

The Short Short Workshop POLICY STATEMENT

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Office Hours: Conferences are by appointment Tuesdays between the hours of 1-3PM. Thursdays from 10-11.

Required Texts: GOOD BONES AND SIMPLE MURDERS (Doubleday) by Margaret Atwood, and THE BOOK OF EMBRACES ((Norton) by Eduardo Galeano, MICRO FICTION (Norton) edited by Jerome Stern and IN SHORT (Norton) edited by Judith Kitchen and Mary Paumier.

Course Description: This workshop will look at the construction of effective contemporary short shorts. Its intention is to build a community of writers with a commitment to craft, to risk taking, and to building each other's own sense of story. It is my hope that you find the material deep inside you and that you use your craft, your ability to risk and your community to develop your works. In addition to workshoping student narratives, we will ground our discussions in the text of contemporary short shorts. In the end, I intend for you to be strong storytellers and readers, able to write, critique and revise your works in a confident manner.

Policies, Procedures:

Attendance: Since we not only write extensively in class, but will also discuss, workshop and revise each other's works, regular attendance is essential. You may be excused for two class periods -- no questions asked. However, further absences may result in the failure of this class.

Workshops (Class Participation 25% overall grade): In-class workshops allow for peer evaluation of your work. This type of critique provides you with a reader's perspective of your writing. It also improves your ability to critique a work. Please feel free to mark your peer's manuscripts and write them a short letter at the end. Fictions are due the class before workshop. You should bring in one copy for me and three to four for your peers (I'll specify ahead of time). Late papers may receive feedback but will not be given any credit.

ALL FINAL DRAFTS AND DRAFTS TO BE WORKSHOPPED MUST BE TYPED DOUBLE-SPACED AND PAGINATED OR RISK BEING RETURNED WITHOUT CREDIT.

Portfolios (50% overall grade): Portfolios demonstrate your semester's work, how far you've come and whether or not you've met your writing goals. Your portfolio will include:

- A. 15 UNPOLISHED SHORT SHORTS 25%
Each week you'll be asked to draft one short short and send it to me via email every Friday by midnight. They should be between 250-750 words long. They don't have to be revised. They can be raw and imperfect. You just need to draft one a week. From this journal you will choose six to revise for your final CHAPBOOK.
- B. ONE CHAPBOOK 35%
Choose six of the fifteen and revise them until you are happy with them. You may want to incorporate images along with your text.
- C. INTERMEDIATE DRAFTS, SUMMARY/RESPONSES AND CRITIQUES FROM PROF AND PEERS 15%
These are materials that demonstrate the growth of each of the six short shorts.
- D. SELF ASSESSMENT 25%
Assess your growth as a writer in four to five pages (It can be longer if you need it to be). Use examples from your stories, my workshop comments, your peers' comments, the stories we have read, class discussions and our story conferences to support your analysis. You'll want to cover the following:
 - a. Talk about your writing process. How did your stories evolve? What were your strength and weaknesses during this semester? How did you address them?
 - b. What risks did you take? Talk about specific moments where the risks you took brought your success and/or failure.
 - c. Talk about discoveries in your work, in yourself as a writer. How did you employ our readings into your writing? Use specific examples from at least three books to describe how you made links between the craft of fiction and your writing progress.
 - d. Talk about your role as a member of the writing community. Did you grow to be an active reader and effective critic? How well were you able to incorporate or reject feedback from teacher and peers?

The importance of this section is to determine your growth as a writer, your efforts to grow as well as your actual success
- E. Extra Credit
Summary/Responses to Literary Readings or any performances at Open Mic.
These can be used to make-up for an unexcused absence or to boost borderline grades.

Expectations: Success in this class will not be measured by a finished piece -- rather it is understood from the start that all works presented, are works in progress with the ability to grow, to change drastically and in some cases, to take chances that are not always successful. To pass this course I expect writers to challenge themselves and each other, to take risks in their writing, to be willing to write badly in order to push themselves. A passing grade will consider not only the writer's progress (evident in the portfolio and subsequent revisions), but also writer's ability and effort to give critical response to his or her peers.

