Spring Term 2015 Course Descriptions, School of Writing, Literature, and Film

Course
ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Harrison

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
Scribner
In this course we will consider fictional form by reading short stories and one novel. As we proceed through the term, our focus will be on elements of fictional craft, such as plot, character, setting, voice, and symbolism. Course outcomes will include developing skills in textual analysis, close reading, and critical thinking and writing. 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.
ENG 104: Intro to Literature – Fiction
Katz
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, characterization, 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
Brock
What is poetry, and why does poetry matter? In this class, we will read, think about, write about, and discuss a wide variety of poems, and we’ll begin to look at poetry through a critical lens. Participation in class discussions and completion of exploratory assignments will make up a significant part of your grade. Quizzes and a final exam will illuminate the understanding you’ve gained.

ENG 106: Intro to Literature - Poetry
Holmberg
This course provides an overview of the main modes, techniques, and characteristics of poetry through an examination of world poetry. Using the anthology readings and the on-line resources above, the course will cover world poetry by geographical region, and will feature 4 week-long units focused on relevant topics or themes within world poetry: Poetics and Craft; Poetry as Cultural Performance; Poetry as Social Action and Historical Witness; Translation and Influence. During each unit, we will also study the poetic devices nearly universal to poetry, such as rhythm, sound play, image, symbol, metaphor, point of view, and tone.

ENG 202: Shakespeare
Barbour
• Sharpen reading skills by mastering Shakespeare’s language.  • Explain Shakespeare’s involvement in the politics and culture of his day.
• Interpret Shakespeare’s influence on 21st century culture.  • Analyze different media of production (page, stage, image, screen).
• Sharpen skills of exposition and persuasion, orally and in writing.
• Recognize the principles of form that shape Shakespearean drama.

ENG 202: Shakespeare
Olson
An introduction to the second half of Shakespeare's career. This course is designed to help students become more confident readers (and audience members) of Shakespearean drama by focusing on language, historical context, and staging. Plays include Macbeth, Measure for Measure, The Winter’s Tale, and The Tempest. This course is included in two Baccalaureate Core categories: Western Culture and Literature and the Arts.
ENG 206: Survey of British Literature: Victorian Era to 20th Century
Davison
As the second course in our British literature survey sequence, this class examines works of 19th and 20th century English prose, poetry, drama, and fiction. These two centuries represent the aesthetic, political, and cultural changes known respectively as the Victorian age (1830's-1890's), the Modernist movement (1890's -1940's), and the Contemporary era (1950's-present). We will situate most of our study in the first two of these eras. Studying this long stretch of English literary arts will include examinations of the works of such figures as Thomas Carlyle, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Lord Tennyson, John Stuart Mill, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, Charles Darwin, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, W. H. Auden, Philip Larkin, Nadine Gordimer, and others. As a study of the mid-Victorian Realist novel, we will also read Charles Dickens’ Great Expectations during the middle weeks of the term. We will read concise introductions to each period throughout the course, the key points of which will be expanded through lecture. Students will be evaluated through two mid-terms and a final examination. A formal essay paper may also be assigned if the class so desires.

ENG 206: Survey of British Literature: Victorian Era to 20th Century
Ward
Find out the backstory for some of contemporary literature’s most pressing issues. By surveying British literature from the Victorian period to today, we will explore important questions about colonial and postcolonial literature, gender politics, science and technology, and race and national identity. Along the way, we’ll define four major periods of literature – Victorian, modernist, post-modern, and contemporary – and ask whether and why each piece seems to fit the characteristics of its period. Assignments will include a position paper, a contribution to a Wikipedia article, and a mid-term and a final exam.

ENG 213: Literatures of the World: Middle East
Elbom, Gilad
This class will focus on modern Middle Eastern narratives from multiple perspectives: cultural, political, religious, historical, postcolonial, geographical, linguistic, structural, stylistic, thematic, comparative, and other points of view. The texts on our reading list include a self-referential Palestinian novel, a feminist narrative from Egypt, a curious bildungsroman from Yemen, and a surrealistic, hallucinatory, self-deceptive novel from Iran. We will also watch and analyze several Middle Eastern movies.

