Course Title: Short Story Workshop: Writing for Impact  
Course Code: FICT 55  
Instructor: Rachel Smith

Course Summary:  
Weeks 1-4 of this course will focus on short story readings (a tentative schedule is listed below), craft readings (to be assigned in class), and short in-class and out-of-class writing assignments. In weeks 5-10 we will continue to read and discuss published stories as we also shift a good deal of our focus to workshopping student stories.

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.

Grade Options and Requirements:  
• No Grade Requested (NGR)  
  o 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)  
  o Score will be determined by student attendance and participation. Credit is given at 70% completion of requirements.
• Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)  
  o Written work, as assigned by the instructor, will determine a student’s grade.  
  o If you choose to receive a grade for this course, it will be calculated as follows. More than two absences will affect your grade.  
    30% Completion of a short story for workshop (up to 3,000 words)  
    20% Response letters to your peers’ workshop stories  
    20% Completion of out-of-class writing exercises  
    30% Participation in class

*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 Weekly Outline:  

Week One  
Introductions  
What is a story? Where to start?  
“Ambush” by Tim O’Brien  
“Wants” by Grace Paley
Week Two
Conflict, Without and Within
“Sonny’s Blues” by James Baldwin
In class: “Chablis” by Donald Barthelme (PC)

Week Three
Writing the World
“Immortality” by Yiyun Li
Optional: “Talk of Heroes” by Carol Bly
In Class: “Living” by Grace Paley (PC)

Week Four
Writing the Moment
“Optimists” by Richard Ford
In Class: “Reunion” by John Cheever (PC)

Week Five
Suspense and Momentum
WORKSHOP ONE
“The Night in Question” by Tobias Wolff (PC)
Optional: “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson (PC)

Week Six
Hidden Lives
WORKSHOP TWO
“Differently” by Alice Munro
Optional: “The Toughest Indian in the World” by Sherman Alexie

Week Seven
Language
WORKSHOP THREE
“Twenty Minutes” by James Salter
In Class: “Water Liars” by Barry Hannah
Optional: “Break It Down” by Lydia Davis (PC)

Week Eight
Humor
WORKSHOP FOUR
“Going Home” by William Trevor
In Class: “The Birds for Christmas” by Mark Richard
Optional: “You’re Ugly, Too” by Lorrie Moore

Please contact the Stanford Continuing Studies office with any questions
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**Week Nine**  
*Consequence*  
WORKSHOP FIVE  
“A New Man” by Edward P. Jones

**Week Ten**  
*Endings*  
WORKSHOP SIX