

## Introduction to Creative Writing

Hartwick College  
ENGL 213-B (3 Credits)  
Spring 2018

Dr. Bradley J. Fest  
Assistant Professor of English  
Office: 226 Clark Hall, ext. 4921  
Email: [festb@hartwick.edu](mailto:festb@hartwick.edu)

TuTh 10:10 – 11:30 am, Clark Hall 342  
Office Hours: TuTh 4:00 – 5:00 pm  
and by appointment

*Men, like poets, rush "into the midst," in media res, when they are born; they also die in mediis rebus, and to make sense of their span they need fictive concords with origins and ends, such as give meaning to lives and to poems.*

—Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending*

### Required Texts

Hayes, Terrance. *Hip Logic*. Penguin, 2002.  
Johnson, Denis. *Jesus's Son: Stories*. Picador, 2009.  
Koch, Kenneth. *Making Your Own Days: The Pleasures of Reading and Writing Poetry*. Touchstone, 1999.  
Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies: Stories*. Mariner, 1999.  
Mullen, Harryette. *Sleeping with the Dictionary*. U of California P, 2002.  
Saunders, George. *Tenth of December: Stories*. Random House, 2014.

Additional texts to be covered can be found on the calendar below. These will be available on D2L under "Content Browser: Readings." See endnotes for bibliographic citations.

### Recommended Materials

I *highly* recommend acquiring a *folder* dedicated *exclusively* to this course. Students may also want to set aside roughly ten dollars for printing costs if they go beyond their allotted quota.

### Catalog Description

The course will approach reading as a way to develop the imagination of the writer of both poetry and short fiction. Students will read widely in both genres, write poems and short stories in response to weekly readings, and participate in workshop discussions of their writing. The class will also consider relations between poetry and fiction, in terms of both their historical development and contemporary practice. Several short analytical essays on the assigned readings as well as students' original poetry and fiction will be expected. (EL)

### Course Description and Purpose

Introduction to Creative Writing is a primer for the exploration of some of the basic elements of creative writing. The course is designed for both interested general education students and as the first in a series of courses for students majoring in creative writing. We will be covering both poetry and short fiction, with a focus on learning the forms and tools necessary for successful writing. Throughout this course, you will be asked to engage various aspects of writing, including studying craft, reading the work of published writers, and composing work of your

own. It is essential for a writer to develop ways of thinking about and discussing critically the work of others, so you should be prepared to do a substantial amount of reading during this semester and to respond to this reading in short analytical essays. Course readings will also prepare you to analyze and assess other students' writing and to evaluate your own compositions. The primary focus of this class will be on learning *craft*, the “nuts and bolts” of writing, the skills, techniques, choices, and strategies that will allow you to improve your own writing. You will be paying careful attention to the effective use of image, metaphor, line-break, sound, shape, and voice in poetry, and dialogue, plot, character, setting, conflict, and scene in fiction. This focus on *form* will give you a better understanding of the various writers we will be reading and help you effectively use these elements in your own writing. Above all, writing is an art and, like any art, it requires a knowledge of its tools and conventions combined with a will to create, explore, experiment, and push boundaries. I fully expect that you will also have some fun.

### How This Course Works

The main concern of this course is *your* writing, and because of that, though we will be extensively reading and critically writing about the work of professional writers, you will be asked to bring in a substantial amount of your own work. The course is divided into two sections. The first half of the course, until Spring Break, will be devoted to poetry. You will be expected to write a poem every week. During the second half of the course, you will compose one piece of flash fiction (which will function as a formal segue into fiction) and two short stories (of at least eight pages in length).<sup>1</sup>

The primary way we will be focusing on your writing will be during class in a writing workshop. If you look below on the calendar, most Tuesdays will be devoted to covering the assigned reading and most Thursdays will be devoted to workshopping student writing. Though our schedule is subject to change, it is rare for me to deviate from a course calendar, so come ready to talk about the various texts scheduled for discussion each day.

Workshops will run in a more or less a traditional manner. Students will have roughly twenty-five minutes devoted to their work at least once per unit. After the class roster has solidified, I will hand out a workshop schedule and assign a primary reader for each student. The primary reader will be principally responsible for responding to their assigned writer's work. This means that the primary reader should write extensive notes, comments, and critiques on *each* piece of writing from this student, along with writing a 1–2-page reflection on that students'

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<sup>1</sup> Though I will not generally put limits on what you can write about in this class, a couple disclaimers are necessary.

