Fall Term 2014 Course Descriptions, School of Writing, Literature, and Film

Course
ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Harrison

ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Elbom, G
If it doesn't move the plot forward, is it necessary? If it's hard to read, is it worth the effort? If nothing happens, isn't it just a tapestry of words? If there's no emotional release, isn't it just an intellectual exercise? If there's no payoff, will the reader feel cheated? If the author is too smart, will the reader feel stupid? If the reader demands simplicity, would the author be foolish not to provide it? If the reader is invested in the story, should the author leave the ending ambiguous? If the first sentence is not dazzling, should we bother with the rest of the story? If fiction isn't real, why would we want to read about the imaginary lives of made-up characters? Answers to these questions -- and many more -- in ENG 104.

ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Dybek
The novelist Richard Ford says, “If loneliness is your disease then the story is the cure.” Though a well-told story certainly has the power to engage us, one need not be unhappy or otherwise infirm to appreciate the power of a fictional narrative. (I have it on good authority, for example, that Homer was quite cheerful and always a hit at the big sacrificial feasts!) But what is it about stories—fictional stories, in particular—that fosters this powerful, even curative, emotional and intellectual engagement? In this course, we will attempt to answer that question by reading and discussing several short stories and three novels with an eye towards how each is made, identifying and interrogating the author’s use of tools such as point of view and image. This attention to craft will ultimately help us become better, closer readers, able to pick apart the means by which texts illuminate and critique the mysterious world in which we live and reveal the surprising, familiar secrets that lurk in our lonely hearts and minds.

ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Larison
Introduction to Fiction offers you a chance to read, ponder, and explore some of the most influential short stories of the last century. Specifically, we'll be focusing our explorations on issues of theme, context, and craft. Expect an inspiring and intellectually rigorous—class, one in which you will produce several short writing assignments and two papers.
ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Bushnell
This course introduces students to prose fiction through the short story, novella, and novel, with particular (but not exclusive) focus on 20th-century American writers. Students will learn to read closely for fundamental craft concepts such as descriptive detail, plot, characterization, point of view, structure, symbolism, and theme. By the end of the term, students will have received exposure to a broad array of narratives, cultures, and ideas, and will have developed the skills to analyze them for meaning and value.

ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Delf
What is a story? How does fiction create or reflect the culture and historical moment in which they are written? Why do we (or why should we) read literature at all? In this class, we will build answers to these foundational questions. Using a critical lens, we will work to understand both the implied and stated meaning of short stories from the last two centuries, as well as developing our knowledge of the key elements of fiction.

ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Larison
Introduction to Fiction offers you a chance to read, ponder, and explore some of the most influential short stories of the last century. Specifically, we’ll be focusing our explorations on issues of theme, context, and craft. Expect an inspiring and intellectually rigorous—class, one in which you will produce several short writing assignments and two papers.

ENG 106: Intro to Literature – Poetry
Biespiel
Study of poetry for greater understanding and enjoyment.

ENG 106: Intro to Literature - Poetry
Gottlieb
This course is a thematic introduction to the study of poetry. For our first three units – on Love, Loss, and the Human Condition – we read chronological selections of poetry from some of the greatest poets in the English language. The third unit focuses on a volume of contemporary poetry by Michael Robbins, a talented and provocative young American poet. Throughout, we will focus on learning to read poetry for both enjoyment and critical understanding, while gaining some sense of its historical evolution and cultural relevance.
ENG 106: Intro to Literature - Poetry
Brock
What is a poem? Why do poems matter? In this class, we will begin to look at poetry through a critical lens, and we’ll begin to answer these questions, looking at both the stated and implied meanings in a variety of different poems. We will also develop an understanding of the tools poets use. Participation in class discussions and short quizzes testing reading comprehension will make up a significant part of your grade. A writing portfolio composed of in-class and out-of-class writings will be submitted for credit at the end of the term. Two in-class exams will illuminate your understanding of various poems we’ve read and discussed.

ENG 107: Introduction to Creative Nonfiction
Verzemnieks
Over the centuries, writers have been drawn to nonfiction, and to the essay form in particular, out of a deep hunger to explore and understand the world around them. In that same spirit, this class will also be all about exploration—putting ourselves in new and unexpected places, then observing, reflecting upon, and writing about what we discover. We’ll seek out the strange, as well as try to see the familiar through new eyes. We’ll do this in two ways: together we will read essays—lots of essays—that will introduce you to the vast range of possibilities that exist within the genre, from writing that mines our hidden interior spaces to works of literary journalism that require deep inhabitation of other people’s lives to essays that are driven by visual approaches and other experimental techniques. And then, we’ll also be doing our own writing, carefully analyzing what we are reading with an eye toward imagining how we might launch our own literary explorations of the world around us. In other words, you’ll have some chances to give the approaches you are reading about a try (and try is the operative word—any successful exploration always involves a certain amount of risk and embrace of the unknown).

ENG 200: Introduction to Library Resources
Deitering
English 200 Introduction to library resources such as catalogs, Google Scholar, JSTOR, MLA International Bibliography, primary resources, etc., and to scholarly issues including intellectual property and scholarly practices for the study of literature. Required for English majors.

