Course Syllabus
CRW 2100 – Introduction to Creative Writing
Fall 2014

COURSE TITLE
Beginning Fiction Writing

COURSE NUMBER
CRW 2100 CRN 10986

PREREQUISITES

CREDIT HOURS
3.0

CONTACT HOURS
45

CLASS MEETING TIMES
5:30-8:20 Thursday – Middle Keys Center

CLASS METHOD
This course is designed to meet once a week for 16 weeks using formal class
meetings and supplementary instruction online. Primary instructional
method is an interactive workshop in which student writing is read, discussed
and studied in a critically supportive way. Course method also involves:
critical discussion of works by notable writers of fiction, drama and poetry; in-
class writing; guided exercises; and basic instruction in elements of craft
(characterization, plot, structure, perspective, setting, dialogue, pace and
rhythm, tone, style, symbolism and figurative suggestion, use of language).
Primary focus of the course is on regular production of fiction manuscripts,
workshop critique, literary reading and revision of work for portfolio
submission. A portfolio of completed work is due at the end of the term.

This is a technology-enhanced course which uses Desire2Learn (D2L), an
online setting, as an instructional resource. Students will be required to use
D2L to access course materials, submit writing in the Dropbox and post
responses and original work in the online Discussion Board. Students can
access the link to D2L on the FKCC home page. For D2L assistance, call the
Help Desk at 305-809-3177.

INSTRUCTOR
Dr. Lois Wolfe Markham
lois.markham@fkcc.edu
Cell # 305.942.1357
Marathon Center: 305.809.3145
Coral Shores Center: 305.809.3146
ON-CAMPUS HOURS

Middle Keys Center: 8:30 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays; 8:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. Thursdays.
Upper Keys Center: 8:30 a.m – 6 p.m. Mondays; 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. Wednesdays.
As needed: Call 305.942.1357 or email lois.markham@fkcc.edu. Instruc-
tor is on campus and available to students during non-teaching times in the hours above. Please note that students should feel free to call and email with questions or concerns at any time.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on short prose fiction writing in a workshop format. Basic structural and stylistic elements of conventional and experimental short story forms are introduced and interpreted through classic readings and critical exchange of students’ own work. Established writers’ prose is occasionally intro-
duced as model or example. Through supportive in-class critical discussion, the student learns the practice of basic techniques of writing, rewriting and editing. This course includes a 6,000-word writing requirement.

Gordon Rule Writing Requirement:

This course satisfies the Gordon Rule writing requirement.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Identify basic elements, forms and purpose in narrative, dramatic, and expository writing.
Creatively express and convey ideas in fiction.
Read and analyze literary elements in published works.
Constructively critique creative writing
Create and develop characters.
Develop plot, conflict and structure in writing.
Create, edit and revise dialogue.
Employ different points of view / means of perception.
Describe and evoke experience, setting and time.
Use language for aesthetic effect.
Revise work.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

None. Students will use instructor-produced and Web-based materials.

- Students must provide photocopies of their work regularly and in sufficient quantity for class exchange, study and discussion
- Students must have access to a computer, Internet and printer.

For use of FKCC computers, contact the FKCC Marathon Center (305-809-3145), Coral Shores Center (305-809-3146) or FKCC library in Key West: 305-809-3194.
- The course schedule is subject to change to meet the needs of the course and its students.
- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to stay current.
- Student performance in this course is assessed by portfolio submission of work and by participation criteria.
- Students accrue participation points for performance in specific areas, noted in Course Policies below.
- See the Student Evaluation and Course Policies section of the syllabus for details on grading criteria and the Portfolio Assessment instrument.

Course Schedule – CRW 2100 -- Thursday – Middle Keys Center

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO WORKSHOP METHOD

Class 1 – Thursday, Aug. 21

- Welcome, introductions, syllabus review, overview of course and use of the workshop method
- Discussion of experience, goals, approaches
- Guidelines for workshop critique and writer rotation
- Introductory Craft Talk: showing and telling; presenting the implicit and explicit through narrative; narrative structure and forms (flash fiction; short story; novella; novel); storytelling tools (characters in conflict; types, archetypes and stereotypes; problem/solution dynamics; importance of intimacy and tone in the narrating voice; structuring plots for tension, apprehension, prediction and novelty).
- In-class reading and discussion:
  - Fairy Tales: “Godfather Death” by Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm (Germany) and “The Boy with the Ale Keg” (Norway) [http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0332.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0332.html)
- Orientation to CRW 2100 course site on D2L
- In class writing: fictionalize a familiar scene or situation. Use exposition (telling/explaining) and dramatization (showing through embodied action, dialogue, suggestion, gesture, details).
- Craft Talk handouts: Getting Started and Fiction Exercises from Jerome Stern