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 225/PAC 331/FW 112: Literature of Fly Fishing
Malewitz
This unit of the macro-course (The Art of Fly Fishing and the Science of Fly Fishing are the other two units) is designed to rapidly introduce you to some of the major themes and formal devices of literature written about fly fishing. In four days, we will gain a sense of how four different genres—the short story, the novel, poetry, and creative nonfiction—represent and understand this activity.

ENG 254: Survey of American Literature: 1900 to Present
León
This course offers an introduction to an array of writers and movements of American literature from 1900 to the present. We will examine how literature responds to and helps shape the variant historical, social, and political movements that develop over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Our readings will take us through many wars, political movements, and literary genre experimentations. We will be especially attuned to questions of: modernity, post-modernism, globalization, immigration, new identity formations, and desire. Reading through these texts, we will see how American writers have written through and beyond the nation as an ongoing process—as a set of persistent questions.

ENG 275: The Bible as Literature
Anderson
In this class we’ll try to set aside everything else and look closely at the language and style of the four canonical gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as if we are reading any other story, the work of any other creative writer: the narrative arcs, the development of character, what the stories say and what they don’t. I’ll ask you to do a short warm-up essay, a take-home essay midterm, and a take-home essay final. There’ll also be pop quizzes along the way, as well as frequent in-class freewriting. Our emphasis will be on ways of reading—on kinds of truth and methods of interpretation. Satisfies Bacc Core Literature and the Arts; Western Culture.

ENG 275: The Bible as Literature
Elbom, G.
Emphasizing variety rather than unity, the Bible is a vast collection of literary genres: stories, poems, genealogies, biographies, prophesies, aphorisms, laws, letters, and many other styles and strategies. This class will focus on narrative, key characters, and biblical scholarship. We will try to broaden and deepen our understanding of biblical literature through a careful reading of specific stories and a close inspection of biblical commentary, looking at Scripture from different perspectives: literary, political, social, theological, linguistic, historical, psychological, feminist, and other points of view. We will focus on some famous male characters—God, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Paul—and examine them in relation to notable women: Samson’s wife, Jephthah’s daughter, Abimelech’s killer, and other interesting, controversial, or marginalized characters. Paying attention to a variety of literary techniques, we will try to address the complexity and richness of the Bible rather than reduce it to one truth, a single message, or important lessons. In other words, our approach will be critical and analytical, not didactic.
ENG 313: Studies in British Poetry: The Romantics and Their Legacy  
Gottlieb  
** This is a WIC (Writing Intensive Course) class. **  
In 1798, the English poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge co-published a landmark volume of poetry: Lyrical Ballads. The collection was an experiment in combining content and form in new ways: Wordsworth would write poems about everyday people and natural phenomena so that they were infused with almost supernatural radiance, while Coleridge would write poems about supernatural events using down-to-earth diction and a realistic perspective. From this uneven collaboration, British Romanticism was essentially born.  
Using the poems of Lyrical Ballads as our starting point, this course will track Wordsworth’s and Coleridge’s formal and thematic legacies, especially from political and eco-critical perspectives. Our next stop will be the poetry of two of the so-called second-generation Romantics, Percy Shelley and John Keats. We will then jump into the twentieth century and beyond, looking at the poetic output of three modern British poets, each of whom adapts the very English worldview of the original Romantics to her or his own local and regional sensibilities: Dylan Thomas (Wales), Seamus Heaney (Ireland), and Carol Ann Duffy (Scotland).  
Grades will be based on attendance & participation, response papers, pre-writing and rough drafts, and two writing assignment sequences.

ENG 318: The American Novel: Modernist Period  
Robinson  
The period between 1920 and 1950 is the most innovative, historically important, and richly treasured era of American fiction. Modernist in orientation but in deep conversation with the novel’s traditional forms and concerns, the best works of these decades remain powerful artistic examples and invaluable cultural documents. We will begin with Hemingway’s first, and best novel, a portrait of American expatriate life, The Sun Also Rises (1926), and follow it with William Faulkner’s Light in August (1932), the murder mystery transformed into modernist classic. Zora Neale Hurston’s Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937), which extends and responds to Faulkner, is one of the most important African-American novels, and a crucial work in the canon of American women’s literature. Scott Fitzgerald’s Tender is the Night (1934), the moving fable of the Jazz Age, and Eudora Welty’s Delta Wedding (1945), an insightful rendering of the life in the deepest South, provide two memorable portraits of mid-century American culture. These will be supplemented by Welty’s superb writer’s memoir, One Writer’s Beginnings through discussions of regional literature.

