



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME

CREW 254 SHORT FICTION WORKSHOP

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 1 2015

Important dates

Trimester dates: 2 March to 1 July 2015

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

Easter/Mid-trimester break: 3-19 April 2015

Last assessment items due: 15 June 2015

Study week: 8-12 June 2015

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

The course consists of twelve workshops.

These will take place 2-5pm on Mondays in the workshop room (Room 102) at 16 Waiteata Road, Kelburn Campus.

Names and contact details

Workshop convenor	William Brandt
Room	404, 16 Waiteata Road
Work phone	463 6854
Email	william.brandt@vuw.ac.nz

Communication of additional information

Any additional information will be handed out in class or distributed to students by email. Please note that all email communication, much of it absolutely vital, will be via Blackboard. Blackboard uses your Victoria student email address.

Prescription

A workshop course in writing short fiction which also involves wide reading in the genre.

Course objectives

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. analyse how successful short fiction achieves its effects
2. edit and improve their own stories in light of both critical reading of texts, and workshop discussions.

Teaching format

CREW 254 investigates the art of the short story. By the end of the workshop each member of the course should have developed their writing skills, their understanding of the craft of short fiction and their sophistication as a reader. Not to mention their enjoyment of this wonderful artform.

These goals are achieved through:

- writing exercises
- reading published fiction
- discussion of craft
- keeping a reading journal
- workshop discussion of and written commentary on each other's draft stories
- steady progress towards completing your assessment folio.

Writing exercises

For the first four weeks of the course, you will be assigned a set exercise. The first one will be written in class (so remember to bring pen and paper). The next three will be brought to class for discussion. Exercises are a stimulating way to explore particular craft aspects of story writing, but will also develop individual voice and imaginative range.

Reading published fiction

We will read a range of contemporary short fiction. The set texts are intended to give you a broad sense of what is possible in a short story, while also providing illustrations and examples for our discussions on craft. While you should aim to read all the set texts at least once, as well as anything else you can get your hands on, there will also be a nominated story of the week for class discussion.

Discussion of craft

Each week we will discuss various aspects of craft, with reference to one of the set texts.

Keeping a reading journal

You will keep a journal (on a Blackboard blog) over the duration of the course. The journal is a place to record your responses to your reading. You must discuss four published stories in your journal - see course mandatory requirements - but ideally you should write in it at least once a week. It is a place to investigate the published stories in the light of your own creative decisions and struggles and serves as a record of your development over the course. The blog format means the journals are also a shared resource - you will be able to read your classmate's reflections and they will be able to read yours.

Workshop discussion and written commentary on each other's draft stories

The heart of the course is the workshop process, in which you put draft stories of your writing in front of a small, supportive group, (ie, the rest of the class) and receive feedback from them.

The workshop cycle will begin with the submission of the first round of draft stories in week 4. The cycle, will run through twice, so on two different occasions it will be your turn to put forward a draft story. Your classmates will read and consider the story, and a week later you will receive both written and oral feedback from each member of the workshop. This feedback is intended to help you refine and redraft your story for inclusion in the final assessment folio. In turn, you will read, consider and mark up your classmates' draft stories. You should come to class prepared to discuss these in detail, and provide a written commentary on each story of about half a page.

For organisational purposes, the class will be divided into four groups. Each group will have the same submission and workshop days.

Progress towards assessment folio

The assessed folio is the final product - what you have to show for 12 weeks' intensive work. It will contain at least three stories and will be at least 6,000 words long. There is an upper limit of 12,000 words (to keep the workload manageable for examiners).

There will be many demands on your time, but work on your folio every day. Your folio will most likely include one or both of your workshopped stories. You may wish to include one story in both draft and final, edited, versions, to give your external examiner (see assessment) a feel for how you have changed and progressed over the course. The draft version will not be included in the word count. All the stories should be new work - written during the 12 weeks of the course.

Individual Meetings

In addition to the workshops, I would like to meet with each of you once during the trimester to discuss your folio content. This will be at a time convenient to both of us. A good time is often after your first workshop but before your second.

Other Contact

I have an office in the IIML (on the right at the top of the stairs as you come in) but will only be there term time Mondays, as a rule. You are welcome to drop by and I will be very happy to talk over any issues or inspirations you may have - as long as I have time. (I may be frantically photocopying.)

I will give you in the first workshop, my personal mobile number and you can text me for urgent stuff.

I will be closely monitoring my Victoria email address (william.brandt@vuw.ac.nz).

The work phone is going to be useful on Mondays but generally not at other times.