Online in D2L – due by 11:59 p.m. Friday, Aug. 22 – ONLINE CLASS ACTIVITY

- **Writing due:** Short response (two paragraphs) showing that you have signed on to the Discussions Board in D2L.
  Directions for signing-on: Go to FKCC homepage. Scroll down the list of options on the left-hand side of the homepage. Find “Desire2Learn Login” and click. At Desire2Learn homepage, sign-on using your FKCC email name and default password. When logged into D2L, click on dropdown arrow for “Select a Course,” found in the menu across the top of the page. Select your course: CRW 1001. At the course homepage, scan the top menu and select the drop-down arrow for “Assessments.” In the drop-down menu select “Discussions.” In Discussions, find the Forum field (shaded) entitled: “Evidence that you signed on successfully.” Below the shaded forum field is a Topic Thread of the same name. Click on the topic thread to open it. Select “Compose” to bring up a window in which you can write your message or, if you wish, upload your response in a computer file.
  First paragraph response: Introduce yourself, your goals and questions you have about writing.
  Second paragraph response: Identify and describe a work of fiction which you have found to be particularly meaningful or memorable. Your paragraph should explore why and how the story/novel sticks in your mind. Be descriptive, detailed and reflective. Make sure you identify the author of the work and try to characterize the kind of narrative voice you hear mentally when you’re reading the story.
Remember to click “post” in order to post responses in the Discussions thread. Check the forum thread after you post to make sure your name and response appear.

WRITING FICTION

Class 2 – Thursday, Aug. 28

- Writing that’s due by class-time today:
  - A scene that reveals significant aspects of two characters. Length two or more double spaced pages. Bring enough copies to distribute.
  - Alternate writing assignment: compose a new section to a work you have in progress; focus on character introduction, development or change.
  - Prompt if you’re stuck: Start with the first sentence of one of the following excerpts: “Preparation for a Collie” by Joy Williams or “The Paperhanger” by William Gay, both posted at http://www.theshortform.com/week/54.

- Instructional reading:
  - Craft Talk handout on characterization posted on Blackboard
  - Craft Talk handout on Guidelines for Workshop Critique
  - Building characters:
    - “How to Craft Compelling Characters” by David Corbett
    - “Building Character: What the Fiction Writers Say” by Jack Hart
    - “Shitty First Drafts” by Anne Lamott at https://wrd.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/1-Shitty%20First%20Drafts.pdf

- Literary reading:
  - Novel excerpt: Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy, Chapter 1, at http://www.fullbooks.com/Anna-Karenina1.html
  - “The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien, posted in Content, D2L

- Craft Talk focus: characterization and incident
- Inaugurate workshop critique

Class 3 – Thursday, Sept. 4

- Writing due by class-time:
  - A narrative involving a main character in conflict. Length three or more double spaced pages. Bring enough copies to distribute.
  - Alternate writing assignment: compose a new section to a work you have in progress; focus on development of tension or conflict.
  - Prompt if you’re stuck: Start with the first sentence of one of the following excerpts: “Sins of the Wolf” by Lasha Bugadze at http://www.theshortform.com/week/53.
  - Critique comments on your colleagues’ manuscripts.

- Instructional reading:
  - Craft Talk handout: Writing and Punctuating Dialogue
  - Craft Talk: “The Remarkable Reinvention of Very Short Fiction” by Robert Shapard
  - Craft Talk handout on plot and conflict posted on Blackboard
Workshop: critique writers in rotation

Literary reading due:
- Fable: “The Country Doctor” by Franz Kafka, posted in course Content, D2L

Class 4 - Thursday, Sept. 11

Writing due by class-time:
✓ A scene of revealing dialogue, thought, behavior and/or action, or a flashback that primes new developments in characterization or plot design. Length four or more double spaced pages. Post your work in the Discussions Forum topic: Class 4 Fiction Writing

Alternate writing assignment: compose a new section to a work you have in progress; focus on integrating significant, revealing dialogue/thought/behavior/action.)

Prompt if you’re stuck: Start with the first sentence of one of the following excerpts:

✓ Critique comments on manuscripts of writers in rotation for critique

Literary reading due for discussion:
- Short story: “The English Lesson” by Nicholasa Mohr, posted in Content, D2L

Instructional reading due:
- Craft Talk handout re: When You’re Stuck
- Craft Talk handout re: Revision

Workshop: work by designated writers.

