**The Bridge: A Generative Creative Writing Workshop**

**READING**
In this course, we will be reading as *writers*. Our chief aim in examining published work will not be the identification of symbols or the analysis of themes. Rather, we will be reading in order to learn how to write. We will be approaching the reading as apprentice craftsmen. We will be dismantling the stories, essays and plays and inspecting their component parts – characterization, point of view, voice, plot, etc.

*Father Flashes*, by Tricia Bauer

*The Art of The Personal Essay*, ed. by Phillip Lopate

*The Clean House*, by Sarah Ruhl

*Circle Mirror Transformation*, by Annie Baker

*I Am My Own Wife*, by Doug Wright

**Course packet containing the following stories** (list subject to change):
- “The Emerald Light in the Air,” Antrim
- “A Choice of Accommodations,” Lahiri
- “Cathedral,” Carver
- “The Jewish Hunter,” Moore
- “The Happiest I’ve Been,” Updike
- “House Hunting,” Chabon
- “Reunion,” Englander
- “Notes to My Biographer,” Haslett
- “Dimension,” Munro
- “Passion,” Munro
- “Leaving for Kenosha” Ford
- “Eleanor’s Music,” Gordon
- “The Ballroom of Romance,” Trevor
- “The First Day,” Jones
- “The Shawl,” Ozick
- “William and Clare,” Bloom
- “Ralph the Duck,” Busch
- “The Dinner Party,” Ferris
- “The Conversion of the Jews,” Roth
- “For Esme -- With Love and Squalor,” Salinger
- “St.Lucy’s Home for Girls Raised by Wolves,” Russell
- “Basket of Trips,” Strout

Not required but highly recommended:
Writing Fiction: A Guide to Narrative Craft, ed. by Janet Burroway. (The book is very expensive if bought new. There are multiple editions with few changes from year to year. It should be fairly easy to purchase a used copy online.)

From Where You Dream: The Process of Writing Fiction, by Robert Olen Butler

WRITING
We will begin the semester with weekly writing exercises (2-3 pages). Later in the term each student will write a short story, essay, one-act play (15 pages, min.) for workshop discussion. The final project will consist of an extensive revision of that work and will also be discussed in class.

All work is to be typed, double spaced. Students are responsible for supplying each member of the class with copies of all submitted writing. Student stories are to be emailed no less than five days prior to the date the material is to be discussed in the workshop. At the beginning of the semester we will establish a fixed schedule for “workshopping” student stories.

PARTICIPATION
This class will be run as a workshop. As a member of this cooperative, each student is entitled to a careful and considerate reading of his or her work. Everyone is expected to come to class having read and considered the work to be discussed that day. You will be responsible for a detailed written commentary on each of your fellow students’ manuscripts. Your job in this course is to function as both writer and editor.

GRADING
Given the structure of this course, attendance and class participation are crucial. If you miss more than one class, your grade will be reduced by five points (e.g., a B becomes a B-). If you miss 2 classes, your grade will be reduced by 10 points, and so on. If attendance is problematic for you, you could easily end up with a failing grade in this course.

Class participation will count for 40% of your total grade. Each student is expected to come to class ready and willing to share her/his ideas on what is to be discussed that day.

HELP
Writing can be a lonely business. As you embark on the work assigned for the class, you may find yourself in need of some additional guidance. I’m happy to meet with you prior to class and/or to talk with you over the phone or via email.