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Spring 2019  
MW 12:00 -1:20 pm.  
Instructor: Sylvia Aguilar Zéleny  
E-Mail: [saguilar8@utep.edu](mailto:saguilar8@utep.edu)



Office Hours: TW 10:00-11:50, and by appointment.

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# CRW/3371

## Reading and Writing Fiction

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### Overview

This course is intended to approach fiction through the analysis and practice of techniques as well as formal and stylistic options. We will go over some elements of craft such as voice, characterization, setting, plot, structure. Based on what we learn, we will write an episodic novel based in Segundo Barrio, an iconic neighborhood of El Paso, Texas.

To become a better writer, you must first learn to be a better reader, so each week we will read both theory and fiction pieces that will be discussed in class and will become a frame for our final project.

### Goals

To learn a series of concepts related to the writing and reading process, as well as techniques and resources that will help students to:

- Analyze literary works and narrative theory to discuss and learn about the craft of fiction.
- Work consciously in the creation of a collective narrative project.
- Build a serious and enriched critique.

### Course Expectations

Reading and writing are the two main activities of the course, therefore the student must be committed to:

- Read and analyze the texts –theory and fiction, previously selected by the professor.
- Write two critical responses based on the assigned articles.
- Outline, write, and submit three etudes for workshop. These pieces are to be part of our final project.
- Read, analyze, and prepare a series of comments for the etudes presented by classmates.
- Participate in the planning, design and editing of an ebook as a group.

### Materials

#### Novel:

Groff, Lauren. *Florida*. Riverhead Books, 2018.

#### Film:

“One Square Mile: Segundo Barrio.” PBS, 2014, [vimeo.com/82261158](https://vimeo.com/82261158).

### Evaluation

This course will evaluate three main activities: written assignments, participation and final project as it follows:

45 % Études  
10 % Critical responses (2)  
15% Quizzercises (based on *Florida*)  
10% Discussion boards/Participation  
20% Collective Novel

**Etudes:** You will submit 3 etudes regarding our Final Project. Think of it as a story divided in three sections. Etudes will be reviewed through our workshop sessions.

**Critical responses:** You will submit 2 critical responses based on articles provided by your professor. Creative critical responses are not only welcome, expected. Share your own experiences and challenges while writing. Think of this as your own way to dialogue about fiction.

**Quizzercises:** The quizzes-exercises will regard your reading and analysis of the novel *Florida* by Lauren. Check calendar for chapters and dates.

**Discussion Boards:** I will create boards on Blackboard for you to discuss either articles, stories or themes regarding fiction writing. Participation is expected both in class and on our online sessions.

**Final Project:** As a group we will work on a novel following the example of *Florida*. Each of the members of the class will design his/her own character and will ground this story to Segundo Barrio. The plan is not only to write your story, but as a group to create your ebook with cover, preface and format design.

**PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENT:**

Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording, and it is also not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per utep catalog policy. Refer to <http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm> for further information.

**DISABILITIES STATEMENT:** I will make any reasonable

accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please, email me during the first two weeks or make an appointment to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require special accommodations, you will need to contact the Disable Student Services Office in the East Union Building, Room 106. Refer to: <http://www.utep.edu/dsso>

**\*\*This syllabus, including the course schedule, is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.\*\***

## Course Calendar

Spring 2019	
Week 1	<b>Introduction</b> Syllabus. Exercise 1: <i>My favorite home/ street/ city</i> . HW. Read “Ghosts and Empties” by Lauren Groff. Research about Segundo Barrio
Week 2	<b>Story, Plot, and Structure</b> Narrative Project Guidelines: Segundo Barrio Discussion: “Ghosts and Empties” by Lauren Groff One Square Mile: Segundo Barrio HW. Prepare Segundo Barrio Project.
Week 3	<b>Characterization</b> Who is Jude? “At the Round of Earth’s Imagined Corners” by Lauren Groff Your Segundo Barrio project.
Week 4	<b>Details, details, details</b> Showing and Telling Exercise 2: <i>I hate my neighbor</i> Copies for étude 1. HW. Read “Dogs go Wolf” by Lauren Groff
Week 5	<b>Workshop Étude 1</b> Groups 1 and 2 Read “The Midnight Zone” by Lauren Groff
Week 6	<b>Workshop Étude 1</b> Groups 3 and 4 Quizzercise 1: Online
Week 7	<b>Places Matter</b> Details, details, details Exercise 3: <i>What I found after...</i> <b>Online session on March 6<sup>th</sup></b> submit Critical Response 1 and participate on Discussion Board 1. H.W “For the God of Love...” by Lauren Groff
Week 8	<b>Time Matters Too!</b> Present, Past, Future and everything in between Teams for Ebook Discussion: “For the God of Love...” Copies Étude 2
Week 9	<b>Spring Break</b>
Week 10	<b>Workshop etude 2</b> Group 4 Online session for March 27th. H.W. “Salvador” by Lauren Groff
Week 11	<b>Workshop etude 2</b> Groups 3 and 1 H.W. “Flower Hunters” by Lauren Groff
Week 12	<b>Workshop etude 2</b> Group 2 <b>Look who’s talking</b> Quizzercise 2: Online HW. Étude 3
Week 13	Prepare cover, structure Index, preface

Bring copies of Étude 3	
Week 14	<b>Workshop étude 3</b> Groups 2 and 3 Critical Response 2
Week 15	<b>Workshop étude 3</b> Groups 3 and 1
Week 16	In class work for ebook <b>Quizzercise 3: online</b>

**Quizzercises Calendar/All stories are from *Florida* by Lauren Groff**

Date	Stories
Quiz 1	“Ghosts and Empties,” “At the Round of Earth’s Imagined Corners,” “Dogs Go Wolf,” “The Midnight Zone”
Quiz 2	“Eyewall,” “For the God of love, for the Love of God,” “Salvador,” “Flower Hunters”
Quiz 3	“Above and Below,” “Snake Stories,” “Yport”

All quizzes will be ONLINE. You will have 60 mins to answer.

**Workshop Calendar**

1

Date:	Groups/Members
Febr. 18th	1: Zury, Amaya, Elizabeth, Serena
Febr. 20th	2: Miguel, Sean, Olivia, Sabrina
Febr. 25th	3: Kamille, Raúl, Anthony, Paulina
Febr. 27th	4: Michael, Shakeem, José, Naomi

2

Date:	Groups/Members
March 25th	4: Michael, Shakeem, José, Naomi
Apr. 1 <sup>st</sup>	3: Kamille, Raúl, Anthony, Paulina
Apr 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2: Miguel, Sean, Olivia, Sabrina
Apr. 8 <sup>th</sup>	1: Zury, Amaya, Elizabeth, Serena

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Date:	Groups/Members
Apr. 22 <sup>nd</sup> .	2: Miguel, Sean, Olivia, Sabrina
Apr. 24th	4: Michael, Shakeem, José, Naomi
Apr. 29 <sup>th</sup>	1: Zury, Amaya, Elizabeth, Serena
May 1 <sup>st</sup>	3: Kamille, Raúl, Anthony, Paulina