Class 5— Thursday, Sept. 18

Writing due: short story due by 11:59 p.m.
✓ A short story that advances plot and characterization using dialogue, narrative, and plot conflict/foreshadowing as needed to maintain pace and tension. You may create a new work or continue one already in progress. Length four or more double-spaced pages. A 50% deduction in participation points applies for late submission. Post in Discussions Forum thread: Short Story/Advancing Plot and Characterization

✓ Critique comments on manuscripts of writers in rotation for critique

Instructional reading
- Chapter 8 on point of view, pp 296-311.
- Craft Talk handout on point of view / perspective posted on Blackboard

Literary reading:
- “Snow” by Anne Beatty
- “Happy Endings” by Margaret Atwood
- “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor

Craft Talk: perspective as means of perception; focus, distance.

Workshop: critique writers in rotation.

Class 6 – Thursday, Sept. 25

Writing due:
✓ A work of flash fiction, 300-500 words. Post your short work in Discussions Forum topic: Class 6 Flash Fiction.
✓ Constructive critique: Post two substantial paragraphs of critique on works of writers in rotation. If you post your critique after the deadline, you will receive a 50% deduction in participation points for late submission.

Instructional reading
- Craft Talk handout on substantial revision posted on Blackboard
- Literary reading due:  
  - Flash fiction stories at http://nanofiction.org/category/weekly-feature/featured-story 
- Craft Talk: revision 
- Status check: taking the pulse of the group dynamic 
- Workshop: critique writers in rotation.

Class 7 – Thursday, Oct. 2
- Writing due:
  ✓ Submit a revised short story that is six or more double spaced pages in length. Post it in the Revised Short Story Discussion Forum. A 50% deduction in participation points applies for late submission.
  ✓ Post two substantial paragraphs of constructive critique on your colleagues’ work.
- Critical reading that’s due for discussion: 
- Workshop: remaining student work 
- Sign up for manuscript consultations

Class 8 – Thursday, Oct. 9
- Writing due:
  ✓ Reflection: write a five paragraph reflection on the creative writing you have done so far. Be constructive and critical. Examine the kinds of characters, plot tensions, use of language, tone and settings you explored in the first eight weeks of writing. What worked and why? What didn’t work and why? Post your work in the Discussions Forum topic: Mid-term Reflection.
  ✓ Post two substantial paragraphs of critique on your colleagues’ work
  ✓ Group presentations: Present a three to five minute talk on a novel and author whose work puzzles, confuses or irritates you.
  ✓ Sign up for manuscript consultations

Class 9 – Thursday, Oct. 16 – Individual meetings with students – No formal class session
- Manuscript consultations with instructor
  Meet with your instructor for a 30-minute discussion of your writing. Focus of meeting: review writing, progress, participation, concerns and guidelines for portfolio submission. Consult instructor schedule for a time and day convenient for you.

Class 10 – Thursday, Oct. 23
- Writing due:
  ✓ A monologue or section of epistolary fiction by one of the characters you created. Length: two or more double-spaced pages. Post your work in Discussions Forum topic: Class 10 Monologue/Epistolary Fiction.
  ✓ Critique of your colleagues’ work.
- Literary reading that’s due: 
- Workshop: new or remaining student work

Class 11 – Thursday, Oct. 30
- Writing due:
  ✓ A scene of character development and conflict that uses a setting (time and place) foreign to you. Length: four or more double-spaced pages. Post your work in Discussions Forum topic Class 11 / Fiction.
  ✓ Post two substantial paragraphs of critique on each writer’s work. If you post critiques after the deadline, a 50% deduction in participation points applies for late submission.
- Literary reading that’s due:
  - “The Library of Babel” by Jorge Luis Borges at
Workshop: remaining student work

Class 12 – Thursday, Nov. 6

- **Writing due:**
  - Prose fiction of three or more double-spaced pages. Post your work in Discussions Forum topic Class 12 / Fiction.
  - Post two substantial paragraphs of critique on each writer’s work. If you post critiques after the deadline, a 50% deduction in participation points applies for late submission.

- **Workshop:** remaining student work

- **In-class writing:** Prompt TBA

Class 13 – Thursday, Nov. 13

- **Writing due:**
  - Prose fiction of four or more double-spaced pages. Post your work in Discussions Forum topic Class 13 / Fiction.
  - Post two substantial paragraphs of critique on each writer’s work. If you post critiques after the deadline, a 50% deduction in participation points applies for late submission.

