. **Workshop drafts will not be accepted late, as the workshop schedule depends upon drafts being turned in on time.**
   2. **If there is a legitimate reason you feel you will need more time for an assignment, see me *before* the assignment is due. (Lack of time management is not a legitimate reason.)**

Major Assignments: (Word count for major assignments can be found in the Point Breakdown table below.)

- **Weekly Responses:** Weekly Responses will ask students to respond to a particular question relevant to the week's reading and/or class discussion, which will allow students to think more extensively about the assigned material, and will also help to facilitate class discussions. Weekly Responses will be turned in on Canvas.

- **Weekly Readings:** Weekly Readings will be posted on Canvas and will be discussed in class the following week. Students are expected to read the assigned stories, make annotations, and come to class prepared to discuss them.
- **Writing Exercises:** Writing Exercises will challenge students to create original work based on prompts assigned by the instructor. These exercises will not be workshopped by the class, but they will help students to generate ideas and might potentially contribute to workshop submissions.
- **Workshop Submissions:** Students will submit one story of 1,000 to 1,350 words, which will be workshopped by the class the week after it is turned in. Students will also submit a revised version of the story later in the semester, which will also be workshopped by the class. A workshop schedule will be provided by the instructor. Workshop Submissions will not count toward the 6,000-word requirement, but the word count must be met in order to receive full credit for this assignment.
- **Workshop Responses:** Workshop responses should consist of 200-300 words and should be formatted as a letter to the writer to whose story you are responding. These letters should consist of three sections: *What is the story about? What's working well? What could work better?* Completion of Workshop Responses will be counted toward Class Participation grades. Workshop Responses do not count toward the 6,000-word requirement.
- **Final Portfolio:** The Final Portfolio will include a revised version of your workshop submission, plus two revised versions of your best writing exercises from the semester, along with at least 200 words of commentary for each of these three pieces. Portfolios will also include a 400-word artist statement explaining what you've learned throughout the semester, your personal writing process, etc.
- **Class Participation:** Class Participation will include attendance, adherence to classroom policies (such as cell phone use, etc.), and participation in class discussions and workshops; grades will be given each week for participation. If you are uncomfortable speaking in class, come see me after class or during office hours.

Point Breakdown:

Assignment	Word Count	Points	Total Points
Weekly Responses (10)	300	50	500
Writing Exercises (8)	250	20	160
Workshop Submissions	N/A	100	200
Workshop Responses	N/A	N/A	N/A
Final Portfolio	1000	200	200
Class Participation	N/A	10	160
Total Words:	**6000**	**Total Points:**	**1220**

Schedule:

See Canvas for weekly readings; syllabus will be updated to reflect any changes.

Wk	Date	Read for Class	DUE

1	8/30		
2	9/6	Tim O'Brien, "On the Rainy River"	Weekly Response 1 Writing Exercise 1
3	9/13	Becky Hagenston, "Midnight, Licorice, Shadow"	Weekly Response 2 Writing Exercise 2
4	9/20	John Updike, "A&P"	Weekly Response 3 Writing Exercise 3
5	9/27	Raymond Carver, "Cathedral"	Weekly Response 4 Writing Exercise 4
6	10/4	Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour"	Weekly Response 5 Writing Exercise 5 Group 1 Stories
7	10/11	Abigail Thomas, "Buddy's Best Work"	Weekly Response 6 Group 2 Stories WS 1 Writing Exercise 6
8	10/18	James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues"	Weekly Response 7 Writing Exercise 7 Group 3 Stories WS 2
9	10/25	John Cheever, "The Swimmer"	Weekly Response 8 Writing Exercise 8 Group 4 Stories WS 3
10	11/1	Anton Chekhov, "The Lady with the Dog"	Group 5 Stories WS 4
11	11/8	MFA Faculty Short Stories	Revisions WS 5
12	11/15		Weekly Responses 9 & 10 Revisions Revision WS
13	11/22		Revision WS
14	11/29		
15	12/6		Final Portfolio

Grading Scale and Rubric:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E
98–100	93–97	90–92	87–89	83–86	80–82	77–79	73–76	70–72	67–69	63–66	60–62	0–59

A: An "A" is the result of fulfilling all the assignment's requirements and doing it well. An "A+" is reserved for those cases in which the assignment offers a little something extra beyond what was required; this could be the depth of information included, particularly eloquent writing, etc.

B: A "B" is the result of fulfilling the assignment's requirements for the most part, but it doesn't quite meet the level of depth and polish that characterizes the "A." A "B" is not an "A" with points deducted—it is a solidly executed assignment that *could be improved.*

C: A "C" is the result of partially fulfilling the assignment's requirements, or fulfilling them in a way that is less thoughtful or less polished than the "B." A "C" might also be attributed to mechanical or stylistic issues.

D: A "D" is the result of partially fulfilling the assignment's requirements (less fully than the "C"), or of major mechanical or stylistic issues.

E: An "E" does not fulfill the assignment's requirements, or partially fulfills them in a way that lacks thoughtfulness, depth, and/or polish.

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. 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 Policies:
- **Paper Maintenance Responsibilities:** Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
- **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.'"
  - o Definition of *plagiarism* according to the current 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.
    - 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.
    - Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution.
    - Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.
- 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.
- Students who are in distress or who are in need of counseling or urgent help: please contact 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/
- For information on UF Grading policies, see: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx
- 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 Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
- 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.bluera.com/ufl/