

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 436.04

FALL 2018

COURSE TITLE: Long Short Stories and the Novella

Classroom: SS 1153

Instructor: Aritha van Herk

Office: SS 1132

Phone: 403 220-5481

E-mail: vanherk@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 14:00 to 16:00

Homepage/course website:

<https://english.ucalgary.ca/courses/f18/ENGL436.04?destination=courses%2Ff18>

Course description:

English 436 is a course in the practice and theory of writing longer works of prose for students at an intermediate level, with emphasis on well-developed stories or short novellas. Students are expected to read and write a great deal and should be prepared for intensive work. The course is conducted as a workshop, along with analyses and critiques; class participation is required. There is no group work; the class functions as a workshop of the whole. Students will make work to be discussed available in advance so that their colleagues can read that material and come to class prepared to discuss it with erudition and eloquence.

Students are required to submit writing that is polished and well developed. Students are also expected to read their colleagues' writing with care, to write brief critiques of their colleagues' work, and to come to class with constructive criticism, prepared to discuss each piece of writing under consideration. This requires steady and thoughtful work in preparing for class, and requires focused attention on an ongoing basis.

Students are required to write and submit about 50 pages of Creative work: one short novella OR two long stories of about 25 pages, OR four shorter pieces of about 15 pages, with a final re-written portfolio to be submitted as a piece de resistance at the end of the course. Work will be critiqued by the class, and all work should be carefully constructed, showing evidence of re-writing and revision. Pages of writing for the course should total around fifty, but that is a rough guide. The primary expectation is that students will be producing polished work.

Students are also required to do one in-class presentation on a selected work from the text assigned to the class. This in-class presentation will be brief (5 minutes), and will approach a particular piece of writing from a writer's perspective, elucidating its effectiveness and usefulness.

Assignments and Evaluation:

50 pages of writing (1 novella OR 2 short stories OR 4 shorter pieces)	50%
Final portfolio (40 pages)	20%
Class participation	10%
Critical acumen, critiques	10%
In-class presentation	10%
TOTAL	100%

A student must complete **ALL** work in order to pass this course.

There is **NO** final examination in this course.

As per Calendar Section E.3, attendance is included in your participation grade:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-3.html>

Pedagogy, workload, methods of evaluation:

This class will be conducted primarily as a workshop, with students handing in writing twice in the term. Students are expected to write a great deal, to read the text assigned, as well as their classmates' writing with care, and to come to class prepared to discuss this writing with constructive, informed, and intelligent criticism. Grades will be based on writing, critique skill, the in-class presentation, and in-class participation. There is **NO** final exam in this course. Attendance is essential.

Texts and readings:

The Penguin Book of Canadian Short Stories, selected and introduced by Jane Urquhart (Penguin)

This book is available in the bookstore. Required.

Submission of Work:

Work to be critiqued is to be sent to Professor van Herk via e-mail, in pdf form, so it can be posted on D2L.

You must also provide me with **TWO** hard copies of each assignment, given to me in class. Please make every effort to give your writing to me. If it is not possible to do so, take it to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in my mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause.

Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

Guidelines and Policies

Electronic Devices:

We are all at the mercy of social networking, cell phones, text messages and e-mail, but in this class we will need to concentrate on writing.

a) We will be in a wireless-access classroom. You may take notes and work on a laptop in class. If the context is relevant, we may use the Internet to search for a particular item of information together. You are to use this as a tool to accompany the context of what we are learning and discussing. You are **NOT** to surf

the net, text message your friends, play games, or do assignments for a different class.

b) Cell phones are to be turned off in class.

c) I check and answer e-mail regularly, usually within 48 hours; however, do not expect me to reply to a query within minutes.

Food, Drink, etc.:

Because this is an evening course and a long class, it is understandable that students might feel hungry. Students may drink coffee or water or juice in class, but I would request no consumption of food. Eating in a class like this is distracting and intrusive. We do have a fifteen-minute break in the middle of the class, so if you have low blood sugar and need to consume something, please do so in the break.

