

5CRWRI-UA 818 Writers In New York: Fiction Workshop Syllabus

Instructor: Helen Schulman

Office Hours: Mondays 1-2:30 (or by appointment)

In the first two weeks of this four-week course, students will be given writing exercises designed to generate new material. In the second 2 weeks, they will be expected to work on a full-length story, the first draft due according to the schedule below, and revisions due the final day (or for those who are workshopped on June 14th by email Sunday June 18th).

All written homework must be printed out in a professional manner, double-spaced, with your name on it, page-numbered etc. Please bring in 12 copies to distribute in class.

ALL STORIES SHOULD BE EMAILED TO THE CLASS THE DAY BEFORE THEY ARE TO BE DISCUSSED, BY 4PM AT THE LATEST (earlier is even better). This is so we will have time to read them before we come into class to workshop them.

Also, active participation is a must (unless this is extremely hard for you—then please speak to me privately). No late submissions, please. Since this is a four-week intensive, attendance is mandatory. If you must miss class, call the office or email me directly.

*For the first class please read Lorrie Moore's story (How To Be A Writer)

Class #1 Monday 5/22

INTRODUCTION

In class reading, Mark Leyner, Tallent and Ordan

Openings Writing Assignment

Reading Homework for Friday: John Cheever (Goodbye My Brother)

James Baldwin (Sonny's Blues)

Writing Homework For Friday: Dictionary of Personal Language (3-5 examples) and if we don't finish in class, openings assignment.

Class #2 Wednesday 5/24

Descriptions Writing Assignment in class

Reading Homework for next Monday: Flannery O'Connor (The Displaced Person)

Visual Homework: Please bring in a photo or ad or postcard of a person who interests you enough for you to want to write about him or her. If you see this person on the street, all the better, but make sure you have his or her permission before taking the picture.

Writing Homework: Bring in a detailed character sketch of this person (it can be a detailed description, it can be a scene that captures their essence, it can be a short short). Please write it either from the 1st person or the 3rd person POV.

Class #3 Wednesday May 31 (NO CLASS MONDAY, MEMORIAL DAY)
In Class Writing Assignment (characters continued)
Reading Homework for Monday: J.D. Salinger (A Perfect Day for Bananafish) Ernest Hemingway (Hills Like White Elephants)
Writing Homework for Wednesday: Go out: to a café, a museum, a club, a store and EAVESDROP. Use the dialogue you have found to create a scene or short short.

Class #4 Friday 6/2
In class writing assignment, beginnings and endings
Discussion: Stories, generating them, finding them out in the world around us.
Writing Homework for Monday: Work on your stories
Reading Homework: Tim O'Brien (The Things They Carried, Love) Jamaica Kincaid (Girl)

Class #5 Monday 6/5
(1st draft stories due Sunday before by email and workshopped in class)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reading Homework for Wednesday: Adam Haslett (The Beginnings Of Grief) ZZ Packer (Drinking Coffee Elsewhere)
Writing Homework for Wednesday: Work on your stories!

Class #6 Wednesday 6/7 Second Set of First Drafts

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reading Homework for Monday: Denis Johnson (Work), Jhumpa Lahiri (Once In A Lifetime)
Writing Homework: Work on First Drafts or Revisions

Class #7 Monday 6/12

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Reading Homework for Wednesday: David Schickler (The Smoker)
Julia Slavin (Swallowed Whole) Junot Diaz (How to date a brown
girl (black girl, white girl or halfie)
Writing Homework: Work on First Drafts or Revisions

Class #8 Wednesday 6/14 All revisions due today (except for
those handing in first drafts)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Revisions due by email by Sunday 6/18