

CRW1101 □ BEGINNING FICTION WRITING **(Sec. 1633) Spring 2018**

Instructor: Gardner Mounce

Meeting time & Location: Fridays 12:50pm - 3:50pm, Weimer Hall 2050

Office hours: Wednesdays 10 AM - 11 AM, Thursdays 10 AM - 11 AM, by appointment, at least 24 hours ahead of time.

Course website: Canvas

Instructor email: gmounce@ufl.edu

Required Texts:

Writing Without Teachers, Peter Elbow

The Book of Other People, Edited by Zadie Smith

Online course packet

Course Description:

In this course, we will survey ways of writing fiction through close-readings and discussions of short stories, sort-of-short stories, experimental stories, and prose experiments which can't at all be called *stories* in the traditional sense, from a range of authors and genres. Additionally, by trying our hand at some fiction of our own, as well as workshop-ping that of our classmates, we will better understand how to make fiction work.

General Education Objectives:

- This course confers General Education credit for Composition (C), and also fulfills 6,000 of the university's 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Composition courses provide instruction in the methods and conventions of standard written English (grammar, punctuation, usage), as well as the techniques that produce effective texts. Composition courses are writing intensive. They require multiple drafts submitted to your instructor for feedback before final submission.
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Course Policies:

1. You must complete all *assignments* to receive credit for this course.
2. *Attendance*: Students are allowed one unexcused absence. Each additional absence will result in 20 points off of your class participation grade. Three absences earn a failing grade. The exception would be UF activities such as band, athletics, debate team, and documented major illnesses I'll consider on a case-by-case basis.
3. *Paper Format & Submission*: 12pt font, Times New Roman (I understand TNR isn't the sexiest font, but agreeing on a standard font rescues us from issues down the road), double-spaced, 1" margins, numbered pages. As for headers, just put the relevant information (name, date, paper title, prompt answered, etc) in whatever configuration does it for you.
4. *Late Papers/Assignments*:
 - a. Stories: Failing to turn in a story on time disrupts the class and holds everyone up, so if you fail to turn a story in on time, you will receive a zero for the assignment.
 - b. All other assignments: For every day late the assignment is, 10% will be deducted from the final score.
5. *Paper Maintenance Responsibilities*. Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.
6. *Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism*. Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.
7. Students with *disabilities* who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.
8. For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>
9. *Grade Appeals*. In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
10. *Course Evaluations*. Toward the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

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14. *Laptops & Phones*: To say that technology is essential to a university course is truism. Phones and laptops curb our over-dependency on paper, enable us to connect outside of class, and open wide the doors for accessing literature online. However, cell phone addiction is real, it's prevalent, and it's pernicious to the aims of the university course. So. *You are not able to use your phone in class unless it is an emergency*. You are able to use laptops for in-class writing assignments and while we discuss literature from the online course packet. Otherwise, I will ask you to put them up. Please talk to me privately if this presents a unique problem for you.

Writing Assignments:

Twelve 200-word Weekly responses — Each week students will write a short 200-word critical response to the stories we read, due to Canvas on Fridays at 12:50 PM.

Each week, the prompt is the same: "Choose one of the stories we read this week. What did you notice about the text? What did this/these thing(s) you noticed do to you as a reader? How did this/these thing(s) contribute to the text as a whole?"

Two Critical Essays (one 800-word, one 1,600-word) — Students will write two critical essays in which they consider the function of particular formal elements in the stories we've read. Prompts will be provided. These will be graded according to clarity, concision, and use of evidence to support your argument.

Moon Journal — Students will keep a moon viewing journal for a month. This will be checked each week during the course of the moon viewing study.

One 1,200-word Argumentative Essay— Students will write an argumentative essay arguing for or against the effectiveness of Peter Elbow's ideas in *Writing Without Teachers*. Prompt(s) will be provided.

Story — Students are required to hand in one story to be workshopped. This story must be no less than 3 pages and no more than 12, and **must be printed-out and submitted the week before its workshop**. This story will be revised and the **revision is due on the date listed below**. These will be graded according to how they utilize the techniques and avoid the mistakes that we will have discussed in the first half of the semester.

Revision — These will be graded according to the depth of the revision, as well as whether or not they make use of comments.

Students will also be asked to complete writing exercises in class.

