SYLLABUS

English 104 (CRN# 22433)  Introduction to Literature / Fiction
Winter 2012    MW&F 2:00-2:50    117 Fenton
Instructor: John Witte (rhymes with city)    346-5935    jwitte@uoregon.edu
Office: 206 PLC    Office Hours: M&F 3:00-4:30, and by appointment

A book of fiction of your choice (a novel or short stories), by one of the authors studied this term.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

**DAILY ASSIGNMENT.** For each class you will be either a PRESENTER or a RESPONDENT, depending on your group (A or B).

**PRESENTERS** will turn in a one-half to one-page paper (typed, double-spaced) on the story assigned for the day, answering the following question. **What is the author’s intent in this story?** Consider a number of the following questions, insofar as they advance the author’s intent:

How is the first sentence like a seed out of which the whole story emerges?
Who is the narrator? Is she/he reliable?
Why has the author chosen this point of view?
What back story is provided? Why is it necessary?
Why is the setting appropriate to the story?
What is the conflict in the story? Is there a protagonist and/or an antagonist?
Are the characters types or individuals? How are they defined? By their actions? Their speech? Their thoughts?
How are the thought processes revealed in characters whose thoughts are not described?
In what ways does the main character (or other characters) change in the course of the story?
Do any objects, acts, or situations have symbolic meaning? What do these contribute to the story?
Does the story make a general statement about life and experience? If so, how is this statement made?
Does the story stir up pity, contempt, amusement, awe, dismay, admiration, or a desire that life should be different?
Has the story given a new twist to traditional wisdom? If so, where have you encountered a similar theme?
In what ways does the supplemental material enhance our understanding of the story?

**RESPONDENTS** will be prepared to respond to the presentations.
**FINAL PAPER.** A final paper, of four typed pages, assessing a full-length book of fiction by one of the authors studied this term, will be due on March 16. While writing, keep in mind the following:

Think about your topic and reread important passages several times, taking notes and exploring possibilities. Question yourself, and the text. Decide on a title and a main argument or thesis; then compose a detailed outline of your paper. Begin by writing an introduction that explains your thesis in one paragraph. The body of your paper should develop the thesis logically, with each paragraph enlarging on an important point with specific evidence (such as quotations) and clear explanation. Pay as much attention to the end of the essay as to its beginning. You should leave the reader with a clear sense of what you have demonstrated and why it matters. Carefully proofread your paper, rewriting as necessary, and correcting all grammatical errors.

Papers must be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Words or ideas not your own must be clearly identified by quotation, and, where necessary, a citation. Plagiarism is a serious academic crime that will result in disciplinary action up to expulsion from the University. If you are uncertain how to properly acknowledge other people’s words and ideas, I’ll be glad to discuss this with you.

**GRADING.** Your grade will be determined by your preparedness for and participation in class discussions (10%), by your fourteen daily written assignments (70%), and by your final paper (20%).

**ATTENDANCE.** Attendance is crucial. If you need to miss a class, an explanation will be required. You will be allowed two unexcused absences. Each additional unexcused absence will lower your grade one step (for example, from a B to a B-). If you are sick, you will be required to produce a note from your pharmacist or personal doctor.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

- Martin Luther King Holliday: Jan.16.
- Last day to drop without a “W”: Jan. 16.
- Last day to reg/add classes: Jan. 18.
- Last day to withdraw from classes: Feb. 26.
- Last day of class: Mar. 16.
CLASS SCHEDULE (all assignments are from The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction)

Jan. 9: Orientation and review of syllabus.
      No class Jan. 16: Martin Luther King Holiday.

FINAL PAPER DUE.