ENG 200: Introduction to Library Resources
Mellinger
English 200 Introduction to library resources such as catalogs, Google Scholar, JSTOR, MLA International Bibliography, primary resources, etc., and to scholarly issues including intellectual property and scholarly practices for the study of literature. Required for English majors.
ENG 201: Shakespeare
Olson
An introduction to the first half of Shakespeare’s dramatic career. This course is designed to help students become confident readers of Shakespeare’s language, articulate the significance of aural and visual elements of Shakespearean scripts, and consider the plays within a specific cultural and historical context. Plays include Richard III, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Merchant of Venice, and Hamlet. This course is included in two Baccalaureate Core categories: Western Culture and Literature and the Arts.

ENG 201: Shakespeare
Barbour
The course treats several sonnets, a narrative poem (Venus & Adonis), and four plays from the first half of Shakespeare's career: the Elizabethan phase. The primary goal of the course is to sharpen our skills at reading Shakespeare’s verse and at articulating our insights into its content, forms, and energies. Our concerns will range from language, characterization, genre, and staging to wider questions of Shakespeare’s involvement in the economic, political, and theatrical cultures of his day and ours. Our sessions will combine lecture and discussion. Students will be expected to keep pace with an ambitious syllabus and contribute to discussions.

ENG 204/204H: Survey of British Literature: Beginnings to 1660
Williams
Travel back in time to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance! This survey covers over a thousand years of literature and topics such as magic, religious visions, political intrigue, and forbidden love. Readings will include one of the first poems in English (Beowulf), two of Britain’s most famous authors (Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare), and three of the earliest women writers (Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe, and Elizabeth I). This course fulfills requirements for the bacc core (Western Culture or Literature and the Arts) and the English major or minor.

ENG 207: Literature of Western Civilization
Anderson
A survey of ancient Western literature from the Athens to Jerusalem, including discussion of selections from Homer, Virgil, the Christian Bible, Augustine, and Dante. Five multiple-choice quizzes and an in-class writing journal leading to an out-of-class essay. Text: The Norton Anthology of World Literature, shorter third edition, volume I
ENG 213/213H: Literatures of the World: Middle East
Elbom, Gilad
This class will focus on modern Middle Eastern literature from multiple perspectives: cultural, political, religious, historical, geographical, linguistic, structural, stylistic, and other points of view. The books on our reading list include a controversial Sudanese novel that navigates between East and West, the present and the past, the personal and the political; a famous work of Egyptian feminism; a surrealistic, hallucinatory, self-deceptive novel from Iran; and two landmarks of Palestinian fiction: one originally written in Arabic, the author’s native tongue, the other in Hebrew, the language of the dominant culture that classifies the author as the enemy. We will also watch some movies form the Middle East, mostly from Egypt, Israel, and Iran. We will compare visual and written texts, make connections between our novels and Middle Eastern cinema, and expand our analysis of narrative structures and thematic concerns. This class will be based on active participation in ongoing discussions about the material. Consistent attendance, a very close reading of the texts, and a high level of involvement in our conversations will be crucial.

ENG 220/FILM 220: Topics in Difference, Power, and Discrimination
St. Jacques
This course will concentrate on analyzing representations of sexuality in relation to difference, power and discrimination in contemporary Western cinema. Viewing films that represent a diversity of sexual vantage points in a variety of directorial styles, ENG220 participants will evaluate the construction of sexualities in contemporary film. Beginning with overtly heterocentric films, such as What Women Want (Nancy Meyers, 2000) and Fatal Attraction (Paul Verhoeven, 1992), students will learn to critically explore and evaluate typical and atypical representations of hetero- and homosexuality, queerness, sexual aggression and homophobia, transvestism, transsexualism and intersexuality - as well as intersections of sexuality and discrimination in terms of age and race. Our exploration will be activated through student participation in research, writing, experiential exercise, group discussion forums and personal reflection.

ENG 221: African American Literature
Sheehan
This course introduces students to African American literature from the eighteenth-century to the present. It is designed to develop students’ skills in analyzing literature from a range of genres. Texts include slave narratives, poems, short stories, autobiographies, essays, a speech, a novel, and a play. The course also aims to advance students’ ability to understand texts in relation to their cultural context, including concepts and experiences of race, gender, and sexuality and struggles for social justice, particularly abolitionist, civil rights, women’s, and black nationalist movements.
ENG 253: Survey of American Literature: Colonial to 1900 American Ecologies
León
This class will look at how the early American experience has been expressed through writing to shape the many American imaginaries. Our survey will cover a lot of ground, looking to indigenous oral literature, colonial contact accounts, early settler colonial literature, slave narratives, and onto poets and writers who engage with the rapidly shifting dynamics of a young nation-state and its relation to the surrounding environment. As we read together, we will examine the following questions: How do Amerindian writings offer a different intersection of time and geography than settler colonial narratives? How can we think of the plantation system as an ecology where survival was precarious at best? How do poets lose themselves in nature in order to articulate the very possibility of a self? How are these literary pieces necessarily inflected by gender and race? As we move through the semester, we will look to these literary artifacts to investigate how America has been framed as an ongoing process.

