

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 694-01

Fall 2014

Instructor: Dr. Larissa Lai

Classroom: SS1015

Time: F 9:00am - 11:45am

Office: SS1120

Email: larissa.lai@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: F 1:00pm-2:00pm

Studies in Creative Writing: Prose Fiction (Advanced)

English 694 is an advanced workshop, intended to offer exceptional students who already have a consistent writing practice the chance to work on a full-length manuscript.

Students at this level are expected to be well-read and articulate in contemporary fiction, fiction theory, and preferably in critical theory more broadly. They are expected to keep up to date in terms of contemporary theory and practice, as well as current events.

Students are expected to be excellent researchers. They are expected to have read widely and to be engaged in the worlds of thought and experience in mature and interesting ways, and to bring their reading and living experience actively to bear on their own work, and on their critiques of their fellow students. This class will involve both intensive reading and intensive writing. Students will write and present short response papers to the fiction, poetry, experiments and criticism set in the syllabus, and will produce high quality creative work of their own.

This course is designed to guide students towards the completion of a full-length manuscript. Each student applying to this course should have already begun work on the project and have at least 20 pages to work in hand and a description of the project that she or he wishes to undertake over the course of the semester. The project could be a long short story, a novella, a cycle of tales, a prose-poem, a work of ficto-criticism or some other experimental/narrative prose form.

Intense and active engagement is expected from all students enrolled in this course. You will be required to provide intelligent and constructive written critique to your classmates and to regularly produce excellent work of your own.

Prerequisites for Application

Students enrolled in this course are may already have taken English 364, English 494, or equivalent courses in other departments or universities. The instructor selects qualified students for admission to the course based upon the literary quality of their writing samples submitted with the application.

Course Texts (Required)

Calvino, Italo. *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*.

Carter, Angela. *Nights at the Circus*.

Course Texts (Suggested)

Akutagawa, Ryunosuke. *Rashomon and Other Stories*.

Brossard, Nicole. *Mauve Desert*.

Baxter, Charles. *The Art of Subtext*.

Carter, Angela. *The Bloody Chamber*.

Gardner, John. *The Art of Fiction. Notes on the Craft for Young Writers*.

Goto, Hiromi. *Chorus of Mushrooms*.

King, Thomas. *The Truth About Stories*.

King, Stephen. *On Writing*.

Kroestch, Robert. *Seed Catalogue*.

LeGuin, Ursula. *The Dispossessed*.

Lispector, Clarice. *The Passion According to G.H.*

McKee, Robert. *Story*.

Maass, Donald. *Writing the Breakout Novel Workbook*.

Metzger, Deena. *Writing for Your Life*.

Prose, Francine. *Reading Like a Writer*.

Scott, Gail. *My Paris*.

Seger, Linda. *Writing Subtext*.

Stephenson, Neal. *Snow Crash*.

Wittig, Monique. *Les Guerillères*.

Wah, Fred. *Diamond Grill*.

Course Requirements

1. Two submissions of original creative prose (15-20 pages each) (10% each): Twice per term you will present a piece of original creative prose for class critique. This must be new material directed towards the longer project you proposed when you applied to enter the course. Please post your submission to the Desire2Learn website no later than one week before you are due to be critiqued. This means Friday at midnight, no exceptions, no excuses. Late submissions will be bumped to the next available free slot. If there are no free slots, then you will forfeit your critique session. If you are having serious difficulties with the course, please come speak to me during office hours.
2. One presentation on a book of your choice (10-15 minutes) (10%): Presentation on a text of your choice, in consultation with me, announced a week in advance. Please present on a published creative work relevant to your project, discussing how it works, its flaws, its surprises, and the social, political or critical import of the work. One week after your presentation, you will submit a 4-5 page write-up of the presentation for grading.

