

HL 2020 Creative Writing Workshop

The Challenges in the Process of Writing Fiction.

Division of English, Nanyang Technological University

Semester:

Day:

Location:

Seminar Leader: Tan Twan Eng

Contact Details:

This course is a 13-week-long series of workshops about the various issues faced by the writer during the process of writing his/her novel. We will meet once a week, for three hours. This course will focus solely on writing fiction – novels and short stories only. I will be discussing the challenges I faced while writing *The Garden of Evening Mists*, and how I tried to solve them. The discussions will be done with reference to the various elements that make up a novel or a short story, inter alia: beginnings, settings, characterization, dialogue, themes, structure, points of view, style, the basics and development of plot, creating tension and conflict, the use of flashbacks, symbolism, endings.

Each week I will ask for a short piece of writing from each student, of approximately 500 words, and we'll discuss the problems raised, in relation to the set topic of that week. The piece can be an extract from a work in progress.

We will also discuss some practical aspects of writing, including how to approach agents and publishers, and issues of plagiarism and copyright.

The main text will be *The Garden of Evening Mists*, but we will also use extracts from other novels, short stories, reviews, articles as and when I feel they can help to illuminate our discussions.

SOME POINTS TO NOTE:

Please be present. Please have your writing and reading done, and please be on time. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class it will count as an absence.

No audio or video recording of the seminars.

REQUIRED TEXT:

The Garden of Evening Mists, by Tan Twan Eng.

ASSESSMENT:

Course grades will be determined by the following:

Class participation	20%
Weekly writing assignment, due at the beginning of class	80%