- **Workshop:** remaining student work

- **In-class writing:** Prompt TBA

Class 14 – Thursday, Nov. 20

- **Writing due:**
  - Submit a revised short story that is five or more double spaced pages in length. Post it in Discussions Forum topic: Class 14 / Revised Short Story.
  - Post two substantial paragraphs of constructive critique on your colleagues’ work.

- **Workshop:** remaining student work

- **In-class writing:** Prompt TBA

Class 15 – Thursday, Nov. 27 – No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday

Class 16 – Thursday, Dec. 4

- **Deadline / Portfolio Submission:** Submit your portfolio of work in two forms: 1) hard copy in class by 5:30 p.m. today and 2) electronically in the Dropbox in D2L by 11:59 p.m. tonight. A fiction portfolio consists of 30 or more pages of original fiction; the portfolio must include evidence of drafting and substantial revision. The manuscript may contain multiple structural approaches to fiction, including but not limited to: flash fiction, short story, chapters of a novel or novella, frame tale, monologue, epistolary voice, non-linear storytelling, linked stories. The portfolio assessment comprises 60% of the final grade.

- **Survey**
- **Pedagogy and curriculum review**
- **Author readings**
Student Evaluation and Course Policies

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<th>STUDENT GRADE DETERMINATION</th>
<th>FKCC GRADING SCALE</th>
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| **60 %** Portfolio of completed work  
See Portfolio Assessment Grading Form below | **90-100%** A |
| **40 %** Participation  
See performance areas defined below in “Participation” | **80-89%** B |
| **Total 100 %** Final Grade (maximum 100 percentage points) | **70-79%** C |
| | **60-69%** D |
| | Below 60% F |

**Participation**

Participation accounts for nearly half of the grade. The interactive workshop methods relies on regular student involvement through submission of writing, consistent exchange of work and responsive critique of colleagues.

Students receive participation points for each of the following activities:

- attendance (max. 10 pts.)
- on-time submission of writing (max. 10 pts.)
- technical qualities in writing assignments (max. 10 pts.)
- active involvement in critical discussion of literary readings (max. 10 pts.)
- active involvement in workshop discussion of your colleagues’ work (max. 10 pts.)
- regular notations on and response to your colleagues’ manuscripts (max. 10 pts.)
- consistent preparedness and professionalism (max. 10 pts.).

Maximum participation points in a class meeting with all activities represented: 70 pts.

**Late Work**

Any assignment not submitted by the date and time specified in the Course Schedule is considered late, unless you have contacted me and I have approved an extension. Late assignments (other than class participation) will be assessed a late penalty.

**Revision Policy**

I encourage revision of submitted work. All writing may be revised for final submission in the end-of-term Portfolio.

- Please note that revising involves substantial change and improvement. Minor editing and proofing do not constitute revision.

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with FKCC Policies, which can be found in the current Student Handbook.
Portfolio Assessment  
CRW 2100: Beginning Fiction Writing

Student name: ________________________________ Date: ________________ Final point total:__________

I. This portfolio includes:

30 or more pages of original fiction ____
Evidence of substantial revision ____

(maximum 25 points) _______

II. Work in this portfolio reflects student capacity to:

Develop and organize ideas ___
Adapt and extend ideas ___
Capture / describe / evoke experience ___
Create / reveal / develop characters ____
Action / Behavior ____ Dialogue ____ Thought / Introspection ____
Manage perspective and point of view ____
Structure narrative: ______
Create / sustain / build cohering tensions / conflict ___
Create / implement plot, causal events and acts ___
Manage pace / rhythm ___
Evoke and manage time / temporal flow ___
Establish, evoke and manage setting / spatiality ___
Establish and manage tone ____
Use language effectively ____
Figurative language / imagery ____
Metaphor / metonymy / symbol ____
Economy / nuance ____
Diction and style ___
Present insights and explore significant concerns ___
Implement and balance a variety of discourse techniques (narrative exposition, description, dialogue, action, etc) ____
Revise work in meaningful ways ____
Edit work ____
Take literary risks, explore something new, challenge him/herself ___

(maximum 75 @ 3 points each) _______

PORTFOLIO GRADE (60% of final): __________________________________________________________

* Denotes additional recognition and acknowledgment of student skills and/or growth in specific areas.

Participation: Participation points are awarded during the term for each student’s attendance, timely submission of assignments and active involvement in class discussion, workshop critique, verbal analysis of literature and other class activity. Participation points for each student are totaled and divided by the maximum point count in order to determine a participation grade.

PARTICIPATION GRADE (40% of final): ______________________________________________________

Work notable for effective use of technique: _________________________________________________

Work notable for aesthetic or stylistic effects: _______________________________________________