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CRWR 210A.02: Intro to Fiction Workshop

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Instructor Information
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Course Description
Creative Writing 210 is an introductory writing workshop focused on the reading, discussion, and revision of students' short fiction. Students will also be introduced to models of fiction techniques through listening to lectures, reading published stories/essays, and participating in group discussion. Students will also be introduced to creative writing workshops as a tool for both providing and receiving feedback. No prior experience in writing short fiction required.

Learning outcomes
❖ Acquire foundational skills in reading, discussing and writing short fiction
❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the terminology and concepts that apply to fiction
❖ Practice the art of writing and revising short fiction
❖ Learn to critique the quality of one's own work and that of fellow students

Required Materials
❖ *The Best American Essays of the 20th Century*
❖ Course Website (http://www.moodle.umt.edu)
❖ Notebook for in-class writing
❖ Binder for Final portfolio

Grading
Students are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, F. Final grades will be based on the following criteria:
❖ Participation: 40%
❖ Midterm: 20%
❖ Final Portfolio: 40%

Participation (40%)
Participation includes coming to class prepared and on time, taking part in class discussions, asking questions, contributing your knowledge and insights in whatever form is appropriate, and striving to make all your contributions excellent. It also includes doing the required reading and writing for each class. Note: Please come to class on time. Lateness will hurt your grade because it is an unnecessary interruption and because latecomers are likely to miss valuable information.

Midterm (20%)

On Friday, March 17th there will be a timed (fifty minute) midterm consisting of a series of short questions, creative in nature, designed to test student knowledge of the concepts covered throughout the course.

Final Portfolio (40%)

The **Final Portfolio** will be due on _____, and will consist of the following materials:
- ❖ Typed versions of all In-Class Writings
- ❖ **All Drafts** All Writing Restraints
- ❖ Midterm
- ❖ **All Drafts** of Major Story #1
- ❖ **All Drafts** of Major Story #2

Written Assignments

Note: All drafts and revisions must be typed. Since students have access to a number of computer labs around campus, own computers, technological setbacks/difficulties will not be accepted as an excuse for missed deadlines.

In-Class Writing

We will be writing in class. We will be doing so frequently. These assignments will be quick writing exercises designed to cultivate student creativity and erase the myth of the "inspired writer." In-Class writing will be shared in class regularly; in fact, **all class writing is considered public writing**, so students should be sure to consider topics and content they are comfortable sharing with others. In-Class Writings will be handwritten, but students will be required to type them later, as they will be submitted in the **Final Portfolio.**

Writing Restraints

Over the course of the semester, students will be assigned a variety of writing restraints. These assignments (typically 1-2 pages in length) are narrowly focused creative prompts designed to help students further explore the course's key concepts and terms. As with the in-class writings, writing restraints (or excerpts of them) will be shared in class regularly, so students should be sure to consider topics and content they are comfortable sharing with others.

Major Story #1

For the midterm, students will be required to write an original story, not previously worked on prior to this course. Major Story #1 must adhere to the following restrictions:
1. Page length: 5-10 pages
2. Restraint: No one dies; No one cries.

Major Story #1 will be due on the day of the **In-Class Midterm (3/17)**. A revision of the midterm story will be due for the **Final Portfolio**.

Major Story #2

In weeks 13 & 14, students will be required to write an original story, not previously worked on prior to this course. Major Story #2 must adhere to the following restrictions:
1. Page length: 10-20 pages
2. Restraint: **[To be revealed after midterm]**

A revision of Major Story #2 will be due for the **Final Portfolio**.

Check System

I will also mark the journals using a check system (check, check-minus, unsatisfactory) to help you know if your journal entry met the expectations of the assignment. To give you a sense of the check system I'll be using, please refer to the following descriptors:

- ❖ (✓+): A writing assignment with a (✓+) exceeds the goals of the assignments and demonstrates that the writer has clear understanding of the core concepts behind the assignment. Further revision may be necessary to polish the piece.
- ❖ (✓): A writing assignment with a (✓) generally meets the goals of the assignment, but would benefit from further revision in order for the student to demonstrate a finer control of the core techniques behind the assignment.
- ❖ (✓-): A writing assignment with a (✓-) meets the basic requirements of the assignment, but does not yet meet the learning outcomes of the assignment and would benefit from significant revision and a stronger understanding of the course concepts.
- ❖ (U): A project with a (U) does not meet basic standards, and requires extensive development and attention. An unsatisfactory submission may be incomplete or inappropriate to the assignment.

Conferences and Workshops

Throughout the semester I will hold conferences multiple times with students in lieu of class (both 1-on-1 conferences, as well as group conferences). These conferences will be used to help develop ideas and discuss writing strategies—both of writing in general, as well as specific advice for Major Story #1 and #2.

Student workshops will consist of 10-15 minute peer workshops, where each student will receive written feedback on their work from the rest of the class, as well as a brief discussion about their piece. More information about workshops as we approach the workshopping period (Weeks 13 & 14). Students are responsible for bringing multiple copies of drafts to class on the day before their workshop is scheduled. This aspect of class preparedness is part of overall class participation.

Attendance

You are permitted three absences from the class. Any absences beyond your third absence must be excused, otherwise you will be docked a third of a letter grade for each unexcused absence (from a B+ to a B, for example). Regardless of how many absences you have or don't have, you are still responsible for anything you miss during class. If you miss class on a day that an assignment is due, will still be required to get me your assignment via email by the time class starts. **Be on time**, and be prepared.

Academic Conduct

All students are expected to abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the Student Conduct Code. If you have any questions about how to avoid academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, please review the Conduct Code and talk with me. Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Note on self-plagiarism: All assignments written for this course must be composed during the course itself. Do not submit writing written prior to this course, as you will not receive credit.

Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.