



School of English, Journalism  
& European Languages

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## Unit Outline

### HEA203 Writing Short Fiction

Semester 2, 2009—Hobart

<http://www.utas.edu.au/english>

<b>Unit coordinator:</b>	Ms Rosie Dub	
<b>Contact details:</b>	Email:	Rosie.Dub@utas.edu.au
<b>Unit description:</b>	<p>This unit introduces students to the steps involved in producing polished works of short fiction: generating ideas through writing exercises, improving work through redrafting, and refining work through copy-editing. Seminars will focus on aspects of writing craft, while workshops will enable students to receive critical feedback on their own work and develop skills in critiquing the work of their peers.</p>	
<b>Unit aims and objectives:</b>	<p>The objective of this unit is to demystify the process of creative writing by providing students with the tools they need to create polished works of short fiction, as well as competently and confidently edit their own work and the work of others.</p>	

<p><b>Learning outcomes:</b></p>	<p>By the end of this unit, if you have fully engaged with it, you should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have developed your capacity to write a polished short story.</li> <li>2. Be able to demonstrate your understanding of technical devices such as structure, plot, point of view, setting, dialogue and style.</li> <li>3. Have developed skills in constructive criticism for evaluating your own creative writing and the creative writing of others.</li> <li>4. Be able to accept and adopt constructive editorial criticism of your own creative writing.</li> <li>5. Have an understanding of the editorial process and be able to recognise and apply basic proofreading symbols.</li> <li>6. Have an understanding of relevant critical ideas about writing and be able to apply them to your own work.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Required texts:</b></p>	<p>Unit Reader</p> <p>Note: Required texts are stocked by and can be purchased from the Co-op Bookshop online or on campus. The library also holds copies of all required texts on reserve.</p>
<p><b>Recommended texts:</b></p>	<p>Grenville, Kate. <i>The Writing Book</i>. Allen &amp; Unwin.</p>

<b>Timetable:</b>	The timetable for this unit can be viewed online at: <a href="http://student.admin.utas.edu.au/coursesenrolment/timetable/">http://student.admin.utas.edu.au/coursesenrolment/timetable/</a>
<b>Assessment:</b>	Short fiction: 2500 words (50%), essay: 1500 words (25%), critique (15%), participation tasks (10%)

## LECTURE / SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Week	Date	<i>Topic</i>
14	Fri Jul 17	<p><b>Introductory Class</b></p> <p>11-11.50 am, SB Unicentre 103 Flex</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>'Negotiating With the Dead', by Margaret Atwood</p> <p>'Why I Write', by George Orwell</p> <p>'On Writing', by Raymond Carver</p> <p>'Keeping a Writer's Journal', by Jenny Newman</p> <p>'Overcoming Writing Blocks', by Tristine Rainer</p> <p>NOTE: Please read all the short stories at the back of the unit reader as early as possible as they will be referred to throughout the seminars.</p>
15	Fri Jul 24	<p><b>Seminar One: The Art of Writing</b></p> <p>Getting Started. Where ideas come from, how to develop them and how to find your themes.</p> <p>9am-12.50pm, SB CompInfoSys216</p> <p>2.10-6pm, SB Geo500</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>'Source of Inspiration', by Carmel Bird</p> <p>'Identifying Your Defining Stories', by Daniel Taylor</p> <p>'The Swimmer' and 'Autobiography of a Story', by Kevin Brophy</p> <p>'Impotence', by Rosie Waitt</p>

