Course Title: Short Story Writing: Working with Your Best Material  
Course Code: FICT 128  
Instructor: Angela Pneuman

Course Summary & a Note from the Instructor:

In this course, we’ll be reading the stories of established writers to explore the ways fiction operates, focusing on narrative elements like point of view, character, conflict and more. We’ll also be writing our own short stories and sharing them with the class for feedback in workshop. Brief weekly writing exercises will foster creativity, work with memory and observation, help you turn anecdote into story, and jump-start the writing process for longer work.

As you complete your weekly short writing assignments, you’ll receive my feedback; at times you’ll also respond to each other in small groups, and we’ll all participate in lively discussions about the elements of fiction and the published work we’ve been reading. When it’s time to workshop your full-length story, you’ll bring in copies for the entire class to read over the week before your piece is up for discussion. Responses to everyone’s full-length stories in workshop during the workshop portion of the class are crucial to the success of the workshop (mandatory).

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

Grade Options and Requirements:

- No Grade Requested (NGR)  
  o This is the default option. Just show up for class! 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.
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)  
  o Written work, as assigned by the instructor, will determine a student’s grade.

If you’d like to take the course for a grade, here’s the evaluation breakdown:

55% Completion of five of the weekly writing assignments and one full-length story  
45% Participation on discussion threads and thoughtful feedback on classmates’ full-length stories
**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:**

The first three to five weeks of class we’ll focus on outside readings, discussion on the elements of fiction, and writing activities that explore these elements and spark the creative process.

The second part of class will follow the same format, only we’ll lower the number of outside readings and assignments so that you can prioritize your workshop submission and responses. Workshops are valuable not only for the direct feedback on individual work, but also for the helpful topics that arise through the story drafts-in-progress, new things for us all to consider while writing our own stories. During this second part of the course, weekly reading and writing assignments will also address additional concerns that come up when stories are well underway—revision ideas, endings and beginnings, narrative summary verses dramatic scene, etc. At the end of class, you have the option of turning in a revision of your full-length story for my review.

**Week 1:** Character—The Who’s Who of Story  
**Week 2:** Point of View and Narrative Voice  
**Week 3:** Setting (Time, Place, Culture)  
**Week 4:** Conflict  
**Week 5:** Dialog  
**Week 6:** Plot and Tension  
**Week 7:** The Writing Life  
**Week 8:** Revision I, Beginnings and Endings  
**Week 9:** Revision II, Opening up a Story  
**Week 10:** Revision III, Letting Go, Giving it Time, Starting Over