Introduction to Fiction & Poetry (CRWRI-UA.815.001)
Instructor: J. Robin Whitely
MW: 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM
(Room/Location)
Jrw484@nyu.edu
Office hours: (Time TBA) (or by appointment) 58 W. 10th St.

Course Description & Objectives
In this course we will recognize writing as a craft, a sum of aspects that includes not only creative imperative and purpose, but also literary and artistic techniques. The semester will largely be divided between workshop classes (Mondays) where we examine the work of our peers and craft classes (Wednesdays) where we look at the work of established authors. We will survey literature primarily from the post-modern and modern periods, with a special emphasis on the literary avant-garde. Most of the first portion of the semester will be devoted to poetry, while the latter devoted will be devoted to fiction.

Required Text(s)
Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology (Second Edition)

Readings
- We will read several short stories and poems over the course of the semester, as well as some craft-oriented non-fiction selections. Readings are selected to challenge and broaden the student’s knowledge and comprehension of poetry and fiction. All readings not found in the Norton can be found on NYU Classes. Print each reading out, as we will be referencing them in class discussions.
- There is no set schedule for these readings, I will assign readings based our discussions in class. Please make sure there is someone in class you can get the reading assignment from if you miss a day.

Attendance Policy
- Attendance is expected in every class. More than one unexcused absence will result in a one-mark loss to your final grade. Ex: an “A” will become an “A-,” a “B-” will become a “C+,” etc.
- Tardiness will be noted. Two or more instances in which a student is significantly late to class (15+ minutes) will count as an absence. If you expect to have issues getting to class on time, please speak to me.
- Excused absences owing to a medical or other emergency circumstance must be accompanied by a doctor’s (or other official) note.
**Significant Dates**
- Monday, January 23 – First Day of Class
- Monday, February 20 – No Class: Holiday
- Monday, March 13 – No Class: Spring Recess
- Wednesday, March 15 – No Class: Spring Recess
- Wednesday, April 26 – Critical Response Paper Deadline
- Monday, May 8 – Last day of class

**Workshop Dates**
- Monday, February 6 – Poetry Workshop: Group A
- Monday, February 13 – Poetry Workshop: Group B
- Monday, February 27 – Poetry Workshop: Group C
- Monday, March 6 – Poetry Workshop: Group D
- Monday, March 20 – Poetry Workshop: Group E
- Monday, March 27 – Fiction Workshop: Group A
- Monday, April 3 – Fiction Workshop: Group B
- Monday, April 10 – Fiction Workshop: Group C
- Monday, April 17 – Fiction Workshop: Group D
- Monday, April 24 – Fiction Workshop: Group E

**Plagiarism Policy**
- Don’t do it. It will be escalated to the department.

**Grading Procedure**
- (25%) Participation
- (20%) Workshop Submissions
- (10%) Prompted Writing Assignments
- (20%) Critical Response Essay
- (25%) Final Portfolio

**Participation**
Active, engaged and generous participation is required. We are all here to help each other develop our craft as writers. Your fellow writers need your focused, thoughtful and respectful input. While some people feel more comfortable speaking in class than others, it is important that everyone contributes to the discussion. Note that participation is a large part of your grade.

**Assignments**
**Workshop Submissions**
Over the course of the semester, you will submit one short story and two poems to be read and critiqued by your classmates. For this reason, you must bring 16 copies of each poem or story to class. Unless cleared with me in advance, all work must adhere to the following guidelines: All work will be typed. Stories should be between 6 and 10 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, with standard 1.25” margins. Poems can be of any length/formatting.
Prompted Writing Assignments
Throughout the semester, I will assign various creative writing prompts based on our discussions in class. These will vary in length, but will not exceed more than a few pages.

Critical Response Essay
We will read and discuss several authors and movements over the course of the semester. You are expected to write one 5-7 page (double-spaced) critical response essay to one or more the readings. You may choose any of the assigned readings and may turn this response in at any time during the semester before Wednesday, April 26. Your essay should include both a close reading and a research component, with at least three sources and an annotated bibliography. Possible lenses/topics could be: examining the work in relation to its artistic movement(s) or political/socioeconomic context, an in-depth close reading, or a survey of a broader literary movement in general. You must clear your topic with me beforehand. NYU’s library has several research databases available to you for finding your sources at https://arch.library.nyu.edu.

Final Portfolio
- In lieu of a final exam, you will turn in a final portfolio consisting of revised versions of your (3) workshop submissions, as well as (1) additional short story or (2) poems. Revisions must be substantive, as I expect them to be significant enough to warrant my re-reading of them. Don’t just make editorial changes; take into consideration the feedback you received in class, as well as the concepts we’ve been discussing. For each revised submission, include a short (one page) typed reflection on your revisions.
- The final portfolio must also include a two page personal essay, reflecting on what you learned in the course and how the course has affected your own work and writing process.
- Final portfolios are due by (date) in my mailbox on the basement floor of the writer’s house (58 W 10th St.)

Office Hours
I will hold office hours every week and ask that you meet twice with me over the course of the semester. Unless otherwise arranged, office hours will be held at the Lillian Vernon Creative Writers House, 58 W 10th St, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues. Possible topics include: Your critical response paper, an author we’ve read in class, an author we haven’t read, how the class is meeting or not meeting your expectations, your writing process, writing as a career, publication, etc. If my time slot does not work for you, please let me know and we’ll arrange another time to meet.
Tentative Reading List

Many of the poetry readings will be found in your Norton. Fiction readings will be found on NYU Classes. Again, readings are not will be assigned based on our discussions in class.

Stories:
Yukio Mishima “Patriotism”
Sheila Kohler “Baboons”
Tobias Wolff “Bullet in the Brain”
Vincent Craig Wright “The Changing Light”
Rick Bass “Wild Horses”
Lisa Rubenson “Sorry For Your Loss”
Dino Buzzati “The Falling Girl”
Salman Rushdie “At the Auction of the Ruby Slippers”
Raymond Carver “What we Talk About When we Talk About Love”

Non-fiction:
Paul Auster: (Selections from) Winter Journal

Craft:
Marguerite Duras: Writing

Poetry:
While most of the poems I will assign will appear in your Norton, we may read/cover work from the following poets as well:

Hugo Ball
Anselm Berrigan
Ted Berrigan
Christian Bök
Gwendolyn Brooks
Ani DiFranco
Craig Dworkin
Noel Fielding
Anne Garreta
Allen Ginsberg
Kenneth Goldsmith
Deborah Goldsmith
Sharon Landau
Sharon Mesmer
Henry Rollins
Hannah Sanghee Park
Vanessa Place
Kurt Schwitters
William Shakespeare
Cody Walker