



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

CREATIVE WRITING CREW 258 THE IOWA WORKSHOP (PROSE) 20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 3 2013

Important dates

Trimester dates: 6 January – 23 February 2014

Teaching dates: 6 January – 14 February 2014

Last assessment item due: 21 February 2014

Examination/Assessment Period: 17-23 February 2014

Note: students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination (aegrotats), refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat

Class times and locations

The first workshop will take place on Tuesday 7 January 2014 at 10am-1pm, the second on Thursday 9 January at the same time. Thereafter, workshops will take place from 10am-1pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Location: Room 102, International Institute of Modern Letters, 16 Waiteata Road (the workshop room).

Names and contact details

Workshop coordinator	Ben Shattuck
Room	402, 16 Waiteata Road
Work phone	(04) 463 6854
Email	ben.shattuck@gmail.com
Office hours	Tuesdays and Thursdays
Administrator hours	Monday-Friday

Communication of additional information

This will take place in the workshop room or will be communicated by email.

Prescription

A topic in creative writing. Course materials will be an additional cost.

Course content

Novelist Haruki Murakami wakes up every morning at four to write for six hours without breaking for food. “The repetition itself becomes the important thing,” he said in an interview. “It’s a form of mesmerism; I mesmerise myself to reach a deeper state of mind.” Honore de Balzac drank fifty cups of coffee a day to keep writing. William Faulkner unscrewed the doorknob of his study’s door to bar distractions. Stephen King writes even on his birthday. Woody Allen said simply of his writing, “I never stop.” In this course, we’ll explore the practice of writing, of using routine and time at the desk to drill deep into the artistic wells that blissfully bubble up in rare moments called inspiration. To that end, part of every class will be dedicated to a writing prompt or exercise. Eventually, you will have a fat portfolio to expand, boil down, or rewrite. To keep our narrative tools sharp, we will read a diverse range of short stories and novel excerpts to plunder what craft lessons they might offer. In addition to writing exercises, students will submit short stories or self-contained novel excerpts for workshop

By the end of the workshop, each student will have developed as both a writer and a reader. Over the course of the trimester, we will write and revise short stories or longer works. Each member of the workshop will submit two new or recent stories (or excerpts from longer works - novels, novellas, etc.) for group discussion and critique. As generous readers of one another’s drafts, we will discuss the strengths of a piece, speculate about ways in which it might be made stronger, and use the work in question as an opportunity to discuss specific aspects of craft in fiction. By encouraging one another to continue developing as writers, and by reading work that challenges, amuses, and awes us, we will enlarge our sense of fiction as tradition and craft.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. Write fiction marked by an improved understanding of craft
2. Continue developing a distinctive individual prose style
3. Read contemporary fiction with an eye for construction and craft, so that they are able to identify the elements common to successful contemporary short stories and experiment with them in their own work
4. Constructively edit and comment on other’s drafts
5. Write daily.

Teaching format

This is a workshop-based class. You’ll write and revise a short story by the end of the trimester. Most classes will begin or end with a long writing exercise. Requirements include in-class discussion, weekly reading, and submitting a portfolio of drafts at the end of the trimester.

Mandatory course requirements

Attendance and participation are mandatory. If you miss a class due to extenuating circumstances, you must email your response letters to both the students being workshoped and the workshop coordinator, as well as a response to the published work we have read for that class. If you are sick on one of your assigned days to turn in work and cannot attend, you must find a way to get your work to the workshop coordinator by the beginning of class time. As a last resort, email it to

the course coordinator. Missing more than one class will jeopardize the likelihood of your passing the course.

Workload

It is hard to assess the workload for this course. CREW 258 is formally a 20-point undergraduate course, but many students tend to treat it as a full-time undertaking. You should certainly expect to be busy. Plan on spending about 400 hours during the course, including workshop hours and final folio preparation.

Assessment and submission and return of work

Assessment is based on the portfolio you submit at the end of the course, as well as satisfactorily meeting the two deadlines that you will be given in class, for turning in work for workshop (please note these deadlines will be decided during the first workshop, when we decide the order of the workshops). I will also take into account my impression of your overall participation during the trimester, in which your response letters and your participation in discussion of your classmates' work are of paramount importance.

Two typewritten or printed copies of your folio must be submitted by (Friday 21 February 2014). Two examiners (the workshop convenor and one external examiner) will read each folio. After assessment is completed, one copy of your folio will be returned to you, along with the written reports of the two readers. Minimum total word count of 'workshopped' writing submitted in folios: 6,000. Writing Exercises must also be included in folio.

Additional expenses

Bring thirteen copies of your work to class when you are presenting – the photocopying is an extra expense for you.

Set texts

1. The novel *Cloud Atlas*, by David Mitchell. Publisher: Random House Trade Paperbacks. ISBN-13: 978-0375507250
 2. A course reader that you can purchase from vicbooks (www.vicbooks.co.nz).
- Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

Workshop Timetable

Tuesday 7 January	<p>Introductions, Inspirational Quotes, Expectations, 'Write Till You Drop', by Annie Dillard (handout at the workshop)</p> <p>Writing Exercise 1: The pheasant.</p> <p>Workshop order decided.</p> <p>Homework: "Powder," by Tobias Wolff.</p>
Thursday 9 January	<p>Exercise 2: Memory and plot.</p> <p>Workshop 1, Workshop 2.</p> <p>Homework: <i>Cloud Atlas</i>, 'The Pacific Journal of Adam Ewing'.</p> <p>Research a far-flung time or place for 'Journal'.</p> <p>Writing Exercise. Bring materials to class.</p>
Tuesday 14 January	<p>Exercise 3: Journaling from another place and time.</p> <p>Workshop 3, Workshop 4.</p> <p>Homework: 'A Father's Story' by Andre Dubus.</p>
Thursday 16 January	<p>Exercise 4: Confession as plot.</p> <p>Workshop 5, Workshop 6.</p> <p>Homework: 'Say Yes' by Tobias Wolff, and 'The Islanders' by Andrew Sean Greer.</p>
Tuesday 21 January	<p>Exercise 5: Ethical dilemma as plot, in scene. Strategies in plot.</p> <p>Workshop 7, Workshop 8.</p> <p>Homework: 'Tedford and the Megalodon' by Jim Shepard.</p> <p>Go through <i>Science Times</i> etc. for adventure story, and isolate personal relationship.</p>

Thursday 23 January	Workshop 9, Workshop 10. Homework: "How I Met My Wife," by Robert Boswell.
Tuesday 28 January	Workshop 11, Workshop 12, Workshop 13. Homework: "Child's Play" by Alice Munro.
Thursday 30 January	Workshop 14, Workshop 15. 'Out of the Pain' by Lars Gustafsson.
Tuesday 4 February	Workshop 16, Workshop 17, Workshop 18. Homework: "Ralph the Duck," by Frederick Busch.
Thursday 6 February	Writing Exercise: Transference. Workshop 19, Workshop 20. Homework: <i>Cloud Atlas</i> , 'Letters from Zedelghem'.
Tuesday 11 February	Exercise: Epistolary prose. Workshop 21, Workshop 22. Homework: 'The Swimmer' by John Cheever.
Thursday 13 February	Workshop 23, Workshop 24 <i>Fail Better</i> by Zadie Smith

Friday 21 February **Folios due**