NOTE to prospective students: This syllabus is intended to provide students who are considering taking this course an idea of what they will be learning. A more detailed syllabus will be available on the course site for enrolled students and may be more current than this sample syllabus. Summer term courses may be accelerated – please check the Ecampus Schedule of Classes for more information.

WR 424
ADVANCED FICTION WRITING

COURSE CREDIT:
(4) This course combines approximately 120 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 4 credits.

PREREQUISITES, CO-REQUISITES AND ENFORCED PREREQUISITES:
WR 324 [D-] and/or instructor approval required.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Advanced fiction workshop with an emphasis on developing longer pieces. (FA) This course is repeatable for a maximum of 8 credits.

Baccalaureate Core Course Attributes:
Liberal Arts Fine Arts Core

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 section of WR 424 will include guided readings of published work, workshop, and regular writing and commenting.

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Instructor: John Larison
Office: 306 Moreland Hall
E-mail: larisojo@onid.orst.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information. For accuracy, please check the ECampus Schedule of Classes to see the most current instructor information. You can search for contact information by name from the OSU Home Page.
LEARNING RESOURCES:

Required Text:


   NOTE: For textbook accuracy, please always check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website. Sample syllabi may not have the most up-to-date information.

   Students can also click the ‘OSU Beaver Store’ link associated with the course information in the Ecampus schedule of classes for course textbook information and ordering.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication.

2. Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions.

3. Apply critical thinking to writing and writing process, including revision.

COURSE CONTENT AND POLICIES:

Instructor Availability
The instructor responds to all emails within 48 business hours, and to all formal written work within seven days. If you have general questions that might interest your classmates, feel free to post them on the Discussion Board’s Questions Forum. If you have private questions, feel free to email the instructor at the address provided above.

Expected Time Commitment (Over 11 Weeks)
Class time (including watching lectures and participating in online discussions): 30 hours
Assigned reading (including published stories and peer drafts): 30 hours
Blog posts: 10 hours
Analysis Paper: 12 hours
Short Story Instructor Draft: 12 hours
Short Story Revision
   (Including revision before workshop and after, leading to Final Draft): 18 hours
Workshop (including letters and comments): 8 hours

Total = 120 hours (30 hours per credit hour)
Evaluation of Student Performance

The Assignments

1) **Discussion Board Contributions (6%)**:
   a. During the first half of the term, we’ll be using specific forums on the course Discussion Board to conduct conversations as a class. We’ll be using these discussions to advance our collective understanding of the course concepts being taught.
   b. For weeks 1-4, plan to post answers to the questions posed by the instructor, then to offer at least two additional posts in response to other students’ answers; these additional posts might be questions or rebuttals. [Worth 1.5% per week, for a total of 6%]
   c. There is no word count minimum on Discussion Board Contributions; each post should authentically engage the material and advance the class discussion in a substantive manner. Late posts are not accepted for credit, unless an arrangement was made with the instructor before the due date.

2) **Blogging (9%)**:
   a. Five times during the term, you’ll be asked to write a blog entry. (See Course Schedule for the prompts). These blogs offer low-stakes opportunities for you to practice the craft techniques we’ll be learning about each week. [1% each week, for a total of 5%]
   b. Blog comments: During weeks 1-4, plan to read and respond to at least three other students’ blog posts. You’ll find specific guidance for these comments on the schedule. The week six blog post requires no commenting. [1% each week, for a total of 4%]
   c. There is no word count minimum or maximum for blog posts. Draft, revise, and edit your post before submission. Make an authentic and complete effort, and you can expect full credit.

