

Carleton University
Winter 2026 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English

ENGL 3903B: Writing Fiction (Intermediate)

Prerequisites: a grade of B+ or higher in one of: ENGL 2901, ENGL 2903, ENGL 2915, or departmental permission.

Students who lack the prerequisite must submit a writing sample. Instructions can be found at <https://carleton.ca/english/>

**Instructor: Professor 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 intermediate fiction workshop intends to develop skills in writing fiction, reading published texts and learning from them as our teachers, and in offering and receiving peer-editing feedback in a workshop setting. To up our writing game, we will spend time reading and writing stories that engage with a “borrowed form,” or texts that otherwise push the boundaries of form, structure, and, possibly, means of dissemination. Regardless of prior experience, students should have a sincere interest in writing fiction and a willingness to learn from their peers, the instructor, and exemplary works of fiction assigned by the instructor.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will emerge from this workshop with two pieces of polished fiction written in a new, innovative, or “borrowed” form. Most of our sessions will be spent workshopping our short fiction manuscripts, thus developing skills in editing, reading as writers, and offering constructive feedback with diplomacy and tact. Students will also closely read works of exemplary fiction, learning from various published works. Additionally, students will keep a reading journal, participate in class discussions, and write a review of a literary journal, magazine, publishing platform, or community-based literary event.

Note well: Success in this course depends upon attending the sessions regularly, contributing to discussions, and fully engaging with workshops. Students must, therefore, be ready to circulate their creative work among their peers and have it openly discussed in class. In addition to receiving peer commentary about their writing, students will offer their peers constructive and thoughtful feedback.

Course Requirements:

- 1) **50%:** Two short fiction manuscripts (25% each) submitted a) for workshopping and b) to the instructor in a revised form for grading. Students will submit a reflection statement with each revised manuscript.
- 2) **10%:** Review of a literary journal, publishing platform, or literary event
- 3) **10%** Reading journal: Students will submit five responses to five assigned readings of their choosing.
- 4) **10%** Getting-started prompts, submitted and workshopped in weeks 2-3
- 5) **20%:** Participation

Required Reading: Approximately one short story per week, available online through Ares or Course Reserves.