CRWRI-UA.815 Creative Writing: Introduction to Fiction & Poetry
Section I

Instructor: Razmig Bedirian  
Contact: rmb577@nyu.edu  
Class times: Monday and Wednesday 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM

Course Objectives
The goal of this course is to encourage a creative use of language. We will be looking at works of both prose and poetry while keeping in mind their historical, political and individual drives and relevance. My hope is that by examining these texts and the techniques they make use of, students will be able to identify and articulate their own literary tastes and build upon them.

Course Structure
Monday’s classes will be dedicated to discussing the assigned texts. We will be looking at character development, plot, dialogue, and image. You will be expected to bring a short response to the reading every week.  
Wednesday’s classes will be designated as workshop days. You will be required to bring in a piece to workshop based on the weekly writing prompts. Workshops will involve everyone reading, marking up, and discussing each other’s work. By the end of the semester, students must submit a portfolio, the contents of which are elaborated below. Students are required to give either handwritten or typed responses to their cohorts’ submissions. Our course will end with students reading from their portfolios.

Attendance
You will need to provide a doctor’s note or similar documentation for any absence.

Electronic Devices
Please keep your mobile phones, tablets, silenced and stowed away.

Grading
Participation – 30%  
Presentation – 10%  
Workshop submissions – 30%  
Portfolio – 30%

Final Portfolio
Your final portfolio will include all of the work you have handed in over the course of the semester. Here is what you will complete by the end of the semester—
3 workshop pieces (one poem, one story, one of your choice)  
2 revised pieces (one revised poem, one revised story)  
Your weekly reading and workshop responses  
In class writing exercises
Required Readings

Short Stories:
Espace from Spiderhead—George Saunders
Can’t and Won’t (excerpts)—Lydia Davis
The House of Sugar—Silvina Ocampo
The Truck to Berlin—Hassan Blasim
The Yellow Wallpaper—Charlotte Perkins Gilman
The Library of Babel, The Immortal—Jorge Luise Borges

Novels:
Life is Elsewhere—Milan Kundera
Shattered Crumbs—Muhsin Al-Ramli
Woman at Point Zero—Nawal El Saadawi
Minotaur—Benjamin Tammuz
Sitt Marie Rose—Etel Adnan

Poetry:
Wooden Die, Study of the Object—Zbigniew Herbert
Journal of an ordinary grief (select passages)—Mahmoud Darwish
Night Sky with Exit Wounds—Ocean Vuong
Crotegé—Carl Philips
Odes—Sharon Olds
The Best of It—Kay Ryan
3arabi—Zeina Hassan Beik
Eileen myles

Final Portfolio
Your final portfolio will include all of the work you have handed in over the course of the semester. Here is what you will complete by the end of the semester—
3 workshop pieces—one poem, one story, one of your choice
Revisions of 2 of your workshop pieces
Your weekly reading and workshop responses
In class writing exercises

Office Hours:
You will be required to meet with me at least once over the course of the semester, so that we can discuss about how the semester is going for you. Please email me to arrange meeting times.