How to do well in this course:

1. Class attendance is required. You will have difficulty passing this course if you do not attend, if you do not write regularly, and if you do not read your colleagues' work with care and diligence.

2. If you are to make good progress, it is essential that you set aside time for writing every day. Students who work steadily throughout the year perform better than students who binge-write. Writing is a matter of discipline, not excuses.

However, if you are ill or are experiencing other difficulties, do let me know so that appropriate consideration can be given to your circumstances.

3. Writing must be double-spaced and must use a clear font so that the text can be read easily, either in hard copy or on-line. Students are responsible for supplying electronic copies of their work so that it can be posted on D2L. You **MUST** give the instructor **TWO** hard copies of piece of writing to be critiqued and you must provide two hard copies of your critiques of your colleagues' stories, one for Professor van Herk and one for the author of the text under consideration.

4. This is a course in literary writing, not a course in how to get published or what is trendy (see guidelines on genre writing). We are more concerned with exceptional writing than we are with its marketing.

5. The schedule for this class, as the attached outline makes clear, sometimes varies. A class may be cancelled or moved, but it will always be replaced, if not by a class, then by a literary event. Please let me know if this flexibility creates difficulties for you. Use the schedule to plan and to make effective use of your time.

6. Students often labour under the misguided notion that they do not wish to be "influenced" and that reading outside material or participating in the literary life of the community is not relevant. In fact, literary events provide students with invaluable inspiration and experience.

7. Class participation (discussion) is a requirement, part of the graded component of this course.

8. Students will determine their own deadlines in this course. You should plan to be workshopped twice over the course of the class.

9. The work that is circulated in the class deserves your full attention. However, it does not deserve the attention of your cousins, roommates, or friends. Please keep your colleagues' work confidential, and treat it with respect, as you would wish your writing to be treated. Also, do not discuss your colleagues or their

work on social media, in any platform.

10. Work is to be discussed in class with intelligence, using literary terminology. See Guidelines for in-class discussion.

11. If you are having difficulties of any kind, or if you have questions, please feel free to meet with me. If you cannot make an appointment during my regular office hours, I am happy to arrange to meet at another time. Do not hesitate to inform me of potential difficulties because I will do all I can to help you solve them.

Guidelines for in-class discussion:

From the language that holds sway in daily conversation and from our abbreviated texting language, a nuanced vocabulary may seem archaic, but is increasingly desirable. The current reliance on “thing,” “you know,” and “like” are markers of a lazy tongue. In this class, we will focus on improving your eloquence and wit by moving beyond such limited vernacular. This class will seek to help you overcome speech disfluencies, which consist of various breaks, irregularities or non-lexical vocables that occur within the flow of speech. These include *false starts*, i.e. words and sentences that are cut off mid-utterance; and fillers, i.e. grunts or non-lexical utterances such as “huh,” “uh”, “erm”, “um”, “well”, “so”, “like”, and “you know.” Please take notes on our discussions of oral fixatives and vocabulary dependencies, and add your favourites to a list as the year progresses.

The “I LIKE” syndrome: In terms of evaluative positions and their critical expression, your personal tastes are a less useful benchmark to apply than objective appreciation. When reading any text, the questions you must confront are not whether or not you “liked” the material, but whether it is convincing, effective, and interestingly developed, with reference to literary elements. If you determine that some aspect of the work works well, explain what and why. And if you find some aspect of the work that does not work well, explain what and why. Abusive or personal comments will not be tolerated.

Learning is about confronting uncomfortable ideas. At some point during this class, we are likely to discuss sensitive material, material that will challenge your thinking or upset your expectations. These challenges are about enhancing your clarity and capacity for critical thinking. However, if any issues arise that make you uncomfortable, please do meet with me.

Guidelines for Written Critiques:

The same care and attention holds for the critiques that you are required to write in response to your colleagues’ stories. Students are expected to read and comment on others’ work with courteous objectivity. As part of your critical acumen, all students are required to write a one-paragraph double-spaced critique in response to every story discussed in class. These written critiques are due on the evening of class discussion; your reading should thus not be a re-hash of what is said in class, but your own carefully thought-out response to the work you have read. Late critiques will be penalized. Critiques should include the name of the piece being analyzed, the author’s name, your name, and the date, with two paper copies, one for Professor van Herk and one for the student whose work is under scrutiny and who will consider your suggestions very seriously.

