

**Creative Writing: Introduction to Fiction and Poetry**  
**CRWRI-UA.815.020**  
**Tuesday / Thursday 9:30-10:45am**  
**Location: TBA**

**Instructor: Zach Williams**  
**Email: [zcw221@nyu.edu](mailto:zcw221@nyu.edu)**  
**Office Hours: TBA**

**Course Overview**

In this course, we will write, workshop, and revise fiction and poetry with the aim of sharpening our aesthetic sensibilities and building comfort and proficiency with the process of creating art. Because writers must also be readers, we will study a diverse array of authors across a variety of forms and discuss their work from the perspective of craft.

**Structure**

On Tuesdays we will devote ourselves to the study of literary craft. Our work will be animated by the questions: How do fiction and poetry work, and what can writers use these forms to do? This is not an English class, but we must read deeply and carefully if we intend to make use of these forms ourselves. You will be required to submit reading responses to each of our assigned texts, **due in hard copy in class each Tuesday.**

On Thursdays we will workshop student fiction and poetry. Over the course of the term, you will submit two short stories and two sets of poems. Student work will be submitted one week before workshop, in hard copy. **You are responsible for printing one copy of your submission for each member of the class.** For the day of the workshop, students will write a one-page response letter to each author. **You must print two copies of each response, one for the writer and one for me.**

**Readings**

All required readings will be posted to NYU Classes. Unless otherwise noted, you must print them and bring them to class each week.

## **Policies**

### **Grading**

Attendance and Participation: 40%

Reading Responses and Workshop Response Letters: 30%

Final Portfolio: 30%

### **Attendance**

Your success in this course, and indeed the success of the course itself, is predicated entirely upon your consistent participation in our shared work. A good workshop group functions as a community; your presence, therefore, is required. Two unexcused absences will result in a 10% reduction in your final grade, with an additional 10% penalty for each subsequent absence.

### **Plagiarism**

Please review NYU's plagiarism policy online if you are not familiar with it. The consequences for plagiarism are extreme; I urge you not to incur them. If you are having trouble completing your work for any reason, please contact me so we can talk through it.

### **Electronics in Class**

The work we do in this course is not enriched by the use of electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, phones, and watches; in fact, it is greatly hindered by them. If our aim is to build a community centered on creative expression, we must all commit to being fully present in class. Many of us struggle to define the boundaries of our relationships to the Internet. Our classroom can be a place free of that struggle, where we are at liberty to focus, listen to one another, and be heard. Electronic devices, therefore, should be silent and out of sight.

### **Disability Disclosure Statement**

Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or who is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980.

NYU's Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities

726 Broadway, 2nd Floor

New York, NY 10003-6675 Telephone: 212-998-4980 Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114

Web site: <http://www.nyu.edu/csd>

### **Student Wellness Policy**

Unless we see explicit evidence in workshop that a character or speaker in a work is the writer themselves, we assume the speaker is fictional. However, certain content relating to murder, depression, suicide, sexual assault, or severe mental distress, such as seems to be a possible cry for help, will likely prompt the instructor's attention. Please send an email putting this work in context before submitting work, especially for workshop, that may be interpreted as such. If you do feel you need someone to talk to at any point in the semester, please feel safe to reach out to me and I can guide you to the NYU Wellness Center.

## Course Outline

- Week 1**      T 9/3: Introductions, Syllabus Review  
R 9/5: James Joyce, “The Dead”  
Assignment: Fiction Exercise #1
- Week 2**      T 9/10: Virginia Woolf  
Assignment: Fiction Exercise #2  
R 9/12: Class: Introductory full-group workshop of fiction exercises  
*Group A submits stories to be workshopped 9/19*
- Week 3**      T 9/17: Darryl Pinckney, Don DeLillo  
R 9/19: Workshop Group A  
*Group B submits stories to be workshopped 9/26*
- Week 4**      T 9/24: Lucy Corin, Alice Munro, Jhumpa Lahiri  
R 9/26: Workshop Group B  
*Group C submits stories to be workshopped 10/3*
- Week 5**      T 10/1: Paul Bowles, Denis Johnson, Ralph Ellison  
R 10/3: Workshop Group C  
*Group A submits stories to be workshopped 10/10*
- Week 6**      T 10/8: William Faulkner, Nam Le, Stephen Dixon  
R 10/10: Workshop Group A  
*Group B submits stories to be workshopped 10/17*
- Week 7**      T 10/15: Jennifer Egan, Donald Barthelmé, Julio Cortazar  
R 10/17: Workshop Group B  
*Group C submits stories to be workshopped 10/24*
- Week 8**      T 10/22: Russell Edson, Chris Kennedy, Matthea Harvey, Porpentine  
R 10/24: Workshop Group C  
*Group A submits poems to be workshopped*

- Week 9**      T 10/29: Tracy K. Smith
- R 10/31: Workshop Group A  
                                 *Group B submits poems to be workshopped*
- Week 10**     T 11/5: Wallace Stevens, Philip Larkin, Elizabeth Bishop
- R 11/7: Workshop Group B  
                                 *Group C submits poems to be workshopped*
- Week 11**     T 11/12: Derek Walcott, Seamus Heaney, Gary Snyder
- R 11/14: Workshop Group C  
                                 *Group A submits poems to be workshopped*
- Week 12**     T 11/19: Ha Jin, Mary Oliver, Robert Lowell, John Ashberry
- R 11/21: Workshop Group A  
                                 *Group B submits poems to be workshopped*
- Week 13**     T 11/26: Workshop Group B  
                                 *Group C submits poems to be workshopped*
- R 11/28: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving
- Week 14**     T 12/3: Anne Carson
- R 12/5: Workshop Group C
- Week 15**     T 12/10: Louise Gluck, Ben Lerner, Terrance Hayes, Kate Durbin
- R 12/12: Final Portfolios Due