First, creative writing programs in the United States widely share the convention of asking students to write *literary* fiction rather than *genre* fiction, and it will be the same in this class. The writing you submit for workshop will be predominantly realism rather than fantasy, stories and poems set in our world rather than writing set in an imaginary world or that uses the conventions of an established genre (e.g., romance, Western, detective, et cetera). There are many reasons for this convention, and I would be happy to speak with students at further length if they have any questions or concerns (including what might be unfair or seem overly restrictive) about it. If students are curious about the institutional and academic history of creative writing in the US, I would urge them to read Mark McGurl's important book, *The Program Era: Postwar Fiction and the Rise of Creative Writing* (2009).

Second, students sometimes inaccurately presume that this class is a place to work through personal issues rather than a space in which to rigorously study the practice of an *art*. Obviously, students will be drawing upon their own experiences in their writing, but they should keep in mind that this is principally a course on *craft* and *form*. Consequently, I urge students to try to stay away from overly sentimental issues (e.g., a recently deceased grandparent) or subjects that often result in cliché (e.g., stories about high school). Though powerful writing about such subjects can be and obviously has been produced by writers at all levels, these subjects can lead students away from the primary focus of this class: learning and practicing the basic formal elements of creative writing.

writing each time they are workshopped and at the end of a unit (more details below and to follow). The primary reader will also be responsible for opening up the conversation about that person's writing: making initial comments and asking a few key questions that will lead into a productive class discussion. In addition, each student will be expected to write brief comments on *everyone's* writing—all of it—though these comments can be brief.

In workshops, students will read their work aloud followed by a group discussion of the writing and the craft issues presented by the piece. During workshop, the student whose work we are discussing will remain silent until the end, at which time they will be able to ask questions (note: not provide explanations). Though we will of necessity be honest and forthright in the criticism of our peers' work, all members of the workshop should strive to make their criticism *generous* and *constructive*. Comments during workshop should look not only to improve the work but also to better situate it within a student's larger project as a writer. Rather than "nitpicking" about small things, I will always be more interested in the bigger ideas at stake and the specific issues of craft and form in a student's writing, so please be aware of this and *always* be respectful of your peers in whatever discussion we are having.<sup>2</sup>

### **Learning Outcomes**

In addition to the basic skills of literary analysis, students in this course will: 1) learn to identify conventional creative writing techniques; 2) learn to read as writers and use this knowledge to more successfully write and discuss works of creative writing; and 3) learn to produce works of creative writing that demonstrate an understanding of literary and formal conventions while also articulating a personal artistic vision.

### **Other Course Requirements and Assignments**

*Texts*—As this course is structured around the knowledge that becoming a strong, careful reader is essential for beginning to develop as a creative writer, students will be required to have read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts for each class meeting, including the writing of your peers. This also entails that students bring the texts to class, whether the book, *printouts* of the .pdfs from D2L, or copies of your peers' work. Additional readings for the course (see below) can be found under the "Readings" section of D2L. *Failure to bring the assigned text(s) to class will count as an absence.*<sup>3</sup> Please do not let the "creative writing" nature of this class fool you: this course asks students to read *quite* a bit and *very* carefully. Our meetings and discussions will depend upon the rigorous, intelligent, and frequent involvement of every participant of the class, and this involvement is simply not possible if students do not come to class prepared. All students *must* obtain the edition of the texts specified above. Unless individual arrangements are made with me, electronic versions of the texts will not be permitted. Students should expect to read approximately 50–100 pages per week.

*Portfolio*—Submitted during the week of final exams, the portfolio will represent the culmination of your work throughout this semester and will constitute the most significant portion of your grade. Your portfolio should include all the original poems and stories you wrote with my comments on them, a cover letter, four newly revised poems, and one newly revised story. The writing in the portfolio should consist of what you feel best represents your work in

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<sup>2</sup> In general, I prefer trying to figure out what a piece *is* saying, what it *means*, what *work* it is doing, what it is *accomplishing*, before beginning the activity of saying what a piece should be doing differently.

<sup>3</sup> See the section below on "Classroom Etiquette" for more details about daily classroom expectations.