ENG 319: The American Novel: Post-World War II  
León  
This course will look at the American novel written after WWII. Often deemed the era of the postmodern novel, this time period produced a number of aesthetically diverse novels. In this class, we will read: Lolita, Beloved, Blood Meridian, Housekeeping, and The Brief Wonderous Life of Oscar Wao. As we traverse this diverse set of texts, we will think through the inheritance of history, the role of gender and race, the force of immigration, and the various experimentations of long prose that we call the novel.
ENG 319: The American Novel: Post-World War II
Elbom, G.
From a thematic perspective, this class will focus on the American tradition of exploration, self-discovery, and transformation. From a stylistic point of view, each of the novels on our reading list, in its own original way, inspects, combines, and reinvents several literary traditions, most notably ones that are commonly conceived as uniquely American. Set in a thinly disguised version of Corvallis, at an institute of higher education not unlike Oregon State University, A New Life (1961) is an academic novel that enters into a curious dialogue with another familiar genre: the Western. Against the harsh, tense, vivid backdrop of Cold War era New York, Up (1968), an urban coming-of-age story, constructs a labyrinth of childhood dreams, adult fantasies, political nightmares, personal and professional failures, big city misadventures, small victories, postmodern narrative techniques, and pop culture references. In similar ways, His Own Where (1971), a young adult novel written in Black English, offers a distinctively American version of the bildungsroman, an educational journey in which language itself plays an important role. Set in Kentucky during World War II, Too Much Flesh and Jabez (1977) is an interesting variation on the Southern Gothic: a rural reverie that challenges social norms, gender roles, moralistic restrictions, notions of the grotesque, and the boundaries between fiction and reality. I Love Dick (1997), a cross between an epistolary novel and a personal diary, investigates the complexities of feminist thought and paves the way to what critics have termed theoretical fiction. What is common to all these novels is a high degree of tension between established conventions and self-determination. This type of tension occurs on multiple levels: historical, national, regional, personal, social, political, economic, linguistic, and, perhaps most importantly, literary. In other words, each of these narratives presents highly introspective main characters whose quests for new lives, new frontiers, and new beginnings often parallel the self-examining qualities of the text itself.

ENG 321: Studies in Word, Object, and Image
Sheehan
This course explores the relationship between fashion and fiction from 1900 to the present. Focusing on work written by authors from the U.K. and the U.S., it examines how and why fashion is associated with femininity and modernity, investgates connections between literary and sartorial style, and considers the status of garments and books as global fashionable commodities. Readings include fiction by Edith Wharton, Virginia Woolf, Nella Larsen, and William Gibson as well as literary and cultural criticism, including scholarship in the field of fashion theory.
ENG 330: The Holocaust in Literature and Film
Davison
Is the Nazi Holocaust of European Jewry ultimately beyond the human imagination? Should the generations who did not witness those events compose “stories” about it, or write “poetry” that attempts to envision or search for the redemptive in it? Can there ever be a film that allows us to understand its magnitude, rather than merely make spectacle or heroics from discrete parts of its known history? How do these historical events inform our own era’s violence and mass murder?

In this course we will study major pieces of fiction, memoir, and film that indeed attempt to re-imagine and gain insight into the Nazi vision of a world that, in their own terminology, would be completely cleansed of Jews. We will learn through supplementary documents about the history of European Jewry, religious-based anti-Jewishness, and racial anti-Semitism. We will position the Holocaust in the context of the wider racial science of the era, and through this, grapple with how pervasive race and racial hierarchy was, and often remains, to the Western mind. By way of these contexts, we will make reference to other genocidal actions that have occurred after the Holocaust and into our own century. Finally, through each text we study, we will consider the controversy of the uniqueness of the Holocaust, and whether its unimaginable horrors can ever be justly represented in forms that originated during more innocent periods of Western culture that preceded it—forms such as the traditional novel, the short story, poetry, and film.

Students will be evaluated through two major assignments: a literary/historical analysis of one of the written texts we’ve studied in an essay mid-term format, and a comparative critique of two of the films we’ve viewed for the course. The second assignment will be a traditional, formal essay and mandate at least five critical sources other than the subject text in question.

