# Course Information Sheet: EWRT 40

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| **Instructor:** Becky Roberts  **Email and Website**: [robertsbecky@fhda.edu](mailto:robertsbecky@fhda.edu) http://faculty.deanza.fhda.edu/robertsbecky | **Phone**: (408) 864-5764  **Office**: F11-E  **Hours**: TTH 12:30-1:20; and by appointment |

Prerequisite: English Writing 211 and Reading 211 (or Language Arts 211).

**Course Description:** Writing fictionis a glorious journey—creating worlds and characters that make readers feel something; developing voices, images and ideas that expand readers’ minds (maybe even blow their minds). What could be more exciting than that?

As I chart our course, I am trying to strike a balance between developing control and freedom, creative play and disciplined revision. Please be willing to experiment and try new things in practice exercises that will help you generate ideas for short stories and get more acquainted with the tools of fiction. You will also draft and revise at least one short story, read and discuss your classmates' work, read and discuss the work of published writers, and submit a final portfolio. Try it out, dive in, push yourself a little, and we'll have a good time along the way.

Please note: Since this is an introductory class, the focus is on writing short stories and not novels. And because the emphasis of the class is on generating new work, this isnotthe place to submit or get feedback on work you have written before taking this class.

**Course Goals:  
•** Develop and strengthen a personal creative process in fiction writing.   
**•** Identify and use major technical and stylistic elements of fiction.  **•** Evaluate one's peers' and one's own stories.

**Texts:** available at the De Anza Bookstore

*Wired for Story,* Lisa Cron.

*Course Reader EWRT 40,* Becky Roberts.

**Class Participation:** **Silence and Stow Cell Phones**

Participation in class is required—attendance, in-class writing and discussion. Presenting your writing and responding to others’ is how our class operates; it is also crucial to the writing process. Sharing our work can feel risky so it’s very important that we support each other’s effort and always respond in constructive, generous ways.

Please arrive on time. Since we will be writing for the first 10 minutes of most class sessions, if you do arrive late, you will be missing critical in-class writing time. Please exchange phone numbers or email with at least two classmates, so if you must miss class you will be able return prepared with any work assigned in your absence. If you miss more than four class meetings or the equivalent, your participation grade will drop by 50% or more.

**Grades:** You can elect to take this class pass/no pass or for a grade. Passing is a grade of C or better. These are the grading criteria:

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| Writing practice exercises (one dropped) | 80 | 93-100%=A 90-92%=A-  87-89%=B+ 83-86%=B  80-83%=B- 77-79%=C+  70-76%=C 60-69%=D  59% and below = F  of 750 total points |
| Flash Fiction piece | 100 |
| Short story start | 100 |
| Short story for workshop | 120 |
| Class participation/in-class writing | 100 |
| Peer responses to others’ work | 120 |
| Final portfolio | 240 |

**To submit the final portfolio, you must first satisfactorily complete the work leading up to it,** which includes completing and submitting writing exercises, turning in flash fiction piece and a short story for peer response, attending class regularly and coming prepared to give feedback on classmates' work.

**Late Work:** Homework exercises cannotbe turned in late because we'll be working with them in class the day they are due. However, you can skip one of them since I drop one. Larger assignments, the short story draft for example, should also be turned in on time, especially if your late story would throw off the whole workshop schedule. However, if you have a very good reason and make arrangements with me, I will accept your story draft up to one week late (unless that puts us into exam week). The final portfolio cannot be turned in late. No work for the course will be accepted after the final exam day.

**Final Portfolio**: Your final for this class will be a TYPED portfolio of

* 3 exercises you select from work you've produced over the quarter
* a short story you've written and revised for the class (at least two drafts), and
* a reflective essay or self-interview of 500 – 800 words in which you discuss what you've learned about your writing process, what you still want to learn, how you plan to keep developing as a writer.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating include copying someone else’s homework, lifting sentences from someone else without quoting (whether the source is published or not) and any small or large act of academic forgery in the work that you submit as your own effort in this class. Please do not waste our time by submitting any writing that is not your own. The penalty is, at minimum, a “0” on that assignment, and an “F” for the course is very likely.

Student Resources: I enjoy helping students and talking about writing, so please don’t be shy about using my office hours.