COURSE INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>CODE &amp; SECTION</th>
<th>LENGTH OF COURSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story-A-Day: A Generative Practice in Flash Fiction</td>
<td>WRIT32425 20A1</td>
<td>Four Weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE SCHEDULE</th>
<th>CLASS LOCATION</th>
<th>INSTRUCTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAYS: Tuesdays, 10/27-11/17</td>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Stephanie Friedman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMES: 6-8:30pm</td>
<td></td>
<td>PHONE: 773-702-5012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EMAIL: <a href="mailto:sfriedmn@uchicago.edu">sfriedmn@uchicago.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GRAHAM SCHOOL INFORMATION

PHONE: 773.702.1722
WEBSITE: https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this generative workshop, you will receive a daily prompt that you will use to write a new flash fiction piece (under 750 words), except on the days when we meet in class to discuss one of your stories from the preceding week, and explore how to develop your own writing practice as well as your craft knowledge. Once the course is over, you will have experienced the discipline of writing every day, and also have a number of stories that you can revisit and revise in the months to come.

To get the most out of this course, follow these three cardinal rules:

- **Be disciplined.**

  You must make a commitment to yourself and to your writing, every single day. Don’t leave your writing time to chance: schedule it like you would an important meeting or other responsibility. Take a hard look at your daily schedule. Think about what you could give up for a few weeks. Social media? Television programs? Other commitments? You could carve out one solid block of time or you could carve out shorter time periods here and there (for example, you could think about the prompt in the morning over breakfast and during your commute, start writing during your lunch hour, and then finish your draft before you go to sleep at night). However you can make the time, do it. All the prompts and advice in the world won’t make a bit of difference if you don’t write every day.

- **Be playful.**

  In addition to providing you with discipline and structure, these few weeks should encourage you to follow your impulses wherever they may lead. Flash fiction requires the discipline of compression, but it also encourages experimentation. Let go of your preconceptions about what a story is “supposed” to be. Have fun. Surprise yourself. Let the work that you write over the next few weeks knock you off-kilter in ways that will spur your creativity.
• Be forgiving.

You are writing a new story draft every day. Don’t expect perfection. You are aiming for a complete draft, not a final, polished one. Sometimes a story will fall into your lap during this process. Mostly, however, they won’t, and don’t expect them to. Sometimes you will find the writing to be a hard slog and the draft you are working on to be something with nothing to recommend it other than that you can say that you wrote a complete story draft for that day. Remember that this, in itself, is a good thing. Just do the best you can and keep going, because tomorrow will be different.

HOW THE COURSE WORKS
• You receive a daily prompt to use as a springboard for your writing the next day.
• You make the time to write a complete story draft, including a title, every day (except the day we have class, when you will have time to write in class). Try for pieces that are usually no more than 500 words long, although don’t stress if you sometimes get into the 750 or even 1000-word range.
• If you have signed up to have work discussed in class that week, pick one of your story drafts from the preceding week that you would like to have discussed in workshop and post it to our course site on Canvas (in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format) by noon on the Sunday before your work will be discussed.
• Post your story drafts from the preceding week as one document to Canvas (.doc, .docx, or .pdf), with the story you want me to focus on for comments placed first. If you have work discussed in class, that will be the story which receives detailed comments for the week.
• All submitted story drafts should be typed, double-spaced, in 10 or 12-point font with one-inch margins. Your name should appear on every page of each draft, as should page numbers.

A NOTE ABOUT PROMPTS
The prompts will vary in type, from the very open-ended to the very directed, involving everything from memories, sensory perception, word play, and more. They are meant to help you get past the “what will I write about” phase and proceed directly to the “now I am writing” phase, and, in their variety, might help you learn more about what sort of food your muse likes best. Don’t treat the prompts like an assignment, however. The assignment is to write a complete story draft every day. Interpret the prompts as strictly or loosely as you find gets you to a story on that particular day, or even disregard a prompt altogether if you already have your own story idea to develop. If you really like a particular prompt and can get more than one story out of it, that’s fine too. In short, the prompts are a means, not an end.

A NOTE ABOUT WORKSHOP DISCUSSION
Because everyone is turning out first drafts on a daily basis in this course, our workshop discussion won’t be quite as pointed as it would be in other courses. We will spend less time going over each story, and will focus on the strengths that can be built upon in revision. This doesn’t mean you can’t bring up some aspect of the story that seems to be working at cross-purposes to the rest of the story – indeed, this sort of information is crucial to a writer of an early draft. What it does mean is that, rather than picking each story draft apart to consider the soundness of each component, we will instead be stepping back from the whole and considering what this draft wants to be when it grows up, and how it might get there.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 – January 8
Introductions
Overview of Course Goals and Structure
In-Class Exercise: Rummage Sale

Week 2 – January 15
Process Discussion
Workshop Discussion for Group A
The Art of Compression and Ambiguity (discussion of Grace Paley, “Mother” and Jamaica Kincaid, “Girl”)
In-Class Exercise: Getting to the Heart of a Half-Known World

Week 3 – January 22
Process Discussion
Workshop Discussion for Group B
Experimenting with Form and Fabulism (discussion of T.C. Boyle’s “The Hit Man” and Jack Matthews, “A Questionnaire for Rudolph Gordon”)
In-Class Exercise: A Questionnaire for King Kong

Week 4 – January 29
Process Discussion
Workshop Discussion for Group C
After the Challenge, Then What?
In-Class Exercise: Tapping for Load-Bearing Sentences (Bring one unsuccessful short short to class.)

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE
As we may be addressing controversial topics in our class discussions, we expect students to be respectful and considerate of others.

DISABILITY INFORMATION
The Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act (see http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm), with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (see http://www.dol.gov/oaasam/regs/statutes/sec504.htm), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (see http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html) and will provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities covered by law. If you have a disability for which you may require accommodations, please contact Charnessa Warren, Director of Student Disability Services, at 773.702.6000 or charnessa@uchicago.edu in advance of the first class meeting.

This syllabus is a summary of course objectives and content, not a contract. All information in this syllabus is subject to change, with sufficient advance notice provided by the instructor.