

# Stanford | Syllabus

[Return to syllabi search](#)

ENGLISH 90: Fiction Writing (Edward Porter)

---

The musicians of the Titanic - only one survived 😞



Following up on yesterday's discussion of whether old guys with guitars are cool.

\*

English 90 Calendar Summer 2024.docx (<https://canvas.stanford.edu/courses/193206/files/13694916?verifier=lpNeDqSD8UUDvTMrU0eciUWv0ncK4sICkeRyo1iD&wrap=1>)

SyllabusEnglish 90.3Su24Revised.docx (<https://canvas.stanford.edu/courses/193206/files/13694921?verifier=Y0PdPzqJbtoJvK3wMKiPTp7UVQTwHxAF4DnZeg1m&wrap=1>)

## **English 90: Fiction Workshop**

**Stanford University, Summer 2024**

**Instructor: Edward Porter (he, him) Email: [efporter@stanford.edu](mailto:efporter@stanford.edu)** (<mailto:efporter@stanford.edu>)

**Class Time: 11:30 to 1:20 Tuesdays and Thursdays**

**Class Location: Building 110, Room 101**

**Office: Mariposa House, Room 106**

**Office Hours: 1:30 to 2:30 Tuesdays and by appointment**

### **Texts**

**I will supply course texts on Canvas via links or files.**

### **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the art, and discipline of fiction writing, focusing primarily on reading, writing, and discussing short stories. It is designed with the idea that some participants may be writing fiction for the first time, while others may already be well-practiced. Our time together will be an opportunity for you to explore the pleasures and challenges of written storytelling in a community of like-minded students.

Like other disciplines, fiction writing has its own vocabulary and set of concepts, and we'll spend time identifying and analyzing things such as point of view and narrative distance. We'll also consider best practices of discussing and responding to each other's writing. The life of the class will depend on your steady participation and daily writing practice. Over the eight weeks, you'll write short exercises develop craft skills, read and discuss published stories, read and discuss essays by fiction writers on their craft, write your own full length short story and receive feedback on it in a workshop setting, and support your peers with your own written and verbal responses.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Through active engagement with and the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

\*Write a complete short story that demonstrates a contemporary awareness of the form.

\*Understand and accurately use the concepts and technical vocabulary of the discipline.

\*Analyze and respond to works of fiction by their peers and published authors in an artistically informed way.

## **Content**

We write to explore the worst and the best things we know. Literature exists because of our need to grapple with love and hate, with trauma, violence, sexuality, identity, race, power, and injustice. Therefore, in the published pieces, the work of your peers, and in discussion, be prepared to encounter mature content and engage it with your most empathetic and curious selves.

Be aware that some of the material we will read was written in societies featuring cultural and moral norms different from our own. Please note that students may not be warned about all content of individual readings. If you anticipate that content will cause you acute distress, please confer with me.

We all come to the university seeking truth and wisdom, but the university doesn't keep truth and wisdom in a vault. What the university can do is put you in touch with others past and present who have also sought truth and wisdom. It's up to you to grapple with them.

## **Course Responsibilities**

1) During the first half of the quarter, you'll develop craft skills through exercises. Expect to write in class and to submit homework after each weekend.

2) In the second half of the quarter, you'll write a short story of around thirty-five hundred to five thousand words that you'll submit for workshop by your colleagues.

3) At the end of the quarter, you'll submit a revision of your story based on the feedback you received.

- 4) You'll support your colleagues' work with written and verbal responses to each workshop submission.
- 5) You'll support the class overall by thoughtful participation in the workshop, by discussing each week's readings, and by sharing your work as we go.
- 6) You'll keep an ongoing writing diary that you'll turn in each week on Canvas.

## **Grading Policies**

Since this is a studio arts class, your grade will be based on effort and studentship, not my subjective judgment of your ability.

To grade well in this class:

1. Appear on time to all the classes.
2. Turn in all assignments on time.
3. Be prepared for class discussions and activities and participate thoughtfully and generously in them.
4. Demonstrate seriousness of purpose in your written work.
5. Demonstrate understanding of the craft elements studied in discussion and your written submissions.

## *Grade Weights*

1. Participation 30%
2. Exercises 20%
3. Workshop Submission 35%
4. Revision 15%

## *Attendance*

Because of the collaborative, progressive, and participatory nature of our work together, it's vital that you support each other's learning by being present at our meetings. You may miss up to two classes without penalty. After that, each class missed reduces your final grade five points.

### *Workshop Submission*

The workshop process is central to the course, and your fellow students deserve time to study your work and respond. Each day late may reduce your grade by 5 points.

*Short Exercises.* Each day an exercise is late may reduce your grade one point.

*Written Responses.* Written responses to your colleague's work are due by class time on the day of workshop. Each missing response reduces your grade by one point.

*Participation.* One way to support your participation grade is by asking questions and sharing your thoughts with the class. Other ways of participating include active, attentive listening, contributing to group activities, and talking to me after class or during a conference.

If you know you're going to miss a class, an assignment, or be late with an assignment, get in touch with me ahead of time to ask if it's possible to rescheduling or receive an extension.