ENG 254: Survey of American Literature: 1900 to Present
Betjemann
The second portion of the introductory American literature sequence, this course covers the period from 1900 to the present - and covers literature ranging from conventional narrative to experimental poetry and prose. Among other themes, we will consider the effects of an increasingly global culture on American identity, the pressures of violence and war on a literary history that has often idealized the pastoral or rustic, and the situation of American literature in new places (California, Harlem) or new landscapes (suburbia, the neon city).

ENG 254: Survey of American Literature: 1900 to Present
Schwartz
The course catalog defines English 254 as “Readings from American literature presented in chronological sequence, important eras and movements with emphasis on major writers.” This particular section will mostly adhere to this formula, but it will be defined by its emphasis on short stories and poetry. Given the short amount of time we have to cover 114 years of literature, novels and drama will be excluded, and instead we’ll examine short stories by various major American authors on Tuesdays, and on Thursdays we’ll focus on poetry. We’ll progress through the 20th century mostly decade by decade, but at times theme will trump chronology. Like most of your courses, most of the work for this course will be done outside of class—there will be plenty (but not an overwhelming amount) of reading. We’ll balance deep, vertical engagement with sprawling horizontal coverage. The course will introduce students to many different authors and poets, as well as various literary techniques, concepts and contextual backdrops. The course will be successful if it enhances your ability to think critically, and find both wisdom and aesthetic pleasure in the stories and poems that capture the (rather hubristically self-defined) “American century.”
ENG 317: The American Novel: Beginnings to Chopin
Elbom, G.
In this class we will take a close look at a wide variety of early American texts: a captivity narrative (Rowlandson), a slave narrative (Equiano), a feminist utopia (Gilman), a Native American autobiography (Apess), the first African American novel (Brown), a dark romance (Hawthorne), and Melville’s *Moby-Dick*. We will identify the main themes in these texts and examine them from different perspectives: historical, cultural, political, religious, stylistic, structural, colonial, psychological, and so on. We will develop our ability to read, enjoy, think about, and respond to literature in critical and meaningful ways. We will strengthen our skills as scholarly writers and broaden and deepen our understanding of early American narratives.

ENG 319: The American Novel: Post-World War II
Sandor
In this course, we will read and examine the work of six great American novelists from the mid-twentieth century to the present, exploring both their literary artistry and their diverse expressions of what it means to come of age in America. Decade by decade, how does the American quest for identity take new forms? How does the shape and texture of the novel itself reflect—and possibly resist—its own historical moment?

ENG 320: Studies in Page, Stage, and Screen
Barbour
Focusing on the great contemporaries Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare, this course will explore the industries of publication and performance as they shaped the careers of authors and texts across various media: manuscript, print, theater, and film. At the outset of the term, we will concentrate on practices in early modern London. Then we will take up modern staging’s and cinematic adaptations of a few plays by Shakespeare, including *Romeo & Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*.

ENG 345: Introduction to Literary Criticism and Theory
Malewitz
Provides a rapid introduction to theories and concepts that drive current literary scholarship. By the end of the term, students should be able to. Identify major theoretical/critical movements and theorists, as well as the primary concepts with which they are associated. Define and apply specific theoretical concepts and terms to literary and cultural texts. Evaluate and analyze strengths and limitations of critical/theoretical arguments in terms of internal logic and specific applications. Examine historical contexts for the development of contemporary theory and criticism. Strengthen critical reading, writing, and interpretive practices for comprehension and analysis.
ENG 375: Children’s Literature  
Ward, Megan  
Children’s literature and the idea of childhood grew up together. This course will examine their mutual maturation through the school story, a genre of British children’s literature largely set in boarding schools and strongly influenced by imperialism. There are pranks and hijinks as well as sentimental moments; students form close friendships, deal with authority figures, and even go to class sometimes. These stories define childhood in relation to changing concepts of nationhood and empire. From the Victorian originator of the genre, Tom Brown’s School Days, to the battlefields of empire to twentieth-century periodicals devoted entirely to girls' boarding schools, we’ll examine emerging cultural ideals of gender in relation to nationhood. We’ll conclude with the most famous schoolboy of our time, Harry Potter. With the introduction of co-education, does the British school story move beyond its nationalistic origins or do we continue to define childhood in relation to nationhood and empire? Assignments will include several short close readings, a longer essay, and a final exam.

ENG 435/535: Studies in Shakespeare - The Henriad  
Olson, Rebecca  
Shakespeare’s second tetrad of history plays (Richard II, 1 Henry IV, 2 Henry IV, and Henry V) feature some of the playwright’s most memorable situations, from Richard breaking the mirror to Henry’s rousing “band of brothers” speech. In this course we will interrogate their reputation as vehicles of propaganda and question the extent to which they indicate Shakespeare’s participation in a larger move toward nation-building in Elizabethan England. At the same time, we will explore the way the Henriad presents many different perspectives on what “England” is, and consistently raise questions about monarchical authority. We will begin the term by establishing a context for these remarkable plays: we will determine what makes history a dramatic genre and discuss larger "nationalistic" moves in the sixteenth century. In the latter weeks of the class, we will consider the plays through a variety of critical lenses, including a Shakespearean comedy and recent film adaptations.

