

ENGL 3903: Intermediate Fiction

Course Description:

The objective of this intermediate fiction-writing workshop is to further develop students' creative writing skills and, attendant to that, their reading and editorial skills as well. Students in this workshop are expected to have a solid foundation in the fundamentals of fiction writing (such as character development, setting, point of view) upon which this workshop will build.

They will also have a sincere interest in writing fiction and a willingness to learn from their fellow writers, the instructor, and works of exemplary fiction assigned by the instructor.

While the focus is on writing short literary fiction—short stories, novel chapters—other formats and genres will be considered as well.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will emerge from this workshop with two revised, polished fiction manuscripts. They will also attend and review a literary reading event (on campus or in Ottawa), thus gaining an appreciation for literature as it is read out loud by the author and learn what authors have to say about the process of writing fiction.

The majority of each class will be spent critiquing and discussing each others' short fiction manuscripts, thus developing skills in self-editing, reading as writers, and offering constructive feedback with diplomacy and tact. Students will also read works of exemplary contemporary fiction, developing skills in close reading as a means to learn from the success of a variety of published works. Students will also prepare a short presentation 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 each and every session, 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, thoughtful and forthright critiques as well.

Writing Sample Guidelines:

Please send me 8-10 double-spaced pages of your best, most polished prose. Your sample can be fiction, creative nonfiction, or screenwriting, and I will also consider poetry and drama. Your sample can be drawn from multiple pieces if needed, just clearly indicate that you are submitted excerpts from larger works or that you are including more than one piece, etc. Please also include a short bio of about 200 words. You can let me know your background in creative writing and what you hope to achieve in this course.