ENGLISH 5389.001
Thesis Research: Fiction
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SFASU
Department of English & Creative Writing
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Where To Reach Me:
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Office Hours: 11-1PM (MW) and 8:30-9:30AM (TU) and by appointment.

Thesis meetings: Arranged between instructor and student. Student will meet with instructor at least once every two weeks.

Course Description:
First semester of a two semester progression of master’s thesis culminating in a well-crafted book-length creation of either poetry or prose.

The official Program Learning Outcomes for this course include:
- The student will demonstrate close reading skills and recognize strategies used by professional creative writers.
- The student will employ techniques and strategies for crafting carefully composed, competent creative work.
- The student will demonstrate strategic revision on completed creative work.
- The student will compose and sustain a complete, polished manuscript of substance in the focus-genre.

The goals for this project are:
- Ability to discuss elements of prose in one’s own work
- Ability to discuss the influence of strategies used by professional, contemporary writers on one’s work
- The ability to improve a body of work (poems, short stories, novella) through revision
- The ability to complete a finely polished full-length work.

GRADING BREAKDOWN
DISCUSSION (meetings) 25%
ROUGH DRAFT (of first half/more) 25%
PROPOSAL 25%
REVISION OF MANUSCRIPT 25%

DISCUSSION 25%
The student will attend scheduled meetings with instructor. (If the meeting must be cancelled, notice must be given and an alternative meeting time must be scheduled.) Discussion should be fruitful and on target.

ROUGH DRAFT (of first half) 25%
50 or more pages of prose must be completed to reach the first half page count of a full-length manuscript of 100 or more pages. Rough drafts must be polished for coherence and unity. They must be turned in on time.

PROPOSAL 25%
Completion of well-crafted 10-15 page essay outlining the philosophy and craft behind the thesis. Must be completed by mid term. Student should follow previous examples of theses. Student should also think about formulation of committee, which will consist of 3 English faculty and 1 faculty member from outside the department.

REVISION OF MANUSCRIPT 25%
The entire manuscript will go through an edit in the last three weeks of the semester. Chapters/stories may be deleted and replaced by new pages per advice of instructor. The manuscript must be arranged in a cohesive fashion. It should be presented as a coherent work-in-progress by the end of semester.

Grading:
- All work MUST be turned in on the due date. Otherwise, you will receive a 0/F for that assignment.
- All pages will be graded on professional format, spelling, etc.
- All drafts must be typed on clean paper.
- Make sure you follow professional format.
- All comments will focus on craft and improving the project.
A  exception of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea. If rhyme is used it does not lean toward verse. Presented professionally. Poems are original in imagery & idea as well as sophisticated in use of craft.

B  well-defined use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea. If rhyme is used it does not lean toward verse. Poem is original in imagery & idea as well as sophisticated in use of craft, professionally presented in correct format. Not as original/sophisticated as an A but could get there with revision.

C  simplistic or derivative use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea, but presented in correct format. Rhyme leans toward verse. Revision would improve poem.

D  poorly developed use of imagery, language, placement, line length, and sound to highlight a specific message/idea OR incorrect format, simplistic rhyme, errors in terms of grammar or presentation.

F  plagiarized, grammatically unreadable, incomplete, does not fulfill assignment, not handed in.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1)**
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F.
If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

**Acceptable Student Behavior**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.
Tentative Calendar

WEEK ONE
Go over Syllabus/Policies. Discuss plan/progress so far. Set up meeting times.

WEEK TWO
Discuss where the project needs to go. HW: Write proposal/first pages.

WEEK THREE
Discuss proposal. HW: Revise/draft new prose.

WEEK FOUR
Discuss proposal/finalize. HW: Continue new pages.

WEEK FIVE
Continue drafting.

WEEK SIX

WEEK SEVEN
Discuss new pages. HW: Forward progress.

WEEK EIGHT
Discuss pages. HW: Revise/draft new pages.

WEEK NINE
Discuss pages. Is the proposal behind you yet? Should be close.

WEEK TEN
Discuss pages. HW: Draft new pages.

WEEK ELEVEN
Discuss pages. HW: Draft new pages.

WEEK TWELVE
Discuss revision and overall plan. HW: Revise pages?

WEEK THIRTEEN
Proposal should be all done/signed. Plan for second semester.

WEEK FOURTEEN
Discuss pages. HW: New pages
WEEK FIFTEEN
Revise pages you have for mid-project review

WEEK SIXTEEN
Turn in final manuscript finals week.