ENG 438/538: Studies in Modernism: Five British Formalists  
Davison, Neil  
This course examines intellectual, cultural, and aesthetic aspects of the pre-and-post-World War I era of literature characterized by the practitioners of its day as Modernist. Modernism from its fin de siècle inception onward was an arts-movement based on the overarching assertion that a new 20th-century consciousness mandated new “purified” forms for each of the arts. As a studies course, we will not dwell long on the history of the era nor conduct a survey of various genres, but will narrow our focus to a study of British Modernist fiction from 1900-1924. Each work to be studied represents major formalist experimentation with the novel, novella, or short story. We will early on trace this formalism as it arises from the overlay of nineteenth-century Naturalism with Literary Impressionism and Symbolism; we will also grapple with Modernist Free and Indirect narrative style. We will examine how these schools represent subjectivity from psychoanalytic, gendered, and humanist perspectives. Simultaneously we will study political and cultural issues that inform the era, especially along the lines of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and colonial/post-colonial discourse. Please note that this is an upper-division course: students are expected to have previously studied some examples of Modernist literature and to have acquired a cursory knowledge of the movement (ENG 206, 208, 318 are all solid unofficial prerequisites). Undergraduates will be evaluated through a mid-term exam, a formal essay, and a final exam. Graduates may sit for the mid-term, but will be predominately evaluated through a longer graduate style research/analysis essay modeled on the standard article in academic humanities.
Anderson
A slow, careful reading of Dante’s *Purgatorio*, canto by canto, with backward glances at the *Inferno* and forward glances at the *Paradiso*. Writing: three essays recording the progress of your thinking.
Text: Cicardi, trans, *The Divine Comedy*

ENG 470/570: Studies in Poetry: Myth, Mothers, & Monsters
Richter
In this craft class, we will study contemporary poetry collections framed by myth: Persephone and Demeter, Orpheus and Eurydice, and others. Through in-depth discussions and extensive in- and out-of-class writing assignments, we’ll consider where we, as writers, might step into a myth’s known narrative in order to better understand our own. Possible texts include Louise Glück’s *Averno*, Rita Dove’s *Mother Love*, Gregory Orr’s *Orpheus and Eurydice*, and Anne Carson’s *Autobiography of Red*. Writing assignments will include poetry exercises, a personal aesthetics essay, and close readings.

ENG 514: Intro to Graduate Studies
Betjemann
An introduction to the MA program; theories and methods of English studies. Offered fall term only. Required for first-year MA students.

ENG 580: “See it this way:” Form & Structure in Fiction
Joan Didion, Democracy
Scribner, Keith
In this craft class we’ll explore how form and structure are inextricably wedded to the overall effect of a book. We’ll read the multi-phonnic *A Gathering of Old Men* (Gaines) and *The Sweet Hereafter* (Banks), the two time lines of *Cat’s Eye* (Atwood), the two lives of the graphic memoir *Maus* (Spiegelman), the mystifyingly structured story collection *Battleborn* (Watkins), the fragmentary *Dept. of Speculation* (Offill), and *Beautiful Ruins* (Walter), multi-phonnic, multi-generational, and textually inventive. Course outcomes will include developing skills in textual analysis, close reading, critical thinking and writing, and applying the aesthetic principles you develop to your own work. We’ll examine these works for their historical, literary, social, and political significance, as well as their varying styles and themes, keeping in mind that they are first and foremost works of art.

FILM 110: Intro to Film Studies: 1895-1945
Rust
An introduction to the academic study of world cinema, 1895-1945. Class lectures will offer a variety of historical, critical and theoretical approaches. Although we will screen and discuss films from a variety of nations and geographical regions, we will primarily focus on the development of the film industry in the United States. This focused area of study will enable us to engage more fully in discussions of the industrial and aesthetic development of the US cinema and cultural and ideological aspects of film production and exhibition, such as race, class, and gender. Class readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments will engage students in critical thinking and analysis in order to develop a more fulfilling engagement with classical cinema.
FILM 220: Diff, Power & Discrim: Sexuality and Film
St. Jacques
This course will concentrate on analyzing representations of sexuality in relation to difference, power and discrimination in contemporary Western cinema. Viewing films that represent a diversity of sexual vantage points in a variety of directorial styles, ENG220 participants will evaluate the construction of sexualities in contemporary film. Beginning with overtly heterocentric films, such as What Women Want (Nancy Meyers, 2000) and Fatal Attraction (Paul Verhoeven, 1992), students will learn to critically explore and evaluate typical and atypical representations of hetero- and homosexuality, queerness, sexual aggression and homophobia, transvestism, transsexualism and intersexuality - as well as intersections of sexuality and discrimination in terms of age and race. Our exploration will be activated through student participation in research, writing, experiential exercise, group discussion forums and personal reflection.

FILM 245: The New American Cinema
Fech
This class will attend post-rating system Hollywood (1968-present) by closely examining the important films and filmmakers of the period along with key events in the business of developing, producing, distributing, and exhibiting motion pictures. There are no prerequisites for this course. This is not a film appreciation class.

