Overview
The aim of this class is to explore craft through reading and to sharpen our own writing abilities by looking at strategies other writers have employed. How do the authors create meaning? How do they build the world of their story, create dynamic characters? We will read a wide array of fiction and poetry and analyze each piece on a craft level.

Structure: Every Monday we will discuss some readings relevant to the topic at hand. You will be expected to come to class having read the assigned texts, ready to discuss! Please email me a 1 page reader response to one of the pieces assigned by midnight on Monday before Monday’s class. Every Wednesday 4 of you will have a chance to workshop pieces of fiction or poetry. Please email the class your piece the Wednesday before your workshop, by midnight. You will need to read each workshopped piece and write a critique letter for each writer. Please email your critique letter to the writer and to me by midnight on Wednesday before each workshop.

Assignments:

Reader Responses: A one-page close reading response to one or more of the assigned reading.

Critique Letters: 1-2 page letter to each author on their piece, what you think works and what you think needs revision, strengths, weaknesses, and questions the piece leaves you with.

Original work: You will be expected to turn in original work twice this semester, once in prose and once in poetry. For poetry, please turn in a poem or group of poems of no less than 10 lines and no more than 5 pages. For fiction, please turn in a story or an excerpt of a longer work, no fewer than 3 pages and no more than 20 pages.

Portfolio: At the end of course, you will turn in a portfolio of all your reader responses and your original work, revised after you had a chance to workshop it.

Plagiarism Policy:
Just don’t plagiarize. There is a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy for academic and creative assignments. All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the department, without exception.

Grading:
Attendance and Participation (35%), Reader Responses (20%), Workshop Writing (20%), Final Portfolio (25%)

Attendance
You are allowed two unexcused absences, unless it is your workshop day. After two absences, unless you get a doctor’s note, your grade begins to drop half a letter each instance. If you are sick or have an emergency, please let me know by email. Please try to be on time for class. Two instances of lateness will equal an unexcused absence.

**Workshops**

We will be treating each other as colleagues in these workshops: you can expect your work to be critiqued with respect. Personal attacks WILL NOT be tolerated. Criticism should be constructive: we are examining each piece for how well the elements of craft work. We shall assume each piece to be a work of fiction, and keep a clear division between the speaker/narrator of the work and the author. The point of the workshop is to help each author fully realize the potential of their work, not to reshape their work to our own preferences.

At the beginning of each workshop, you will be asked to read a section of your work. We will go around the room, so each student can discuss the strengths of the piece and offer suggestions, then open the floor to general discussion. The student whose work is being workshopped will remain silent until the end of their workshop, at which point they can ask questions or ask for clarification.

**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](http://www.nyu.edu/csd)

**Student Wellness Policy**

Unless we see explicit evidence in workshop that the speaker of 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.
Conferences
You are strongly encouraged to meet with me during office hours, especially after you’ve workshopped a piece, so we can discuss your revision process. I am happy to meet with you any time over the course of the semester!

Book List
*The Emissary* by Yoko Tawada

Schedule

**Monday 2/1** Review syllabus, general housekeeping  
**Wed 2/3 Openings:** first 5 pages of *The Haunting of Hill House* by Shirley Jackson, and the beginning and end of *My Year of Meats*, by Ruth Ozeki, group 1 pieces due

**Mon 2/8** Setting and World Building: Yoko Towada’s *The Emissary*  
**Wed 2/10 Workshop** Group 1 workshop, group 2 pieces due

**Mon 2/15** Presidents Day, No Classes  
**Wed 2/17 Workshop** Group 2, group 3 pieces due  
**Thurs 2/18 Creating Characters:** “The Wrong Grave” by Kelly Link, and “Family Furnishings” by Alice Munro

**Mon 2/22** Story Structures: “The Girl With the Green Ribbon,” by Alvin Schwartz, and “Afternoon at the Bakery” by Yoko Ogawa  
**Wed 2/24 Workshop** Group 3, group 1 pieces due

**Mon 3/1** Tension and Surprise. “Where Are You Going Where Have You Been?” By Joyce Carol Oates, and “When I Make Love to the Bug Man” by Lauren Benedict  
**Wed 3/3 Workshop** Group 1, group 2 pieces due

**Mon 3/8** Description: “The Flower Garden” by Shirley Jackson, “Robert Greenman and the Mermaid” by Anjali Sachdeva, and “Guessing” by Meg Ellison  
**Wed 3/10 Workshop** Group 2, group 3 pieces due

**Mon 3/15** Retellings, Myths and Fairytales in Fiction: “The Husband Stitch,” by Carmen Maria Machado  
**Wed 3/17 Workshop** Group 3

**Mon 3/22** Fiction Writing Day: No reading or responses due, but come prepared to write! I will give you prompts if you want them, or you can bring an in-progress manuscript.  
**Wed 3/24** Poetry Writing Day, No reading or responses due, but come prepared to write!  
Group 1 pieces are due
Wed 3/31 Workshop Group 1, group 2 pieces due

Mon 4/5 Poetry Forms: Sonnets, Ghazals, Haiku:
Wed 4/7 Workshop Group 2, group 3 pieces due

Wed 4/14 Workshop Group 3, group 1 pieces due

Mon 4/19 Imagery and Detail: “White Mountain” by Vievee Francis, “It is Daylight” and “Garden Apartments” by Arda Collins
Wed 4/21 Workshop Group 1, group 2 pieces due

Mon 4/26 Character and POV: “The Central Virginia Training Center” and “Grand Mal Seizure” by Molly McCully Brown, and “Skinned” by Vievee Francis
Wed 4/28 Workshop Group 2, group 3 pieces due

Mon 5/3 Ambiguity Vs. Vagueness “The Lady of Shallot” by Alfred Lord Tennyson
Wed 5/5 Workshop Group 3, Final workshop group pieces due.

Mon 5/10 Myth and Folklore Retellings in poetry: “Sirens” by Margaret Atwood, “Persephone Falling” by Rita Dove Wrap up discussion. PORTFOLIOS DUE by midnight.
