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Advanced Fiction Writing LTCR 180

For poetry and fiction students in the creative writing concentration or by permission of instructor.

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Office Hours: by appt, email, each student is required to meet at least once during the session for a conference.

Description: In this intensive two week course you will practice the discipline and art of fiction writing, creatively exploring the question: what is a story? You will experiment with language, voice, form, character, plot and theme in your experiments and stories and read the work of published writers and fellow students. We will spend the first week, “warming up” focusing on generative exercises and experiments, and the second week focusing on workshopping drafts of stories. However, each day of the course we will discuss published work, do exercises and experiments to “warm up” and workshop in small or large groups. Each student will workshop their stories at least once in a full group workshop. You may continue to revise work that you have written either on your own or in other creative writing classes or expand one of your exercises or experiments into a story, but you should arrive the first day of class with a rough draft of a story in hand. This course will demand significant focus and dedication.

Required Texts and Materials: The Story and Its Writer, edited by Ann Charters, compact edition. You will need a folder to keep ALL work done in the class. You will also need to cover the cost of xeroxing your work for small groups several times and for the class at least once. If this will be an economic problem let me know immediately and we can work something out.

Optional Journal: Writing journals are useful for practice, experimentation, and collecting raw material for creative projects. All students are encouraged to keep their own writer’s journal.

Required Assignments:

DO NOT EMAIL ME YOUR WORK. DO NOT LEAVE IT IN MY BOX AT HUMANITIES. DO NOT GIVE IT TO ME AT THE READINGS. HAND IT IN DURING CLASS TIMES.

Writing Experiments/Short Stories: Your work needs to be typed, double-spaced, titled and edited for grammatical and spelling errors. These assignments will be evaluated on the power and artistry of their voice, form, language, character, theme, and plot as well as your dedication to experimentation (on how willing you are to take chances and try something new) and on your commitment to revision. You will need to keep all drafts of these pieces to be handed in with the second drafts. By the end of the session you will be expected to have a revised manuscript of 10-20 pages of fiction as well as 10 pages of experiments and exercises.

Class Participation:

You are expected to attend class, to be on time and to respectfully participate in all class discussions. The quality of this class is directly related to the quality of discussions, so please take responsibility by asking questions, bringing up ideas and responding to others. Strike a balance between participating and monopolizing the discussion. **If you have more than one unexcused absence, you may not pass the course, and your grade will definitely go down.** An excused absence is one that we have agreed on beforehand, or one that you were unable to notify me of beforehand, i.e.. sudden illness or family emergency. **Do not miss a class in which your own story will be workshopped.** It will not be rescheduled. In addition, you are responsible for beginning a workshop discussion, writing comments on other students' work, and Xeroxing your own work for class discussion. **You will need to check your UCSC email account every day to participate in this class.**

Grading Policy:

There are three areas in which you will be graded/evaluated :

Responsibility: near perfect, timely attendance, steady, respectful participation in workshop and small groups, handing in of all experiments and reader responses on time (unless otherwise arranged beforehand with instructor), apparent effort put into your assignments.

Experimentation/Revision: hard work on revising according to instructor and peer comments, bold and sincere attempts to experiment with craft and creativity. Pushing yourself to try new things.

Working: Does the piece show excellence and/or innovation in terms of craft (language, form, voice, character, theme, and plot)

Letter Grade System:

If you accomplish all of the requirements under responsibility, you will receive some sort of B.

If you accomplish all of the requirements under responsibility and excel at Experimentation /Revision and/or Working, you will receive some sort of A.

If you do not accomplish all of the requirements under responsibility, you will receive less than a B, unless you are doing something truly remarkable in one of the other two areas. It is advisable not to count on doing something truly remarkable for your grade.

Conferences: required to meet once during the session.