

EWRT 40 FICTION WRITING

Online/asynchronous	CRN	Jennifer Penkethman
Jan 6 – March 28, 2025	37754	penkethmanjennifer@fhda.edu
		Zoom office hrs: Thurs, 1-2pm

Prerequisite: Eligibility for college-level composition (EWRT 1A or EWRT 1AH or (EWRT 1AS and EWRT 1AT)) as determined by college assessment or other appropriate methods.

OVERVIEW

Development of fiction writing skills through critical analysis and intensive practice.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All course materials will be posted on Canvas. (No books required!)

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate a personal creative process in fiction writing.
- Identify and apply major technical and stylistic elements of fiction.
- Evaluate one's peers' and one's own stories.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. Review creative and practical aspects of imaginative writing
- B. Identify and analyze major technical and stylistic elements of narrative fiction.
- C. Examine stylistically and culturally diverse examples of fiction.
- D. Analyze and critique a stylistically and culturally diverse range of literary models and student writing and apply feedback to own writing
- E. Experiment with stylistic choices and practice writing narrative fiction
- F. Revise a portfolio of at least 16-20 pages of original fiction, including commentary related to the writing and revision processes.
- G. Plan and prepare a performance of fiction.
- H. Prepare 3-5 pages of fiction for submission to a campus, regional, or professional literary journal.

OUTLINE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Workshop Submissions/Portfolio

This is the most important work you will be doing for this class! Every week you will be sharing an original piece of fiction with your peers. This means you will be responsible for posting the

material on the appropriate Canvas page (in the Modules section), which you will all read and discuss. The final culminating product of the course is the portfolio, which needs to be 16-20 pages, so the minimum length for a weekly submission would be 2 pages, double-spaced. On the other extreme, if the submission is too long (10+ pages), your classmates may have trouble finding time to read it all. It's up to you as a group to decide what's a reasonable length limit, based on what you realistically have time for.

All of these submissions will be compiled in a portfolio at the end of the semester, which comprises a big chunk (60%) of your final grade. The portfolio must include **16-20 pages** (double-spaced, Times New Roman, size 12 font) in length. This length requirement is a minimum; write as much as you want! I might not be able to fully read very long portfolios, but don't let that limit your ambition!

Workshop Feedback

This is almost as important as the submissions themselves. You are a part of a learning group in this class, and your thoughts on each of the pieces of writing submitted for the week are an extremely important part of the writing process. This requires you to become skilled in **constructive criticism**: i.e., giving suggestions that will **help** the writer revise their piece. This doesn't mean that you can't have an opinion, but it should ideally be enlightening for the author of the piece. In this class, we function as a community of writers who are here to support each other in our writing practice.

Presentations

You are responsible for choosing and presenting on **one** piece of writing (by someone else) this quarter. This is meant to be an opportunity for you to share your enthusiasm for a piece of writing that you think is just tops. I will post instructions for this on Canvas, and I will create a discussion page each week for the person who is presenting that week. On the discussion page, you should attach a copy of the piece you're presenting on (it can also be a link to a website) as well as your write-up. The rest of the class will respond in the comments, and you will be required to respond to those comments.

This presentation needs to be on a piece of fiction. This can include short stories, novel excerpts, or comic or graphic novel excerpts. It just needs to have the elements of fiction, with a narrative conveyed in some way.

Dates for presentations will be posted in the first week of class – don't forget to sign up!

Submission to Red Wheelbarrow

Did you know that De Anza has a totally fabulous student literary magazine? We do, and I'm the current editor! Every year in the spring, we publish the work of dozens of De Anza students, in all genres of writing as well as visual art. It's a wonderful outlet to celebrate and share the considerable creativity of our student body.

You are **required** to submit, by the end of this quarter, at least one piece to Red Wheelbarrow. I will post the link for this in Canvas as soon as it is available. I would suggest choosing one of the pieces you will submit with your portfolio, since those are revised and polished and have the best chance of getting into the magazine.

In-Class Discussions

Finally, we will, on weekly discussion pages, be discussing works of short fiction and other fiction-related material that I will post on Canvas (no books are required to buy). However, this is **not** a literary analysis class, where we come up with theories on symbolism and theme. Instead, the aim of our discussions is to “read like a writer”, meaning that we pick apart the technical aspects of the piece, and basically find out what makes them tick. What techniques did you notice the author using? What did you think about the characters – were they effective? Did you find the tone distracting, or hilarious? These discussions will require you to use vocabulary we have learned in this class.

Participation in these discussions is part of your grade! I expect people to be active in these discussions, and to post at least 100 words in each discussion.

GRADING

Portfolio (includes weekly submissions as well as final portfolio assignment)	60%
Participation (discussions on readings, workshop feedback)	25%
Submission to Red Wheelbarrow	5%
Presentation	10%
Total	100.00%

GRADING SCALE

A	93-100
A-	91-92
B+	89-90
B	83-88
B-	80-82
C+	78-79
C	73-77
D	60-72
F	59 and below

*De Anza does not award the grade C-. You need at least a 73% to get a C and pass the class.

ATTENDANCE

This is a fully online, asynchronous class, so there are no class meetings. However, you will need to log in to Canvas at least once a week to count as active, and to submit required assignments.

