Course Description
This course will discuss the art and craft of short fiction and poetry. Special attention paid to the intuitive questions behind a student’s own work, and the ones that spring from encounters with literature. Students will track their reading and responses in a journal to be brought to class every week. The works we read will be discussed in the context of craft as well as in relation to how they can help students access their own writing.

Course Format
The first class of the week will be spent discussing the assigned reading and the second class of the week will be a workshop class. You will post your creative piece online by Sunday at 12pm. This is important so that your classmates can print it out with plenty of time. It’s also important so that your work is given the thoughtful reading it deserves. This is a small class and workshop will not be conducive if we have not spent enough time with each other’s work before we meet. Everyone should print their own copies of everyone’s piece and bring it with them to class.

Attendance & Timeliness
You’re allowed two absences, reserved in cases of illness, emergencies, and religious holidays. Every additional absence will result in your grade being lowered one degree (A to A-, and so on), unless you provide medical proof and an email from your advisor. The same deadlines apply and your homework should still be done for the following class. It would be helpful to check in with a classmate about the main points from the class discussion. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will be considered absent, regardless of whether you show up or not. If you’re interested in reversing this technical absence, talk to me. I can’t have this become an issue, but I understand life is complicated. In emergencies, you can email me prior to class.

Late Work
In a workshop class, your lateness in turning in an assignment will affect your classmates. If this is a problem, your final grade will be affected by one degree.

Course Goals
During the semester, you will:
● Engage in thoughtful discussions about the assigned reading, paying attention to how individual pieces work, as well as how the collection as a whole works.
● Become fluent in workshop and writing terms so as to communicate your reactions in ways that are both thoughtful and constructive.
● Treat the work of your classmates with the same respect as the assigned reading material.
● Learn about the “project” of a book. What is the thesis of a collection? Is it achieved?
● Distinguish between your emotional reading of a work and your intellectual reading of a work.
● Participate regularly in all facets of the course (workshop, discussion, exercises, etc).
● Apply workshop suggestions in revision and new work.
Introduction to Fiction & Poetry  
Spring 2018 Syllabus

- Go to office hours at least once a semester.
- Feel more comfortable approaching the craft of writing.

Required Texts and Materials

excerpts from WHAT IT IS by Lynda Barry (uploaded by me)

The rest will be found at the NYU bookstore, but I encourage you to give yourself enough time to find them online, as the prices will be better.

- HIM, ME, MUHAMMAD ALI by Randa Jarrar
- Woman Hollering Creek by Sandra Cisneros
- PELUDA by Melissa Lozada-Oliva
- The Crown Ain't Worth Much by Hanif Abdurraqib
- Night Sky With Exit Wounds by Ocean Vuong
- The January Children by Safia Elhillo
- Bright Dead Things by Ada Limón
- Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude by Ross Gay

Grade Requirements

- Participation (5%)
- Response Papers (10%)
- Weekly Journal (15%)
- Original Pieces for Workshop (50%)
- Revision Portfolio (20%)

Workshop format:

- Workshop will be held during Wednesday classes.
- Everyone will be put in groups of four for the whole semester. We will rotate so that each week, the class will workshop the pieces of a different group.
- Each piece will get about 7-10 minutes.
- The rest of class time will be spent workshopping within your own groups of four.
- All good art comes from a place of vulnerability. As a result, we may share personal details while analyzing the work in terms of technicality and style. While we will not discuss personal problems, the workshop environment still has to be understood as a safe space for everyone. Honesty is important and should be informed by empathy and common sense.

Weekly Journal & Final Reflection Paper:

The first reading of the semester by Lynda Barry will be an example of how organic and creative you’re encouraged to be when taking notes and tracking your reactions in your weekly journal. You are expected to respond to the reading in any medium you choose, as long as it contains either a question or conclusion you came to. Since creative process is also learning process, it’s not mandatory to share them with the class, but you’re welcome to do so before we begin our discussions.