3) **Analysis Paper (15%)**:
   a. Once during the term, you’ll write a concise analysis of a story assigned by the instructor. This analysis will answer the following prompts using quoted evidence and analysis of that evidence to bolster your argument:
      - Explain the most important technique the author uses to create verisimilitude.
      - Explain the two primary methods the author uses to build sympathy for the protagonist.
      - How does the author keep us turning the pages?
      - Does the story end with logical exhaustion or resolution?
   b. Your paper must be under 600 words (no allowances provided on this rule, as part of the challenge is distilling what you see into concise language). No need to include an introduction or conclusion to your paper. Simply provide the prompt, then your response to it.
4) **Your Short Story (60%)**:
   a. **Instructor Draft**: At the end of week 5, you’ll submit a complete and thoroughly revised draft of a short story to your instructor via the Assignments page. Before completing the revision process, be sure to read the grading rubric provided on the Assignments page. Be sure to include your name, the story’s title, and the word count at the top of the story’s first page. [30%]
   b. **Instructor Feedback**: Within seven days of the due date, you can expect written feedback from your instructor that points out strengths of the current draft as well as areas that still need improvement. You’ll also receive a grade.
   c. **Workshop Draft**: At the end of week 7, you’ll submit a new draft of your short story to a specific workshop forum on the Discussion Board. This draft should make a substantive effort to revise the story, as directed by the instructor. [On-time submission required to pass the course.]
   d. **Final Draft**: At the end of week 10, you’ll submit a final draft of your short story. Be sure to review the grading rubric before finalizing your revision. [30%]

5) **Workshop (10%)**:
   a. **Workshop Letters**: After submitting your short story to the workshop forum, you’ll begin reading and evaluating the stories of your peers. (Each person will be in a small workshop group, assigned by the instructor during week six). By the deadline listed on the schedule, post a 400-600 word workshop letter as a reply to the student’s story submission. Late letters are not accepted. (Worth 5%)
   b. Letters should be thoughtful, insightful, and honest. Quality workshop letters grow from the careful reading. A good letter can act like a bright flashlight, revealing terrain the author wouldn’t have otherwise seen. A bad letter—one written quickly and without serious thought—can be a waste of time. Let’s treat each student’s work seriously and give it the attention it deserves. Read carefully, let the story digest, read it again, then sit down and write a lucid and well-articulated letter. Finally, revise the letter before submission.
   c. **Some tips**: Avoid simply pin-pointing grammatical errors or moments of minor confusion. Instead, start by articulating what you see the story as attempting to achieve. Describe an especially alluring quality. Cite an example of that quality. Then move on to issues of character; specifically, look for moments where you feel distanced from the character, places where you don’t feel what the character is feeling, and moments when the character does something you don’t understand or believe. Also, do the characters come to life now? Where and where don’t they? Do you feel sympathy for the character? Where and why? Where else might the author seek to build sympathy for the character? How? Is the story’s structure propelling you as a reader? Do you feel the internal conflict? Are you compelled by the external conflict? Consider stakes, challenges, and profluence. Articulate your reactions with enough precision that the author will be able to repair the errors. With every point you make, positive or negative, cite an example from the story. Consider ending your letter by identifying areas of untapped potential, places where you feel more emotion or tension could be gained. You letter doesn’t have to use all these strategies; these are offered only as guidance. However, your letter must be substantive and helpful—and on time.
d. **Workshop Comments:** After submitting your workshop letters, you’ll be expected to tune into the workshop forum twice more during the week and advance the conversations on-going there (see Course Schedule for details). Your comments might focus on those places you strongly agree or disagree with the sentiments articulated by your peers. You might rebut or ask questions. Your comments should be substantive and well-considered. Each student is expected to respond to each workshop letter submitted (not including those letters submitted to his or her story). Then, in the days after, each student is expected to offer additional responses to any questions or rebuttals raised in response to their earlier letters or comments. (Worth 5%)

e. **Some tips on commenting:** Imagine we’re all sitting around a table together discussing these stories. The workshop letters and comments function as our unfolding analysis of the stories. If you would agree or disagree with a person’s comment around the table, be sure to agree or disagree in writing during our workshop.

f. **Comments of thanks:** Though you’re encouraged to thank your workshop mates for their efforts in analyzing your story, such posts of thanks won’t count toward the commenting requirement.