3. Peer critique and participation (participation portfolio required) (20%):
Each week you will produce one page of written feedback for each of the two writers being critiqued that week. The week your own work is being critiqued, you obviously do not need to critique your own work, but you are still required to provide a critique for that week's other writer. Critiques are compulsory, and you will be graded on the depth and intelligence of your engagement with the work of your peers. Critiques should generally begin by saying something both specific and positive about the piece under scrutiny, followed by more substantive/difficult critique. Please close your critique with a second specific and positive observation. Specific and positive comments could pertain to what is working well or could address a specific detail that strikes you as sharp, beautiful, interesting etc. Substantive critique should always be framed constructively, in other words, it should be framed to help the writer improve. *Ad hominem* attacks are strictly forbidden. Overly general statements, positive or negative, are also discouraged. Under no circumstances are you to dismiss another student's work because you don't like its genre or subject matter. Critique must be conducted in terms of what the piece in question is attempting to accomplish. At the end of term, please compile all the critiques you have written over the course of the term into a single portfolio and submit it to me on Dec. 5.
4. Final Prose project (50-70 pages) (50%): The final project should be a substantively revised and expanded version the material you submitted over the course of the term for critique. Since this is a half course, it is not required that you complete novel, cycle of short stories, or experimental prose book, but you should have completed a substantial volume of material, such that the shape of a complete book is apparent. This is due on Dec. 5.

Classroom conduct:

Classroom conduct will be guided by the following purposes and values:

- to promote free inquiry and debate
- to act as a community of scholars
- to lead and inspire societal development
- to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity
- to display care and concern for community

In our classroom we seek to create and maintain a positive and productive learning and working environment, that is, an environment in which there is:

- respect for the dignity of all persons
- fair and equitable treatment of individuals in our diverse community
- personal integrity and trustworthiness
- respect for academic freedom
- respect for personal and University property

Students may be expected to read, respect, consider and discuss materials that they find challenging on a number of accounts, whether this is because of sexually explicit content, controversial ideas, or unfamiliar world views. Critical thinking is encouraged. Racism, sexism, homophobia, and classism of any kind will not be tolerated. Please turn off your cell phones before coming in to class. You may use your lap top for class purposes if you wish, but I will ask you to put them away if you appear to be using it for any other reason.

The email address provided above may be used solely for housekeeping purposes. Students wishing to discuss substantive questions of any kind must come see me during office hours.

Additional Ground Rules:

To be negotiated in the first week. Consider what you need (and what is reasonable) for you to feel safe and be productive in the classroom.

Grading system:

ALL WORK (writing, presentation, critiques) MUST BE COMPLETED IN ORDER TO PASS THIS COURSE.

Following is a description of how grades are derived. Please read and note the Graduate Grading System at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-e-1.html>

A+ (4): Outstanding, exceptional.

A+ is a grade earned only in very rare instances, by work that is absolutely stellar, publishable, dazzling in its achievement.

A (4): Excellent work

The work is moving toward publishable level. Use of language is concise and precise; figures of speech are imaginative and original; the content is interesting, the approach is fresh, and the form chosen the best possible, every element of fiction engaged with sophistication and elegance.

A- (3.70): Very good and consistent work

The work is very good, with a heightened use of language, striking aspects of imagery or story, and an interesting perspective or point of view. Word choice and description generally exact and thoughtful, trajectory of writing achieved.

B+ (3.3): Good Performance

The work is good, writing is competent and shows promise, but definitely would benefit from more work and greater focus. The writing could use more refinement or development, and usually more revision.

B (3.00): Satisfactory performance

The work is satisfactory, but relies heavily on ordinary use of language, and is not formally innovative. The writing is competent and shows promise, but definitely needs more work and greater focus. Images or plot are sound but may verge on the clichéd, predictable, or derivative. Vocabulary is adequate but may be limited.

B- (2.70): Minimum pass for Students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies

Images or plot are sound but may verge on the clichéd, predictable, or derivative. Vocabulary is adequate but may be limited. Use of language is ordinary, not formally innovative.

