“Of the many definitions of a story, the simplest may be this: it is a piece of writing that makes the reader want to find out what happens next. Good writers, it is often said, have the ability to make you keep on reading them whether you want to or not—the milk boils over, the subway stop is missed.”

—Bill Buford, former fiction editor of The New Yorker

“A word after a word after a word is power.”

—Margaret Atwood

DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce you to a handful of great writers and great stories, and some of the basic building blocks and concepts fiction writers employ. We’ll write some exercises that will practice these skills. We’ll also come up with character sketches and brainstorming that will help us craft our main project for the class, a complete draft of a short story, which we’ll then discuss in our workshop sessions. Finally, we’ll revise our drafts and/or write new ones. Be prepared to read and write a considerable amount.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Course reader. These will be sold on campus in Thornton Center Lobby (located at 379 Santa Teresa Street, across from the Terman Fountain and Roble Gym). Cost TBA. Supplementary readings will also be distributed throughout the course.
2. You will be required to provide photocopies of your main story for everyone in the class midway through the term, so please budget for this expense.

GRADING

Class Participation—35% This figure includes attendance, punctuality, preparedness, and involvement in class discussions. Full attendance is of utmost importance in a fiction workshop, as it is impossible to “catch up” on a workshop discussion you have missed, and as the workshop discussion itself suffers whenever even one voice is missing. Students are
expected to engage in and contribute to class discussions. If you miss a class, please let me know ahead of time by email. If you miss more than two classes or are late on a regular basis, your grade will drop.

*Canvas Posts, Fiction Exercises, Stories, and Workshop Critiques—50%* Includes both writing exercises, one longer story, and a revision of that story. The total number of pages will equal 30-35 pp (including exercises but not including the revision).

*Reading Attendance—15%* Your attendance at three readings in the creative writing program is required. The reading schedule can be viewed at CREATIVEWRITING.STANFORD.EDU/EVENT-LIST. Plan which events you will go to in advance so that you will be able to make your three by the end of the quarter.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

*Format for assignments:*
- Double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font. Please staple anything more than one page, and make sure to include your name. Canvas posts should be posted before class begins.

*Story content:*
- Because the workshop experience is based on collective trust, I recommend that you not include references to any instructors or students in your writing. If you feel you must, you should discuss this with your workshop instructor well before you submit the piece.

Work submitted in workshop is not to be shared outside of class.

Your story should be a new draft written for this class. On the other hand, you're permitted and encouraged to use material generated in exercises in this class to create your story.

*Conferences:* Do stop in at any time during my office hours with any concerns you have regarding class, or just to talk about writing. I also highly recommend setting up an appointment to conference with me sometime in the week following the workshopping of your story. This is not required, but I’ve found that students who come in to talk about their revision strategies consistently produce better revisions.

*Laptops* may be used during in-class writing exercises. Feel free to bring them to class, but don’t leave them open during general discussion.

*Late Assignments:* The highest grade any late assignments will receive is a C; any comment not uploaded to Canvas will be considered not completed, and comments more than a week late will not be counted at all since the author will already be revising.

*Note:* Both lecturers and undergraduate advisors are available to discuss the creative writing minor and the English major. Please stop by to learn more about the Creative Writing Program or to ask questions or make suggestions. For this quarter's hours and location, visit http://creativewriting.stanford.edu.
**Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate a request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).

**Honor Code**

The Honor Code is the University’s statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work.

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. That they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading;
2. That they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.