



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS**

**CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME**

**CREW 254 SHORT FICTION WORKSHOP  
20 POINTS**

**TRIMESTER 1 2016**

## **Key dates**

**Trimester dates:** 29 February to 29 June 2016

**Teaching dates:** 29 February to 5 June 2016

**Easter break:** 24–30 March 2016

**Mid-trimester break:** 25 April to 1 May 2016

**Last assessment item due:** 13 June 2016

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://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](http://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 WR16 102, the workshop room at 16 Waiteata Road, next to the Recreation Centre.

## **Names and contact details**

Workshop convenor	William Brandt
Room	WR102
Work phone	463 6854
Email	<a href="mailto:william.brandt@vuw.ac.nz">william.brandt@vuw.ac.nz</a>

## **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 learning objectives (CLOs)**

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. The primary elements of the course are outlined below.

### **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 written at home and brought to class for discussion. Exercises are a stimulating way to explore craft and develop 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 in class. While you should read all the set texts at least once, you will also be assigned a story or stories to read each week. These will form the basis of class discussion of aspects of craft and the like.

### **Keeping a reading journal**

You will keep a Blackboard blog/journal for the duration of the course. The journal is a place to record your responses to your reading. You must discuss at least four of the set stories in your journal - see course mandatory requirements. The journal is a place to investigate the set stories in the light of your own creative work 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 draft stories**

The heart of the course is the workshop process. You will put draft versions of your own work in front of a small, supportive group, (ie, the rest of the class) and receive feedback on them.

The workshop cycle will begin with the submission of the first round of draft stories in week 4. These stories will be discussed the following week in class, and will also receive written feedback from each member of the workshop. The feedback is intended to help you refine and redraft your story for inclusion in the final assessment folio. In turn, you will read 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. You can also mark up the text with suggestions and observations.

For organisational purposes, the class will be divided into four groups. Each group will have the same submission and workshop days. Each student will be workshoped twice through the semester. Refer to the timetable at the back of this outline.

## Progress towards an 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 between 6,000 and 12,000 words.

There will be many demands on your time, but work on your folio every day. Your folio should include one or both of your workshoped stories. You may wish to include one story in both draft and final versions, to give your external examiner (see assessment) a feel for how you have progressed. 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 twice during the trimester to discuss your progress. There will be an initial round of brief 15 minute meetings early in the term and another later on. Meeting times and places can be arranged to suit both parties.

## Other Information

### Contact Details

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 will give out my personal mobile number in class. If anything urgent comes up feel free to text me. Otherwise, I will be closely monitoring my Victoria email address ([william.brandt@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:william.brandt@vuw.ac.nz))

### Punctuality and Attendance

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.

Because workshops depend on participation, attendance to all classes is mandatory. See Mandatory Course Requirements, below.

## 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):

**Group 1:** Monday 21 March, and Monday, 2 May

**Group 2:** Monday 4 April and Monday 9 May

**Group 3:** Monday 11 April and Monday 16 May

**Group 4:** Tuesday 18 April and Monday 23 May

One of the drafts should be 1000 words or more, and the other 2500 words or more. Unless there is a strong reason to do otherwise, different stories should be submitted for each workshop.

**Monday 13 June: Journal Due.** You should aim to write something for your journal each week. It needs to include reflections on at least four of the set stories discussed in class. It also gives you a record of your progress and process as a writer. The journal will be monitored 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 13 June:** final assessment folios due for everyone. Your folio should be 6,000 – 12,000 words long and should include three or more stories. The stories must have been written during the course.

## **2. Comply with the following attendance requirements:**

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.

Any student who is concerned that they are (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

## **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 13 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 13 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. You will be printing out three stories a week from week 5 on.

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).

Links to the set stories will be available on Blackboard. You will be required to print out and bring to class paper copies of the story or stories which have been set for reading and discussion that week.

## 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 available on Blackboard.

## 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.

## Student feedback

Adjustments to this course are constantly being made and these are frequently in response to ideas from students. For example, this year there will be two one-on-one meetings with your tutor instead of one. A number of other excellent ideas have come forward from students and will be incorporated in my teaching this year, including a change to the way I monitor the online journals.

We pride ourselves at the IIML on a 100% response rate to feedback questionnaires which are presented at the end of the course. This year sees the introduction of an online version of the feedback form. We are very keen to keep up the response rate and will work with the group later in the trimester to ensure this happens with a minimum of inconvenience.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)

- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://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 29 February	Introductory. Exercise one in class. (Bring paper and pen)	
Monday 7 March	Bring 13 copies of Ex 2.	
Monday 14 March	Bring 13 copies of Ex 3.	
Monday 21 March	Bring 13 copies of Ex 4	<b>Group 1 submits one story each</b>

### Easter break 24 -30 March

Monday 4 April	Workshop Group 1	<b>Group 2 submits one story each</b>
Monday 11 April	Workshop Group 2	<b>Group 3 submits one story each</b>
Tuesday 18 April	Workshop group 3	<b>Group 4 submits one story each</b>

### Mid trimester break 25 April – 1 May

Monday 2 May	Workshop group 4	<b>Group 1 submits one story each</b>
Monday 9 May	Workshop group 1	<b>Group 2 submits one story each</b>
Monday 16 May	Workshop group 2	<b>Group 3 submits one story each</b>
Monday 23 May	Workshop group 3	<b>Group 4 submits one story each</b>
Monday 30 May	Workshop Group 4	
Monday 13 June	<b>Folios and reading journals due</b>	