

WRITING 2218F: To Make a Long Story Short (*Introduction to Writing Short Fiction*)

Fall 2019

Section: 001

Time/Room: Tues., 12:30 – 3:30 PM, HSB-9

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Course Description and Objectives

The course consists of twelve 3-hour classes, conducted in the “workshop” mode (as opposed to the lecture format), in which students will develop not only fiction writing ability, but also critical reading skills. **The short story** will be the focus of the course.

Based on professional models, instructor guidance and class discussion, students will produce their own 2 short fictions, progressing from short “flash” fictions of 500-750 words, to a more moderate length of 1000-1200 words (“sudden” fiction) that will stress the use of dialogue.

The ability to communicate information, arguments and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences, is an objective of all the Writing Program courses.

This is not a lecture course. It is a discussion, reading and **workshop** course, and as a result students must be prepared to **participate** in the workshop process: peer evaluation, editing, drafting, discussion topics, etc. In a writing workshop, one learns to write for others besides oneself – to respect one’s readers and work toward their seamless reading. And clearly, as there are only 12 classes (and no final examination), attendance is mandatory. I will take attendance at the beginning of each class. Should you arrive late, it will be your responsibility to ensure that you are not marked absent by seeing me after class. **[See note regarding Writing Program policy for documenting absences and penalties for absences in Section 5 of this Course Outline.]**

Required Text (available in University Bookstore)

1. *Flash Fiction Forward*, ed. by James Thomas & Robert Shepard [*\$21*] (80 very short stories)
[to be read by **Week 2**]

Course Requirements

Story 1 Draft	10%	Week 3/4/5/6
Revision Notes for Story 1	10%	Week 7
Final Story 1 :	30%	Week 7
Story 2 Draft	10%	Week 8/9/10/11
Revision Notes for Story 2	10%	Week 12
Final Story 2	30%	Week 12
Total:	100%	

Student E-Mail Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to check **both** the course's OWL Messenger and their UWO Office 365 email Inbox **daily** for possible updates/information, and not rely solely on external email accounts.

Assignments/Assignment Format

Assignments must be typed, double-spaced and stapled. All assignments must have your name, course name, section number, and instructor's name on the first page.

Submitting Assignments

- **NOTE:** All work submitted for grading or shared with other students in a workshop setting must be computer-printed for legibility. All writing must be backed up on CD, disk or memory stick (**including all drafts**), for submission if requested.
- All work submitted for this class must be developed from a draft approved by the instructor. If, for any reason, a draft of any creative work is deemed unacceptable (*originality, topic, language, genre, etc.*), it must be replaced by an acceptable draft, which will subsequently be developed into an acceptable finished work.
- **All assignments must be accompanied by a draft and Revision Notes.**
- Late assignments will be penalized 5% a day (including weekends) unless an extension has been negotiated at least 48 hours in advance of due date.
- Assignments more than 1 week late will receive no credit (unless mutually arranged in advance).

Attendance policies

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

- You may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation. That means that the first three class hours you miss will be recorded as absences but *excused provided you don't miss any more*.
- However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).
- If you miss a total of more than nine hours of class meetings (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 68).

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors. See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you are more than 20 minutes late, you will be penalized an hour of attendance. Please make every effort to be on time as late entry can disrupt the flow of discussion in our class. Early departures from class, which have not been previously arranged with the instructor, will also be counted as an absence. If you leave during the break, you will be docked an hour of attendance.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course will count as non-attendance, and will attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario shall not require a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is your choice; your absence will not be excused.

See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholoff.pdf.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks

where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Prerequisites

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

The prerequisite for registration in this course is a) a final grade of 65 or more in one of Writing 2101, 2121, 2111, or 2131, or b) a final grade of 70 or more in Writing 1000F/G, or c) Special Permission of the Program.

MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION POLICY

Western has a comprehensive policy covering requests for accommodation by students who are not registered with Student Accessibility Services. All students should review this policy here, under the heading ‘Accommodation for Illness – Undergraduate Students’, noting the procedures, restrictions, and notice requirements:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

In Writing courses, students covered by this policy who are seeking academic consideration must proceed as follows.

Writing Studies’ Basic Policy: students seeking academic consideration **on medical or any other grounds** for any missed tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments must either initiate a Self-Reported Absence (**for a grade component worth up to 30% of their final grade, but excluding final exams scheduled during the exam period**) or apply in person to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of their home Faculty and provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) or other supporting documentation as required in accordance with official Western policy (linked above).

Students seeking academic consideration **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either:

- i. A Self-Reported Absence, or
- ii. Academic consideration supported by the Academic Counselling Office.

Exception: in Writing Studies courses, a student seeking academic accommodation **on non-medical grounds** for any missed in-class tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments **worth less than 10% of a final grade** may first consult directly with her or his instructor, who will – in his or her discretion – elect either to make a decision on the

request directly or instruct the student to follow the procedures set out in **Writing Studies' Basic Policy**.

Please note that individual instructors will **not under any circumstances** accept or read medical documentation directly offered by a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds or for related reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All medical documentation must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of a student's home Faculty.

Students who are or who feel they should be covered under Student Accessibility Services should review Western policy here:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to **MentalHealth@Western**: (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Class Meeting Schedule

Date	Meeting focus	Readings/Assignments (and other information)
Week 1 <i>Sept 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to course Assignment for next class: Select 3 to 5 stories from Flash Fiction Forward and explain (jot notes to yourself) the reasons why you singled them out. Be prepared to share your responses in class discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick up textbooks from bookstore Read all stories in Flash Fiction Forward (ed. Thomas & Shepard) for next class
Week 2 <i>Sept 17</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class discussion of Reading & Writing assignments from last week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing assignment for WEEK 3: Write a "flash fiction" (250-750 words maximum) modelled on a story you admired. Print and bring sufficient copies to share (workshop) with the class. DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON WORKSHOP COPIES.
Week 3 <i>Sept 24</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flash Fiction Workshop (Part 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STUDENTS WILL HAVE 2 WEEKS FROM THE DATE OF THEIR STORY'S WORKSHOP TO SUBMIT FINAL DRAFT, ALONG WITH REVISION NOTES. Stories work-shopped today due WEEK 5.
Week 4 <i>Oct 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flash Fiction Workshop (Part 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories work-shopped today due WEEK 6.
Week 5 <i>Oct 8</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flash Fiction Workshop (Part 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories work-shopped WEEK 3 due today. Stories work-shopped today due WEEK 7
Week 6 <i>Oct 15</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flash Fiction Workshop (Part 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories work-shopped today due WEEK 8
Week 7 <i>Oct 22</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion and Readings of specific assigned stories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readings provided
Week 8 <i>Oct 29</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden Fiction Workshop (Part 1) STRESS USE OF DIALOGUE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stories work-shopped WEEK 6 due today. Stories work-shopped today due WEEK 10.
Nov 4 - 8	READING WEEK	

Week 9 <i>Nov 12</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden Fiction Workshop • <i>Stress use of dialogue</i> (Part 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories work-shopped WEEK 7 due today. • Stories work-shopped today due WEEK 11
Week 10 <i>Nov 19</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Story Workshop • <i>Stress use of dialogue</i> (Part 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories work-shopped WEEK 8 due today. • ALL FINAL STORIES DUE WEEK 12 (Final Class: WEEK 12)
Week 11 <i>Nov 26</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Story Workshop • <i>Stress use of dialogue</i> (Part 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALL FINAL STORIES DUE WEEK 12 (Final Class: WEEK 12)
Week 12 <i>Dec 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Story due, with Revision Notes. 	