

**Carleton University  
Winter 2021  
Department of English**

**ENGL 3903 A: *Writing Fiction (Intermediate)***

**Prerequisites: a 2000-level creative writing workshop  
and permission of the instructor  
Preclusions: none**

**Wednesday / 2:35 pm – 5:25 pm  
Location: *Please confirm location on Carleton Central*  
Format: *Blended***

**Instructor: Adam Barrows  
Email: adam.barrows@carleton.ca  
Office: DT 1901  
Phone: 613-520-2600 x4093  
(voicemail will be checked semi-regularly- email preferred)  
Office Hours (virtual): by appointment**

**Course description:** This course will help students to develop their creative writing and revision skills through regular peer workshopping of prose fiction. Students will build upon their foundation in the fundamentals of fiction writing through close reading of short stories, creating effective writing prompts, and studying the writer's creative process.

**Learning Outcomes:** Students will produce two polished short-fiction manuscripts. They will study short fiction from the perspective of writers, learn how to generate story ideas, give and receive constructive feedback, and practice self-editing and revision techniques. They will also give a short presentation on the creative process of a writer of their choice.

**Required Texts:** All required texts will be made available through links on CULearn.

**Course Calendar** (This schedule is subject to change at my discretion. Required ZOOM sessions will be held roughly every OTHER week, as indicated on the calendar. These sessions will NOT be recorded. Students may choose to have their video cameras on or off. Peer feedback during workshop sessions may NOT be given via the chat function, but must be delivered orally (preferably with camera on in order to build a sense of community and fellowship). Students will sign-up for workshop dates in the first week of the course.)

- Jan 13** Course Introduction  
Topic: “Character as desire”  
**(ZOOM session begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Jan 20** Rushdie, “Good Advice is Rarer than Rubies”  
**Writing Exercise #1 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Writing Prompts #1 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Manuscripts for Jan 27 Workshop Due by 11:59 pm on CULearn**
- Jan 27** Workshop manuscripts  
Topic: “Subtext in dialogue”  
**(ZOOM session begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Feb 3** Lahiri, “A Temporary Matter”  
**Writing Exercise #2 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Writing Prompts #2 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Manuscripts for Feb 10 Workshop due by 11:59 pm on CULearn**
- Feb 10** Workshop manuscripts  
Topic: “Setting, atmosphere, and theme”  
**(ZOOM session begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Feb 17** **Winter Break**
- Feb 24** Story: Desai, “Games at Twilight”  
**Writing Exercise #3 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Writing Prompts #3 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Manuscripts for Mar 3 Workshop Due at 11:59 pm on CULearn**  
**Final Manuscript #1 Due at 11:59 pm on CULearn**

- Mar 3** Workshop manuscripts  
Topic: “Setting and POV”  
**(ZOOM session begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Mar 10** Story: Bradbury, “The Emissary”  
**Writing Exercise #4 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Writing Prompts #4 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Manuscripts for Mar 17 Workshop Due at 11:59 pm on CULearn**
- Mar 17** Workshop manuscripts  
Topic: “Structure and POV”  
**(ZOOM session begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Mar 24** Story: Cather, “The wolf story” (from *My Antonia*)  
**Writing Exercise #5 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Writing Prompts #5 Due at 2:35 pm on CULearn**  
**Manuscripts for Mar 31 Workshop Due by 11:59 pm on CULearn**
- Mar 31** Workshop manuscripts  
**(ZOOM Session begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Apr 7** Student Presentations on the Writer’s Process  
**(ZOOM meeting begins at 2:35 pm)**
- Apr 14** Final Manuscript #2 Due at 11:59 pm on CULearn

**Evaluation:**

**Final Manuscripts: 40%**  
**Manuscript Feedback: 20%**  
**Writing Exercises: 20%**  
**Prompts: 10%**  
**Presentations: 10%**

(Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean).

**Final Manuscripts:** You will submit two polished pieces of short fiction that have been workshopped during the semester. The first (workshopped in January and February) will be under 1500 words. The second (workshopped in March) will be a maximum of 3000 words. The manuscripts will be evaluated on the basis of demonstrated effort, creativity, effective writing, and grammar/mechanics. Each manuscript must be accompanied by a 2 page report in which you reflect upon the revision process. These reports should account for the ways in which workshop feedback has been accommodated (or not) in the revision process.

**Manuscript Feedback:** For each of the manuscripts submitted in advance of a workshop you must provide at least five sentences of written feedback to be submitted to the student and to the instructor by the end of that workshop period. You may also choose (but are not required to) annotate manuscripts with feedback. In addition, you will be asked to contribute oral feedback during alternate workshops, as assigned at the beginning of the semester (the class will be divided in half, such that members of group A will provide oral comments one week and group B the next, etc.). Feedback will be evaluated in terms of the quality and care with which the feedback is crafted.

**Writing Exercises:** Five times throughout the semester, as indicated on the course calendar, you will respond to an instructor-generated writing prompt that asks you to explore a particular technique or formal element that has been illustrated by an assigned short story. These need not be fully polished pieces of writing and they need not be complete stories (in some cases, they may be brief character sketches or a descriptive passage). You should aim to write around 500 words for each exercise and you will post your work on CULearn for the class to read. Your work will be evaluated on creativity and the extent to which it successfully explores the technique or element under consideration.

**Writing Prompts:** In addition to these writing exercises, you will also share productive and useful writing prompts with your peers in order to help inspire their writing. These may be original prompts, but they do not have to be. If there are useful prompts you have acquired from other writing courses or have found online or in instruction books, please share them. Students are not expected to use these prompts, but they are invited to do so, and to share the writing inspired by these prompts with their classmates (simply for fun). The quality of the prompts will not be evaluated. Students will receive full credit for submitting prompts on time.

**Presentations:** Throughout the course, students will research the creative process of a writer of their choice. How does this writer describe their process? Do they follow a regular writing routine? If so, what is it? How do they deal with writer's block? What inspires their fiction? To answer these questions, you are encouraged to seek out interviews with your chosen author, journal and diary entries (for writers whose journals and diaries have been published) or comments they have made about the creative process in their own published work. Your presentation will be on ZOOM and should be around 5-10 minutes. You will be evaluated in terms of the thoroughness of your research and your presentation effectiveness.

## 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.” This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- 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/>

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 more details click [here](#).

**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 must 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>