ENGL 318/ROST 390: The Writing of Fiction: Writing Rome
John Felice Rome Center
Spring 2023
Tuesdays | 9:00-12:00pm
Classroom: TBA & On Site
Prof. Elizabeth Geoghegan
Email: egeoghegan@luc.edu
Office Hours: Tues 12-1pm, by appointment

Course Description

This On-Site, Writing Intensive, Core Course will discuss techniques of fiction writing and offer guidance in generating original fiction that utilizes the city of Rome as inspiration. Students will examine works of literature that reflect the city’s vast influence on Western creativity and culture throughout the ages while simultaneously navigating the Eternal City itself. Students are encouraged to look beyond the veneer of the Rome depicted in travel guides and observe the ways that the Mediterranean city, so thoroughly rooted in history and the concept of “empire”, struggles with contemporary European issues such as immigration and social justice. On site classes take place amidst the quintessential intersection of the ancient, medieval, and modern world, inviting students to respond to, participate in, problematize, and incorporate Rome’s layered history and influence—as well as their own experience of it—into their prose. Through the studied practice of descriptive writing and the examination of the Rome setting as a vital literary component, students will produce their own fictional interpretations of the Eternal City. (Note: English 318 is an elective for non-English majors and English majors not in the CW Concentration & a requirement for English majors in the CW Concentration.)

Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the technical vocabulary and critical skills necessary for discussing, analyzing and formulating arguments about fiction writing, and will produce a portfolio of their own original fiction. Through experiential learning, students will gain a deeper understanding of the multidimensional and ongoing influence of the city of Rome upon Western culture, history, art, and ideas and, in particular, literature and literary fiction

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Area(s) satisfied:</th>
<th>Artistic Knowledge</th>
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<tr>
<td>Skill(s) Developed:</td>
<td>Critical Thinking &amp; Dispositions, Writing</td>
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Required Text / Materials

- Writing Fiction: The Practical Guide from New York’s Acclaimed Creative Writing School
  Bloomsbury USA, ISBN 1582343306 (or digital version)
- The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone, Tennessee Williams
  New Directions, ISBN 9780812121494 or digital version
- Assigned short fiction readings all posted on Sakai

Attendance Policy (please note that course attendance is based on prompt class attendance, preparation and active participation in class discussions). In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets _once_a week, thus a total of _one_ (1) unexcused absence(s) will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a lowering of your final grade. _Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit.” The collective health of the JFRC is everyone’s responsibility. DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IF YOU ARE ILL.
Assessment Components

10% Participation / Preparedness
10% Peer Reviews for Workshops (Conscientiousness of editing classmates' work)
20% Homework & Presentations (Reader Responses & other assignments uploaded to SAKAI)
60% Final Portfolio*

* Typically the Final Portfolio contains your new & revised work, including the Roman Postcard (15%) Roman Snapshot (15%), Roman Story (15%), and the Roman Vignette (15%) NB: this may vary depending on unforeseen changes and limitations to our schedule. The Portfolio also contains unrevised work, such as: in-class & on-site writing, reader response papers, peer reviews of story drafts, and a process analysis for all revised work.

LUC Grading Chart

94-100: A
90-93: A-
87-89: B+
84-86: B
80-83: B-
77-79: C+
74-76: C
70-73: C-
67-69: D+
60-66: D
59 or lower: F

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml. You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reason; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**NB**: This is a sample schedule and is subject to change due to the availability of scheduled museum and other unforeseen interruptions. The official schedule will be distributed on in class and made available on Sakai.

