

Fresher/Sophister Module Description Template 2025-26

Full Name: Writing Short Prose Forms

Short Name: Writing Short Prose

Lecturer Name(s) and Email Address(es): Una Mannion (umannion@tcd.ie)

ECTS Weighting: 5 ECTS

Semester Taught: HT

Year: JS

Module Content:

Writing Short Prose Forms is an introductory writing module that combines a creative writing workshop with literary seminar on the short form. We will study and write prose poems, prose sonnets, haiku prose, palm-of-the-hand stories, auto flash fiction, flash fiction, prose portraits, short lyric essays and short short stories. Each week we will read representative works with critical assessments, discuss these and attempt our own versions. We will consider the lyrical in short form prose—the use of compression, line breaks, metaphor, analogy, juxtaposition and paratactic structures, the primacy of language over linear narrative, sonic resonances, associative writing strategies and fragmentation. Class-time will be divided between critical discussion and writing workshop.

This module is intended for students who are interested in writing but may not have previous experience. Each week the tutor will give guided prompts and samples of the form we are trying. There is a reading element, including both works of fiction and critical writing relevant to the art of writing short prose forms.

Week 1	Introduction
Week 2	The Prose Poem, Prose Sonnet & Collage
Week 3	Haiku Prose and Palm-of-the-Hand story
Week 4	Auto Flash Fiction
Week 5	Flash Fiction
Week 6	Full Workshop
Week 7	Reading Week
Week 8	Short Lyric Essay
Week 9	Short Lyric Essay
Week 10	Short Short story
Week 11	Short Sort story

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of this module learners will be able to:

- Identify the formal structures, narrative strategies and attention to the lyrical in short prose works
- Give and receive constructive feedback on aspects of prose writing and reflect on their own practice
- Produce creative work in short form and bring work through revision and editing process
- Demonstrate skills in critical analysis of short prose forms in fiction and creative nonfiction

Learning Aims:

- To understand the short prose form potentially as its own genre and its intersection with poetic and longer form narrative strategies
- To practice writing modes and take work through revision and editing processes
- To engage in collaborative environment with other students, giving and receiving feedback and refining an authorial voice

Assessment Details:

- Number of Components: Three
- Name/Type of Component(s):
Assignment 1 (ongoing): Portfolio of weekly tasks (30%)
Assignment 2 (midterm submission): Flash fiction or prose poem revised (30%)
Assignment 3 (final submission): Short short story or short lyric essay (40%)
- Word Count of Component(s):
Portfolio (must include all weekly writing tasks)
Flash fiction or prose poem (200-500 words)
Short Lyric Essay or Short Short Story (1,500-2,000)
- Percentage Value of Component(s): Assignment 1 (30%), Assignment 2 (30%), Assignment 3 (40%)

Preliminary Reading List:

Please note that the following is an indicative reading list.

Babitz, Eve *Slow Days, Fast Company* (1977)

Berlin, Lucia. *A Manual For Cleaning Women* (2015)

Davis, Lydia. 'Fragmentary or Unfinished: Mallarme, Barthes, Joubert, Holderlin, Flaubert,' *Essays One* (2019)

Davis, Lydia. *The Collected Stories* (2009)

Friebert, Stuart and David Young eds. *Models of the Universe: an Anthology of the Prose Poem*, 1995

Kawabata, Yasunari. Palm-in-the-hand stories to be selected

Kennard, Luke. *The Solex Brothers* (2005)

Mallarmé, Stéphane. *A Tomb for Anatole* (1961)

Nelson, Maggie. *Jane* (2005)

Nelson, Maggie *The Red Parts* (2007)

Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary* (1953)

Yuknavitch, Lidia. *The Chronology of Water* (2011)

Please note:

- Curricular information is subject to change.
- Information is displayed only for guidance purposes, relates to the current academic year only and is subject to change.

The School of English strongly supports Trinity's strategic commitment to the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion. Staff in the School are required to adhere to all the college's policies around issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, including engaging with appropriate training. The School also encourages its students to engage with the training made available to them in relation to these areas by Trinity's Equality Office. This training and further information about the college's policies can be found on their website: <https://www.tcd.ie/equality/>. The School acknowledges, however, that texts studied in its modules may contain forms of representation or language that engage in and portray prejudice and discrimination of various kinds. Fostering the ability to engage critically with such texts, and the complex and challenging debates and deliberations to which they give rise, is an essential part of the School's educational mission. So too is instilling knowledge of the historical and sociolinguistic dimensions of what has and has not been considered offensive. As a community committed to open, respectful and responsible discussion, the School recognises that the direct quotation of discriminatory, derogatory terms from texts in lectures, seminars and tutorials should generally be avoided. It supports the right of its members to respond critically, openly and vigorously to ideas or opinions that they oppose, while affirming its commitment to fostering a robust intellectual environment in which all members can freely participate. The School also recognises the complexities of debates about teaching and questions of equality, diversity and inclusion, and undertakes to continue to work towards a better understanding of the issues involved.