16	Fri Jul 31	<p><b>Seminar Two: The Craft of Writing</b></p> <p>Characterisation, dialogue, point of view and plot</p> <p>9am-12.50pm, SB CompInfoSys216</p> <p>2.10-6pm, SB Geo500</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>'Telling Talk', by Anne Bernays and Pamela Painter</p> <p>'Easy Beats', by Renni Browne and Dave King</p> <p>'On Writing', by Stephen King</p>
17	Fri Aug 7	<p><b>Seminar Three: The Craft of Writing</b></p> <p>Plot: beginnings, middles and endings</p> <p>Structure, setting and style</p> <p>9am-12.50pm, SB CompInfoSys216</p> <p>2.10-6pm, SB Geo500</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>'Bird by Bird', (Plot) by Anne Lamott</p> <p>'Before You Start', by Gary Disher</p> <p>'A for Alive, D for Dead', by Carmel Bird</p>
18		Self-directed learning – writing short story
19		Self-directed learning – writing short story
	Fri Aug 21	<b>Draft Short Story Due</b>

20	<p>Thu Aug 27</p> <p>Fri Aug 28</p>	<p><b>Workshop One</b></p> <p>2.10-4pm, SB.CompInfoSys216</p> <p>9-10.50am, SB.Socsci379</p> <p>11am-12.50pm, SB.Socsci379</p> <p>2.10-4pm, SB.Socsci313</p> <p><b>Readings:</b></p> <p>'Writing Together: Groups and Workshops', by Heather Leach</p> <p>'Looking Your Words in the Face: Reflection', by Robert Graham and Heather Leach</p> <p>'Editing and Rewriting', by Liz Cashdan, Mary Luckhurst and John Singleton</p>
<p><b>Mid-semester break: 31 Aug – 6 Sep 2009</b></p>		
21	<p>Thu Sep 10</p> <p>Fri Sep 11</p>	<p><b>Workshop Two</b></p> <p>2.10-4pm, SB.CompInfoSys216</p> <p>9-10.50am, SB.Socsci379</p> <p>11am-12.50pm, SB.Socsci379</p> <p>2.10-4pm, SB.Socsci313</p>
	<p><b>Mon Sep 14</b></p>	<p><b>Essay Due</b></p>
22	<p>Thu Sep 17</p> <p>Fri Sep 18</p>	<p><b>Workshop Three</b></p> <p>2.10-4pm, SB.CompInfoSys216</p> <p>9-10.50am, SB.Socsci379</p> <p>11am-12.50pm, SB.Socsci379</p> <p>2.10-4pm, SB.Socsci313</p>

23	Thu Sep 24 Fri Sep 25	<b>Workshop Four</b> 2.10-4pm, SB.CompInfoSys216 9-10.50am, SB.Socsci379 11am-12.50pm, SB.Socsci379 2.10-4pm, SB.Socsci313
24	Thu Oct 1 Fri Oct 2	<b>Workshop Five</b> 2.10-4pm, SB.CompInfoSys216 9-10.50am, SB.Socsci379 11am-12.50pm, SB.Socsci379 2.10-4pm, SB.Socsci313
25	Thu Oct 8 Fri Oct 9	<b>Workshop Six</b> 2.10-4pm, SB.CompInfoSys216 9-10.50am, SB.Socsci379 11am-12.50pm, SB.Socsci379 2.10-4pm, SB.Socsci379
26		Self-directed learning – editing short story
<b>Study week: 19 – 23 Oct 2009</b>		
<b>Exam period: 24 Oct – 10 Nov 2009</b>		

## ASSESSMENT

Task	Due	Percentage
<b>Short Fiction: First draft</b> <b>Short Fiction: Completed</b>	Fri Aug 21 Mon Oct 27	50%
<b>Essay</b>	Mon Sep 14	25%
<b>Critique</b> – you will be assigned a due date which will be on:	Fri of Week 21, 22, 23, 24 or 25	15%
<b>Participation</b> – you will be assessed on your participation in seminar activities and workshops		10%

<b>Assessment task 1—Essay</b>	
<b>Task description</b>	<p><b>Analysis of a short story</b></p> <p>Select and summarise one of the short stories in the back of the Unit Reader.</p> <p>'The Tell-Tale Heart', by Edgar Allan Poe</p> <p>'The Pencil', by Raymond Chandler</p> <p>'Class of '73', by Kathryn Lomer</p> <p>'Learning to Swim', by Graham Swift</p> <p>'Charlene and Trudi Go Shopping', by Kate Atkinson</p> <p>'Postcards from Surfers', by Helen Garner</p> <p>'A Letter to Our Son', by Peter Carey</p>

