

**Welcome to American Short Fiction (240L-741) with Professor Kristin L. Wolfe  
Fall 2026 Session (October 26 – December 18, 2026) - Accelerated**

Dear Students,

I am thrilled to welcome you to our upcoming accelerated eight-week online journey through contemporary American literature.

Our course officially kicks off on **Monday, October 26, 2026**. Because this is an accelerated online class, we hit the ground running on day one. Our virtual classroom will operate less like a traditional lecture hall and more like a collaborative reading workshop—a vibrant space for active reading, thoughtful dialogue, experimentation, and collective discovery.

Required Textbook Information

Please secure your copy of the anthology prior to our course start date, as we will begin working with it during Week 1. We will be reading all 20 of the short stories in the anthology, so the sooner you are able to complete the reading, the better shape you'll be in for the written and discussion assignments:

**Title:** *The Best American Short Stories 2025*

**Editors:** Guest Editor Celeste Ng; Series Editor Nicole A. Lamy

**Publisher:** Mariner Books (2025)

**Paperback ISBN:** 978-0063399808

**Hardcover ISBN:** 978-0063399846

**Format Policy:** You are welcome to use print, ebook, or audiobook editions. However, you must have a format that allows you to easily revisit specific passages and pinpoint exact textual evidence for our discussions and written arguments.

What We Will Explore

What does American short fiction look like right now—and who gets to decide which stories represent the “best” of it? Using this collection of twenty works as our guide, we will examine how contemporary writers navigate complex human experiences like identity, race, technology, and isolation. Together, we will dissect the mechanics of storytelling—how authors build narrative authority, manipulate time, shape language, and land endings—while treating the anthology itself as a unique cultural artifact. You will learn to trust your own observations and build compelling, evidence-backed critical interpretations.

Important Pre-Course Instructions

1. **Purchase the Text:** Ensure you have your copy of *The Best American Short Stories 2025* in hand before October 26.

2. **Explore Brightspace:** Our course site will open shortly before the session begins. Please log in, explore our initial modules, and review the finalized syllabus.
3. **Check Your Email:** Keep an eye on your Marist email account for our opening announcement and instructions for our first module.

### About Me

Welcome! I've spent the last two decades working in education, spanning middle and high school classrooms to the last ten years in higher education. Based here in the Hudson Valley, I split my teaching time locally and down in NYC at the School of Visual Arts. Outside the classroom, I am an active food and culture writer for various print and digital publications and manage a new site celebrating the Hudson Valley. Because I am a working writer—and author of a handbook for student writers—I treat our literature class like a collaborative workshop. My goal is to build a community of inquiry where your unique perspective actively shapes our discussions.

### Contact & Support

If you have any questions before the term starts, please don't hesitate to reach out.

- **Email:** kristin.wolfe@marist.edu
- **Office Hours:** Available by appointment via Zoom.

I can't wait to read your insights and dive into this journey together. Here's to e-meeting you all on October 26th!

Warm regards,

**Professor Kristin L. Wolfe**

Department of English  
Marist University