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Weekly Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date &amp; Meeting Point</strong></td>
<td>Where indicated, assignments are to be uploaded to Sakai no later than 9am on class meeting days. Late assignments will not be accepted. Short stories are available on Sakai.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 1 - Jan. 17</strong></td>
<td>Class Intro: Descriptive writing &amp; learning to ‘read’ stories &amp; exploring “Micro-fiction”</td>
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<td>Meeting Point: JFRC</td>
<td><strong>Homework:</strong> Read Ch. 1 Fiction &amp; 2 Character (WF) &amp; Read “Roman Fever” (Wharton) &amp; “Twin Beds in Rome” (Updike); be prepared to discuss. Please bring a copy to class. <strong>Reader Response 1</strong> Focusing on “characterization”, write a 1-2 (paragraph) response for EACH story using Ch. 2 as your guide. Strive to analyze the stories from a writer’s POV.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 2 - Jan. 24</strong></td>
<td><strong>Homework:</strong> Read Ch. 3 Plot &amp; Ch. 5 Description (WF), and “Roma!” (Oates) + “be prepared to discuss. Consider how the setting (time frame, etc.) might influence the plot and descriptions in the story. Consider whether the stories are descriptive or not and how the two different writers approach or employ both plot and description.</td>
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<td>Meeting Point: Antico Caffe del Teatro Marcello Via di Teatro Marcello, 42</td>
<td><strong>SNAPSHOT DUE</strong></td>
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<td>**Week 3</td>
<td>Jan 31**</td>
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<td>Meeting Point: Bar Gusto Massimo</td>
<td>**Week 4</td>
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<td><strong>SNAPSHOT DUE</strong></td>
<td><strong>Homework:</strong> Peer Reviews of Snapshots (Critique groups will be assigned + see guidelines)</td>
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<td>Meeting Point: JFRC + Workshop for Snapshots</td>
<td>**Week 5</td>
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<td><strong>Homework:</strong> Ch. 4 POV, Ch. 8 Voice &amp; then the three interlocking stories by Jhumpa Lahiri in the following order 1) “Once in a Lifetime” + 2) “Year’s End” + 3. “Going Ashore” (Lahiri, Sakai) and be prepared to discuss in class. <strong>Reader Response 2:</strong> Write a 3-page response to the stories discussing the role of voice and point-of-view. The stories operate as a novella, told from various perspectives, so please reference all three even though the early ones only reference Rome casually. Upload to Sakai. No late papers accepted. “The Benefit of the Doubt” (Wolf)</td>
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<td>Meeting Point: Tiber Island: Caffe Tiberino, Via Ponte Quattro Capi 17</td>
<td><strong>NB:</strong> Print &amp; bring “Hills Like White Elephants” (Hemingway, Sakai) with you to class.</td>
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| Week 6 | Feb. 21 | **Meeting Point:** Pepy’s Bar, Piazza Barberini 53, 00187 Roma (Metro A to Barberini)  
Museum visit: Palazzo Barberini  
**Homework:** Read Ch. 6 Dialogue & Ch. 7 Setting & Pacing and “Roman Romance” (Marciano) & Chanel” (Marciano)  
**(Reader Response 3:** Write a 2-page reader comparison of the stories, exploring the way the author uses the Roman setting, dialogue and pacing in the two stories, as well as expressing why you prefer her technique in one vs. the other. (Due on Sakai by class time). |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 7 | Feb. 28 | **Meeting Point:** Friends Caffé,  
Via delle Coppelle 34 – 00186 Roma  
https://goo.gl/maps/SwjLAtdVn5sR2  
**Homework:** ROMAN STORIES DUE (See guidelines)  
**SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS** |
| Week 8 | Mar. 14 | **Meeting Point:** JFRC  
Workshop Group 1: TBA  
**Homework:** Group 1 Story Critiques  
See guidelines for preparing critiques for the class & your critique group |
| Week 9 | Mar. 21 | **Meeting Point:** JFRC  
Workshop Group 2: TBA  
**Homework:** Group 2 Story Critiques  
See guidelines for preparing critiques for the class & your critique group |
| Week 10 | Mar. 28 | **Meeting Point:** Piazza de Spagna 26  
https://goo.gl/maps/QjCDMQnArBAwtxx5  
Museum Visit to Keats-Shelley House  
**Homework** Read Ch. 9 Theme & *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* (Williams); be prepared to discuss it. Please bring book to class.  
**(Reader Response 3:** Discuss a key theme contained within Williams’s novella & analyze how the author’s style helps exemplify that theme: 3-pages. Sakai. |
| Week 11 | April 4 | **Meeting Point:** Non-Catholic Cemetery; OUTSIDE entrance, Via Caio Cestio, 6,  
POSTCARDS DUE + Selected Poem due (bring 1 copy to present on site)  
**Homework** On your own time, research John Keats, Percy Bysshe Shelley or Gregory Corso & read a few poems by each, then select a poem to share in class.  
**Microfiction 3 “Postcard” Due. See guidelines.** |
| Week 12 | April 11 | **Meeting Point:** Piazza Trilussa  
Visit to Orto Botanico & Villa Farnesina  
**Read:** Ch. 10 Revision (WF) + “Boy in Rome” (Cheever) & “Behold the Key” (Malamud)  
**Homework:** (Presented in Class) Write a List of 5 things you hate about Rome & 5 things you love about Rome. Bring copy to class & include in portfolio. |
| Week 13 | April 18 | **Meeting Point:** Castel Sant’Angelo,  
Lungotevere Castello 50  
Museum Visit: Castel Sant'Angelo  
https://goo.gl/maps/SxfkWD6Zekk  
**Homework:** (Presented in Class) Write a List of 5 things you hate about Rome & 5 things you love about Rome. Bring copy to class & include in portfolio. |
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<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Exam date TBA</th>
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| PORTFOLIOS DUE | Please submit electronically via Sakai (NO EXAM) |

| Microfictions Due | (to be presented in class and included in portfolio) & Portfolios due; Guidelines on SAKAI. No late portfolios. No exceptions. |

| Extra Credit Reader Response | for Portfolios. Read “La Ragazza” by Andrea Lee & write a 2-3 pp. response exploring her portrayal of the contemporary issues of immigration, cultural bias and/or gender bias. |

| WRITING ROME, READING ROMA: Class reading on Arts Night |

| NB: • The Writing Rome, Reading Roma (Class Reading) will take place during ARTS NIGHT |