

**Carleton University
Fall 2023 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English**

ENGL 2903: Writing Fiction

Prerequisites: permission of the instructor

Wednesdays 11:35-2:25pm

Format: In-person, not suitable for online students

Instructor: Nadia Bozak

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******This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.******

Course Description:

This introductory fiction workshop aims to develop students' creative writing skills and, attendant to that, their reading and editorial skills.

We will spend the course building skills in the fundamentals of fiction writing (such as character development, setting, and point of view) and experiment with both form and content, pushing our boundaries and comfort zones.

Regardless of prior experience, students will have a sincere interest in writing fiction and a willingness to learn from their fellow student-writers, the instructor, and works of exemplary fiction assigned by the instructor.

We will focus on writing flash fiction, short stories, and prompt-based exercises. Students will require the time and energy to write, read, and revise continuously.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will emerge from this workshop having written two polished fiction manuscripts. Most of each session will be spent workshopping each other's short fiction manuscripts, thus developing skills in editing, reading as writers, and offering constructive feedback with diplomacy and tact. Students will also read works of exemplary fiction, developing skills in close reading to learn from the success of various published works. Students will also lead a discussion on an assigned topic or reading and participate in class discussions.

Note well: Success in this course and development as writers depends upon attending the sessions regularly, contributing to discussions, and fully engaging with writing journal prompts and workshops. Students must, therefore, be ready to circulate their creative work among their

peers and have it openly discussed in class. As well as receiving peer commentary about their writing, they will offer their peers constructive and thoughtful feedback.

Course Requirements (tentative):

- 1) **50%:** Two short fiction manuscripts (25% each) submitted **a)** for workshopping and **b)** to the instructor in a revised form. One manuscript will be 2000-2500 words; the other will be 500-750 words.
- 2) **15%:** Attend and review a literary event in Ottawa (such as the Ottawa International Writers Festival)
- 3) **15%** Presentation/ leading a class discussion on a selected assigned reading or topic (i.e. an informal presentation plus discussion questions)
- 4) **20%:** Participation (contributions to discussions, quality of editorial comments, general preparedness and engagement)

Readings are mandatory. All readings are available on Ares (unless otherwise noted).