

*I will tell you something about stories, they aren't just entertainment. Don't be fooled. They are all we have, you see, all we have to fight off illness and death.*

—Leslie Marmon Silko—

# Fiction

Spring 2020

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point  
ENGL 353/553, Section 2 ADV Creative Writing—Fiction  
Monday 4:00-6:30  
CCC 206

Instructor: Jeff Snowbarger  
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Office Hours: M 1:00-2:00, TH 1:00-2:00 or  
by appointment

Class email: ENGL353.02\_2204@uwsp.edu

## Course Description

This workshop based course is a comprehensive introduction to the art of storytelling. We will cover the fundamental aspects of the short story—plot, character, scene vs. exposition, motif, conflict, vibrancy, point of view, dialog, tangibility, compression, structure, pacing, voice, and mystery. We will critique classic examples of the form, take what we learn, and experiment in our own writing. Students must complete one 10+ page short story, and a major revision of the long story. You will also be expected prepare for the weekly workshops by reading your peers' stories and writing a one-page critique letter for each story. Students must be willing to test their imaginations and improve their work through revision. By semester's end, you'll be expected to turn in a portfolio of revised work. Laziness will not be tolerated: attendance and participation are mandatory.

## Required Materials:

- One Notebook for notes and in class writing assignments
- The Story and Its Writer: and Introduction to Short Fiction* Ed. By Ann Charters  
(Available as a textbook rental)

## Participation

Students will be required to participate in each class. This means asking questions, challenging the texts and encouraging your peers. The participation requirement will not be met if the student sits quietly through workshop and fails to engage the material. Students are also expected to complete all of the weekly reading—this will typically include one classic short story and two of your peers' stories. Expect pop quizzes.

## Attendance Policy

This course depends on your attendance and participation. *Unexcused absences* will not be tolerated. After **TWO** unexcused absences your final grade may be lowered a half-letter for every absence thereafter. **FOUR** unexcused absences may result in you being disenrolled from the course. *Three tardies will count as one absence.*

If you must miss class for an excusable reason you are obligated to notify me by email before class is scheduled to begin. I define an excused absence as a class missed due to illness, mandatory religious obligations, certain University activities, or unavoidable circumstances.

## Respect

You are expected to respect your peers. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Make sure your critiques are geared toward the materials at hand. Learning how to give polite, constructive criticism will improve your own writing more than you can imagine.

## Recording Policy

Students may not make audio, video, or photographic recordings of lectures or other class activities without written permission from the instructor. Anyone violating this policy will be asked to turn off the device being used. Refusal to comply with the policy will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom, and possibly being reported to the Dean of Students.

## Workshop

Everyone is expected to put their longer short story up for workshop. This is a chance to hear what other people have to say about what you've created. Sit back, take notes and watch how people have reacted to your work. This immediate feedback is invaluable and gives you the opportunity to assess the successes and shortcomings of what you've hoped to achieve.

**All stories must be emailed to the class email list ONE WEEK before they are supposed to be workshopped. Students are expected to print off a copy, read the story twice, make helpful notes in the margins, and compose a one-page critique letter. These letters are to be at least a page in length. Half the letter should address things the story does well. The other half should offer helpful suggestions on how the piece might be improved in further revisions. Disrespectful remarks, whether spoken in class or written on someone's story, may be cause for dismissal.**

## Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

Participation:		60%
Major Assignments:	Long Story (workshop)	20%
	End of term Portfolio	20%

### Assignment Format

At the top of each assignment you should type:

Your Name

Snowbarger

And the date your story will be workshopped

### Cell Phones & Other Electronic Devices

Please silence/turn off these items at the beginning of class and leave them stored. If devices become a distraction you will first be warned; continued distractions will **not** be discussed, but may result in significant loss of Participation Points (20% of your final grade).

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking credit for work that is not your own. There will be serious consequences if I find that you have stolen other people's work and turned it in as your own. You are also expected to turn in new work. Recycling old work is also considered plagiarism. (See the University's stance on plagiarism below).

### Rights and Responsibilities

UWSP values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Click here for more information: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

### Learning Inclusive Environment

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>