Introduction to Creative Writing. These four poems and single story should display an awareness of the various issues that we discussed in class, show thoughtful revisions based on comments provided during workshop and in written feedback, and the final drafts should be polished, finished writing. The writing submitted in your portfolio should also display a firm grasp of the conventions and craft of creative writing that we discussed throughout the semester. Because such a large portion of your grade will not be assessed until the end of the semester, students who are curious about their standing in the class should feel free at any time to come talk with me about any questions or concerns they may have. More details about the expectations for your portfolio will be provided later in the semester.

*Individual Writing Assignments*—Throughout the semester you will be asked to complete a number of individual writing assignments: poems, flash fiction, and short stories. These assignments will not be graded, though they will be returned to you with my comments after your workshop and at the end of a unit. For reasons of logistics, individual writing assignments—poems, flash fiction, and stories—*will not be accepted late*. Failure to turn in a poem or piece of flash fiction during class *and to upload it to D2L* will cost a student 5% off their final portfolio grade; failure to turn in a short story in class *and to upload it to D2L* will cost a student 20% of their final portfolio grade. (So, for example, if a student did not turn in a poem and a failed to upload a short story, the highest possible grade they could receive on their portfolio would be a C [75%.]) Due dates for poems, flash fiction, and short stories are below. The assignments will follow. All individual writing assignments *must* be handed in as hard copies in class to me *and* to your primary reader; they *must also* be uploaded to D2L (that way, if you have to miss class, you will still receive credit for turning in your assignment on time and your peers will have access to your writing). There will be links under “Discussion” to electronically upload your poems and stories.

*D2L Uploads*—So that it is easy for *all* members of the class to easily find someone’s writing on D2L, please save all files in the following format: Last Name, First Name--Assignment #. So, for example: Fest, Bradley--Poem 1. Students *must* upload their files as .doc, .docx, or .pdf files. Other file formats will not be accepted. If students do not have Microsoft Word, they should install it on their computers and use it. The program is free for Hartwick Students. To install Office on your personal Windows or Mac computer, please go to <https://portal.office.com> and log in using your Hartwick credentials. The Technology Resource Center recommends using the “Download and install” button in the upper right to install the full version of MS Office 2016.

*Workshop*—Each day a student is workshopped, they will be able to decide what piece(s) of writing they would like to discuss. So, one class prior to being workshopped, each student should make enough copies of up to three poems or one short story to distribute to each member of the class (up to 20, though this number will most likely change). Each member of the class is responsible for reading and commenting on each piece of writing a student distributes for workshop. If a student misses a class in which writing was distributed, each piece of writing should be available digitally on D2L. Students are individually responsible for having their peers’ writing for class and the failure to do so will count as an absence.

*Essays*—Students will be asked to write two essays of 3–4 pages during the course of the semester: one at the culmination of our unit on poetry and one at the end of our unit on fiction.

These papers are designed to allow you to reflect upon our discussions of the readings and the issues of craft we will explore, and should demonstrate thoughtful, critical engagement with the reading. All papers should be proofread and polished. They should be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins, and should accord to MLA guidelines for citation and format.<sup>4</sup> Students who do not follow directions or fail to meet the basic requirements of an assignment—e.g., not meeting the page requirement,<sup>5</sup> failing to format a paper correctly, or failing to upload a paper to D2L—will automatically cost that student a *minimum* of 5% of their grade (so B- → C+, B → C+/B-). Papers will be assessed primarily on the *strength of their argument, the quality of their idea, and the rigor of their analysis regarding elements of form, style, and craft*. Due dates for these papers are below. The assignments will follow. All papers *must* be handed in as hard copies in class *and* uploaded to D2L under “Assignments.”

*Responses*—For each class in which we will be workshoping students’ work—up to three students in a given class—all members of the course will be responsible for writing marginal comments on their peers’ work and must write a brief paragraph about what they thought that piece was doing well and their thoughts on how to improve it. Make sure to read and comment on your peers’ work prior to coming to class. Though I will not be formally checking on the comments that you provide to your peers, believe me when I tell you that it will be clear to me who is providing thoughtful, detailed, constructive feedback and who is shirking their duty. If it is clear students are failing to provide comments on *everyone’s work, every week*, I will begin collecting comments and giving them a completion grade.

