English 90-1: Introduction to Fiction
Summer 2013
Tuesday & Thursday, 11-12:50
Building 20, Rm 21B

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Course Description
This course is an introduction to the craft of fiction writing. We will read a variety of published stories and analyze how the formal elements of story—structure, plot, character, point of view, etc.—function in these pieces, so that you can apply these principles of craft to your own work. Throughout the term, you will complete several writing exercises, as well as a draft of a complete short story, which we will then discuss in a traditional workshop format with an eye towards revision.

I encourage a diversity of styles and subject matters, and I encourage you to take risks in your work. It is therefore important that the workshop be both rigorous and kind; we will approach each piece with a critical eye and generosity of spirit, and we will address each piece on its own terms.

Required Texts
• Reader, available from Copy America, 344 S. California Ave, Palo Alto. (Readers will be delivered the second day of class ($49); please bring cash or check made out to Copy America.)
• Note: You will be required to provide copies of your full story manuscript to your peers, so please budget for this expense. You should also have a notebook and folder reserved for this class, and access to a printer throughout the quarter.

Course Requirements and Grading
Stories and Exercises: (35%) You are expected to submit a complete story for workshop, as well as a substantial revision of that story. Hard copies must be distributed the week before your workshop date. All work must be typed, double-spaced, with numbered pages. These stories must be polished, carefully proof-read, and free of grammatical and typographical errors. Your revision should be a true re-envisioning of the piece; with your revision, you will submit a process paper, examining your revision process. You will also complete several smaller writing exercises throughout the term, both in class and out.

Written Critiques: (20%) I expect you to read your peers’ manuscripts carefully twice and to provide margin comments as well as written responses. These letters should be typed and about one single-spaced page in length, and should address both what is working in the piece and areas for improvement. You should address how craft elements are functioning
and provide specific examples from the text. Please keep the tone of these letters professional, constructive, and respectful; it is possible to be both generous and rigorous. I ask that you submit a copy of these letters to me.

Participation: (35%) A workshop depends on the full participation of its members. Participation means punctual arrival in class having closely read and annotated the assigned texts. Once in class, participation includes posing questions based on the assigned texts, respectfully engaging each other’s thoughts about the texts, and listening to what each member of the class is saying. I reserve the right to assign reading responses if I sense that people are not reading or not reading deeply enough.

Writer’s Notebook: The world is full of material for the writer who keeps her eyes and ears open. To hone your observation skills, you will carry a small notebook with you, and jot down at least one interesting observation, overheard anecdote, image, story idea, line of poetry, odd fact, etc. each day. Maybe you see an interesting character on the bus, hear a moving story on the news, or read something totally bizarre. Pick a notebook you like enough to carry around. I won’t collect this notebook, but we will begin each class hearing some of these.

Reading Attendance: (10%) Attendance at three readings in the Creative Writing program is required. You don’t need to write a reaction to the readings, but you do need to let me know that you attended. A list of readings this quarter can be found at http://creativewriting.stanford.edu and http://events.stanford.edu/. I’ll also announce them as they come up in class. Please also sign up for the Creative Writing Events Listserve by going to http://mailman.stanford.edu and joining “cw-undergrad.”

Absences & Late Arrivals
You are allowed two absences throughout the quarter, no questions asked. After that, your grade will drop one letter for every unexcused absence. If you do miss a class, you are responsible for getting any manuscripts that have been distributed and for giving your comments to those who were workshopped that day. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class; if you are more than ten minutes late, or leave early without prior permission, it will count as an absence. Repeated tardiness may be treated as an unexcused absence at my discretion.

Story Content
Because the workshop experience is based on collective trust, you should not include references to any instructors or students in your writing. If you feel you must, you should discuss this with me well before you submit the piece. Furthermore, I ask that the content of other students’ work not be discussed outside of class.

Format for All Work (Excluding Critique Letters)
• 12-point font. Double-spaced, 1-inch margins, STAPLED
• Number pages (typed)
• Please include the following: name, date, assignment
Email Policy
I do not accept any work submitted through email, though I encourage you to ask questions and/or voice concerns via email.

Academic Honesty
All work submitted for this class must be your own and written for this class. Please familiarize yourself with Stanford’s Honor Code:
http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/judicialaffairs/policy/honor-code

Late Assignments
The highest grade any late assignments will receive is a C—even if you’ve just forgotten to print an exercise out for class. Please don’t email me late work—put it in the box outside my office. Late work will not receive my written feedback.

Laptops, Cell Phones, Food
Laptops may be used only during in-class writing exercises, with WIFI off. Feel free to bring them to class, but don’t leave them on the table or open during general discussion. Because ringing and buzzing and Call Me Maybe are disruptive, all cell phones should be switched off prior to entering the classroom. If for some reason you must be reachable, please talk to me before class. Snacks are permitted (encouraged if there’s enough for everyone!) as long as they are eaten quietly and neatly and all garbage is disposed of, and as long as you can still participate fully in the discussion.

Students with Documented Disabilities
Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare and Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone:723-1066, URL: http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).