

Fall 9-1-2018

## CRWR 310.01: Intermediate Fiction Workshop

Robert Stubblefield

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**CRWR 310 Section 1**  
**Creative Writing: Fiction**  
**Fall 2018**

**Instructor:** Robert Stubblefield

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Office hours: Monday, 1-3:00 p.m., Tuesday 1-2:00 p.m., Wednesday 3-5:00, and by appointment.

**Classroom:** Social Sciences 340

**Class Meeting Time:** T, Th 11:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

**Required Text and Materials:** A journal and folder for compiling all exercises and in-class and out-of-class assignments. You will be responsible for photocopying and distributing copies of your workshop stories to each of your classmates. We may have online posting of stories and responses by unanimous consent/agreement.

**Electronic Readings:** You will be required to sign on to UM Online and read stories and/or essays. Be prepared to print these readings to bring to class.

**Required Software:** Adobe Reader.

**Course Objectives:**

CRWR 310 is an intermediate fiction writing class. We will focus on the craft of fiction writing and the components required for a successful short story. We will read, discuss, and respond to a variety of published stories and craft-based essays, but the primary emphasis throughout the semester will be analysis and discussion of student work. You will be expected to complete three substantial works of fiction during the semester in addition to workshop responses and exercises. You will be responsible for carefully reading the work of your peers and responding both in classroom discussion (workshop) and with typed comments.

**Course Requirements:**

- **Writing Exercises:** All writing exercises will be turned in on the date due and must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins. Exercises will focus on one component of a story or be of a specified length. Keep these in your portfolio upon return.
- **Journal:** I expect you to keep a journal of dialogue bits, story ideas, brilliant insights, complaints, whatever you desire. Although I will not ask you to turn in these journals, I will occasionally ask for a typed excerpt (one page or less) of your collected wisdom.
- **Major Assignments (stories):** You will produce three works of fiction over the course of this semester. Two of these works will be presented for peer workshopping and one will be presented to instructor for conferencing/discussion.

Although you will be expected to revise each story based on peer critiques, instructor comments, and workshop experience, you will choose one story for Reading/Presentation that will demonstrate significant and substantial revision.

### **Grading/Evaluation:**

You will be graded on your active participation in class, your writing exercises, your improvement from draft to revision, and your attendance. **DO NOT MISS MORE THAN TWO (2) CLASSES OR YOUR GRADE WILL BE AFFECTED**

- **40%** of your grade is based on active participation. Show up prepared, comment on readings and the work of your peers, and contribute to the community of the classroom.
- **30%** of your grade is based on successful completion of all writing assignments (including peer responses). Turn these exercises in on time, put some thought and effort into the work, and type and double-space all out-of-class work. You will receive credit for exercises, but not a letter grade.
- **30%** of your grade is based on your fiction portfolio. All major works must be substantially revised by the end of the semester. Demonstrate improvement and the ability to effectively respond to criticism.

**Grade Descriptors:** To give you a sense of what constitutes an A, B, C, D, and F in this class, please refer to the following grade descriptors for participation and portfolios.

### **Participation Grade Descriptors for CRWR 310**

- **A** Superior participation shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions and workshops through his/her verbal, electronic, and written contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, thorough, specific, and often provide other student writers with a new perspective or insight.
- **B** Strong participation demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, specific, and helpful.
- **C** Satisfactory participation demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group workshops and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful and prompt, but could benefit from more attentive reading and/or specific detail when giving comments.

- **D** Weak participation demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions or small group workshops. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, suggestions to group members may be missing, disrespectful, or far too brief and general to be of help.
- **F** Unacceptable participation shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, the student has a pattern of missing, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [Student Conduct Code](#)

### **Students with Disabilities**

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

### **Important Dates and Deadlines:**

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**Deadlines:** Consult this site for updated add/drop information:

[Add/Drop Deadlines and Registration Information](#)

Tuesday, November 6: Election Day, no class

Thursday, November 22: Thanksgiving Day, no class

Friday, December 14: Final Meeting, 10:10 a.m.-12:10 p.m.

## **Calendar (Tentative and Subject to Change)**

Week 1 (August 28, 30): Introduction, Selected Readings

Week 2 (September 4, 6): Tension/Process/Texture Exercise, Selected Readings, Making a Scene Exercise

Week 3 (September 11, 13): Introduction to Workshop: Absorbing, Responding to, Reflecting upon, and Incorporating Criticism

Week 4 (September 18, 20): Workshopping

Week 5 (September 25, 27): Workshopping

Week 6 (October 2, 4): Workshopping

Week 7 (October 9, 11): Workshopping

Week 8 (October 16, 18): Workshopping

Week 9 (October 23, 25): Contemporary Literary Journal Readings/Exercises

Week 10 (October 30, November 1):

Week 11 (November 8): Workshopping

Week 12 (November 13, 15): Workshopping

Week 13 (November 20): Workshopping

Week 14 (November 27, 29): Revision Primer

Week 15 (December 4, 6): Workshopping and Small Group Revision Workshopping

Week 16: (Friday, December 14, 10:10-12:10) Final Meeting—Reading and Presentation of Work

### **Some other Matter:**

It is important that our classroom develop into a community of writers. You must be able to provide and accept criticism and feedback in a positive manner. I will be available during my office hours to meet with you and will also schedule individual and group conferences by appointment.

Missoula is a vibrant literary community. Although not required, I suggest you take advantage of readings, conferences, and gatherings occurring this semester. I will

announce upcoming events, but keep in mind the Second Wind Reading Series each Sunday night. Readings are frequently held on campus and at local bookstores.

### **A Few Words to Ponder on Writing and the Short Story:**

“The writer is the one who stays in the room.” Ron Carlson

“I’m not the sort of writer who can think up great story lines outside of writing. The writing itself is the thing that generates stories for me.” Alice McDermott

“Try to leave out the part that readers tend to skip.” Elmore Leonard

And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen  
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.  
– William Shakespeare (from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*)

“My own experience is that once a story has been written, one has to cross out the beginning and the end. It is there that we authors do most of our lying.” Anton Chekhov

“Making people believe the unbelievable is no trick; it’s work. . . . Belief and reader absorption come in the details: An overturned tricycle in the gutter of an abandoned neighborhood can stand for everything.”  
Stephen King

“I think that we live in a time where it's easier to be suspicious of dedicated men and women, people dedicated to their craft, because the world around them inspires them to be lazy. It inspires them to be negative. It inspires them to be snarky.” Ryan Adams

“Don’t try to figure out what other people want to hear from you; figure out what you have to say. It’s the one and only thing you have to offer.” Barbara Kingsolver

“If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write. Simple as that.” Stephen King

“You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write.” Annie Proulx