Course Title: All Writing Is Rewriting: A Fiction Writing and Revising Workshop
Course Code: FICT 75 W
Instructor: Antoine Wilson
Dates: 10 WEEKS (09/20/21 - 12/03/21)

Course Summary:

Nobody writes a perfect first draft. They tend to come out unbalanced, tentative, cloudy, under-imagined, overblown, or any number of adjectives meaning they don’t quite work. And so we rewrite them. And rewrite them again. Until they start to look like something we might actually want to share with someone else. Someone else who will no doubt have their own ideas as to whether they work or not.

The aim of this course is to shepherd a new piece of your fiction (preferably a short story, though a novel excerpt is acceptable), through the revision process. Or, I should say, your revision process. Along the way, you'll be exposed to a multitude of approaches, philosophies, and techniques—some of which will you’ll likely absorb and come to call your own as you move forward.

Writing fiction requires something of a binary oscillation. At times, you have to be an eyes-closed scribbler, following your gut wherever it leads you. At other times, you have to be a ruthless editor of your own work. In this course, we will cultivate the scribbler's art even as we strengthen the editor's craft. You'll never be able to read your work like a total stranger, but you can learn how to find enough distance to dive in and improve it.

We'll cover the basic techniques of fiction writing, including plot, conflict, characterization, dialogue, narrative voice, and point of view—all with an eye to understanding how they come together to create compelling stories. Henry James once said that he couldn’t think “of a passage of description that is not in its intention narrative, a passage of dialogue that is not in its nature descriptive, a touch of truth that does not partake the nature of incident.” In other words, these so-called techniques are actually inseparable. That doesn’t mean we can’t put down a few flags and draw a rough map of the territory.

You'll read published short stories and discuss them, as well as participate in a weekly discussion on a specific topic. Most important, you'll be reading the work of your fellow classmates, critiquing it carefully and respectfully, and discussing it online. While you'll no doubt benefit from others' comments on your fiction, it's the process of critiquing the work of your fellow students that will likely serve as the strongest foundation for a lifetime of writing, and, yes, rewriting.
Grade Options and Requirements:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  - This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  - Students must attend and/or watch all class sessions, participate in discussions, submit critiques of other students’ work, as well as submit on time: (1) a story for workshop and (2) a revision of said story for a second workshop.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  - Students must attend and/or watch all class sessions, participate in discussions, submit critiques of other students’ work, as well as submit on time: (1) a story for workshop and (2) a revision of said story for a second workshop.
  - Grading will not be based on how “good” your stories are, but on the quality of your participation in all aspects of the course.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Zoom Schedule*:

THURSDAYS 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM, might go 15 minutes longer
(Final schedule will be displayed in Canvas before the start of class.)

*Please note that the Zoom schedule is subject to change. The live video sessions are recorded; student attendance is optional

Course Structure:

Each weekly course module will typically include the following:

- Craft Lecture
- Discussion thread re the craft lecture
- Discussion thread re the reading assignment
- Discussion thread re stories up for workshop
- Stories to be workshopped for the next week

Stories to be workshopped the next week will be due on Thursday at 6:00 pm PT. The next week's module will be posted by Friday at 6:00 PT.
The primary focus of this course is workshopping each other's stories. As such, participation in the workshop discussions is mandatory. A suggested rubric to structure your critique letters will be provided.

NB re: Announcements: Consider setting your "announcement" notification preference to "notify me right away" to immediately receive the information via email. See the Notification Preference section on the Settings and Preferences page for instructions.

**Tentative Weekly Outline:**

**Week 1**

Introduction: Welcome and Course Guidelines.
Lecture: The Shoddy First Draft: Make a Mess?
Reading: "Gold Coast," James Alan McPherson.

**Week 2**

Group A turns in stories
Lecture: "A" Revision Process
Reading: "Meneseteung," Alice Munro.

**Week 3**

Group B turns in stories
Workshop: Group A
Lecture: Technical Matters: Point of View (Whose story is it?)

**Week 4**

Group C turns in stories
Workshop: Group B
Lecture: Developmental Revision: Revealing the Story

**Week 5**

Group D turns in stories
Workshop: Group C
Lecture: Developmental Revision: Characters
Week 6

Group A turns in revised stories
Workshop: Group D
Lecture: Technical Matters: Pacing and Rhythm (Scene and Summary)
Reading: "Birthmates," Gish Jen.

Week 7

Group B turns in revised stories
Workshop: Group A revised stories
Lecture: Language and Revision: Diction, Cleaning Up, and Killing Darlings
Reading: "That in Aleppo Once...," Vladimir Nabokov.

Week 8

Group C turns in revised stories
Workshop: Revision Group B revised stories
Lecture: Technical Matters: Revising Beginnings and Endings
Reading: "Theft," Katherine Anne Porter.

Week 9

Group D turns in revised stories
Workshop: Revision Group C revised stories
Lecture: Troubleshooting: A Step-by-Step Approach?
Reading: "Greenleaf," Flannery O'Connor.

Week 10

Workshop: Revision Group D revised stories
Lecture: Envoy: Becoming Your Own First Reader without Turning to Stone
Reading: TBD

**Required Textbook:**