

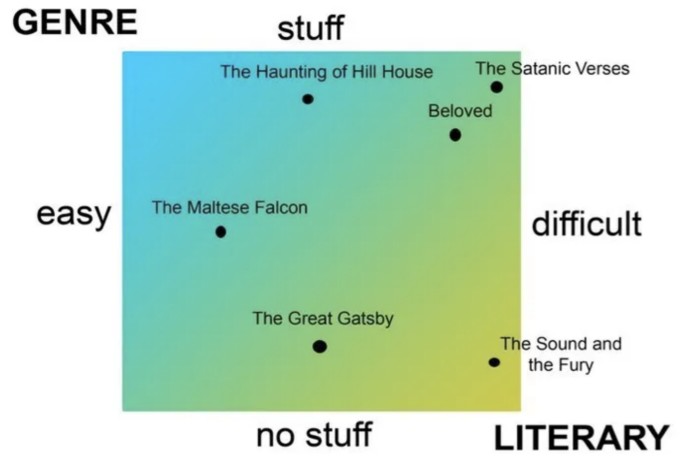
# English 20W: Introduction to Creative Writing

## Horror, Mystery, Romance: Genre Fiction as an Introduction to Prose

**Instructor:** Anadaios “Ana” Box  
(they/them), genre fiction defender

**Class:** MW 2-3:50 P.M., Moore 1003

**Office hours:** Tuesday, on Zoom,  
4:30-5:30 PM;  
Wednesday, on Zoom or in person at  
Kaplan A97, 12:30-1:30 PM.  
sign up for an appointment [here](#)  
additional meetings always available –  
just email me!



## COURSE DESCRIPTION

English 20W as a course is a broad introduction to all forms of creative writing. Students will be expected to engage with weekly readings, prepare and workshop small weekly pieces, and submit a final portfolio with their work throughout the quarter. This particular class, though, narrows the study of “creative writing” down to fiction, and especially prose fiction.

This quarter, you can write whatever you’d like – science fiction stories, memoirs, fanfiction, anything. Our readings, however, will be taken mainly from three genres: horror, mystery, and romance. Genres such as these have something of a bad reputation that’s contrasted to “literary fiction” – they are considered too pulpy, too popular, too extreme. But these qualities make for exceptional models of fiction writing. By studying their over-the-top plots, characters, and emotions, we can see clearly the ways that fiction works and how these elements of storytelling come together.

Each week, we'll do a combination of reading, writing, and discussion. We'll discuss works of genre fiction from various authors, in various forms: short stories, novels, movies, television episodes, even stories written for social media websites like YouTube and Reddit. On Mondays, we'll discuss a writing concept in class, doing exercises to help us understand it. On Wednesdays, we'll workshop writing in groups using previous lessons to give feedback. By the end of the quarter, I hope that you (and I!) will become more confident in your writing, more assured in your knowledge of fiction, and more comfortable with sharing your work, at least in small groups.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

They're all on Bruinlearn or course reserves! You don't need to buy anything for this class. :)

## **GRADES**

This class will be graded non-traditionally with a system called "contract grading" ([I use a modified version of Asao B. Inoue's](#)). Everyone in the class starts with an A. You'll keep that A if you do the assignments I outline below. I made this decision for a simple reason: I don't want you to focus on your final grade. I want you to focus on developing your creative writing skills at your own pace, in your own messy and individual way.

### [Feedback](#)

Just because you won't have grades doesn't mean you won't receive feedback. You'll receive comments from your peers weekly in your small feedback groups, and I'll write extensive feedback on your final portfolio. As for weekly assignments, I'll read each of them happily – but I will only give feedback if asked for, and only via office hours/meetings or voice recording. This is for one main reason: the weekly assignments are works-in-progress, and don't always need extensive written commentary. If you need or want my help with a piece, though, I'll be glad to talk about it with you.

### [Assignments](#)

To keep that "A" I mentioned above, you'll do the following things:

- Write a short creative work (aim for around 200-500 words) with a prompt decided upon by the class the previous week (seven of these total). This prompt will respond either to the readings of the week or to the element of storytelling we've been focusing on. More details on Bruinlearn and individual due dates listed below.
- Do the readings. If you can't, at least Google them or something. But do the readings.
- Read your group members' work and be prepared to give them feedback.
- Show up most of the time and talk in class at least some of the time. If you're uncomfortable speaking in front of the class, try to speak in your groups or show up to office hours.
- **Practice compassion.** In this class, we will be discussing sensitive topics, which I will provide content warnings for before class. Please be mindful of the experiences of your classmates, and approach others' comments with curiosity. In order to cultivate a learning environment that is both kind and productive, disrespectful or offensive behavior will not be tolerated. Intellectual disagreements can lead to generative discussions and analysis; personal attacks and careless comments only lead to harm. This goes double for giving feedback and discussing writing – your criticisms can (**and will**) be kind and constructive.
- Complete the final portfolio, composed of several short works or one extended work. I will release more details around week 6, and we'll discuss the assignment extensively in class.

If you fail to complete any of these assignments or turn them in more than a day late without talking to me, your grade will go down. Please see the table below for an explanation of how that system works. The number in each cell notes how many of something you are allowed to have before your grade goes down. For example, if you have no incomplete or missing assignments but 2 late assignments, you keep your A, as "A" grades include 3 late assignments. However, if you have one incomplete assignment in that formulation, your grade will go down to an A-. If you have one missed assignment and an incomplete, you will have a B+. Each column that gets "maxed out" (i.e., you go over your "allowance") is a half-step down for your grade.