In addition to comments on your peers’ work, each member of this class will be a primary reader for another member of the class. Primary readers are expected to introduce and guide workshop discussion about their assigned writer’s work, and to provide thoughtful and *substantial* comments to that writer. Each day a primary reader’s writer is workshoped, the primary reader should not only make marginal comments directly on the page, but write a 1–2-page letter (double-spaced), addressed to the writer, about that person’s work so far. Each primary reader will also write up a 1–2-page response at the end of a unit (one for poetry, one for fiction) reflecting on that student’s work as a whole.<sup>6</sup> These comments will be given to the writer *and* submitted to me as hard copy (you will not upload these to D2L). These responses will receive a completion grade (so full credit if you do them; no credit if you fail to do them, turn them in late, or if they are in some way unacceptable—i.e., the response is cursory, incomplete, rushed, mean-spirited, insulting, et cetera). Please consult the handout on Responses, provided next week, for further details.

*Quizzes*—Students will often be given unannounced short quizzes on the assigned material. Students who have done the reading will, for the most part, find these quizzes quite manageable. Students who fail a quiz will lose two percentage points off their total final grade. If you do the

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<sup>4</sup> I would *highly* recommend that students purchase the indispensable 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook* (2016). For a good website on MLA style, visit <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. I urge students *not* to rely on EndNote or software found in Microsoft Word or online to format your “Works Cited” pages, for your citations will most likely be incorrect (*trust me*). Students should also note that in this syllabus each text has been correctly cited in MLA format, either above or in the endnotes below (so there is no excuse for incorrect citations).

<sup>5</sup> 3–4 pages means that the paper must be at least 3 *full* pages (i.e., not 2 ½ or 2 ¾ pages). Students will not be penalized for going over the page requirement (within reason).

<sup>6</sup> For a total of 4 total responses, though this number might vary slightly for individual students. See handout.

math, multiple failed quizzes could dramatically lower your grade. Unless otherwise informed, all quizzes are open book.

*Participation*—As we will be engaged with critically reading texts and discussing each other's work frequently in class, an absolutely crucial part of this class will be student participation. Though I will lecture from time to time, the class is conceived as a collective inquiry into the subject matter and class time will primarily be based around discussions that privilege students' thinking and writing. I am quite excited to delve into the material, as I see it as both quite challenging and, in all honesty, quite fun. But this class will be a two-way street and will require the input of all its participants. I am completely aware that some students may be more vocal than others, but if I see a student consistently attempting to add to the discussion, I will take this into consideration. I have a habit of a rambling a bit, so please help me with this by asking questions of me if you are unclear. Asking questions can be an excellent way of participating. Since this class will rely heavily on student participation, your attendance is a necessity. *More than three absences will negatively affect your overall grade and can be grounds for failure, in which case you may want to consider withdrawing from the course and taking it again under better circumstances.*

### **Grading**

Participation: 20%

Primary Reader Responses: 5%

Essay 1: 10%

Essay 2: 15%

Portfolio: 50%

### **Classroom Etiquette**

To ensure a positive learning environment for all participants, and to ensure that everyone's work is given the respectful and thoughtful attention it deserves, students should adhere to the following guidelines for classroom etiquette. Failure to do so may result in being marked absent or in penalties applied to a student's participation grade.

*Texts*—Students who do not have their text in class, including their peers' writing for workshop, will be marked absent (whether I draw attention to it or not).

*Lateness*—As I often give crucial information and reminders about the course at the beginning of class, being late is not only disruptive but means that students may miss information that is important to their success in this course. As such, any student who is more than five minutes late will be marked absent.

*Notes*—Students are expected to take notes during class meetings and should have the materials to do so every day. Over a dozen years of teaching, I have found that, unsurprisingly, students who take notes in class perform better than students who do not. A student who fails to have a pen or pencil and notebook out for each class meeting—and most importantly, fails to visibly be taking notes when appropriate—will result in an absence (whether I draw attention to it or not).

*Laptops, Phones, Tablets*—Anyone observed using their mobile phone or another digital device during class, whether I draw attention to it or not, will be marked absent for the day.<sup>7</sup> Phones will not be tolerated in this class, and the use of laptops or tablets in this course will not be permitted unless special arrangements are made with the instructor.

*Leaving Class*—As we are all adults and a variety of things may necessitate leaving class, students should feel free to get up and leave class to use the bathroom without my permission as long as they do so quietly and unobtrusively. If, however, individual students make a habit of leaving and returning during class time, I will have to have a conversation with that student about disrupting class. If students continue leaving frequently after this conversation, they will be marked absent each time they leave regardless of circumstance (whether I call attention to it or not). If a student has any issue that would cause them to need to get up frequently, please talk with the instructor in the first weeks of class or at any time during the semester.

