

LT216 Fiction Writing Workshop

Seminar Leader: Tom Drury
Course Times: Thu 15:45-19:00
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

This is a workshop class on the writing and reading of short fiction with a goal of encouraging creativity, clarity, and originality in narrative prose. As a workshop we will be focusing primarily on stories by class members, supplemented by published works to be read and discussed as assigned. The required text is *Telling Stories: An Anthology for Writers* (ed. Joyce Carol Oates).

Requirements

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is required and critical to the success of the workshop! More than two absences in a semester will significantly reduce your participation grade for the course. If necessary, please consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

Assessment

Your grade will be based on writing assignments and class participation.

Writing Assignments

Students will write three original short fictions of 1500-2500 words each, due on a rotating schedule over the course of the semester, as well as short response papers (250 words maximum) on selected readings from the anthology or writing prompts. Student stories scheduled to be workshopped during a given week are to be submitted by 5 pm on the preceding Friday, giving the class plenty of time for reading and analysis.

Class Participation

This is essential. You are encouraged to read all assigned stories carefully and come to class prepared to discuss them in detail with regard to sentence structure, plot elements, phrasing, images, dialogue, narrative unity, etc. Analysis should be on a line-by-line, word-by-word level. Show precisely where and how a text is working (or could work better). Be creative, constructive, and specific.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

From the Student Handbook: *Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.*

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of

academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section III Academic Misconduct.

Grade Breakdown

Each short story will make up 25 percent of your grade. The remaining 25 percent will be based on response papers and participation in class.

Schedule

For the first several weeks we will be discussing the theory and practice of writing short fiction with exemplary readings. Beginning on Oct. 4, we will shift into workshop mode, discussing two student stories in each class as well as readings from the anthology or handouts. We will make a schedule of writers and deadlines on the first day of class. 2) Due to a previous commitment (a literary festival in Italy), I will be out of town on September 6, so our first class will meet Sept. 13.

Thu Sept. 6
NO CLASS

Thu Sept. 13:
What is a short story? Introduction & syllabus

Thu Sept. 20
Beginnings
Anthology I: Miniature Narratives

Thu Sept. 27
Point of View
Anthology II: Dramatic Monologues

Thu Oct. 4
2 stories
Anthology III: Early Stories

Thu Oct. 11
2 Stories
Anthology IV: The Art and Craft of Revision

Thu Oct. 18
2 stories
Anthology V: Reappropriations

Thu Oct. 25
2 stories
Anthology VI: Narrative in Other Modes/Memoir, Diary, Personal Document

Thu Nov. 1
NO CLASS
FALL BREAK

Thu Nov. 8
2 stories
Anthology VI: Narrative in Other Modes/Poems that Tell Stories

Thu Nov. 15
2 stories
Anthology VIII: Classics and Contemporaries

Thu Nov. 22
2 stories
Anthology VIII: Classics and Contemporaries

Thu Nov. 29
2 stories
Handouts: Jamaica Kincaid and Lucia Berlin

Thu Dec. 6
2 stories
Handouts: Chekhov and Raymond Carver

Thu Dec. 13
2 stories
Handouts: Sara Majka and Rachel Glaser

Thu Dec. 20
2 stories
Handouts: Chavisa Woods and Denis Johnson