	<p>'Walker Brothers Cowboy', by Alice Munro</p> <p>'Aguantando', by Junot Diaz</p> <p>'The Kangaroo', 'Zein's Way' and 'The Deferred Death of Fuad', by Eva Sallis</p> <p>When you have chosen a story, analyse its themes, structure and technical devices, such as characterisation, setting, point of view and style. You may also explore the story's context in relation to its time, its place in the author's works and/or its autobiographical elements. Include a definition of the short story and argue whether or not your chosen story fits into this formula. Use secondary sources (not more than one third from internet sources).</p>
<p><b>Task length</b></p>	<p>1500 words</p>
<p><b>Links to learning outcomes</b></p>	<p>This assignment will help you to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate your understanding of technical devices such as structure, plot, point of view, setting, dialogue and style.</li> <li>2. Develop skills in constructive criticism for evaluating your own creative writing and the creative writing of others.</li> <li>3. Develop an understanding of relevant critical ideas about writing and be able to apply them to your own work.</li> </ol>

<b>Assessment criteria</b>	You will be marked on the coherent flow of your argument, as well as your theoretical and technical understanding of the short story. Marks will also be awarded for the quality and accuracy of your writing, your use of secondary sources and your referencing.
<b>Submission instructions</b>	Hand in one copy with signed coversheet to the School Office before 4pm on the due date.

<b>Assessment task 2—Critique</b>	
<b>Task description</b>	In this assignment you will read to the workshop a written critique of the draft short story of one of your classmates. The critique will be a reading and evaluation of the draft work, offering constructive criticism to the author.
<b>Task length</b>	700 words
<b>Links to learning outcomes</b>	This assignment will help you to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop your capacity to write a polished short story.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate your understanding of technical devices such as structure, plot, point of view, setting, dialogue and style.</li> <li>3. Develop skills in constructive criticism for evaluating your own creative writing and the creative writing of others.</li> </ol>

	4. Accept and adopt constructive editorial criticism of your own creative writing.
<b>Assessment criteria</b>	You will be marked on your engagement with the draft story, your understanding of the technical devices discussed during seminars, such as structure, resolution, language, style, characterisation, point of view and dialogue. Marks will also be awarded for your written presentation and your diplomacy.
<b>Submission instructions</b>	During the workshop you will provide one copy of the critique to your tutor and one copy to the author of the story. Wherever possible the critique will be returned in class.

<b>Assessment task 3—Short Story</b>	
<b>Task description</b>	<p><b>Draft Short Story.</b> This is an early draft of the short story you will submit at the conclusion of the unit.</p> <p><b>Completed Short Story.</b> This is a polished version of the draft submitted in Week 19.</p>
<b>Task length</b>	2500 words
<b>Links to learning outcomes</b>	<p>This assignment will help you to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop your capacity to write a polished short story.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Demonstrate your understanding of technical devices, such as structure, plot, point of view, setting, dialogue and style.</li> <li>3. Develop skills in constructive criticism for evaluating your own creative writing and the creative writing of others.</li> <li>4. Accept and adopt constructive editorial criticism of your own creative writing.</li> <li>5. Have an understanding of the editorial process and be able to recognise and apply basic proofreading symbols.</li> <li>6. Have an understanding of relevant critical ideas about writing and be able to apply them to your work.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Assessment criteria</b></p>	<p><b>Draft Short Story</b></p> <p>This draft will not be marked, however it will be read and workshopped by your tutor and all the members of your workshop (hence the 20 copies). It will also be critiqued and edited by one of your peers. If the draft work is handed in late, the usual penalties will apply and will be subtracted from your mark for the completed work. It is important that everyone hands in their work on time so that it can be easily distributed to all other workshop members. Remember, someone else will have to critique and edit your work and they (and you) will be disadvantaged if your work is handed in late.</p>