Schedule (subject to change - you will be notified)

Week	Day	Reading Material	Assignments Due
1	January 12	Discuss syllabus, assign workshop dates, discuss: -“Lights” by Stuart Dybek -“What She Knew” by Lydia Davis	
2	January 19	- <i>Writing Without Teachers</i> , pgs 3-11 -“Gideon” by ZZ Packer (from <i>The Book of Other People</i> , pgs 47-51) -“Elsewhere” by Steven Millhauser (from <i>Voices in the Night</i> , pgs 135-149) -“Akhnilo” by James Salter (from <i>Dusk</i> , pages 104-111)	-Weekly response #1 (200 words)
3	January 26	- <i>Writing Without Teachers</i> , pgs 12-22 -“Puppy” by George Saunders (from <i>The Book of Other People</i> , pgs 171-179) -“Great Rock and Roll Pauses by Allison Blake” by Jennifer Egan (75 powerpoint pages)	-Weekly response #2 (200 words) -Critical Essay #1 (800 words)
4	February 2	- <i>Writing Without Teachers</i> , pgs 22- 30 -“Rhoda” by Jonathan Safran Foer (from <i>The Book of Other People</i> , pgs 183-186) -“Two Houses” by Kelly Link (from <i>Get in Trouble</i> , pgs 261-286)	-Weekly response #3 (200 words) -Moon-viewing journal check #1
5	February 9	- <i>Writing Without Teachers</i> , pgs 30-37 -“Roy Spivey” by Miranda July (from <i>The Book of Other People</i> , pgs 207-215) -“Anything Helps” by Jess Walter (from <i>We Live in Water</i> , pas 1-16) -“the suggestiveness of one stray hair in an otherwise perfect coiffure” by Mark Leyner (1 page)	-Weekly response #4 (200 words) -Moon viewing journal check #2

6	February 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Writing Without Teachers</i>, pgs 38-47 -“Theo” by Dave Eggers (from <i>The Book of Other People</i>, pgs 229-235) -“Redeployment” by Phil Klay (from <i>Redeployment</i>, pgs 1-16) -“Go For it And Raise Hell” by Amelia Gray (from <i>Gutshot</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Weekly response #5 (200 words) -Moon Viewing Journal check #3
7	February 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Writing Without Teachers</i>, pgs 48-64 -“Perkus Tooth” by Jonathan Lethem (from <i>The Book of Other People</i>, pgs 239-258) -“The David Party” by David Leavitt (4 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Weekly response #6 (200 words) -Moon viewing journal check #4
8	March 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>Writing Without Teachers</i>, pgs 64-75 -<i>Writing Without Teachers</i>, pgs 85-92 -“Sticks” by George Saunders (from <i>10th of December</i>, 1 page) -“Jesus is Waiting” by Amy Hempel (from <i>The Collected Stories</i>, pgs 309-316) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Weekly Response #7 (200 words) First Workshop
	March 9	Spring Break - No class	
9	March 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“The Angel Seems” by Jeffrey Ford (15 pages) -“The Swimmer” by John Cheever (from <i>The Stories of John Cheever</i>, pgs 603-612) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Weekly Response #8 (200 words) -Argumentative Essay (1,200 words) -Second Workshop
10	March 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Autumn” by Joy Williams (from <i>Ill Nature</i>, pas 170-171) -“Sharks and Suicide” by Joy Williams (from <i>Ill Nature</i>, pgs 92-100) -“The Gingerbread House” by Robert Coover (from <i>Pricksongs & Descants</i>, 8 pages) -“Date Night” by Amelia Gray (from <i>Gutshot</i>, 2 pages) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Weekly Response #9 (200 words) -Third Workshop
11	March 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“The Gun” by Mark Haddon (from <i>The Pier Falls</i>, 17 pages) -“The Liar” by Aleksandar Hemon (from <i>The Book of Other People</i>, pgs 98-103) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Weekly response #10 (200 words) -Fourth workshop

12	April 6	-“Car Crash While Hitchhiking” by Denis Johnson (from <i>Jesus’ Son</i> , pgs 3-10) -“End of the Line” by Aimee Bender (from <i>Willful Creatures</i> , 10 pages) -“Ghosts and Empties” by Lauren Groff (from <i>The New Yorker</i> , 8 pages)	-Weekly response #11 (200 words) -Fifth workshop
13	April 13	-“Hanwell Snr” by Zadie Smith (from <i>The Book of Other People</i> , pgs 63-71) -“Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid (from <i>At the Bottom of the River</i> , 2 pages) -“Cordóba” by Stuart Dybek (from <i>Ecstatic Cahoots</i> , 10 pages)	-Weekly response #12 (200 words) -Sixth Workshop
14	April 20	-“Hinterlands” by William Gibson (from <i>Burning Chrome</i> , 20 pgs) -“The Locked Room” by Ottessa Moshfegh (from <i>Homesick for Another World</i> , 8 pages)	-Seventh Workshop -Critical Response (1,600 words)

Revision of workshopped story due: April 27th

Rubric:

1. Class Participation (includes workshop comments, in-class writing, moon-viewing journal, etc.) — 200 points
 2. Weekly Responses: 150
 3. Critical Responses: 150
 4. Argumentative Essay: 125
 3. Story — 250 points
 4. Story Revision — 125 points
- Total** — 1,000 points