

ENGL2101: Writing Short Fiction

Online

Semester 1 - 2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others.

The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description	Short fiction is often the first challenge in the creative writer's career and has become a vital component of major writing programs across the world. This course offers a practice-led approach to understanding and applying the techniques used to create short stories. Both the work of Australian and international writers, as well as the original writing of students, will be used to explore this foundational literary form.
Academic Progress Requirements	Nil
Contact Hours	Online Seminar Online 2 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1
Unit Weighting Workload	10 Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	Online Dr Michael Sala Michael.Sala@newcastle.edu.au (02) 4921 8811 Consultation: By email or appointment.
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences Social Sciences Building Callaghan HCISS@newcastle.edu.au +61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content	The course will cover the key aspects of short fiction including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• different narrative modes• concept development• characterisation• perspective• plot and story structure• line and structural editing• genre
Course Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this course, students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify key writing elements used in short fiction.2. Explain the techniques used by fiction writers.3. Apply editorial processes to the development of written work.4. Create works of short fiction that reflect an understanding of writing craft.
Course Materials	See required readings in Schedule. Further materials may be available on the course website in Canvas.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Readings	Assessment Due
1	26 Feb	Structure 1—Structural fundamentals of the short story	'Geometry Can Fail Us'—Leigh Alison Wilson, 'Oliver's Evolution'—John Updike	
2	4 Mar	Structure 2—Foreground and background	'The Paring Knife'—Michael Oppenheimer, Haruki Murakami. 'The Second Bakery Attack'	
3	11 Mar	Structure 3: Transitions—Transitions through time and space	Peter Dickison. 'Eye into Eye'	
4	18 Mar	Third Person 1—Objective third person	Robert Penn Warren. 'Christmas Gift'	
5	25 Mar	Third Person 2—Subjective: One vantage point	A.S. Patric. 'Beckett & Son.'	
6	1 Apr	Third Person 3—Subjective:	Lawrence Sargent Hall. 'The	

		Multiple vantage points	Ledge.'	
7	8 Apr	First Person 1—Unreliable narration.	Ellen Van Neerven. 'Sound'	Short Creative Assignment due: Friday 12 April. 11:59pm
Mid-Semester Recess				
Mid-Semester Recess				
8	29 Apr	First person 2—Intimacy	Denis Johnson. 'Two Men'	
9	6 May	First Person 3—Voice and style	Gish Jen. 'Who's Irish'	
10	13 May	A Sense of Play 1—The metafictional story	Ryan O'Neill. '17 Rules for a Short Story'	
11	20 May	A Sense of Play 2—Third person omniscient	Tobias Wolf. 'Bullet in the Brain.'	
12	27 May	A Sense of Play 3—Second person	Ilse Aichinger. 'Story in a Mirror.'	
13	3 Jun			Long Creative Assessment due: Friday 7 June 11:59pm
Examination Period				All quizzes close Friday 14 June 11.59pm. No extensions possible.
Examination Period				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 3 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Short Creative Assignment	Friday 12 April 11:59pm	Individual	30%	2, 3, 4
2	Long Creative Assignment	Friday 7 June 11:59pm	Individual	50%	2, 3, 4
3	Quizzes	Friday 14 June 11:59pm. We strongly recommend that students complete quizzes during each relevant week, but the quizzes will remain open until the due date. No extensions are available beyond this date for any reason.	Individual	20% (10x2%)	1, 3

Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Short Creative Assignment

Assessment Type	Professional Task
Purpose	Short story
Description	Write a single short story that demonstrates your growing understanding of the form. This story may be the development of one of the creative prompts you have written and posted as part of the course. Try to capture some aspect of change, whether it occurs within a character or within the reader's understanding of that character.
Weighting	30%
Length	1000 words
Due Date	Friday 12 April 11:59pm
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	Please consult rubric on assignment page in the course website

Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - Feedback will be provided within three weeks of submission.

Assessment 2 - Long Creative Assignment

Assessment Type	Professional Task
Purpose	Short Story
Description	Write a single short story that demonstrates your growing understanding of the form. This story may be the development of one of the creative prompts you wrote and posted as part of the course—but it must not have been submitted as an assessed assignment previously. (For example in Assessment 1). This story can also be an entirely new work.
Weighting	50%
Length	2000 words
Due Date	Friday 7 June 11:59pm
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	Please consult rubric on assignment page in the course website
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - Feedback will be provided within three weeks of submission.

Assessment 3 - Quizzes

Assessment Type	Quiz
Purpose	Knowledge consolidation quizzes
Description	These quizzes will aim to consolidate your understanding of writing craft within the context of the weekly topics and readings.
Weighting	20% (10x2%)
Length	11 x Multiple choice quizzes, ten questions per quiz. Approx. quiz duration 30 minutes.
Due Date	Friday 14 June 11.59pm. We strongly recommend that students complete quizzes by the end of each relevant week, but the quizzes will remain open until the due date. No extensions are available beyond this date for any reason.
Submission Method	Online
Assessment Criteria	Multiple choice quizzes. <u>While there are 11 quizzes, only the top 10 quizzes will be counted for assessment.</u>
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online - Feedback is provided as you complete each quiz.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:

<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

© 2024 The University of Newcastle, Australia