Fiction Writing and Workshop Syllabus

**Week 1:**

Introductions, syllabus and getting comfortable sharing with each other

Story Structure: How is a story structured? Why does this work? What are the different parts of a story? How do they go together? How can this rule be broken?

Resources and Journals: How do you use a journal? How do you research? How much research is too much research, how much is too little?

**Week 2:**

POV: What are the different points of view? What makes each point of view distinct from the others? How do you determine what point of view your story should be told in?

**Week 3:**  
Character Building: How do you populate your world. How do you avoid tropes and two-dimensional characters? How do you create a believable cast of characters? How do you set up relationship dynamics between characters?

**Week 4:**   
Settings: What kind of setting do you need for your characters (or vice versa)? What kind of setting compliments the ideas your story presents as well as the characters? How do you make a setting visible to your audience (incorporation of the five senses, “showing, not telling”)? Discussion on the writer-reader relationship and trust-building.

**Week 5:**  
Dialogue: How do you write realistic dialogue and incorporate it into characters? How can you give different characters different voices? What is a voice?

**Week 6:**   
Scene Transitions: How do you transition between scenes? How do you transition between the parts of a story? How to manage the “boring parts” of your story. Incorporation of exposition and summary.

**Week 7:**  
Climax and Resolution: How to fulfill your end of the author-reader contract. Do’s and do not’s of climaxes. How to write a climax for a stand-alone story vs. one that is a part of a series. What do you do with all those loose ends and should you use an epilogue? Where do you go from here – drafts, revisions, workshopping, etc.