Be punctual

The workshops begin promptly. Students need to be seated in the workshop room a couple of minutes before the start. We have a lot to get through and classes are generally timed to the minute. Late arrivals have a significant impact on the class.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass for their assessment folio, a student must:

1. Meet the following deadlines:

A draft story to be submitted via Blackboard for distribution to the class on each of these two dates (note this is the week *before* your workshop date):

Group 1: Monday 23 March, and Monday, 4 May

Group 2: Monday 30 March, and Monday 11 May

Group 3: Monday 20 April and Monday 20 May

Group 4: Tuesday 28 April and Monday 25 May

Three students will be assigned to each group at our first meeting. Usually, you would hand out a different story on each of the two dates unless there was a particularly strong case to workshop a story a second time. One of the drafts should be 1000 words or more, and the other 2500 words or more.

Monday 15 June: Journal Due. You should aim to write something for your journal each week. It needs to include reflections on at least four short stories (often those read in class). It also gives you a record of your progress and process as a writer. The journal will be read by the course convenor. It will not be marked but is a course requirement.

Three written commentaries on your classmates' stories are due **each week** for the last eight meetings of the course (except the weeks of your own two workshops, when you will write two). Two or three paragraphs of commentary is sufficient; your comments may either be typed up or handwritten on the manuscript. If you are absent, you will need to give your classmates the written commentaries on your return.

Monday 15 June: final assessment folios due for everyone. Your folio should be 6,000 – 12,000 words long and should include three or more stories.

2. Comply with the following attendance:

Students are expected to attend all twelve meetings in CREW 254, as it is unsatisfactory to run a workshop process with missing members. A single absence due to extenuating circumstances would usually be excused; further absences would make it unlikely that you would pass the course.

If you do not comply with these mandatory requirements, your folio may not be assessed, in which case you would automatically fail the course.

Workload

CREW 254 is a 20-point undergraduate course. Fulltime undergraduates should expect to spend about 15 hours per week, including the workshop hours. This is about 200 hours across the whole course.

Assessment

Assessment is based on the folio you submit at the end of the course. Participation in class during the trimester will be taken into consideration; a thoughtful and adequate response to your classmates' work is of paramount importance.

Two typewritten or printed copies of your portfolio must be submitted by **Monday 15 June**.

Two examiners (William Brandt 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.

CREW 254 is assessed on a pass / fail basis only. If you pass the course, you will receive Grade P (Ungraded Pass).

Submission and return of work

The final assessment folio should be submitted either to the Administration Office of the IIML (Room 402, 16 Waiteata Road), or at the folio hand-in party on Monday 15 June (location to be advised). One copy will be returned with a copy of each examiner's report approximately one month after 15 June.

Materials and equipment and/or additional expenses

Note Photocopying will be an additional expense for you:

Draft stories will be submitted then distributed via Blackboard. Class members will print them out and bring them to class, marked up. We will workshop three stories per week for weeks 5 - 12, so you will be printing out three stories a week.

Exercises will be handled differently. For weeks 2, 3 and 4 you will bring **13 printed copies** of your own exercise to class (one for every class member, plus one for William).

Set texts

There is one set text for this course, a Course Reader (Student Notes) which is an anthology of short stories. This will be sold from vicbooks: www.vicbooks.co.nz.

Recommended reading

An optional but recommended text is *The Elements of Style*, also available from vicbooks. This is a small, friendly manual full of helpful advice.

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:

Student Feedback

Student feedback on University courses may be found at:
www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php

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/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)

- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library/resources/subjectcontacts.html>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

Workshop Timetable

Our first four meetings will focus on discussion of weekly exercise work. From then on we will focus on folio work, workshopping three stories from three different class members each session.

The following schedule shows how it will work. Each group hands out their work the week before they are due to be workshopped. The cycle repeats so each student gets workshopped twice.

On the days your group is scheduled to hand out a story, ie the week before you are workshopped, you need to arrive **on time** with 12 printed copies of your work - one for each class member plus the convenor.

Monday 2 March	Introductory. Exercise one in class. (Bring paper and pen)	
Monday 9 March	Bring 13 copies of Ex 2.	
Monday 16 March	Bring 13 copies of Ex 3.	
Monday 23 March	Bring 13 copies of Ex 4	Group 1 submits one story each
Monday 30 March	Workshop Group 1	Group 2 submits one story each
- Mid Trimester Break -		
Monday 20 April	Workshop Group 2	Group 3 submits one story each
Tuesday 28 April 6.30 pm	Workshop group 3	Group 4 submits one story each
Monday 4 May	Workshop group 4	Group 1 submits one story each
Monday 11 May	Workshop group 1	Group 2 submits one story each
Monday 18 May	Workshop group 2	Group 3 submits one story each
Monday 25 May	Workshop group 3	Group 4 submits one story each

Tuesday 2 June 6.30 pm Workshop Group 4

Monday 15 June **Folios and reading journals due**

NB: We have drawn the short straw with two workshops clashing with public holidays this year - ANZAC Day and Queen's Birthday. I have moved these classes to the evening of the following Tuesday, in the hope that they won't clash with lectures. If you know of an unavoidable conflict on either of these evenings let me know ASAP.