

Fiction Writing

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

Voyage: Fall 2015

Discipline: English Writing

ENWR 2559-101: Fiction Writing

Division: Lower

Faculty Name: Antonia Losano

Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Storytelling, also known as narrative fiction, is a primary means of human expression. This course offers an introduction to the writing and reading of narrative fiction, from short stories to novels and novellas. As we read and discuss the inner workings and intricacies of stories from around the world (many from countries we will visit) we will also learn to incorporate these literary elements into our own creative writing. Individual classes will consist of discussion of original student work and assigned readings. In our writing we will emphasize both the drafting process and revision, where the real writing begins. Regardless of your own writing experience, our class will be a safe and respectful forum in which we will take all fiction, including yours, seriously.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the tools and strategies authors use to write successful creative fiction.
2. To learn how to observe human behavior, real-world settings, and the dramas of daily life carefully and intelligently.
3. To turn those observations into original, complex, insightful short stories.
4. To learn how to provide constructive, critical feedback to your peers.
5. To learn to turn the feedback of others into improvements in your own writing.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

All materials available online

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Southampton—September 13

A1—September 15: Introduction;

A2—September 17: James Joyce, “Araby”

A3—September 19: Pirandello, “The Fly.”

Civitavecchia—September 21-24

Naples—September 25-26

A4—September 27: Draft Workshop; Story #1 Outline due

A5—September 29: Pamuk, “Distant Relations”

Istanbul—September 30-October 5

A6—October 7: Draft Story #1 due: Writing Workshop

Piraeus—October 8-13

A7—October 15: Story #1 Due; Hemingway, “Clean, Well-Lighted Place”

A8—October 17: Hemingway, “Hills like White Elephants”

Barcelona—October 18-23

A9—October 25: Mohamed Mrabet, “Canebrake” (in Halpern, ed.)

Casablanca—October 26-31

A10—November 2: J. G. Rosa, “The Third Bank of the River”

A11—November 4: Draft of Story #2 due; Writing Workshop

Study Day—November 6

A12—November 7: Clarice Lispector, “Love” (in Fuentes and Ortega, eds)

A13—November 9: Jorge Amado, “How Porincula the Mulatto...”

A14—November 11: Draft of Story #2 Due; Writing Workshop

Salvador—November 12-17

A15—November 19: E. Danticat, “Night Women”

A16—November 21: Story #2 Due; Writing Workshop

Study Day—November 23

A17—November 24: Kincaid, “Girl”

A18—November 26: V.S. Naipaul, “Raffle”

Port of Spain—November 27-28

A19—November 30: Octavio Paz, “My life with the Wave”

Study Day—December 2

A20—December 3: Carmen Lyra TBA

A21—December 5: Outline Story #3 Due; Writing Workshop

Puntarenas—December 6-11

A22—December 13: Carver, “Cathedral”

A23—December 15: Draft Story #3 due; Writing Workshop

Study Day—December 17

A24—December 18; A-Day Finals; Story #3 Due

Arrive San Diego—December 21

FIELD WORK

Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.)

While our official Field Lab for this course will involve close observation during an extended walking tour of Casablanca (or Barcelona), you will also be asked to keep a journal in which you record story ideas (scenes or behaviors observed, snippets of dialogue overheard, setting descriptions, etc.) during all of our port stops.

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

After our required Field Lab, you will be asked to prepare a brief class presentation on a story idea generated during that Lab. That presentation will become the basis for your first short story, due November 7th.

During all port stops, you should be attuned to potential source material for stories. You will be asked to write 1-2 page journal entries after 5 port stops of your choice on 5 topics: character description; dialogue exchange; setting description; plot/action/scene; point of view.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

- 10% Class participation (active discussion; keeping up with readings; attendance, performance in writing workshops)
- 10% Response papers (on course readings) and journal entries (5 from port stops of your choice)
- 20% Field Lab and report
- 60% Three Stories (includes drafts and revisions)

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

NOTE TO LIBRARIANS: Some course readings are available online on in the SAS stacks collection. Below is a list; could these stories be somehow scanned and put in the electronic course folder?

1. James Joyce, "Araby" <http://www.dpcdsb.org/NR/rdonlyres/F6177888-9FFF-429A-A76B-E3D50A131CAC/123475/Araby.pdf>
2. Pirandello, "The Fly." <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Forum-1924feb-00220>
3. Short (Two Sentence) Fiction:
http://www.salon.com/2013/12/25/two_sentence_holiday_fiction_amazing_short_short_stories_from_amazing_writers/
4. Clarice Lispector, Love, in Fuentes and Ortego, eds. Latin American Short Stories (SAS library)
5. Pamuk, "Distant Relations": <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/09/07/distant-relations>
6. Mohamed Mrabet, "Canebrake" in Halpern, ed. The Art of the Story (in the SAS library)
7. V.S. Naipaul, "Raffle" in Loughery, ed. Into the Widening World (in the SAS library)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Do you anticipate that students will be expected to locate and employ resources beyond required texts, reserve library readings, DVDs, or intranet resources? If yes, please identify these resources.

HONOR CODE

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of

lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."