

## COURSE INFORMATION SHEET: EWRT 40

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**Instructor:** Becky Roberts  
**Email:** robertsbecky@fhda.edu **Office**  
**hours:** T,TH 12:30-1:30, W 5:30-6:30

**Course Description:** Writing fiction is a glorious journey—creating worlds and characters that make readers feel something; developing voices, images and ideas that expand readers' minds (maybe even blow their minds). What could be more exciting than that?

As I chart our course, I am trying to strike a balance between developing control and freedom, creative play and disciplined revision. Please be willing to experiment and try new things in practice exercises that will help you generate ideas for short stories and get more acquainted with the tools of fiction. You will also draft and revise at least one short story, read and discuss your classmates' work, read and discuss the work of published writers, and submit a final portfolio. Try it out, dive in, push yourself a little, and we'll have a good time along the way.

Please note: Since this is an introductory class, the focus is on writing short stories and not novels. And because the emphasis of the class is on generating new work, this is not the place to submit or get feedback on work you have written before taking this class.

### **Course Goals:**

- Develop and strengthen a personal creative process in fiction writing.
- Identify and use major technical and stylistic elements of fiction.
- Respond constructively to peers' and one's own story drafts.

**Texts:** All reading materials will be available in Canvas

*The Making of a Story*, Alice LaPlante

I will provide several short stories within the Canvas course.

### **Class Participation:**

We will not meet as a whole class in Zoom, but you will sign up to meet with me and a small group for a half hour twice in the quarter. That meeting is a discussion, not a lecture, so you will need to bring a question you want to ask, and a quote (10-40 lines) from a story we read in the class or from your own works. We will use these questions and quotes to open up our writing process, the course, difficulties, discoveries, and to explore issues of craft and invention.

**Late Work:** Freewrites and practice exercises can be turned in up to two weeks late. You will lose 10% the grade for late assignments. Larger assignments, the short story draft for example, must be turned in on time, because a late story will throw off the whole workshop schedule. However, if you have a very good reason and make arrangements with me, I will accept your story draft up to one week late (unless that puts us into exam week). The final portfolio cannot be turned in late. No work for the course will be accepted after the final due date.

**Grades:** You can elect to take this class pass/no pass or for a grade. Passing is a grade of C or better. These are the grading criteria:

Writing practice exercises	180	93-100%=A	90-92%=A-
Freewrites (can skip 3)	80	87-89%=B+	83-86%=B
Flash Fiction piece	100	80-83%=B-	77-79%=C+
Short story start	120	70-76%=C	60-69%=D
Short story for workshop	140	59% and below = F	
Participation in Zoom	40	of 1000 total points	
Online Discussions (can skip one)	130		
Peer responses to others' work	80		
Final portfolio	130		
TOTAL	1000		

**To submit the final portfolio, you must first satisfactorily complete the work leading up to it,** which includes completing and submitting writing exercises, turning in flash fiction piece and a short story for peer response, and providing feedback on classmates' posts and stories.

**Final Portfolio:** Your final for this class will be a portfolio of

- 3 exercises you select from work you've produced over the quarter
- a short story you've written and revised for the class (at least two drafts), and
- a reflective essay or self-interview of 500 – 800 words in which you discuss what you've learned about your writing process, what you still want to learn, how you plan to keep developing as a writer.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism and cheating include copying someone else's homework, lifting sentences from someone else without quoting (whether the source is published or not) and any small or large act of academic forgery in the work that you submit as your own effort in this class. **Please do not waste our time by submitting any writing that is not your own.** The penalty is, at minimum, a "0" on that assignment, and an "F" for the course is very likely.

**Student Resources:** I enjoy helping students and talking about writing, so please don't be shy about using my office hours.