



## Don't Work Too Hard! An Advanced Fiction Workshop G26100101

with Beth Morgan

October 4-10, 2026

### Welcome to Workshop!

The number one thing I hear from my writing students is that they want “accountability”—in other words, they want to be forced to get writing done. And yet, while writing workshops provide helpful deadlines, they can also paralyze creativity. Workshop is often where fiction can start to feel like “work.” Once it’s time to listen to and incorporate feedback, the next stage of writing can feel daunting, and the excitement that led you to produce a piece of work might feel unavailable, or worse, crushed.

This class takes as its starting point the idea that writing should never be a slog, and that playful creativity has a place at every stage of the drafting process. With group writing sessions in the mornings and workshops in the evening, we’ll blur the line between the creative stage and the editing stage. While you may inevitably find your writing responding to workshop discussions, this writing time is unstructured—you might use this time to continue working on a long-term project, break the seal on a new one, play around with craft tools we talked about in class, or respond to a writing prompt (of which I have many).



In workshop, we'll strive to create an environment of inquiry and generosity, so that each writer emerges from workshop looking forward to the possibilities of revision. We'll continuously ask, where do we as readers feel the energy in a piece of fiction? Where did you, the writer, feel most locked in while writing it? What feels most challenging and why? How can those challenges feel less intimidating—less like “work”? How can you stay in touch with the spark of energy that compelled you to write in the first place?

Because this is an advanced fiction class, I'd like to have class discussions where we push past simple binaries about “liking” or “not liking” elements of a story—although of course you're likely to have emotional responses at different moments! I just mean that I'd like you to extend your inquiry beyond that point; what's the precise nature of that emotional or intellectual response? What caused it? “X craft choice made me have Y response as a reader.” “I noticed my interest spiking here because of this detail.” “I noticed more curiosity in myself about this aspect of the piece, and less curiosity about this part.” “At first I thought this was an important theme, but then this theme came to the fore.”

Aside from our morning writing sessions, most of this course will be spent in evening workshop. The majority of time outside of class will be spent carefully reading each other's work—at least twice if possible. While I don't ask you to write feedback letters, you might find it helpful to take notes on each story and bring them to class.

# GHOST RANCH



I tend to think the cliché is true: You often learn more giving feedback than receiving it.

Please come to class prepared to engage deeply with the work of the other students, with the understanding that, in attempting to read each writer's work on its own terms and considering how to bring a piece closer to the writer's vision, you expand your own capacities as a writer.

Best,

Beth



<p><b>Sunday Night</b> Orientation: We'll get to know each other and talk a little bit about class.</p>	<p><b>Monday</b> 10:00-12: We'll do a writing prompt together (sharing is entirely optional) and talk about a reading I passed out in advance. <b>Afternoon:</b> Time to read in advance of the evening workshop. You may also like to enjoy the ranch or continue writing.  6:30-8:30 Workshop. We'll workshop up to two stories each night.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b> 10:00-12: Our first group writing session. We'll write together from 10:00am until 11:30. Stick around for an extra 15-20 minutes if you'd like to discuss how it's going or talk through anything popping up in your writing practice.  Afternoon: Time to read in advance of the evening workshop. You may also like to enjoy the ranch or continue writing.  6:30-8:30 Workshop.</p>	<p><b>Wednesday</b> 10:00-12: We'll write together from 10:00am until 11:30. Stick around for an extra 15-20 minutes if you'd like to discuss how it's going or talk through anything popping up in your writing practice.  Afternoon: Time to read in advance of the evening workshop. You may also like to enjoy the ranch or continue writing.  6:30-8:30 Workshop.</p>
<p><b>Thursday:</b> 10:00-12: Our last group writing session. We'll write together from 10:00am until 11:30. Stick around for an extra 15-20 minutes if you'd like to discuss how it's going or talk through anything popping up in your writing practice.  1-3pm Individual mentoring available.  6:30-8:30 Workshop.</p>	<p><b>Friday:</b> 10-12pm: Individual mentoring available.  1:30-4pm: Our last workshops, followed by a discussion looking forward to revision and new writing challenges.</p>