OFFICE HOURS

I will be available on Zoom to answer any questions or go over your writing on Thursday, 1-2pm. You do not need to make an appointment during this time; you can simply access my room on Zoom from the link on the main page of our Canvas site.

EMAIL

I am available to respond to emails (or messages through Canvas) on weekdays during regular working hours. If you send an email on a weekday, please allow me at least 24 hours to respond. On the weekend, please allow me 48 hours.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Students requiring special services or arrangements because of hearing, visual, or other disability should contact their instructor, counselor, or Disability Support Programs and Services (DSP&S) at 408-864-8885 (<http://www.deanza.edu/dsps/>), or ATC room 209.

OTHER RESOURCES

De Anza's list of services and programs is extensive, including help with basic needs as well as psychological counseling among many other things. Check the list of resources here: <http://www.deanza.edu/services/>.

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

As a student at De Anza you join a community of scholars who are committed to excellence in the teaching/learning process. We assume that all students will pursue their studies with integrity and honesty; however, all students should know that incidents of academic dishonesty are taken very seriously. *When students are caught cheating or plagiarizing, a process is begun which may result in severe consequences.* It is vitally important to your academic success that you know what constitutes academic dishonesty.

The two most common kinds of academic dishonesty are cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent means.

- Copying, in part or in whole, from someone else's test
- Submitting work presented previously in another course, if contrary to the rules of either course
- Altering or interfering with grading
- Using or consulting, during an examination, any sources, consulting with others, use of electronic equipment including cell phones and PDA's, or use of materials not authorized by the instructor
- Committing other acts that defraud or misrepresent.

Plagiarism is representing the work of someone else as your own.

- Incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts of another person's writings, without giving appropriate credit, and representing the product as one's own
- Representing another's artistic or scholarly works such as musical compositions, computer programs, photographs, paintings, drawings or sculptures as your own
- Submitting a paper purchased from a research or term paper service, including the internet
- Undocumented Web source usage.

CLASS SCHEDULE

**Subject to change! All changes will be clearly announced in Canvas.*

	Readings for discussion	Assignments <i>All assignments listed due Sunday of that week at 11:59pm</i>
Week 1 Jan 6 – 12 What is story?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aristotle, excerpts from <i>Poetics</i> - Anne Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 1 discussion: Welcome, Aristotle, shitty drafts - Workshop submission #1 due Sunday, Jan 12, 11:59pm - Sign up for presentations
Week 2 Jan 13-19 Story, part II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - George Saunders, “Rise, Baby, Rise!” - Gabriel Garcia Marquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 2 discussion: Saunders, Marquez - Workshop submission #2 due - Comments on workshop submission #1 due
Week 3 Jan 20-26 Story, part III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Robert McKee, excerpt from <i>Story</i> - George Saunders, “Sea Oak,” “Bohemians” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 3 discussion: McKee, Saunders (again) - Workshop submission #3 due - Comments on workshop submission #2 due
Week 4 Jan 27 – Feb 2 POV, Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dorothy Parker, “A Telephone Call” - Cynthia Marshall Rich, “My Sister’s Marriage” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 4 discussion: POV, Parker, Rich, - Workshop submission #4 due - Comments on workshop submission #3 due
Week 5 Feb 3-9 POV, Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mary Caponegro, “The Father’s Blessing” - Julio Cortazar, “Axolotl” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 5 discussion: voice/POV, Caponegro, Cortazar - Workshop submission #5 due - Comments on workshop submission #4 due
Week 6 Feb 10-16 Genre, format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nikolai Gogol, “The Nose” - Lucy Corin, “Madmen” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 6 discussion: reality and unreality, Gogol, Corin - Workshop submission #6 due - Comments on workshop submission #5 due
Week 7 Feb 17-23 Genre, format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yoko Ogawa, “Old Mrs. J” and “The Little Dustman” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 7 discussion: suspense/horror, Ogawa - Workshop submission #7 due - Comments on workshop submission #6 due
Week 8 Feb 24- Mar 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Foster Wallace, “Brief Interviews” excerpt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 8 discussion: style, Wallace, Dostoevsky - Workshop submission #8 due

Style, dialogue	- Fyodor Dostoevsky, “The Dream of a Ridiculous Man”	- Comments on workshop submission #7 due
Week 9 Mar 3-9 Style, dialogue	- Zora Neale Hurston, “The Gilded Six-Bits” (dialogue) - Lydia Davis, various pieces	- Week 9 discussion: Hurston, Davis - Workshop submission #9 due - Comments on workshop submission #8 due
Week 10 Mar 10-16 Revising, process	- Natalie Goldberg, “Writing Down the Bones” - Julia Cameron, “The Artist’s Way”	- Week 10 discussion: Process - Revision submission #1 due - Comments on workshop submission #9 due
Week 11 Mar 17-23 Revising, process	- Susan Bell, “The Artful Edit” - Matt Bell, “Refuse to Be Done”	- Week 11 discussion: Revision, reflecting - Comments on revision workshop submission #1 due

**Finals week, March 24-28: NO FINAL EXAM – portfolio due Friday, March 28, 11:59pm
NO EXCEPTIONS!**