Critiques should focus on what strikes you, the reader, as the most intriguing element of the writing you have read. They should cover two aspects: what works well and what does not work well, and why. Begin

with what is effective--always begin positively. Then address what worked least well, and why.

Critiques should avoid, at all costs, general or self-evident comments, or spurious praise. "I liked this piece," is not useful or constructive. Critiques should NEVER be personal or in any way derogatory—such comments are considered academic misconduct. Students must address the work on the page and NOT the writer who has created the material. Nor should critiques consist of hollow praise without substantial editorial comment.

Constructive criticism analyzes both the merits and the flaws of a creative work, the point being to help the writer improve the work. It is a cruel fact that every piece of writing in this class is a work in progress; not one of you will be at a level where you produce perfect or publishable pieces. And every thinking writer must learn to edit and critique his or her work. The more critically a writer can read, the better a self-critic and consequently the better a writer s/he will become. Receiving constructive criticism from careful readers enables every writer to improve his/her writing, and is one of the most useful aspects of this course. As well, in-class discussion of material enables every student to develop his/her critical ability as well as his/her writing. Learning to be a discerning reader is an important step in developing into a better writer, and is a skill that translates from this class into your other courses and your daily life. Critiques will be marked for usefulness, consistency, consideration, skill, literary knowledge, critical acumen, and creativity. They are part of each student's final grade.

Making Material Available:

Because of the issue of deadlines and because of the requirements of evaluation, you must submit TWO HARD copies of ALL your work to Professor van Herk.

Please make every effort to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

Evaluation:

Students will be graded on their writing, on their critiques, on their in-class presentation, and on class participation. Critical acumen (including literary range and historical awareness) is evaluated as part of all those areas.

Grading System:

Assigning grades for creative work is difficult, but this is an academic course, and must fulfill academic requirements. Your final grade will consist of an evaluation of all the work you complete. All work is graded (using the letter system) and returned to you.

Your attendance and participation are part of your participation grade. You are expected to attend class and to contribute to class discussion.

The capstone assignment should demonstrate the degree of improvement you have achieved in the course and will be figured in your final mark.

Following is a description of how grades are derived.

A-/A/A+ (4): Consistently exceptional work

The work is moving toward publishable level. Use of language is concise and precise; figures of speech are imaginative and original; the content is interesting, the approach is fresh, and the form chosen the best possible, every element of fiction engaged with sophistication and elegance. **A+ is a grade earned only in very rare instances, by work that is absolutely stellar.**

B range (3): Consistently good work

The work is good, above average, but could use more refinement or development, and usually more revision. It shows at least in part a heightened use of language, several striking aspects of imagery or story, and an interesting perspective or point of view. Word choice and description are generally exact and thoughtful.

C range (2): Consistently average work

The work is satisfactory, but relies on ordinary use of language, and is not formally innovative. The writing is competent and shows promise, but definitely needs more work and greater focus. Images or plot are sound but may verge on the clichéd and predictable. Vocabulary is adequate but may be limited.

D (1): Minimal pass

The work shows some effort but is carelessly constructed and may have grammatical problems. Use of language is undistinguished and clichéd; ideas are ordinary.

F: No Credit

Work shows no effort; no work has been done at all.

The University of Calgary's official four-point Undergraduate Grading System, as described in the Calendar (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>), will be used in this course.

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>

Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events

<http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

Writing support:

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Library and Research Support:

Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: maboym@ucalgary.ca.

Find The English Pages research guide here:

https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject_id=52619

Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:

**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>

Student Accommodations:**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available

at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip>

“Safewalk” Program:

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students' Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at

ascarts@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at

<http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing

learning and teaching, and selecting courses (www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>

"The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community". The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a "positive and productive learning and working environment." This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that "seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff". Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.