Texts:
Selection of essays posted on Blackboard
Andre Schwarz-Bart, The Last of the Just (1960)
The World at War: Genocide, Thames Television Documentary (1982)
Europa, Europa, Directed by Agnieszka Holland (1990)

ENG 345: Introduction to Literary Criticism and Theory
Sheehan

This course introduces students to the most influential theories and methodologies shaping the discipline of literary studies, including formalism, structuralism, deconstruction, Marxist aesthetics, New Historicism, feminist theory, queer theory, post-colonial theory, critical race studies, and affect studies.
ENG 374H: Modern Short Story (Honors)
Sandor
In this course we will study several masterful short stories from the early 19th century to the present, using Freud’s notion of “the uncanny” as a starting point from which to explore the complexities of the modern experience from the psychological to the social and spiritual. We will focus on the way the elements of a literary writer’s craft—such as imagery and setting, point of view, character, tone, and dramatic structure—contribute to the reader’s experience and interpretation of meaning in a literary work. Written work required: two 1 page (single-spaced) take-home analyses, unannounced quizzes and in-class writing, midterm exam, final exam, and a research presentation.

ENG 418/518: The English Novel: Victorian Period
Ward
By the end of the Victorian period, the British empire stretched around the globe. This course asks how the Victorian novel depicted this expansive national identity. We’ll read three novels: one classic, Jane Eyre; one sensation novel, Lady Audley’s Secret, and one novel of imperial adventure, Kim. Alongside those novels, we’ll read history and theory to investigate how money, people, commodities, identities, illnesses, and information moved around the globe – and how novels imagined that movement. Assignments will include a mapping project, an object analysis, and two essays.

ENG 454/554: Major Authors: Spenser
Olson
Edmund Spenser set out to be England’s first professional poet, and he succeeded. His technically brilliant poetry and lush fictional worlds (which feature dragons, magic mirrors, and hermaphroditic transformation) have inspired writers and artists for centuries, from John Milton to Virginia Woolf. In this course we will focus on the way Spenser reinvented three major literary forms or modes of representation for English literature: the pastoral, the sonnet, and allegory.

ENG 475/575: Studies in Criticism, Intro to Posthumanism: Machines, Networks, Media
Gottlieb
Machines, networks, and media: together, these potent signifiers and their many physical and incorporeal manifestations play key roles in shaping our contemporary condition. They have become so much a part of our lives that it is almost literally impossible to imagine what our world – and ourselves – would look like without them. Yet all too often they are taken for granted as either a pure good, as in the so-called transhumanist movement (“Build a better you! Upload your brain and live forever!”), or as an unmitigated evil, as in ecologically oriented science fiction (“We are destroying our humanity and our planet! Death to computers!”). This course will forge a path between these two extremes as we read and discuss recent and contemporary theorists on each of these subjects – and then consider the world after us.
475 grades will be based on participation (in class and online), a mid-term exam, and a term paper; 575 grades will be based on participation, an annotated bibliography, and a term paper OR several short position papers.
ENG 488: Literature and Pedagogy
Russell
Literature and Pedagogy is designed for students who may be interested in teaching college or secondary level English classes in reading and literature or literature and cultural studies. The course explores reading as a conversation between the reader, the writer, the text and the social contexts in which the text takes place. Points of emphasis may change from term to term, but topics typically include the disposition of readers in the classroom, cultural and critical pedagogies, histories and practices of professing literature, special issues associated with the teaching of literary genres (poetry, fiction, drama, and special issues associated with teaching specific populations, such as English Language Learners or students with specific disabilities that affect language processing.
We will study these topics through workshop practices and through reading and discussing case studies constructed by both leading practitioners in English studies and students in the class. While the focus of the course is on guiding students through problems of reading and interpretation typically encountered in English language and literature classrooms, the last half of course in particular emphasizes the “future of English” including visual literacy, electronic literacy, and the questions of ownership, authorship, and negotiated meaning that electronic media raise.

ENG 497/597: International Women’s Voices
Detar
This course studies women and their narratives in a comparative, transnational context, focusing on the political and cultural conditions through which women’s narratives are produced, and the effects of gender on language and literature. We will analyze and discuss literary texts, films and oral narratives locating these materials in the fields of literary and feminist studies. Our discussions will ask questions about expectations and assumptions surrounding “third world” and non-western literature, explore notions of fiction and nonfiction, and address the politics of written versus oral histories. As we travel the globe and listen to women’s voices, we will also reflect on our own cultural contexts, and drawing on feminist global studies, we will ask how our own geographic and historical locations inform our reading practices.