WR 121: English Composition
Staff
WR 121 is designed to help you develop and strengthen your writing skills and prepare you for other writing you will do at Oregon State and beyond. Emphasis in WR 121 is placed on the process of writing, including acts of reading, researching, critical analysis, pre-writing, drafting, and revision. Complementing this approach is our focus on the final product—quality compositions that demonstrate rhetorical awareness and evidence of critical thinking. We envision this course as the beginning of and foundation for your writing development as an undergraduate at OSU.

WR 201: Writing for Media
Munk, Jennifer
In recent years, journalism has been transformed by information technology, corporate media systems, and new social media. This class introduces journalistic techniques and concepts that will enable you to participate in writing for newspapers, magazine, blogs, and other popular media forms. Although these various styles sometimes use different storytelling techniques, they all value the writer’s ability to generate tight, accurate, exciting stories at a moment’s notice. Students begin WR 201 by learning to write hard news, summary leads, and headlines using the inverted pyramid style. After gaining command of this basic writer’s toolbox, students’ progress to writing their own feature stories and in-depth profile articles, which are placed in a blog gallery for sharing and discussion. Students will also study basic media theory concerning ethics, First Amendment law, and the fight for objectivity in the worlds of corporate and citizen journalism.
WR 201: Writing for Media  
St. Jacques, Jillian  
Since the golden days of print journalism, and the rock solid reporting of correspondents like Walter Cronkite, Edward R. Murrow and Kit Coleman, there has been an explosion of media culture and forms. We still have “traditional” media—magazines, journals, newspapers, newsletters, press releases, television shows, and radio. But the advent of interactive media has also given us Twitter, Facebook, blogs, podcasts, flash mobs, citizen reporting ... and whatever forms of “new media” are in the works even as we speak. Although each of these media forms engages in a different style of representation, and (sometimes) conforms to a different set of rules, their core skills involve the ability to generate tight, accurate, exciting stories at a moment’s notice. Students begin WR201 by learning how to write headlines, deks and summary leads using the inverted pyramid style. Once participants are able to fully command their basic writer’s toolbox, they progress to pitching and generating their own reviews, feature stories and profiles. Along the way, they learn to conduct interviews, assemble evidence packets, and utilize journalistic databases such as Lexis-Nexis to strengthen the factual muscle of their stories.

WR 214: Writing in Business  
Staff  
Writing is a social act. Through writing we preserve or change the attitudes and beliefs of others, build and maintain relationships, and persuade others to take specific actions. To communicate effectively in the workplace, it is essential to read contexts, think critically, and write clearly. This course focuses on the rhetorical nature of organizational communication and will help you develop a better understanding of audience, argument, convention, and expression. Your work in this course will help prepare you to engage with a wide range of institutions; however, you are encouraged to use coursework to develop a better understanding of workplaces within your major.

WR 222: English Composition  
Staff  
This course aims to increase your textual power by increasing your ability to read, think, and write about ideas and issues in academic and civic conversations. To do this, we will consider what “they say” and what “you say” in response, as well as why (so what? who cares?). You will analyze viewpoints (with a close look at how different authors and stakeholders are situated) and study the elements that go into crafting powerful written and visual arguments in both public and academic realms. Reading contemporary and classic arguments from the textbook and the New York Times provides a sense of our rhetorical tradition over time. You will be responsible for analytical reading, thinking, discussing, researching, and writing. Instructor conferences and peer review as well as consultation with the Writing Center will guide you through various drafts. This classroom is a learning community, so we will show respect for the ideas of all individuals.
WR 224: Introduction to Fiction Writing
Staff
WR 224 is a Writing II course that seeks to unveil the mysteries of writing literary fiction. We'll read both craft advice and short stories as we learn the concepts and practices behind vibrant and compelling stories. Students will be expected to “workshop” the short stories of their peers, as well as write short stories of their own.

WR 241: Intro to Poetry Writing
Staff
Discussion workshop. Rudiments of mechanics and some background in development of modern poetry.

WR 241: Intro to Poetry Writing
Biespiel
We'll break down and transform the writing of poetry so that the typical fears of writing won't apply. We'll work on self-portraits, imitations, inventions, examinations, and tapping into memory and dream. Through an expressive process that emphasizes doing instead of making products, we'll explore not only what you're writing about but also the pleasure of making new discoveries. Students must be comfortable with experimenting and working in traditional forms--and most important, students must be willing to take risks.

WR 241: Intro to Poetry Writing
Richter
This course is designed to help you sharpen your sensitivity to language and become a skilled reader and writer of poetry. We will study the basic elements of poetry—imagery, voice, lineation, meter, and so on—to further develop our understanding of poetic techniques. We will work on in-class writing exercises to help coax your initial ideas into finished poems. In the workshop, we will discuss your own poems in depth. Our goal in workshopping one another’s poems will be to sharpen our own critical faculties, while at the same time providing a useful critical appraisal of the piece in question for its author. We will also read and study a variety of published poems to understand both the nature of contemporary poetry and the literary tradition of which we, as poets, are a part.
"Memoir" comes from the French word for memory. But if we dig even more deeply into the word’s etymology, we discover connections to the Avestic Persian mermara, which, writes essayist John D’Agata, “itself emerged from the Indo-European root for all that we think about that is not present: mer-mer, ‘to vividly worry,’ ‘be anxious about,’ ‘exhaustingly ponder.’” It’s this impulse – the desire to exhaustively ponder our lives and our experiences – that will guide our explorations in this class. We will be cataloging the various ways that writers have channeled this impulse into works of literature, and then we will use these various interpretations of memoir to help guide our own writing. And then we will take all this pondering one step further, by doing intensive reflection on our decisions as writers through the workshop process.

