

CRW 2100 – Fiction Writing (Section 7005, Class #12350), Spring 2022

Instructor Name: Cassie Fancher

Course meeting times & locations: Thursdays 4:05 PM – 7:05 PM, CBD 0220

Office Location and Hours: Thursdays 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM or by appointment, Turlington 4407

Course website: Canvas

Instructor Email: cassiefancher@ufl.edu

Course Description:

In this course, we will read, discuss, and write short fiction. We will spend the first part of the semester reading and discussing published short stories with a particular focus on what we can learn from reading as writers. These discussions will be accompanied by short lectures on some crucial elements of fiction—plot, character, dialogue, etc. We will also do creative exercises in class, allowing you to take what you have learned in readings and discussion and translate those ideas into short, informal pieces that may or may not inspire complete work. In the second part of the semester, we will workshop each other's stories. This will require insightful, respectful criticism and lively in-class discussion. At the beginning of the semester, we will work together to create classroom norms and discussion expectations so that our workshop will be a safe and constructive space for everyone.

COVID-19 Statement:

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.uflhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing.
 - Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
 - Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers



guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) for more information.

- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
- If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.
- Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

In addition to exposure and quarantine, if you as an individual have any COVID-related hardships which may obstruct your performance in this class, please communicate with me as well as making use of all UF resources available to you. We can then assemble a plan to help you complete the class and fulfill all requirements in the way most beneficial for you.

You can find additional COVID resources for college students, including current data, recommended safety precautions, guides to shared housing, and suggestions for coping with stress here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/colleges-universities/>

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.

Required Texts:

All assigned stories will be uploaded to the course Canvas page. In addition, you will need to access one of the short story collections listed below in order to write your literary analysis. Most of these books are available through Smathers Library or can be purchased for \$5-\$20 online.

Assignments (see below for Grading Rubric):

This course meets the University writing requirement of 6,000 words of written work that will receive feedback and a grade. You can find information about the **University Writing Requirement** [here](#).

Major Critical Assignments—these are the assignments that count towards fulfilling 6000 words of the [University Writing Requirement](#):

- **Two Craft Analyses (20%)**

At the beginning of the semester, you will write two 1500-word literary analyses of stories read in class. In each essay, you will be expected to evaluate the use of one craft element discussed in class as it relates to one or more of the short stories that we will read as a class. Before turning in these essays, you will engage in discussions (see below) that should help you prepare some of the material for your craft analyses.

- **Literary Analysis of a Short Story Collection (20%)**

You will submit a 2500-word analysis of one of the short story collections listed below. All of these collections are written by writers whose work will be assigned over the course of the semester. Think of this as an opportunity to get to better know a writer whose work you particularly enjoy. For this essay, you should cite at least three pieces of relevant literary criticism. You may write about individual stories as well as how all of the stories function as a collection.

You can choose from any of the following story collections:

- Amy Hempel, *The Collected Stories*
- Joy Williams, *Honored Guest*
- Danielle Evans, *Before You Suffocate Your Own Fool Self*
- Lesley Nneka Arimah, *What It Means When a Man Falls from the Sky*
- Chinelo Okparanta, *Happiness Like Water*
- Peter Stamm, *It's Getting Dark*
- Lorrie Moore, *Birds of America*
- Mavis Gallant, *Paris Stories*
- Denis Johnson, *The Largesse of the Sea Maiden*
- Donald Barthelme, *Collected Stories*
- Carmen Maria Machado, *Her Body and Other Parties*
- Jenny Zhang, *Sour Heart*

- **Critical Reflection (10%)**

At the end of the semester, you will write a 500-word critical reflection of your own creative work in this class. In this essay, you will examine your use of craft in your short story, reflect on the decisions you made in revision, and describe any risks that you took in your writing.

Major Creative Assignments:

- **Short Story (10%)**

Your short story should be approximately 6-12 pages long. The story should incorporate elements of craft learned and discussed in class. Your story can be about anything you want, though we will take time to discuss appropriative writing and overused tropes, both of which should be avoided.

- **Second Short Story OR Revision of First Short Story (10%)**

For your second short story, you may submit either

- 1.) An entirely new story, following the guidelines above. This story should still incorporate feedback from your first workshop. For example, if you received feedback on your first short story that your characters could be further developed, your second short story should exhibit more fully developed characters, even if they are different characters.
- 2.) A revision of your first short story. This revision must take into account the feedback you received on your first short story. Most importantly, a revision of your first short story requires significant, big-picture changes. Taking risks is encouraged. Simply changing a few words, patching up grammatical errors, or rearranging a few paragraphs will not suffice.

Other Assignments:

- **Workshop Feedback (10%)**

You will be expected to make detailed line edits on your peers' stories, using the commenting tool on Microsoft Word. You will also be expected to make constructive and respectful contributions in class. **Finally, you should provide a written critique or workshop letter for each story, excluding your own. These letters should be 150 words minimum and should explain your overall reaction to the story.** What is working and why? What questions do you have for the author? What are your big picture suggestions, and why do you think they could strengthen the piece? In your critique, you should avoid making value statements ("I like/don't like this.") as these types of comments will not help your classmates develop their writing. Instead, try to reframe your comments as observations or questions. We'll discuss workshop language and habits in more depth as a class. Instances of disrespectful workshop behavior or inadequate feedback will result in a lower grade. Workshop letters should be uploaded to Canvas. I will forward all workshop feedback to the author.