ENG 585: Studies in American Literature: Postmod Narrative and Theory
Malawitz
This course will examine a stylistically and conceptually diverse group of American literary narratives written after 1960 but set in the past. The key questions that we will ask concern the relationship between historicity (the factual status of a given historical account) and imaginative fiction. We will examine the ways that American postmodern artists recount the practice and enduring legacy of African-American slavery, the conflicts between Anglo and Native Americans in the American southwest, the rise of corporate capitalism, and the Holocaust of World War II. We will explore the ways in which postmodern skepticism towards “grand narratives” of history influence the plot and style of historical narratives. We will investigate the methods by which literary critics think and write about literature in the wake of this skepticism by bringing into dialogue historical, critical, and creative readings. Finally, we will contemplate ways of integrating these ideas into high school and college classrooms. Readings include Cormac McCarthy’s Blood Meridian, Toni Morrison’s Beloved, Richard Powers’ Gain, Art Spiegelman’s The Complete Maus, and a variety of historical sources related to the narratives.
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
Lewis
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.

FILM 265: Films for the Future
Rust
This course explores the intersections that exist between film, media, and culture through a specific focus two distinct genres of film: science fiction and environmental film. Each of these film genres places the past and future into conversation with the present, thus reflecting and responding to society's understandings of science and technology. The class is built around film screenings and readings that examine the cultural, aesthetic, and industrial aspects of film as well as literary and philosophical aspects of these genres. The first half of the class will focus on the history of science fiction film, which has n since the 1890s. The second half of the course will explore the history of environmental filmmaking, which is a relatively new type of cinema. By combining readings in the field with a range of Hollywood and transnational film texts we will discuss how films work to create textual space that both interrogates real world scientific, technological, and environmental issues.

FILM480/580: Studies in Literature, Culture, Society: World of Disney
Lewis
This class will examine the life and work of Walt Disney -- a key figure in American cultural history – from a variety of contexts: Disney and early animation, Disney and Hollywood history, Disney and the American/film industry labor movement, Disney and the Hollywood blacklist, Disney and American cultural imperialism, Disney and (the) theme parks, Disney films and products and gender identity, Disney after Disney (after Walt dies and the company becomes more modern, more diversified and global) and finally Walt Disney’s legacy as one the century’s most significant creative and corporate talents. As part of this broad cultural history, we will also study the history of American animation (in which, of course, Disney plays a large part). Finally, we will “use” this study of Disney’s life and work and the corporation that has thrived since his death as an introduction to a larger cultural history of the U.S. in the 20th century. Weekly screenings, class presentations, and a final paper.
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
All Instructors
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
All Instructors
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
Griffin
WR 224 is an introduction to the study and practice of fiction writing. Reading deeply in the genre, you will develop the vocabulary to respond to the work of established, contemporary writers in terms of craft and technique. This reading, our discussions in class and various writing exercises will give you the practice and tools you need to compose your own pieces of short fiction. These stories will be constructively critiqued by your classmates in workshop. Out of these workshops should come energy and direction for revision. The capstone for the course is a final portfolio in which you describe your revision process in a cover letter and present the final version of your short story.

WR 224: Introduction to Fiction Writing
Harrison
This fiction writing workshop examines the basic techniques of fiction, with related writing exercises involving elements such as point of view, characterization, and dialogue. Students will study the work of professional fiction writers and apply the principles of contemporary fiction to their own creative writing, creating and revising a satisfying short story.