*Preparation*—A key part of this class will involve reading the work of your peers. If it is clear that you have not done the reading or have not read your peers' work in order to be prepared for workshop, you will be marked absent (whether I call attention to it or not).

*Respect*—Sharing your work with others can be often be a bit intimidating, so I urge all class members to be generous, respectful, constructive, and kind to your peers, even when critiquing their work.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty**

Plagiarism is a serious and intellectually inexcusable offense, and it will simply not be tolerated. It will result in an immediate zero for the assignment and I will file a formal charge with the Office of Academic Affairs; plagiarism could also result in more serious action, including a student failing the class completely and being suspended from the College. *Plagiarism includes: lack of proper citations when quoting from someone else's work, representing someone else's work as your own, and knowingly allowing one's work to be submitted by someone else.* This should ultimately be a fun and stimulating class, and there is absolutely no reason for you not to take advantage of being able to do your own work and discuss it in an academic environment. Violations of Hartwick's Academic Honesty policy are not limited to plagiarism—for example, cheating and submitting a paper to more than one class would constitute violations—so students should familiarize themselves with Hartwick College's policy on academic honesty at:

<https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/academic-affairs/academic-policies/>.

### **Academic Adjustments and Modifications**

Hartwick College is committed to upholding and maintaining all aspects of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If a student with a disability wishes to request academic adjustments, they should contact Erin Braselmann, Director of AccessAbility Services, at [braselmann@hartwick.edu](mailto:braselmann@hartwick.edu), or [AccessAbilityServices@hartwick.edu](mailto:AccessAbilityServices@hartwick.edu). AccessAbility Services is located on the 5th floor of Yager Hall in the Center for Student Success. Any information regarding a student's disability

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<sup>7</sup> On how students more fully retain information if notes are taken by hand rather than on a computer, see Meyer, Robinson. "To Remember a Lecture Better, Take Notes by Hand." *Atlantic*, 1 May 2014, <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478/>.

will remain confidential. Requests for academic adjustments should be made as early as possible. Students must present me with an updated Academic Plan Letter for the 2017–2018 academic year in order to be eligible for academic adjustments.

### **The Writing Center**

Located in Clark Hall 230, the Writing Center offers events, courses, and one-on-one tutorials for students. Tutors can help you with your writing for classes or any writing project, and can teach you strategies for organizing, editing, and revising your writing. You can meet with a tutor once or regularly over the course of the semester; the Writing Center will also respond to queries via email. In some cases, I may send you to the Writing Center for help on a particular problem; otherwise, you can seek assistance on your own. Their services are free. You can browse the services at <https://www.hartwick.edu/academics/student-services/writing-center/>, or make an appointment by emailing [wcenter@hartwick.edu](mailto:wcenter@hartwick.edu) or calling (607) 431-4910.

### **E-mail Communication Policy**

Each student is issued a College e-mail address (username@hartwick.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the College for official communication with students. I will also communicate with students via their hartwick.edu address. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to communications from either the College or from me in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to communications sent to their Hartwick e-mail address.

### **Special Assistance**

Hartwick offers free counseling for students who are experiencing personal or emotional difficulties. The Counseling Center is located in the Perrella Health Center and offers psychological services and sexual assault services. Appointments can be made Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm, by calling (607) 431-4420 or emailing [counselingcenter@hartwick.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@hartwick.edu).

### **Statement on Classroom Recording**

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, or activities, nor can they take any photographic image of classroom proceedings, without the advance written permission of the instructor; any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