	<p><b>Completed Short Story</b></p> <p>You will be marked on creativity, technique, use of language, understanding of the short story, your editing and presentation.</p>
<b>Submission instructions</b>	<p>The <b>First Draft</b> is due on Friday Aug 21. Please submit 20 copies (typed, 1.5 or double spaced, page numbered, double sided and stapled) to the School Office by 4pm on the due date. Place the copies in a large envelope and staple a signed coversheet to the envelope.</p> <p>The <b>Final Draft</b> is due on Monday Oct 27. Hand in one copy with signed coversheet to the School Office before 4pm.</p>

## School of English, Journalism and European Languages

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

#### Submission of assignments

Students are required to submit a signed assignment cover sheet with every assignment. The cover sheet includes a declaration that all material submitted is your own work except where there is clear acknowledgement or reference to the work of others. Assignment cover sheets are available from the School office or the School website. **Assignments submitted without a completed, signed cover sheet will not be marked.** Students who submit assignments without a signed cover sheet will be contacted once via their UTAS email address; in such instances the cover sheet should be completed within two weeks of the assignment due date.

Assignments must be submitted in hard copy (not by email) via the assignment slot at the School office. If there are additional submission requirements (eg the use of Turnitin) this will be specified in your unit outline. Students are required to keep copies of all submitted assignments.

#### Late assignments

##### Undergraduate units (100, 200 and 300 level)

Late submissions will be penalised as follows: 5% of the available marks for the first day, and then 2% per working day thereafter.

##### Honours and postgraduate coursework units (400, 500 and 600 level)

Late submissions will be penalised as follows: 10% of the available marks per day for the first five (5) working days and 50% on the following day.

##### Honours and postgraduate research project units (400 and 700 level)

Honours and postgraduate research project submission due dates are treated as the equivalent of exam dates and therefore, late submissions will not be accepted.

**Late work will be accepted without penalty if accompanied by a medical certificate for the relevant period or equivalent documentation in the case of a serious non-medical reason but you must contact the unit coordinator prior to the assignment due date.**

#### Return of marked assignments

Assignments submitted on time will be returned within three weeks of the due date; once on time assignments have been returned no further late assignments will be accepted. All marked assignments will be returned in tutorials unless otherwise advised. In some cases, particularly where an assignment is the final, exam equivalent piece of assessment, the marked assignment may not be returned until after final unit results have been released.

## University statement on plagiarism and academic integrity

**"Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.academicintegrity.utas.edu.au/>. The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>"

**The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.**

## Referencing

The English, French and German disciplines and the Screen Studies major use MLA Style. The Journalism, Media and Communications discipline uses the Harvard style of referencing. For more information about referencing, and brief introductory guides for each of these styles, please refer to: <http://www.utas.edu.au/ejel/referencing.html>

## Marking scale

### Undergraduate and Postgraduate Coursework units

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- High Distinction (HD)—80-100%
- Distinction (DN)—70-79%
- Pass (PP)—50-59%
- Credit (CR)—60-69%
- Fail (NN)—0-49%

### Honours

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- First Class (HF)—80-100%
- Second Class upper division (HU)—70-79%
- Second Class lower division (HL)—60-69%
- Third Class (HT)—50-59%
- Fail (HN)—0-49%

All marks are subject to moderation.

### **Equipment loans**

Please note that some units taught in the school may require access to sound and/or video recording equipment. Although access to equipment may be provided during tutorials, access to equipment outside of tutorials is not guaranteed. Where the loan of equipment is possible students will be required to sign and agree to the terms and conditions of the loan, including the penalties for late return, as presented at the time of the loan.

### **Difficulties with your studies**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should raise these with your lecturer and/or Student Services staff as soon as possible. Please see <http://www.studentservices.utas.edu.au> for more information about the support services available to students.

### **IT support**

MyLO: <http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/>

IT help desk: <http://www.utas.edu.au/service desk/student/index.html>