### **What You Can Expect from Me**

It's my job to present you with a series of challenges and to support you in your efforts to meet them. I will curate our discussions to make them as productive as possible and give you constructive feedback on your workshop submissions.

### **What I Expect from You**

Be brave. Support each other. Prepare for each meeting and be ready to contribute. Devote time and attention to both your writing and reading. The slow, careful examination of literature is the one true way in which writers learn to write.

During class time, use your laptop or pad only for class work. Respect your fellow students by giving them your full attention when they're speaking.

## **Formatting**

For all your written work, please follow the accepted practice of the creative writing community: double-space, use one-inch margins, a common font such as Times New Roman or Garamond in 12-point font, and number your pages.

## **In Class Writing**

We'll write during class time every day. Be consistent with your method, whether handwritten or digital so that you'll have all your material in one place.

## **A.I.**

Do not use A.I. to complete any of the work for this class. If I believe work has been produced with the help of A.I. or another outside source, I will report it to the Office of Community Standards. My inquiry may include the use of detection software.

## **Honor Code**

Stanford's Honor Code (<https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/policies-guidance/honor-code>) and Fundamental Standard (<https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/policies-guidance/fundamental-standard>) are a part of this course. Please follow the links and read each carefully.

The Honor Code reads in part:

The Honor Code is the university's statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates university expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work. <https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/policies-and-guidance/honor-code>

1. The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:
  1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading.
  2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
2. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
3. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.

#### Violations of the Honor Code

Examples of conduct that have been regarded as being in violation of the Honor Code include:

- Copying from another's examination paper or allowing another to copy from one's own paper
- Unpermitted collaboration
- Plagiarism
- Revising and resubmitting a quiz or exam for regrading, without the instructor's knowledge and consent
- Giving or receiving unpermitted aid on a take-home examination
- Representing as one's own work the work of another
- Giving or receiving aid on an academic assignment under circumstances in which a reasonable person should have known that such aid was not permitted

#### **Course Privacy Statement**

As noted in the University's recording and broadcasting courses policy (<https://library.stanford.edu/using/copyright-reminder/common-situations/recording-broadcasting-courses>), students may not audio or video record class meetings without permission from the instructor (and guest speakers, when applicable). If the instructor grants permission or if the teaching team posts videos themselves, students may keep recordings only for personal use and may not post recordings on the Internet, or otherwise distribute them. These policies protect the privacy rights of instructors and students, and the intellectual property and other rights of the university. Students who need lectures recorded for the purposes of an academic accommodation should contact the Office of Accessible Education (<http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oe>).

## **Students with Documented Disabilities**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: <http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oea> (<http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oea>)).

## **Respect for Diversity**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and situations be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit.

All people have the right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity.

## **English 90 Calendar Summer 2024**

### **Week 1**

Noticing

Tuesday 6/25

Girl, Boy, 6-Word Stories

Thursday 6/27

Trial of a Lifetime, Reunion

(Shitty First Drafts, How to Become a Writer)

### **Week 2**

Shape

Tuesday 7/2

Ex 1 How To Due

Reunion continued. Omakase.

Thursday 7/4 Independence Day: No Class

**Week 3**

Tuesday 7/9

Reading for Discussion: “In the Gloaming,” “The Moths,” “Sonny’s Blues,” “My First Goose”

Thursday 7/11

Ex 2 on Shape Due

Reading for Discussion: “From Longshots to X Rays,” “Hills Like White Elephants,” “A Trifle from Life”

**Week 4**

Point of View and Narrative Distance

Tuesday 7/16

“The Lady with the Dog,” “They Told Us Not to Say This,” “Gold Boy, Emerald Girl”

Thursday 7/18

Ex 3 on Distance Due

**Week 5**

Tuesday 7/23

Lab & Conferences

Thursday 7/25

Lab & Conferences

Practice Workshop

**Week 6**

Tuesday 7/30

1.

2.

Thursday 8/1

3.

4.

**Week 7**

Workshop

Tuesday 8/6

5.

6.

Thursday 8/8

7.

8.

**Week 8**

Workshop

Tuesday 8/13

9.

10.

Thursday 8/15



(<https://www.stanford.edu>)

Overflow if necessary and closing ceremonies

Revision and Reflection due Friday August 23<sup>rd</sup>  
(<https://www.stanford.edu>)

[Stanford Home](#)

(<https://www.stanford.edu>)

[Maps & Directions](#)

(<https://visit.stanford.edu/plan/>)

[Search Stanford](#)

(<https://www.stanford.edu/search/>)

[Emergency Info](#)

(<https://emergency.stanford.edu>)

[Terms of Use](#)

(<https://www.stanford.edu/site/terms/>)

[Privacy](#)

(<https://www.stanford.edu/site/privacy/>)

[Copyright](#)

(<https://uit.stanford.edu/security/copyright-infringement>)

[Trademarks](#)

(<https://adminguide.stanford.edu/chapter-1/subchapter-5/policy-1-5-4>)

[Non-Discrimination](#)

(<http://exploreddegrees.stanford.edu/nonacademicre>)

[Accessibility](#)

(<https://www.stanford.edu/site/accessibility>)

**Return to syllabi search**