

**PRELIMINARY OUTLINE SUBJECT TO MINOR CHANGE**

**Carleton University Department of English**

**SUMMER 2022**

**ENGL 2903A: FICTION WORKSHOP**

**Tuesday and Thursday 11:35-2:25/ Patterson 115**

**Professor Nadia Bozak**

**Office Hours: Tuesday 10-11 (Dunton Tower 1918)**

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**The information in this course outline may be subject to change in response to evolving public health guidelines related to the COVID-19 pandemic.**

**Course Description:**

The objective of this introductory fiction workshop is to develop students' creative writing skills and, attendant to that, their reading and editorial skills as well.

We will spend the course building skills in the fundamentals of fiction writing (such as character development, setting, point of view), and also experimenting 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.

While the focus is on writing short-form fiction, students may also work on novel chapters, prose poetry, and other approved forms as well.

As this is a six-week summer course, students will need to have the time and energy to write, read, and revise on an ongoing basis. We will engage in in-class writing exercises, peer-edit our work in class, and also, if needed, have time to work on our assignments in class. We may also welcome one or two local authors into our class to speak about their writing and careers.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will emerge from this workshop having written two polished fiction manuscripts. The majority of each class will be spent engaging in in-class writing exercises and discussing 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 as a means to learn from the success of a variety of published works. Students will also lead a discussion on an assigned topic and participate in class discussions.

**Note well:** The success of this class and your development as a writer depends upon attending the sessions regularly, contributing to discussions, and fully engaging with in-class exercises and workshops. You must, therefore, be ready to circulate your creative work among your peers and have it openly discussed in class. As well as receiving and perhaps integrating the comments of others into your writing, you will offer your peers constructive and thoughtful feedback as well.

### **Evaluation:**

- 1) **40%:** Quality and originality of two short fiction manuscripts submitted **a)** for workshopping and **b)** to the instructor in a revised form. One manuscript will be 1000-1500 words; the other will be 250-500 words (and will originate from an in-class writing prompt).

Effort, creativity, effective writing, proper grammar, and formatting are taken into consideration when grading. As revision/re-writing is the foundation of creative writing, a 10% portion of the above mark includes submitting a separate formal summary (2 pages) reflecting upon the revisions you made and what it was like to experience the workshop process.

NB: "Formal" means written in full sentences, properly paragraphed, with thoughts organized and presented in prose that is clear, thoughtful, and proofread. You will properly cite any sources you refer to.

- 2) **5%** Project Description (for the longer manuscript)
- 3) **5%** Contribution to the "Writing Prompt Forum" (post a compelling writing prompt for the group, including a commentary on its intention and merits)
- 4) **10%** leading a class discussion on a selected assigned reading (i.e. an informal presentation plus discussion questions)
- 5) **15%:** Participation (contributions to discussions, quality of editorial comments, general preparedness and engagement)
- 6) **15%** in-class writing journal

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

**Classroom Conduct:**

We will be kind and respectful when making and receiving constructive feedback.

Students must come to class having a) read the assigned readings and b) prepared to speak about the manuscripts up for critique (their own and those of others).

If you plan to circulate a piece of writing that you think may be sensitive in some regard, please speak to me about it first, and well in advance, before bringing it in to workshop.

You will learn more and be more productive if you turn off your phone/email/social media etc.

**Class time will be divided as follows:**

50 minutes presentations/ discussion

50 minutes in-class writing prompts

50 minutes workshopping

**Readings are all available on Ares:**

- Spencer Holst, “Brilliant Silence”
- Raymond Carver, “Popular Mechanics” and “Shall We Dance?”
- Yasunari Kawabata “Photograph” and “The Man Who Did Not Smile”
- Rhonda Douglas, “Nous and René Lévesque”
- Robert Hass, “A Story About the Body”
- Lucia Berlin “Manual for Cleaning Women”
- Lorrie Moore: “How to Become a Writer”
- Jackie Kay, “Big Milk”
- Kateri Akiwenzie-Damm “It’s Not So Much”
- Vandana Singh “Indra’s Web”
- Michael Crummey “Bread”
- Octavia Butler “Speech Sounds”
- Simon Ortiz “Man on the Moon
- Binyavanga Wainaina “Ships in High Transit”

**Detailed schedule for each session is forthcoming.**

## PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” According to the Department examples of plagiarism include the following:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, or suspension from a program. For more information please go to: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

### Special Information Regarding Pandemic Measures

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) and [mandatory self-screening](#) prior to coming to campus daily.

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca)

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

### **Requests for Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the

university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>