- **Writing Exercises (10%)**

Sometimes, we will do in-class writing exercises. These are intended to get you started thinking about how published stories and ideas discussed in class might translate into your own work. These exercises are also meant to be experimental and fun—a chance to try new techniques and to generate ideas for your longer stories. These exercises should be a minimum of 200 words. You will be graded on completion and little else, as these exercises are meant to be a low-stakes way to take risks with your writing.

- **Participation (10%)**

You will be expected to attend class regularly and to participate actively in class discussions and peer workshops. I reserve the right to deduct points for instances of disrespectful behavior.

- **Conferences**

You are required to have one conference with me outside of class to discuss your story and possible revisions. I recommend scheduling your conference sometime in the week following your workshop. It is your responsibility to schedule an appointment with me and you will not receive reminders. Meeting with me about your story will be counted as part of your participation grade.

Course Policies:

1. *Assignments:* You must complete all assignments to receive credit for this course.

2. *Attendance*: You will be allowed one absence for the semester. Barring extreme circumstances, you will automatically fail the course if you miss more than one class. If you are more than twenty minutes late to class, you will be marked absent. Exemptions from this policy include absences due to university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, quarantine, illness, or serious family emergencies. You can review the entire university policy here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>
3. *Tardiness*: Latecomers receive partial absences, and must see me after class so I know you attended.
4. *Classroom Behavior and Etiquette*: All in-class discussion is expected to be respectful and constructive. Repeated instances of disrespect will result in a lowered grade. On the first day of class we will determine classroom norms and, once these are finalized, all classroom participants are expected to abide by these norms.
5. *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/>
6. *Paper Format & Submission*: All papers should be submitted as .doc or .docx files on Canvas via Turnitin. Papers should be double-spaced and written in 12-point, Times New Roman font. I will download workshop stories and forward them to the entire class.
7. *Late Papers/Assignments*: Since all assignments correspond directly to in-class discussions, they must be submitted on-time. It is especially important to submit stories for workshop on-time, one week before your scheduled workshop, since your classmates will need that time to carefully read and respond to your work. In general, late submissions will not be awarded credit, although if a situation arises, especially related to the current pandemic and any associated difficulties, please let me know as soon as possible and we will work out a solution.
8. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*: Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
9. *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 a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.
10. *Student Disability Services*: 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 me early in the semester. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or participating, I also encourage you to let me know as soon as possible. Your success in this class is important to me and I would like to work together to make sure that all students have their learning needs met in this course.
11. *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/>
12. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
13. *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.

14. *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/>

Course Schedule

(subject to change—I will let you know of any changes at least two weeks in advance)

Week	Date	Readings for Class	Assignments Due
1	1.06	Syllabus & Introductions	
2	1.13	Story Analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ivan Turgenev, “The Singers” ○ George Saunders, “The Heart of the Story: <i>Thoughts on “The Singers”</i>” ○ Amy Hempel, “San Francisco” 	
3	1.20	Beginnings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Joy Williams, “Chicken Hill” 	
4	1.27	Characters & Backstory: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Danielle Evans, “Someone Ought to Tell Her There’s Nowhere to Go” ○ Ernie Wang, “Stay Brave, My Hercules” Mini Workshop	
5	2.03	Narrative Distance & Occasion for Telling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chinelo Okparanta, “On Ohaeto Street” ○ Peter Stamm, translated by Michael Hofmann, “My Blood for You” ○ Lorrie Moore, “People Like That Are the Only People Here (Canonical Babbling in Peed Onk)” Workshop:	Craft Analysis 1
6	2.10	Dialogue & Misconception: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mavis Gallant, “The Ice Wagon Going Down the Street” ○ Ernest Hemingway, “A Canary for One” Workshop:	
7	2.17	Form & Fragmentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maggie Nelson, <i>Bluets</i> (excerpts) ○ Denis Johnson, “The Starlight on Idaho” Workshop:	
8	2.24	Workshop:	Craft Analysis 2
9	3.03	Momentum & Suspense: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Donald Barthelme, “The School” 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lesley Nneka Arimah, “Who Will Greet You at Home” ○ Anthony Doerr, “The Sword of Damocles: On Suspense, Shower Murders, and Shooting People on the Beach” <p>Workshop:</p>	
10	3.10	NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK	
11	3.17	<p>Acoustics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jenny Zhang, “The Evolution of My Brother” ○ Carmen Maria Machado, “The Husband Stitch” <p>Workshop:</p>	
12	3.24	Workshop:	Analysis of a Short Story Collection
13	3.31	Workshop:	
14	4.07	<p>Revision:</p> <p>Gina Berriault, “The Stone Boy” (two versions)</p>	
15	4.14	End of Semester Reading	<p>Critical Reflection Due</p> <p>Revised/Second Short Story Due</p>

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
 E: 0-59

Assessment Rubric for Critical Writing Assignments:

A: Demonstrates a deep engagement with the text and the development of original, sophisticated ideas. Paragraphs are exceptionally well-crafted and ideas are organized logically. Writing is clear and makes use of appropriate stylistic elements.

B: Demonstrates good reading comprehension. Original, sophisticated ideas are discussed. Paragraphs are well-crafted and ideas are organized logically. Writing is clear and some stylistic elements are used.

C: Demonstrates basic reading comprehension and includes some original ideas. Paragraphs are adequately crafted and ideas are mostly well-organized. Writing is clear and some stylistic elements are used.

D: Engages with the text only on a superficial level. Contains very little original thought and/or fails to adequately support claims with textual evidence. Paragraphs are poorly crafted and ideas are unorganized.

E: Fails to engage with the text in a way that demonstrates reading and/or comprehension.