What does it mean to write with style? Is there room for personal style in what we traditionally think of as academic writing? Is your own style bold or meek, subtle or sarcastic? Can a person write without style? We’ll consider all these questions and more in our work together this term. Since you’ve made it this far, by now you know that good writers tailor their writing style to a given audience and rhetorical situation. But we want to push our understanding of style further. We’ll parse the relationship between style and voice, and attempt to illuminate the way our use of tone, diction, emphasis, and clarity shape the entire character of our work. We’ll explore the broader claim that our writing style engages the reader more than any other single element of our prose. Our goal will be not only to explore the meaning of style in expository writing, but to cultivate and expand your own personal writing style, then fortify it by building on the good practices you’ve developed in your writing career so far.

I expect that you enter this class with all the basic skills of strong expository writing in your toolkit. Our goal will be to build on those strengths and identify areas in need of fine-tuning. Success in this class will require your very best effort in every facet of our work together, from whole-class workshops to the well-researched, pointed essays you will produce throughout the term. Welcome to class.

Writing and the reading of writing are social processes that encourage the reader to interpret and respond to texts in varied, unique, and often complex ways. Students in WR 323 will be asked to read and respond to the work of others and compose their own texts with a heightened awareness of style, or the way in which language is used to clearly and gracefully articulate one’s own worldview. Students will be challenged to conceive of and develop their own style, focusing on elements of diction, tone, emphasis, shape and clarity.
WR 324: Short Story Writing
Dybek
Tim O’Brien writes that a story, if truly told, makes the “stomach believe.” But how do you convince a reader to believe, or even care about, something that never happened? In this class, we will attempt to answer this question—and many others—by reading and critiquing works of fiction (by published writers and by you and your classmates), and by completing short exercises that aim to illuminate the craft by calling attention to choices and effects of imagery, perspective, character, etc. This course will follow the workshop model of peer critique, so be prepared to write and read quite a bit and have at least two pieces of original fiction workshopped in class. Many would argue that writing cannot be taught. But, as with any craft—origami, ship carpentry—there is a long tradition of studying fiction in order to learn specific and/or established techniques and writing strategies. On the other hand, some of the most exciting fiction occurs when a writer disregards or flouts expected craft choices. In this course we’ll endeavor to figure out what “the rules” are and how and when to break them.

WR 324: Short Story Writing
Harrison
In this fiction writing workshop, students motivated to advance their creative writing skills will build upon a working knowledge of the elements of a fiction writer’s craft, including point of view, dialogue, imagery and setting, character development, voice, and dramatic structure developed in WR 224. Students will study the work of major contemporary authors to advance their own writing. Exercises allow students to develop the beginning, middle, and end of stories, to work with imagery, and to listen for their own voice and style. In addition to these exercises, students write two complete short stories and revise one.

WR 324: Short Story Writing
Brock, Isabelle
In this course, you will work to develop an understanding of the fundamental tools employed by fiction writers, including character, dialogue, point of view, narrative distance, image, and language. You will also work to become an effective and respectful critic of peer writing, learn to think critically about short fiction, and become, through the practice of reading and writing, a textually literate citizen.

Additionally, as this course satisfies the Writing II requirement for Bac Core, you will work to:
• Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication.
• Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions.
• Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision.
WR 327: Technical Writing
Staff
Technical Writing (WR 327) will prepare you to produce instructive, informative, and persuasive documents aimed at well-defined and achievable outcomes. Technical documents are precise, concise, logically organized, and based on factual information. The purpose and target audience of each document determine the style that an author chooses, including document layout, vocabulary, sentence and paragraph structure, and visuals. To this end, this course will teach processes for analyzing “writing contexts” and producing effective, clean, and reader-centered documents in an efficient manner. You can expect to gather, read, and present the technical content of your field to various audiences in attractive, error-free copy, as well as to learn strategies for presenting that content orally.

WR 330: Understanding Grammar
Brock, Isabelle
Through a variety of learning activities, you will demonstrate that you:
• Are able to recognize and use a range of sentence structures and punctuate them correctly
• Are able to compose rhetorically effective and grammatically correct sentences
• Have the vocabulary to think about and discuss language, especially the structure of sentences
• Are able to recognize and avoid the twenty most common errors in your writing
• Are able to think critically about rhetorical choices in grammar and syntax based on purpose and audience
• Understand language differences, including ethnic, international, and disciplinary differences
• Understand ways that language usage and correctness connect with issues of power in our culture
• Are able to analyze your own style and syntax
• Are capable of effectively revising and editing / proofreading your own writing
You will learn through reading assignments, Discussion Board assignments, two short formal writing assignments, and two exams. Completing all assignment will be essential for your success in this course.