Grade	Incompletes (not resubmitted)	Late assignments <b>(Late = by more than one day)</b>	Missed assignments
A	0	3	0
B	1	4	0
C	2	5	1
D	3	6	2
E	5	7	3

Extra credit is up to my discretion, but you can always ask me for ways to improve your grade.

## OTHER POLICIES

### Attendance

I don't differentiate between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. If you need to miss class, miss class – we'll miss you, but I understand that life happens. However, be wary of missing writing workshops, as your groups' feedback is essential for completing your final portfolio. Please feel free to make an appointment with me to make up that live and in person feedback. Also, if you need to miss multiple classes due to illness or other roadblocks, let me know.

### Email

Please feel free to email me with questions on the readings or with any writing questions. Generally, I respond within 24 hours on weekdays. I also have chronic night owl disease and may respond to emails later in the day. I will try to respond on weekends, but your mileage may vary.

### Office hours

I hold my office hours twice a week (Tuesday 4:30-5:30, Zoom only; Wednesday 12:30-1:30, both) in Kaplan A97 or on Zoom. Please stop by for any reason. If you need to come at a different time, shoot me an email and we can schedule something. I also ask

that you sign-up ahead of time using [this link](#). Walk-ins are welcome, but if you need feedback on a piece, it'll help me to prepare notes ahead of time.

### Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

Please take two minutes to review the UCLA Library's guide to plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism (i.e. failing to cite sources, words, or ideas that are not your own) will result in a zero on the assignment, a failing grade in my class, and will also be reported to the Dean of Students. More information can be found on the [Dean of Students' website](#). If you're ever unsure if you've cited something correctly, please take a minute to review the links above; if those don't answer your question, please email me and I will be happy to clarify.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Please read assignments in preparation for the day they are listed! All readings are posted on Bruinlearn under their respective modules.

### Week One: Introductions

10/2: No reading — syllabus day  
10/4: "Romance, Novelist," Teresa Milbrodt  
\*Prompt 1 due 10/8

### Week Two: World

10/9: "I Dress My Lover In Yellow," A.C. Wise  
10/11: "San Junipero," *Black Mirror*  
-Workshop for Prompt 1  
\*Prompt 2 due 10/15

### Week Three: Character

10/16: "Flowerwalker," Stephen Graham Jones  
10/18: *Knives Out* dir. Rian Johnson (2019)  
-Workshop for Prompt 2  
\*Prompt 3 due 10/22

### Week Four: Perspective

10/23: Bolu Babalola — story TBA  
10/25: "The Infamous Bengal Ming," Rajesh Parameswaran  
-Workshop for Prompt 3  
\*Prompt 4 due 10/29

### **Halloween 5: Plot and Pacing**

10/30: *Scream* dir. Wes Craven (1996)

11/1: “Miss Marple Tells A Story,” Agatha Christie; “The Stalker in the Attic,” Edogawa Ranpo

-Workshop for Prompt 4

\*Prompt 5 due 11/5

### **Week 6: Conflict**

11/6: Eric LaRocca — story TBA

11/8: *Hereditary* dir. Ari Aster (2018)

-Workshop for Prompt 5

\*Prompt 6 due 11/12

### **Week 7: Sympathy**

11/13: “Legacy of Salt,” Silvia Moreno-Garcia

11/15: *Bones and All* dir. Luca Guadagnino (2022)

-Workshop for Prompt 6

\*Prompt 7 due 11/19

### **Week 8: Revision**

11/20: *Penpal*

11/22: **NO CLASS**

\*No assignments due

### **Week 9: Style**

11/27: *Penpal*

11/29: *Penpal*

-Workshop for Prompt 7

\*No assignments due

### **Week 10: Form**

12/4: *Penpal*

12/6: Internet fiction anthology — see Bruinlearn modules

\*No assignments due

### **Finals week**

12/15: portfolio due by midnight

## **Campus Resources**

### **Undergraduate Writing Center**

For help at any stage of the writing process, please make an appointment with the Undergraduate Writing Center. Please also take a look at their resources for students!

### **Accommodations: Center for Accessible Education**

To request accommodations for any suspected or documented disabilities, please contact the Center for Accessible Education as soon as possible. I cannot make any accommodations myself, and accommodations cannot be applied retroactively. Their website lists resources and services provided, and they can be contacted [via this form](#).

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

Please make sure that you're taking care of your mental, emotional, and physical health throughout the quarter. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is a great resource that you can use at any time (not just in an emergency)! If at anytime you feel that you might benefit from psychological services, please visit <http://www.counseling.ucla.edu/> for more information.

### **CARE at UCLA (Sexual and Gender-Based Violence)**

<https://careprogram.ucla.edu>

Telephone: (310) 206-2465

Email a CARE Advocate: [advocate@careprogram.ucla.edu](mailto:advocate@careprogram.ucla.edu)

Email CARE Admin: [admin@careprogram.ucla.edu](mailto:admin@careprogram.ucla.edu)

### **Community Programs Office (CPO)**

The Community Programs Office is another great resource. More information about the resources and services they offer can be found here: <http://www.cpo.ucla.edu/cpo/>

### **Economic Crisis Response**

<https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu>

Telephone: (310) 206-1189

Email: [ecr@saonet.ucla.edu](mailto:ecr@saonet.ucla.edu)

### **Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Campus Resource Center**

Website: <http://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/>

Telephone: (310) 206-3628

Email: [lgbt@lgbt.ucla.edu](mailto:lgbt@lgbt.ucla.edu)

## Reporting Discrimination

<https://equity.ucla.edu/report-an-incident/>

Telephone: (310) 825-3935

Email: [WeListen@equity.ucla.edu](mailto:WeListen@equity.ucla.edu)