

# LT326 Advanced Fiction Writing Workshop

Seminar Leader: Alexander Lumans  
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Office Hours: Thursdays (by appointment only)

## Course Description

This advanced workshop will expand your knowledge and practice of fiction writing. In service of this intention, we'll engage in an ongoing discussion of contemporary fiction (both literary and not so literary). We'll discuss your own writing via workshop (at various stages of generation and revision). By the end of this course, you should be able to explain the merits of, the craft techniques used by, and the authorial choices made within individual works of fiction. You should also have a deeper understanding of your own unique writerly voice and what elements of fiction writing you want to continue developing in the future.

To succeed in this course: Please treat every student with respect, kindness, and the knowledge that they may have differing experiences than you. Complete your assigned readings on time. Complete your major assignments on time. If you're confused at any point, please ask for assistance. Be professional in your communications. If you're having any difficulties in terms of your involvement in the course, please reach out to me. I hold my classes to high standards (this way, you can then hold your own writing to such standards in the future); it'll be natural to find yourself challenged by different parts of this course. I try my best to act as an understanding instructor and part of my role here is to also serve as a resource for you.

## Requirements

Required Texts: *Thrill Me* by Benjamin Percy (Graywolf Press, 2016)

Coursework will include: assigned readings, reading responses, in-class writing prompts, revision assignments, self-reflection assignments, peer workshop participation, peer workshop responses, among others. For workshop, we'll discuss two separate pieces of your writing; as part of the workshop, you'll receive written and verbal critiques from your peers and from me. You'll also respond to others' writing via constructive feedback. By the course's end, you'll produce a final portfolio of revised fiction and a reflective letter detailing your revision process. The class's success also very much depends on your continued active involvement and participation. Your enthusiasm for creative writing should be the banner you come waving every time we meet. Additionally, a high level of professionalism is expected—it's respectful to ask informed and challenging questions, to refrain from interrupting others, and to always assume there're multiple perspectives to further consider.

It's my intent to present materials and activities that're respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. I want to create a learning environment that supports a wide range of thoughts, experiences, and identities. Please contact me if your experience in the course is being impacted by what others have said or have done in the classroom in any way that made you feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

### **Academic Integrity**

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

### **Accommodations**

Bard College Berlin is committed to inclusion and providing equal access to all students; we uphold and maintain all aspects of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 3 of the German Disability Equality Act of April 27, 2002 (Federal Law Gazette I p. 1468). If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, Atticus Kleen, ([accommodations@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:accommodations@berlin.bard.edu)) to request an official accommodation.

Requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible to ensure adequate time for coordination and planning. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and may require advance notice to implement. If you have already been approved for accommodations with the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, please arrange to meet with me outside of class so that we can develop an implementation plan.

Students may face extenuating circumstances related to various personal or external factors, which impact their academic performance. While these circumstances often do not fall within the legal framework of Disability Accommodations, Bard College Berlin is committed to supporting students experiencing such circumstances. A student needing a short extension or replacement assignment because of extenuating circumstances is encouraged to make arrangements directly with instructors. If further support is needed, please visit [Bard College Berlin Accessibility page](#). Questions about this process can be directed to James Harker ([j.harker@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:j.harker@berlin.bard.edu)) or Maria Anderson-Long ([m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu](mailto:m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu)).

### **Attendance**

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences should not affect the participation grade. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused—unless it is an absolute emergency with extenuating circumstances. Starting with the third absence, you will lose 1/3 of a grade off your final grade. Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

### **Assignments and Assessments**

Classwork and Homework: These will include in-class readings, guided exercises, spontaneous feedback, and other sorts of creative prompts. For these, you'll receive full credit, half credit, or no credit, depending on your assignment's level of effort and engagement.

**Workshop:** For each of your two workshops, you will provide the class with an original work of fiction. These pages should be polished and proofread. If you are absent on the day your story is to be discussed in class, you cannot make up this day. If you miss it, you will forfeit all points associated with this assignment. Failing to show up isn't fair to the rest of the students who've come prepared to workshop your story.

**Workshop Responses:** Each response should be a 1-page, Double-Spaced feedback letter addressed to the Writer. After each workshop, you'll submit your response and your marked-up manuscript to the Writer.

### **Policy on Late Submission of Papers**

Major assignments that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept assignments that are more than 24 hours late. Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties for a potentially reduced grade. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students will receive feedback for their course work during and at the end of the semester. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Your final grade will be based on the following criteria:

|                   |                                           |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 50 points         | Workshop Responses                        |
| 50 points         | Classwork/Homework Assignments            |
| 100 points        | Two Workshop Submissions (50 points each) |
| 200 points        | Final Fiction Portfolio                   |
| <u>100 points</u> | <u>Participation and Professionalism</u>  |
| 500 points        | Total                                     |

If you do not turn in the Final Fiction Portfolio, you will be assigned a failing grade for the class.

### **Course Schedule**

This schedule is subject to change (and it probably will). All assignments outside the class meetings should be TYPED and DOUBLE-SPACED—you'll lose points if you fail to follow this guideline. A zero will be given to any work that hasn't clearly been proofread. Assigned readings (excluding excerpts from *Thrill Me*) will be provided via Google Classroom by me.

#### **Week 1:**

THUR (Sept 3) - Introduction to Course Syllabus and Schedule

Buy Required Text for the Course: *Thrill Me* by Benjamin Percy

#### **Week 2:**

THUR (Sept 10)

Have Read: Craft Essay Selection (provided on Google Classroom)

Have Read: Short Story Selection (provided on Google Classroom)

**Week 3:**

THUR (Sept 17)

Have Read: Excerpt from *Thrill Me*

Have Read: Short Story Selection(s)

**Week 4:**

THUR (Sept 24)

Have Read: Excerpt from *Thrill Me*

Have Read: Short Story Selection(s)

**Week 5:**

THUR (Oct 1)

Have Read: Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: Short Story Selection(s)

**Week 6:**

THUR (Oct 8)

Have Read: Excerpt from *Thrill Me*

Have Read: Short Story Selection(s)

**Week 7:**

THUR (Oct 15)

Have Read: Short Story Selection(s) or Craft Essay Selection(s)

**Week 8: Fall Break – No Class**

THUR (Oct 22)

Have Written: Assigned Student Workshop Submissions—submitted via Google Classroom as per the workshop turn-in schedule that we'll create together—to be workshopped next week

**Week 9:**

THUR (Oct 29)

Have Read: Short Story Selection or Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: First Workshop Submissions

Have Written: Workshop Responses

Have Written: Assigned Student Workshop Submissions

**Week 10:**

THUR (Nov 5)

Have Read: Short Story Selection or Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: First Workshop Submissions

Have Written: Workshop Responses

Have Written: Assigned Student Workshop Submissions

**Week 11:**

THUR (Nov 12)

Have Read: Short Story Selection or Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: First Workshop Submissions

Have Written: Workshop Responses

Have Written: Assigned Student Workshop Submissions

**Week 12:**

THUR (Nov 19)

Have Read: Short Story Selection or Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: Second Workshop Submissions

Have Written: Workshop Responses

Have Written: Assigned Student Workshop Submissions

**Week 13:**

THUR (Nov 26)

Have Read: Short Story Selection or Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: Second Workshop Submissions

Have Written: Workshop Responses

Have Written: Assigned Student Workshop Submissions

**Week 14:**

THUR (Dec 3)

Have Read: Short Story Selection or Craft Essay Selection

Have Read: Second Workshop Submissions

Have Written: Workshop Responses

**Week 15:**

THUR (Dec 10)

Have Written: Final Portfolio Due