Journals (20% overall grade): In preparation for stories, you will explore ideas, writing technique, memories and exercises in an electronic journal and in class, a notebook. Please make hard copies of your e-journals and include them with your class journals at the end of the semester.

Conferences (Part of your Class Participation): The best way for me to help your writing is to work with you one on one. Try to make an appointment with me at least twice this semester.

Reading Quizzes (05% overall grade): I give these in the beginning to get you in the habit of reading the works. When it's clear everyone is reading and keeping up with the assignments, the quizzes disappear. You can't push yourself to grow if you haven't done the reading, so READ!

Reading quizzes: 05%

Class Participation: (Workshops, Class Discussions and Conferences) 25%

Journals: (Free write, exercises and process explorations): 20%

Portfolio: (see breakdown on page 2) 50%

Total 100%

The Syllabus

Week One

- January 17: Introductions
15 SHORT SHORTS: Each week, draft one short short and email it to me by midnight each Friday. They should run between 250-750 words long. They may be free-writes, first drafts and imperfect and raw, but drafts nonetheless. In the end you should have 15 perfect and not so perfect short shorts in your e-journals. Out of the 15 you will choose 6 to revise and make into a chapbook of short shorts for your final.
Email Journal 1: Describe your writing process – everything from how you get your story ideas, to drafting, shaping and revising them. What would you say are your writing strengths and what are your weaknesses?
- January 19: What is your writing process or how do you write?
Email Journal 2: Consider your writing process, your strengths and weaknesses and that of your peers and come up with a list of personal and class writing goals.

Week Two

- January 24: Defining Class Writing Goals and Personal Writing Goals
READING ASSIGNMENT: Choose at least two story from each of the four texts (so four stories total) and read them.
Email Journal Entry 3: Write about each story and tell me what each one was about, what each character's conflict was and how the character addressed his/her issue. Based on the readings, what is the short short?
- January 26: Begin to define Contemporary Short Short.
Discuss Readings.
Read GOOD BONES and SIMPLE MURDERS (GB & SM) by Margaret Atwood for discussion on February 2.
For January 31, bring one of your short shorts to class. We'll spend the hour listening to your flash fictions.

Week Three

- January 31: Class Reading
Email Journal 4: Respond to the class readings. What did you think of your peers' work? In general, what worked and didn't work about their short shorts? What did you learn about your own writing?
- February 2: Discuss GB & SM for the material.
Email Journal 5: React to Margaret Atwood's work. How would you describe it?

Week Four

- February 7: Discuss GB & SM for form.
Read Book of Embraces (BE) by Eduardo Galeano for February 9.
- February 9: Discuss BE the material
Email Journal 6: How is Galeano's book different or similar to Atwood's? Do you write more like one than the other or completely different? How?

Week Five

February 14: Discuss BE for form.

Read the following stories for TIME AND PLACE:

- IS: Harjo, "Suspended," page 83
Gibbons, "All-Out Effort," page 32
Nye, "Mint Snowball," page 94
MF: Kerchaval, "Carpathia," page 92.
Addonizio, "Survivors," page 52

Email Journal 7: Choose at least three of the shorts above and analyze them for time and place.

February 16: Define Setting. What is it? How might we use it?

Discuss Stories for TIME AND PLACE

Revision: Thinking about setting, go back into two of the short shorts you have already drafted and revise them with a focus on how time and place determine what happens in the story, the choices for the character and the narrative's tone. Bring in four copies of each revision to class February 23.

Read the following stories for PLOT

- IS: Gates, "Sunday," page 92
Dybek, "Lights," page 31
Lee, "One Human Hand," page 293
Dove, "Loose Ends," page 98
MF: Giles, "The Poet's Husband," page 24
Miller, "Changing the Channel," page 44

Email Journal 8: Choose at least three of the short shorts above and compare and contrast them for plot.

Week Six

February 21: Discuss Readings for Plot

Continue to revise two short shorts for workshop. Bring in 4 copies of each revision on February 23.