WR 224: Introduction to Fiction Writing
Peters
By reading the work of published authors and peers, and writing their own works of short fiction, students will develop strategies for writing and an understanding of the fundamental tools employed by fiction writers, including character, dialogue, and point of view. Students in WR 224 will become effective and respectful critics of peer writing, and learn to think critically about literature, representation, and denoted and connoted meanings in written texts. Students will become, through the practice of reading and writing, textually literate citizens.
WR 224: Introduction to Fiction Writing
All Instructors
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 239: Intro to WR: Fiction and Creative Non-fiction
Katz
This class explores how to write good stories, whether real or imagined. We'll read and write in both genres, identifying the elements that make stories more vivid, more human, and more true. Students will write informal pieces and one longer work in each genre, and will workshop one story and one essay. Students will read and write both memoir and short fiction pieces. In recent years the lines that separate these two genres have become increasingly blurry. Memoirs sometimes read like novels, and short stories often sound more true than invented. As writers, how do we know the best vehicle to tell the stories we've lived and observed? This course addresses this question directly. In the reading component, we'll look at works in both genres centered around themes: parents and children, friends and lovers, living with death, and telling stories. We’ll examine and discuss the ways the tools of each genre are used to reveal the heart of the story. In the writing component, students will write one piece in each genre, using techniques from the published pieces we’ve read. Through this exploration, students will gain a deeper understanding of the ways they can use the elements of good storytelling—voice, point of view, characterization, dialogue, description, setting, and rhythm—to bring any story to life, whether true or imagined. This course combines approximately 90 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 3 credits.

WR 241: Intro to Poetry Writing
Staff
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.

WR 303: Writing for Web
Pflugfelder
Writing for the Web prepares students to produce instructive, informative, and rhetorically savvy writing for Web-based locations and applications. Web-based writing is often written differently than writing meant for different media, because writing on the Web is more often concerned with helping people find information, get things done, convey their opinions, build communities, and collaborate on complex projects. To this end, Writing for the Web will teach students processes, strategies, and principles for analyzing writing contexts and producing writing for different content management systems, Websites, Webwares, and apps. Students learn effective strategies for writing and producing Web content, particularly through the use of existing Web sites and
services, but also through the construction of their own Websites. To achieve success in this course, students must demonstrate knowledge of advanced writing techniques adaptable for numerous networked, multimedia contexts.

WR 323: English Composition
Peters
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 323: English Composition
Passarello
This section of WR 323 investigates non-fiction forms that emphasize stylistic creativity. Our goal in this investigation will be a clearer understanding of the diverse ways in which language can be used to gracefully and persuasively articulate emotional, collective, or logical “truth.” My goal for this class is to give every student some experience in the life of a creative writer. Successful writers almost always READ extensively, take tons of daily NOTES, DRAFT essays long before their polished due dates and REVISE a piece several times (or several hundred times) before they consider it publishable. To mirror this lifestyle, you will be reading at 20-30 pages of text a week in my class. You will be writing and responding at least 500 words per week as well. Please seriously consider whether or not you can commit to this reading and writing workload before joining me.

WR 324: Short Story Writing
Scribner
In this course we will study the basic elements of fiction—character, dialogue, point of view, tone, and so on—to further develop our understanding of fictional techniques. Our class will combine reading, writing, and discussion. Assignments will include one full-length short story (7-12 pages), five writing exercises, and a short essay on aesthetics and craft.

In order to understand how fiction is put together—how the raw material of inspiration is transmuted into art—we will read and discuss in class a selection of short stories. We will try to understand these works in terms of why the author has made the aesthetic choices he or she has made. Why first person? Why third person? Why is X the narrator rather than Y? Why the present tense? Why dramatize this scene; why narrate this information?

WR 324: Short Story Writing
Rodgers
WR 224 is the prerequisite for this class (no exceptions). In 324 you’ll further develop your understanding of the elements of narrative (plot, point of view, characterization, setting, tone, metaphor, subtext, etc.) both as writer and reader; engage in a range of in-class and out-of-class writing exercises and prompts to help you develop voice and material; become a more sophisticated reader of your peers’ stories, and the stories of contemporary authors; and hone your critical skills, written and oral. Course requirements include three graded exercises, regular quizzes, an essay on craft, and participation. Please note that we will NOT consider genre fiction in this class (fantasy, science fiction, romance, mysteries, young adult fiction, etc.).
WR 327: Technical Writing
All Instructors
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: Poetry Writing
Richter
This course is designed to sharpen the writing, critiquing, and close-reading skills gained in WR 241. Through in- and out-of-class exercises, you will work to improve the imagery, voice, lineation, and rhythm of your poems. In this course you will practice the stages of writing—from generative brainstorming to composing solid drafts to polishing accomplished work; revision will be emphasized at every stage.

