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CRWR 310.01: Intermediate Fiction Workshop

Robert Stubblefield

University of Montana, Missoula, robert.stubblefield@umontana.edu

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CRWR 310 Section 1
Creative Writing: Fiction
Fall 2020

Instructor:

Robert Stubblefield

Office: LA 231

Email: robert.stubblefield@umontana.edu

Office hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:00 p.m., Wednesday 1:00-2:00 p.m., Thursday 12:00-2:00 p.m. by appointment on Zoom portal.

Classroom:

Gallagher Business Building 108

Class Meeting Time:

T, Th 2:00-3:20 p.m.

Required Text and Materials:

A journal and folder for compiling all exercises and in-class and out-of-class assignments. You will be responsible for online posting of your stories and peer responses.

Electronic Readings: You will be required to sign on to UM Online (Moodle) and read stories and/or essays. Be prepared to bring these readings to class in either print or electronic form for ready access.

Required Software:

Adobe Reader.

Course Objectives:

CRWR 310 is an intermediate fiction writing class. We will focus on the craft of fiction writing and the components required for a successful short story. We will read, discuss, and respond to a variety of published stories and craft-based essays, but the primary emphasis throughout the semester will be analysis and discussion of student work. You will be expected to complete three substantial works of fiction during the semester in addition to workshop responses and exercises. You will be responsible for carefully reading the work of your peers and responding both in classroom discussion (workshop) and with typed comments posted in online forum.

Course Requirements:

- **Writing Exercises:** All writing exercises will be turned in on the date due and must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins. Exercises will focus on one component of a story or be of a specified length. Keep these in your portfolio upon return.

- **Journal:** I expect you to keep a journal of dialogue bits, story ideas, brilliant insights, complaints, whatever you desire. Although I will not ask you to turn in these journals, I will occasionally ask for a typed excerpt (one page or less) of your collected wisdom.
- **Major Assignments (stories):** You will produce three works of fiction over the course of this semester. Two of these works will be presented for peer workshopping and one will be presented to instructor for conferencing/discussion. Although you will be expected to revise each story based on peer critiques, instructor comments, and workshop experience, you will choose one story for Reading/Presentation that will demonstrate significant and substantial revision.

Grading/Evaluation:

You will be graded on your active participation in class, your writing exercises, your improvement from draft to revision, and your attendance. **DO NOT MISS MORE THAN TWO (2) CLASSES OR YOUR GRADE WILL BE AFFECTED**

- **40%** of your grade is based on active participation. Show up prepared, comment on readings and the work of your peers, and contribute to the community of the classroom.
- **30%** of your grade is based on successful completion of all writing assignments (including peer responses). Turn these exercises in on time, put some thought and effort into the work, and type and double-space all out-of-class work. You will receive credit for exercises, but not a letter grade.
- **30%** of your grade is based on your fiction portfolio. On full-length story must be substantially revised by the end of the semester. Demonstrate improvement and the ability to effectively respond to criticism.

Grade Descriptors: To give you a sense of what constitutes an A, B, C, D, and F in this class, please refer to the following grade descriptors for participation and portfolios.

Participation Grade Descriptors for CRWR 310

- **A** Superior participation shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions and workshops through verbal, electronic, and written contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, thorough, specific, and often provide other student writers with a new perspective or insight.
- **B** Strong participation demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, specific, and helpful.

- **C** Satisfactory participation demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group workshops and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful and prompt, but could benefit from more attentive reading and/or specific detail when giving comments.
- **D** Weak participation demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions or small group workshops. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, suggestions to group members may be missing, disrespectful, or far too brief and general to be of help.
- **F** Unacceptable participation shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, the student has a pattern of missing, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [Student Conduct Code](#)

Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Deadlines: Consult this site for updated add/drop information:

[Add/Drop Deadlines and Registration Information](#)

Monday, September 7, Labor Day, No Classes

Tuesday, November 3, Election Day, No Classes

Wednesday, November 11, Veterans Day, No Classes

Tuesday, November 24: Final Meeting, 3:20-5:20 p.m.

Classroom Safety and COVID-19 Protocols

- Mask use is required within the classroom

- Each student is provided with a cleaning kit. The expectation is that students will clean their personal work space when they arrive for class, and before they leave the classroom
- Classrooms may have one-way entrances / exits to minimize crowding
- Avoid congregating outside the classroom before and after class
- Specific seating arrangements will be used to ensure social distancing and support contact tracing efforts
- Class attendance will be recorded to support contact tracing efforts
- Drinking liquids and eating food is discouraged within the classroom (which requires mask removal)
- Stay home if you feel sick and/or if exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
- Up-to-Date COVID-19 Information from the University of Montana
 - UM Coronavirus Website: [UM Corona Virus information](#)
 - UM COVID-19 Fall 2020 website: [UM Covid 19 Fall 2020](#)
- Remain vigilant outside the classroom in mitigating the spread of COVID-19!

Calendar (Tentative and Subject to Change)

Week 1-2 (August 20, 25, 27): Introduction, Selected Readings
Tension/Process/Texture Exercise, Selected Readings, Making a Scene Exercise

Week 3 (September 1,3): Selected Readings and Introduction to Workshop: Absorbing,
Responding to, Reflecting upon, and Incorporating Criticism

Week 4 (September 10): Workshopping

Week 5 (September 15, 17): Workshopping

Week 6 (September 22, 24): Workshopping

Week 7 (September 29, October 1): Workshopping

Week 8 (October 6, 8): Workshopping

Week 9 (October 13, 15): Individual Conferencing/StoryCraft Writing Retreat

Week 10 (October 20, 22): Workshopping

Week 11 (October 22, 29): Workshopping

Week 12 (November 5): Workshopping

Week 13 (November 10,12): Workshopping

Week 14 (November 17): Small Group Revision Workshops

Week 15 (Final Meeting, Tuesday, November 24, 3:20-5:20 p.m.)

Some other Matter:

It is important that our classroom develop into a community of writers. You must be able to provide and accept criticism and feedback in a positive manner. I will be available during my office hours to meet with you and will also schedule individual and group conferences by appointment.

Missoula is a vibrant literary community. Although not required, I suggest you take advantage of virtual and online readings, conferences, and gatherings occurring this semester. I will announce upcoming events.

A Few Words to Ponder on Writing and the Short Story:

“The writer is the one who stays in the room.” Ron Carlson

“I’m not the sort of writer who can think up great story lines outside of writing. The writing itself is the thing that generates stories for me.” Alice McDermott

"Try to leave out the part that readers tend to skip." Elmore Leonard

And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
– William Shakespeare (from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*)

"My own experience is that once a story has been written, one has to cross out the beginning and the end. It is there that we authors do most of our lying." Anton Chekhov

“Making people believe the unbelievable is no trick; it’s work. . . . Belief and reader absorption come in the details: An overturned tricycle in the gutter of an abandoned neighborhood can stand for everything.”
Stephen King

“Don’t try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say. It’s the one and only thing you have to offer.” Barbara Kingsolver

"If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that." Stephen King

"You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write." Annie Proulx