WR 341/441: Poetry Writing
Holmberg, Karen
In this course you will be asked to focus on and further refine the skills gained in introductory poetry writing: recognizing the poetic subject, using vivid and accurate language, creating appropriate metaphors and imagery, breaking lines effectively, and maximizing the musicality and rhythmic intensity of your lines. Because the course is also designed to give you a richer understanding of poetic traditions, I will ask you to explore the opportunities provided by certain “modes” that have been practiced over the years, and to read with historical breadth into the tradition of these forms and modes. You will write a litany or list poem, a portrait or “autobiography” poem, a poem of praise, a poem on a photograph, and a poetic sequence of at least three parts. At least 3 of your poems will be workshopped by the whole class during the course of the quarter. 441 students will be offered more challenging variations on these projects, and will be required to complete other assignments. You will be asked to complete writing exercises, some of which we will start during class time, and critique letters for a select group of your peers. The final graded portfolio will consist of 5 poems (the initial draft, a middle version, and a final draft), introduced by a one page reflection on your growth as a writer.
WR 353: Writing About Places
Fearnside
Whether you have lived your whole life in one place or moved often, whether you are studying at home or abroad, this course will help you write about the places in your lives. We will read and critically evaluate contemporary authors of placed-based writing, exploring the American West, Antarctica, and beyond through their words. Our primary focus will be on the practice of writing and critiquing each other’s work, through which we will create a new place as a community of writers.

WR 416: Advanced Fiction Writing
Jameson
WR 416 Advanced Composition focuses on the development of style and voice in essays, with particular attention to personal essays through the ages and your engagement with that ongoing tradition.
Essays are said to have started with Montaigne’s attempts (essays) to ponder a topic. Reflecting on a topic rather than persuading anyone is our goal. Bring out your wandering muse. Defend the unexpected. Wonder about great ideas and everyday objects. Capture a transitory moment. Share a mental snapshot. Draw on the rich history of this genre to explore many ways to think and write: a casual, pleasurable, feast of words.
The course challenges you to expand your writing style, focusing on clarity, shape, tone, and details to develop a philosophical curiosity about the world and ideas. We will have daily in-class writing, weekly online Reading Journals, and frequent workshops on drafts plus conferences with me to revise your ideas and polish your work.

WR 424: Advanced Fiction Writing
Larison
“Studies in the Novel” is sequence of classes designed with the budding novelist in mind. Each term, we’ll read two or three exquisitely crafted novels, a well-regarded book on fiction theory, and the work of our colleagues. Through private study, craft presentations, and workshop sessions, we’ll develop our critical reading skills, our writer’s vocabulary, and—most importantly—our craft routines. The content for this sequence is accumulative (meaning the content builds on what was covered in the prior term), providing students with a sustained, graduate-level look at the novel and its particular challenges. (However, students are welcome to start any term: fall, winter, or spring).
WR 449: Critical Reviewing  
Jameson, Sara  
This class offers an opportunity for students to gain experience writing, reading, and analyzing reviews and critical essays of various genres (film, book, music, restaurant, art, etc) and in various print and online journals, which is a great way to start as a freelance writer. In addition, we will review and critique reviews published in a variety of sources (including The New York Times Book Review and The New Yorker) and study the history of reviewing as a cultural and institutional phenomenon, with the question of the roles of professional, amateur and citizen reviewers. We will also look at the relationship between the rhetorical situation of a publication (the left-leaning Nation versus the more moderate New Yorker, for instance) and the form and content of reviews that appear in its pages.

Finally, in this class we will spend some time discussing what might be characterized as the economics, politics, and ethics of critical reviewing. A negative review by a well-known critic can sink a Broadway play or cause a movie to go immediately into video stores rather than showing in theaters, so reviews can play key economic, cultural, and political roles in our information age. Given these and other potentially serious consequences, how can reviewers enact ethical practices? How should a reviewer writing for a local newspaper establish standards for high school productions, for instance, or semi-professional musical events? We will also attend events outside the classroom.

The course challenges you to develop and attune your own writing style(s), articulating educated opinions adjusted for specific print and online audiences. You will write short reviews and longer critical essays, compile an online Reading Journal, and create a Media Project. Workshops, conferences, and peer review will help you revise and polish your work. We will have a library visit and at least one “hybrid day.” Some readings are chosen for you, and others you will choose.

WR 517: Teaching practicum: English Comp  
Jensen  
This seminar continues your training in and preparation for WR 121 instruction, further exploring the pedagogical principles and practices introduced during orientation. Designed to support and strengthen your teaching skills, this practicum provides a forum for you to discover and devise pedagogical practices, share strategies, and participate in guided reflection. Moreover, WR 517 provides an opportunity for GTA’s to contribute to the ongoing development of WR 121 curriculum and delivery.
WR 518: Teaching practicum: English Comp
Jameson
This practicum prepares graduate students to teach professional writing for the workplace, specifically OSU's WR 214 Writing in Business (Business Writing). It provides grounding in rhetorical theories and practices for effective teaching of this course. The curriculum for WR 518 is consistent with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Two-Year College Association (TYCA) recommendations for graduate preparation for teaching workplace writing for undergraduates. The course will include familiarity with rhetorical principles in the workplace, typical textbooks, standard syllabus and schedule, typical assignments, managing workload, and using software such as Track changes, Excel and PowerPoint common in the workplace. Visits to current WR 214 classes will provide first-hand experience of the class in action. OSU Career Services and WR 214 instructors may visit the practicum to share their expertise and discuss issues.