In our rigorous, supportive workshop, we will discuss your poems in depth and offer useful, insightful feedback. We will also read, study, and imitate a variety of contemporary poets as models and inspiration. Prerequisite: WR 241.
WR 341/441: Poetry Writing
Biespiel
The essential duty of a poet is to tell the truth, through intensified speech, about the inner and outer world, and to do so requires of the poet an ambitious engagement with the history of poets and poetry. To write poems is to engage not only the world and the word, but also the world of the word. This poetry workshop will work at moving your poems above and beyond personal expression into the larger realm of poetry (like sculpture, painting, dance, etc.) as art. By using lyric, dramatic, and narrative styles, we'll get at the ways you can make and remake poems, intensifying their form and meaning. Special emphasis: sound, rhythm, lines, and form. A workshop for poets who want to take risks with your poetry.
The course is designed for students to immerse themselves in the forms and patterns of traditional English-language poetry as a method to begin to develop your own voice and style. As the intermediate level workshop, the philosophy of this course is that you must know the conventions -- whether you decide to break them later or not. With that in mind, this course will focus on the long-established ABCs of poetry-writing: metrical lines, rhyme, and traditional stanza patterns (couplets, tercets, quatrains, etc.), as well as working in the basic forms of English-language poetry - including the sonnet, sestina, pantoum, villanelle, heroic couplet, blank verse, nonce forms and more. Emphasis on mastery of traditional lines and stanzas in a contemporary idiom. Revision is required.

WR 362: Science Writing
Jameson
You will learn and practice the conventions for writing scientific materials for a variety of audiences, including print and digital publishing sites, adapting the materials and texts as needed to become increasingly sophisticated critical thinkers and writers who can shape material effectively. While working on good writing to create engaging feature articles which explain science to a general educated audience, the course will also look at the history of science writing and compare to scientific writing. You can work in the areas of science that most interest you and/or fields in which OSU excels. You will interview scientists outside of class to gather information for assignments. In addition, a service learning project may be available and guest speakers may present, such as from OSU’s Terra Magazine, for example. This 3-credit course involves writing and research assignments, lecture, and in-class and on-line activities.

WR 414: Advertising and Public Relations Writing
St. Jacques
This course will analyze the common ground between advertising – with its television commercials, glossy fashion ads, and pay per click pop-ups – and public relations, with its tactfully poised messages strategized to remedy crisis situations or promote an institution’s assets and community goodwill. Although the two fields might seem worlds apart, advertising and public relations share one intrinsic task: deploying rhetorical skills to persuade, convince and motivate their target audiences to take a desired action. To achieve this aim, advertising and public relations professionals avail themselves of any media forms that will get their point across plausibly and expeditiously. This skill set requires proficiency at writing descriptively, quickly and convincingly under tight deadline constraints. Through assembling and critiquing two portfolios – an advertising campaign and a press kit — participants in WR414 will hone their skills at advertising and public relations writing.
WR 420/520: Studies in Writing: Style and Sentence
Anderson
In this class you’ll work first on writing clear, direct sentences. This will involve doing exercises from Joseph Williams’s Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace, exercises that actually have right and wrong answers. You’ll be learning specific syntactic moves, and moves that can make your writing better whatever it is, whether it’s fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, or academic articles.
In the second part of the course you’ll be reveling in sentences and celebrating sentences and imitating a wide variety of sentences, drawing on Stanley Fish’s recent How to Write a Sentence (And How to Read One). The writing for the class: a freewriting notebook, to keep track of the reading and just to give you a chance to write a lot of sentences, for fun, regardless of content; and four extensive out-of-class style projects involving both exercises in syntax and various kinds of sentence imitations and variations. The emphasis in the class will be on producing sentences--on performance, not theory--though you’ll also do some background reading in rhetoric and composition and the theory of style, including theory that challenges the whole notion of clarity and directness. And the emphasis will be just on sentences, on the sentence as a unit, not on paragraphs, not on essays. Just sentences. Think of this as sentence yoga. Think of this as sentence aerobics. Think of this as a class in which you get to write hundreds of sentences and play with hundreds of sentences and most of the time not worry about content or being serious or even making any particular point. Note: the focus this year will not be on sentence diagramming or grammatical issues, as it was last year, though I do want you to bring or buy a handbook, and I am glad to work with you individually as issues of correctness arise.
Texts:  
Joseph Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace
Stanley Fish, How to Write a Sentence
Chris Anderson, Free/Style (posted on Canvas)
optional: Diana Hacker, Rules for Writers

WR 424: Advanced Fiction Writing
Sandor
In this advanced fiction writing-course, students will study the art of literary fiction, and produce several short exercises building up to a final full-length story. Pre-requisite: WR 324. Our sessions will involve the discussion and rigorous written and oral critique of student writing, along with weekly written analyses of contemporary short fiction.