- I will check them off at the beginning of each class.
In lieu of a midterm, I will collect your journals to check in with your progress. I will return them the following class with a note.

At the end of the semester, you will write an informal reflection paper using your journal entries as a jumping off point.

- Talk me through your biggest changes and inspirations this semester.
- Tell me which readings impacted you most, which ones you will carry as you continue your study/craft beyond this class.
- This can be a broad reflection or a return to a journal entry you want to expand on.
- I want you to have fun with this. Anywhere between 2-5 pages double-spaced.
- This paper will be passed in the week before your revision portfolio is due.

Response Essays

You will write one response essay this semester. When you pass it in, you will not be penalized if you don’t have a journal entry done that day. (note: since there won’t be a midterm, it might be the best time in the semester to pass this in.) Choose one of the following assignments:

1) You must go to at least one reading this semester, either an NYU CWP reading, or one of the many literary events in the city. (If it’s not on the list I give you, just include a link to the event when you pass it in.) Then, write a 2-4 page (double-spaced) response paper on your experience.

- Consider Lorca’s definition of “duende,” and note how it plays a role in your experience at the reading, as well as how the rest of the room might be reacting.
- A few of the writers on our syllabus will be at these events, so consider what you may learn about their work from hearing them perform and talk about writing.
- Tip: Bring your journal and record your thoughts, feelings, impulses, and quotes that you like. This boosts your journal grade and might contribute to the journal paper you write later.

2) Pick one book we read. Write a 3-5 page (double-spaced) analysis about the book.

- Make connections between at least three stories/poems in the collection.
- Identify literary devices, forms, patterns, etc.
- Then write about the collection as a whole.
- What seems to be the reasoning behind the order of the pieces, the sectioning, the epigraphs? What real world contexts does the collection seem to be responding to?

Is the writer successful in what they’re going for? (These questions are here to prompt you, but feel free to come up with your own thesis.)
Revision Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will complete a revision portfolio, submitted as a single document (DOC or DOCX) made up of 1) your revised pieces and 2) a short self-assessment (only one, not one for each revised piece) of two-to-three pages (double spaced) that addresses the following, in any order:

1. What were your biggest challenges in this course?
2. What comments from your peers workshop helped you most in revising these pieces?
3. What readings from class informed your writing this semester?
4. What was your specific process of revising? (Did you start over? Did you try to change the form of the poem? Did you read your work aloud and work from there? Etc.)
5. What specifically have you improved upon in these pieces? (Provide examples, quote your poems, compare and contrast the original language to the new language.)
6. What specifically do you need to continue to work on in these poems and in your writing in general? If you had more time to work on this piece, what would you do?
7. What specific questions do you have for me about these pieces and your revisions?
8. How have you improved your writing overall in this class?
9. How might you apply what you’ve learned in this class into your major, your personal communications, or your free time?

Workshop Privacy Policy
Under no circumstance should students share the work of their peers outside class. This includes but is not limited to electronic distribution through email, forums, and social media (Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.); Respect each other.
NYU’s Official Academic Honor Code:
As a student in the College, I pledge that—

• I shall perform honestly all my academic obligations. I will not represent the words, works, or ideas of others as my own; will not cheat; and will not seek to mislead faculty or other academic officers in their evaluation of my course work or in any other academic affairs.

• I shall behave with decorum and civility, and with respectful regard for all members of the University—faculty, staff, and fellow students—our guests, and members of our wider communities.

• I shall abide by the College and by the University rules of conduct and policies on academic integrity and by the special requirements of any individual course of study or other academic activity.

• I shall endeavor earnestly to uphold the values, standards, and ideals on which our University community depends and call on others to do so.

Accessibility Accommodations:
The Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities provides comprehensive services and programs for undergraduate and graduate students with hearing and visual impairments, mobility impairments, learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders, chronic illnesses, and psychological impairments. The Moses Center functions to determine qualified disability status and to assist students in obtaining appropriate accommodations and services. Services provided are designed to encourage independence and self-advocacy, backed by a comprehensive system of supports.

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