**Honesty and Civility**

**Conduct:** Students will act professionally in class, arriving on time and being polite. Behaviors that are disruptive to learning will not be tolerated and will be referred to Student Conduct for disciplinary action. (See <http://oregonstate.edu/ admin/stucon/regs.htm>, “OSU Student Conduct Regulations” for more information.)

**Cheating,** in any form, is not tolerated at Oregon State University. Any plagiarism or use of someone else’s writing (including sentences or phrases), information, or ideas without proper attribution and citations – intentional or accidental – may result in an F on the paper or for the term. A written report of Academic Dishonesty may be filed with the Dean’s office for further disciplinary action. Recycling your own work from other classes is also not allowed.

**Course site login information**

Information on how to login to your course site can be found [HERE](#).

**Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

Oregon State University is committed to student success; however, we do not require students to use accommodations nor will we provide them unless they are requested by the student. The student, as a legal adult, is responsible to request appropriate accommodations. The student must take the lead in applying to Disability Access Services (DAS) and submit requests for accommodations each term through DAS Online. OSU students apply to DAS and request accommodations at our [Getting Started with DAS](#) page.

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for
contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.

Additionally, Canvas, the learning management system through which this course is offered, provides a vendor statement certifying how the platform is accessible to students with disabilities.

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct (OSU policy)

Students are expected to be honest and ethical in their academic work. Intentional acts of academic dishonesty such as cheating or plagiarism may be penalized by imposing an “F” grade in the course.

Student conduct is governed by the universities policies, as explained in the Office of the Dean of Student Life: Student Conduct and Community Standards. In an academic community, students and faculty, and staff each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment, whether online or in the classroom. Students, faculty, and staff have the responsibility to treat each other with understanding, dignity, and respect.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g. on discussion boards, email postings, etc.) in compliance with the university’s regulations regarding civility. Students will be expected to treat all others with the same respect as they would want afforded to themselves. Disrespectful behavior (such as harassing behavior, personal insults, inappropriate language) or disruptive behaviors are unacceptable and can result in sanctions as defined by Student Conduct and Community Standards.

For more info on these topics please see:

Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct
Student Conduct and Community Standards - Offenses
Policy On Disruptive Behavior

Plagiarism

You are expected to submit your own work in all your assignments, postings to the discussion board, and other communications, and to clearly give credit to the work of others when you use it. Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of “F.”

Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct
Avoiding Academic Dishonesty

Turnitin Plagiarism Prevention

Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against
Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content. Turnitin generates a report that highlights any potentially unoriginal text in your paper. The report may be submitted directly to your instructor or your instructor may elect to have you submit initial drafts through Turnitin and you will receive the report allowing you the opportunity to make adjustments and ensure that all source material has been properly cited.

Papers you submit through Turnitin for this or any class will be added to the OSU Turnitin database and may be checked against other OSU paper submissions. You will retain all rights to your written work. For further information on Turnitin please click HERE.

**Technical Assistance**

If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, assistance logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact the OSU Help Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-3474, email osuhelpdesk@oregonstate.edu or visit the OSU Computer Helpdesk online.

**COURSE DEMO**

**GETTING STARTED**

**Tutoring**

For information about possible tutoring for this course, please visit our Ecampus NetTutor page. Other resources include:

- Writing Center
- Online Writing Lab

**Student Evaluation of Teaching**

The online Student Evaluation of Teaching form will be available in week 9 and close at the end of finals week. Students will be sent instructions via ONID by the Office of Academic Programs, Assessment, and Accreditation. Students will log in to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted. Course evaluation results are very important and are used to help improve courses and the learning experience of future students. Results from questions are tabulated anonymously and go directly to instructors and unit heads/supervisors. Unless a comment is “signed,” which will associate a name with a comment, student comments on the open-ended questions are anonymous and forwarded to each instructor. “Signed” comments are forwarded to the unit head/supervisor.

**Refund Policy information**

Please see the Ecampus website for policy information on refunds and late fees.