WR 424: Advanced Fiction Writing
Larison
Welcome to Advanced Fiction Writing, a course that will delve into the subtle mechanics behind compelling, moving, and thematically important fiction. Though our readings will focus on modern short stories, the lessons taught will apply equally well to novels and novellas.

This term, we’ll be focusing our inquiries on issues of structure. Specifically, we’ll be asking “How does a writer create a compelling ‘present moment’? How can structure reveal the character? What is the relationship between internal conflicts and external conflicts within modern stories?”

This section of WR 424 will include guided readings of published work, workshop, and regular blogging.
WR 448/548: Magazine Article Writing
Verzemnieks
In this class, we will explore the art of writing for magazines. From crafting the perfect pitch, to practicing the fundamental skills of reporting and fact-checking that such work demands, we will read widely and roam freely in our own hands-on attempts at quick-hit features and longer-term projects centered around people, places or events. As much as we will focus on questions of craft in class-wide workshops, we will be equally concerned with the art of process, interviewing working writers and editors to broaden our own sense of approaches and techniques.

WR 497/597: Digital Literacy and Culture
Pflugfelder
Digital Literacy and Culture focuses on the many and varied relationships between how we express ourselves and the technological systems and networks that provide context, meaning, and shape to those expressions. From pencils to pixels, telegraphs to texts, and semaphores to social networking, this class will examine the interactions between technology and literacy throughout history. While our focus will be on how literacies have both changed and been influenced by specific technologies, we’ll also address the production, reception, and transmission of cultural texts, both analog and digital. Beyond simply defining “new media,” we’ll consider how technologies affect subjectivity, agency, power, community, relationships, careers, and cognition. Further, this class will reflect on our current technological situation, how the technologies we use to communicate have ties to older literacies, and what they may suggest about coming changes. Since digital literacy and new media do not inhabit one particular discipline, our course will be quite interdisciplinary, drawing from areas of study such as communication, law, art, history, science, economics, and rhetoric.

WR 518: Teaching Practicum: Writing in Business
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 521: Teaching Practicum: Fiction Writing
Faculty
WR 521 is a teaching practicum; enrollment is limited to graduate teaching assistants currently teaching WR 224.
WR 522: Teaching Practicum: Poetry Writing
Holmberg
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: Teaching Practicum: Poetry Writing
Dybek
WR 524 is a graduate level fiction workshop, available only to students admitted into the MFA program. We will discuss student fiction (and occasionally published fiction) with an eye towards answering two essential questions. First, what experience is this piece of fiction asking us to have? And second, how can that experience be made more potent or successful upon revision?

WR 540: Nonfiction Workshop
Passarello
This graduate workshop concerns the art of revision. Students will come to our first meeting armed with substantial, yet “unfinished” drafts of essays, which will then receive extensive group workshops. For the next weeks of class, we will discuss these essays in tandem with smaller revision strategies: the art of the opening, the tyranny of the middle, sticking the landing of an ending, line editing, etc. Some of these middle-term discussions will be supplemented by outside texts. As all this takes place, students will independently undergo a massive, global revision of their pieces, which will then receive open-ended workshops in late May/early June.

WR 541: Advanced Poetry Writing
Richter
WR 541 is a graduate poetry workshop which requires admittance to OSU’s MFA Program.
While I was getting my MFA, I read talented, famous poets who I loved and aspired to become, but I don’t remember ever feeling like one of them. Confidence-wise, craft-wise, it is essential that you see yourself as a poet in a larger context. To give you a sense of who’s writing and publishing today, we’ll read three recent first books by young American women (including Rebecca Lindenberg’s Love, An Index)—they’re doing what you’re doing, right now; this is the larger writing community of which you are part—and you’ll have the valuable opportunity to talk with one or more of them about their work and process. Form-wise, these poets offer very different yet equally successful examples; we’ll read their work as models and inspiration for what’s possible in your thesis and subsequent collections.