C+ (2.30): Work shows little originality and little investment

All grades below "B-" are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.

General Grading System:

University of Calgary's Grading System: A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards if the average of term work is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Make-up Classes:

It is sometimes possible that, for professional reasons, the professor may have to miss a class. If and when this occurs, make-up classes will be scheduled. The best attempt will be made to schedule make-up classes at times that suit all participants in the course.

While university regulations do not require students to attend make-up classes, to get the most out of this course, you are strongly encouraged to do so. In the event that you are unable to attend the make-up class please do the reading for it, and find a classmate who can fill you in on what was discussed.

Late assignment policy:

Because the workshop structure of the class means everyone is affected if anyone submits late, I have built strong disincentives for tardiness into the course. Anyone who does not submit their material one full week before they are due to be critiqued will be bumped to the next available free slot if one is available. If all the free slots are gone, then you will forfeit your critique session.

Final assignments submitted after the deadline (Dec. 5) will be penalized with the loss of a third of grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Academic Dishonesty:

Please take note of the University of Calgary policy and do not plagiarize. Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university.

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca/graduate>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

Writing support:

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Library and Research Support:

Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact:
maboyd@ucalgary.ca

Find *The English Pages* research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:



Academic regulations and schedules:

Consult the Department of English's graduate website for courses, departmental deadlines, and other related program information at <http://english.ucalgary.ca/node/245>. Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar for university and faculty regulations, dates, deadline, fees, and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar is <http://grad.ucalgary.ca>.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact the Graduate Office at 403 220 5484 or visit us in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact the Graduate Program Administrator at enggrad@ucalgary.ca to make an appointment with Dr. Aruna Srivastava, Graduate Program Director.

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that "mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision."

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

Academic Accommodation:

It is the students' responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodations and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact them at 403-220-6019. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodations. More information about academic accommodations can be found at www.ucalgary.ca/access.

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

“Safewalk” Program:

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Contact for the Graduate Student Association: <http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/>

Contact for Students Ombudsman’s Office:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:
 - (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
 - (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
 - (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
 - (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>) “The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.” This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

Fri. Sept. 12 Introduction

Week 2

Fri. Sept. 19 Dr. Lai away in Shanghai. A make-up class will be scheduled. Please read Angela Carter's *Nights at the Circus* while I am away, and we will discuss it in the make-up class.

Make-up class Date: _____

Week 3

Fri. Sept. 26

Book presentation: _____

Critique #1: _____

Critique #2: _____

Week 4

Fri. Oct. 3

Book presentation: _____

Critique #1: _____

Critique #2: _____

Week 5

Fri. Oct. 10

Book presentation: _____

Critique #1: _____

Critique #2: _____

Week 6

Fri. Oct. 17

Dr. Lai away for TWUC AGM in Toronto. A make-up class will be scheduled. Please read Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* in my absence, and we will discuss it in the make-up class. To make the most of your time while I am away, you might wish to attend a few Wordfest events.

Make-up Class Date: _____

Week 7

Fri. Oct. 24

Book presentation:_____

Critique #1:_____

Critique #2:_____

Week 8

Fri. Oct. 31

Book presentation:_____

Critique #1:_____

Critique #2:_____

Week 9

Fri. Nov. 7

Book presentation:_____

Critique #1:_____

Critique #2:_____

Week 10

Fri. Nov. 14

Book presentation: _____

Critique #1: _____

Critique #2: _____

Week 11

Fri. Nov. 21

Book presentation: _____

Critique #1: _____

Critique #2: _____

Week 12

Fri. Nov. 28

Book presentation: _____

Critique #1: _____

Critique #2: _____

Week 13

Fri. Dec. 5

Dr. Lai away for a conference in Limoges. In lieu of last class, we will have a reading and party at my home on my return. Please submit your final projects and portfolios to me electronically **today** (Dec. 5).

Date for Reading and Party: _____