## Calendar<sup>8</sup>

- 2.6 Syllabus  
Introductions
- 2.8 **Poem 1 Due**  
Kenneth Koch, *Making Your Own Days* (pp. 13–49, 210–11, 229–31, and 293–94)
- 2.13 **Poem 2 Due**  
Kenneth Koch, *Making Your Own Days* (pp. 51–92; also read through a few poems in the back of the book and select one you find particularly interesting)
- 2.15 Kenneth Koch, *Making Your Own Days* (pp. 93–123)  
Workshop
- 2.20 **Poem 3 Due**  
Terrance Hayes, *Hip Logic* (pp. 1–45)
- 2.22 Workshop
- 2.27 **Poem 4 Due**  
Terrance Hayes, *Hip Logic* (pp. 46–90)
- 3.1 Workshop
- 3.6 **Poem 5 Due**  
Harryette Mullen (pp. 1–43)
- 3.8 Workshop
- 3.13 **Poem 6 Due**  
Harryette Mullen (pp. 44–85)
- 3.15 Workshop
- 3.20 **Essay 1 Due**  
**All Primary Reader Responses for Poetry Due**  
Workshop
- 3.22 Ernest Hemingway, “A Very Short Story”<sup>1</sup>  
Selections from *Flash Fiction Forward*: Alison Townsend, “The Barbie Birthday”<sup>2</sup>; Jack Handey, “The Voices in My Head”<sup>3</sup>; Samantha Schoech, “Why You Shouldn’t Have Gone in the First Place”<sup>4</sup>; Dave Eggers, “Accident”<sup>5</sup>; Michael Augustin, “The Handbag”<sup>6</sup>; and Pamela Painter, “Toasters”<sup>7</sup>  
Tadeusz Borowski, “The Death of Schillinger” and “Silence”<sup>8</sup>  
Jorge Luis Borges, “The House of Asterion”<sup>9</sup>
- 3.27 No Class, Spring Break
- 3.29 No Class, Spring Break

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<sup>8</sup> This calendar is subject to change and additional readings or handouts may be assigned when appropriate. For ease with citation, bibliographic endnotes to the readings available on D2L (anything with an endnote rather than page numbers) have been provided below in MLA style.

- 4.3 **Flash Fiction Due**  
Denis Johnson, *Jesus' Son* (pp. 1–54)
- 4.5 Denis Johnson, *Jesus' Son* (pp. 55–133)
- 4.10 **Short Story 1 Due**  
Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (pp. 1–82)
- 4.12 Workshop
- 4.17 Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (pp. 83–198)
- 4.19 Workshop
- 4.24 George Saunders, *Tenth of December* (pp. 1–108)
- 4.26 Workshop
- 5.1 **Short Story 2 Due**  
George Saunders, *Tenth of December* (pp. 109–251)
- 5.3 Workshop
- 5.8 **Essay 2 Due**  
Workshop
- 5.10 **All Primary Reader Responses for Fiction Due**  
Workshop
- 5.15 **4:00 pm – 7:00 pm**  
**Final Portfolios Due**  
**Class Wrap-Up: Group Reading**

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**Endnotes: Full Citations (in MLA Style) for Readings Available on D2L**

Epigraph: Kermodé, Frank. *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction with a New Epilogue*. 2nd ed., Oxford UP, 2000, p. 7.

<sup>1</sup> Hemingway, Ernest. "A Very Short Story." *In Our Time*, Scribner, 1996, pp. 65–66.

<sup>2</sup> Townsend, Alison. "The Barbie Birthday." *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*, edited by James Thomas and Robert Shapard, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 24–25.

<sup>3</sup> Handey, Jack. "The Voices in My Head." *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*, edited by James Thomas and Robert Shapard, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 85–87.

<sup>4</sup> Schoech, Samantha. "Why You Shouldn't Have Gone in the First Place." *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*, edited by James Thomas and Robert Shapard, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 90–92.

<sup>5</sup> Eggers, Dave. "Accident." *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*, edited by James Thomas and Robert Shapard, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 101–2.

<sup>6</sup> Augustin, Michael. "The Handbag." Translated by Sujata Bhatt. *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*, edited by James Thomas and Robert Shapard, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 155–56.

<sup>7</sup> Painter, Pamela. "Toasters." *Flash Fiction Forward: 80 Very Short Stories*, edited by James Thomas and Robert Shapard, W. W. Norton, 2006, pp. 216–17.

<sup>8</sup> Borowski, Tadeusz. "The Death of Schillinger" and "Silence." *This Way for the Gas Ladies and Gentleman*. Selected and translated by Barbara Vedder, Penguin, 1976, pp. 143–46 and pp. 161–63.

<sup>9</sup> Borges, Jorge Luis. "The House of Asterion." *Collected Fictions*, translated by Andrew Hurley, Penguin, 1999, pp. 220–22.

**Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank Dr. Jacob Wolff for the language used in the "Learning Outcomes" section of this syllabus.