February 23: Reading day.

Week Seven

February 28: Workshop #1

Schedule a one on one conference with Galang during her office hours.

Email Journal 9: Summarize what was said about your story. What were the strengths and weaknesses of your story, according to your peers? Now tell me if you agree or disagree with them and why. What did you learn about yourself and your story? Lastly, what are your plans for revision based on what your peers, the interns, and I have said?

March 2: Discuss your workshop experience.

MID TERM JOURNAL ENTRY 10: Email me about your progress in the class thus far. Are you meeting the goals you set up at the beginning of the semester? Are you keeping up with the writing and revision as well as the reading in the course? Are you taking risks in your writing? How have you grown? What areas need your attention? What grade would you give yourself today? Why?

Week Eight

- March 7: Define POV
Read for POV:
IS: Calderazzo, "Running Xian," page 168.
Berger, "Fernando and Marisela," page 175
MF: Holman, "Of Exposure," page 112
O'Hara, "Diverging Paths and All That," page 108
GB & SM: "Little Red Hen Tells All" page 13
BE: "House of Words" page 21
Email Journal 11: Choose three of the short shorts above and analyze it for point of view. Define the author's choice and why it works or doesn't work for the short.
- March 9: Discuss Readings for POV
Bring in copies of your work for class reading.
Email Journal 12: Consider the body of short shorts in your electric journal – what pov are you apt to write in? Why? What would your writing gain or lose if you were to vary the use of pov?

WEEK NINE: SPRING BREAK

Week Ten

- March 21: CLASS READING FOR POV
REVISION: Considering our discussions on point of view, choose two of your short shorts and revise them placing your attentions on the use of point of view or perspective. Due March 23.
- March 23: Bring four copies of each revision to class. Reading Day.

Week Eleven

- March 28: Workshop Short Short #2
Email Journal 13: Summarize what was said about your short shorts revisions. What were the strengths and weaknesses of your stories, according to your peers? Now tell me if you agree or disagree with them and why. What did you learn about yourself and your stories? Lastly, what are your plans for revision based on what your peers, the interns, and I have said?
- March 30: Discuss Workshop Experiences and Revisions
Email Journal 14: How would you describe your narrative voice? What's it sound like? What would you like it to sound like?

Week Twelve

- April 4: Discuss VOICE and Figurative Language. Define what they are.
Read the following packet of short shorts for April 6
IS: Ozick, "The Shock of Teapots," page 68
Ondaatje, "Harbor," page 72
Wilson, "Joe Turner's Come and Gone: The Play," page 90.
MF: Suarez, "Anti-Chain," page 54
Chin, "The True Story of Mr. And Mrs. Wong," page 74
Cofer, "Kennedy in the Barrio," page 80.
Email Journal 15: Choose one of the stories about and describe and break down the author's voice. Consider word choice, sentence structure, length of sentences, use of paragraphs, line breaks and white space.

Week Thirteen

- April 6: Discuss the Short Shorts above for voice and figurative language.
Choose two of your short shorts and revise it for workshop.
Focus on voice and figurative language. Bring four copies of each revision to class April 11.
- April 11: Reading Day. Exchange handouts.

Week Fourteen

- April 13: Workshop Short Short #3
Email Journal 16: Summarize what was said about your stories.
What were the strengths and weaknesses of your stories, according to your peers? Now tell me if you agree or disagree with them and why.
What did you learn about yourself and your story? Lastly, what are your plans for revision based on what your peers, the interns, and I have said
Revise Six Short Shorts for your Short Short Chapbook.
- April 18: Revision Workshops /Conferences with Galang

Week Fifteen

- April 20: Revision Workshops /Conferences with Galang
April 25:
April 27: Revision Workshops /Conferences with Galang

Portfolios are due at the beginning of the hour on Tuesday, May 9 from 11-1:30 PM. Location: Hecht Residential College Associate Master Apartment PT113. Late portfolios are not accepted. Choose one of your short shorts to read for the class.