WR 520: Studies in Writing
Tolar Burton
This topics course explores research, theories, and pedagogies of writing and language across the curriculum. We will engage WAC pedagogies, pursue theoretical inquiry, and develop knowledge about writing and the teaching of writing as it connects to critical thinking. We will also view WAC in its historical and institutional contexts. Frequent informal reflective writing as well as more developed essays and other genres are part of the course as students pursue questions like, “How does good writing in a discipline differ from good writing in a more general sense?”

WR 521: Teaching Practicum: Fiction Writing
Scribner
WR 521 is a teaching practicum; enrollment is limited to graduate teaching assistants currently teaching WR 224.

WR 522: Teaching Practicum: Poetry Writing
Holmberg/Richter
In WR522, Poetry Teaching Practicum, students will prepare teaching materials (syllabus, reading packets, guideline sheets, exercises, and workshop strategies) necessary to teach WR241: Introduction to Poetry Writing. Students also will develop and articulate a statement of teaching philosophy for the teaching of poetry writing. Practical matters of the course include: choosing readers and handbooks; designing poetry assignment guidelines and relevant exercises; work-shopping strategies; commenting on student work; teaching prosody and close reading skills; assessing one’s course.

This class is offered every spring, and must be taken by any poetry MFA student who wants to teach poetry writing in their second year.
WR 524: Advanced Fiction Writing
Scribner
WR 524 is a fiction writing workshop; enrollment is limited to students accepted into the MFA program in fiction writing.

WR 525: Scientific & Technical Writing
Chapman
WR 525/PSM 525 combines scientific and technical writing with science journalism. Students will draw on a data set (preferably their own) to draft a scientific journal article (or their research proposal), a short funding proposal, a magazine article, and a book review. They will also critically evaluate and edit documents by peer reviewing classmates’ drafts.
An undergraduate writing course is a required prerequisite. WR 525 is cross-listed with PSM 525, and the course is Quality Matters certified.

WR 540: Nonfiction Workshop
Passarello, Elena
For the first leg of this year’s three-workshop sequence, let’s focus on generating content, unpacking the creative impulse, and getting our writing motors running. In other words, I’d like this term’s workshop to be all about process. Instead of honing and fine-tuning established drafts, we’ll keep putting a blank page in front of us and we’ll note what happens. Then we’ll get together and talk about all we noted. Our in-class work will hopefully yield not so much a commentary driven, thumbs-up/thumbs-down “workshop” as a lively discussion between writer and early reader about what surprises us, what strategies are already present, and what potential for lengthier and more practice work exists in early drafts. These discussions will, hopefully, bring us closer to one another’s aesthetic understanding. Our talks might get a little more formal in our final workshop (Prompt #6), but hopefully by then we’ll have developed a vibrant class vocabulary for conveying insightful feedback. In order to facilitate this open-ended work, I’ve designed a series of five flash prompts, none of which will require more than 1000 words of writing. Some of the prompts will make more formal demands, others might ask you to employ one of the crucial “tools” employed by many nonfiction writers.
Consider these blurbs for recent poetry collections:
“Never has the sumptuous materiality of language felt more seductive than in Landon Godfrey’s remarkable debut collection, Second-Skin Rhinestone-Spangled Nude Souffle Chiffon Gown” (yes, this is an actual collection).
“Things are Happening investigates dramatic emotional landscapes in a peculiar, lucid poetry based in contemporary speech."

Sumptuous vs. lucid, ornate vs. vernacular, seductive vs. plain-speaking: this polarizing categorization has historical longevity. 18th century Neoclassical poets urged decorum, or the use of language and techniques appropriate to the subject, without over-reaching or ostentatious verbal effects. Romantics such as Wordsworth hoped to reveal the poetic force of the actual language of men and women, purging poetry of artifice and clichéd emblems, while the younger generation Romantics such as Keats and Shelley embodied a lush, sensual musicality and a descriptive richness. Whitman was prolix as an ocean in his detail, inclusiveness, and in the sheer number of words, whereas Dickenson wrote poems of startling compression; the Modernist dictum “no ideas but in things” was trespassed by Wallace Steven’s self-conscious gaudiness, linguistic frippery, and complex abstraction. Today, a poet’s language tends to be characterized somewhere on the spectrum between “luminous, spare, deceptively simple” and “lush, pyrotechnic, gorgeous.”

All poets exhibit ardor toward language, but, in the ways they work with and give shape to the material of language, they express it differently. In the work of some poets, this ardency toward language expresses itself in a way that looks more like austerity or even distrust, while in the work of others, ardency leads to an unapologetic gorgeousness. In this class, we will examine and “try on” these extremes, while becoming more aware of our place on the spectrum between. So, although you are welcome to workshop any poems you wish, it makes sense to push yourself toward the “plain” end of the spectrum in the first half of the quarter, and toward the “fancy” end in the second half of the quarter.