# WRT 584.10 and 11: Thesis (Primary)

# Spring 2024

# Contact and Course Information

**Instructor:** Ron Samul

**Telephone:** 860 287 1053

**Email:** [samulr@wcsu.edu](mailto:samulr@wcsu.edu)

norlumas@gmail.com

**Office Hours:** n/a

**Student:** Christopher Lombardo

**Phone:** 203 910 8936

**Email:** [lombardo028@wcsu.edu](mailto:lombardo028@wcsu.edu)

**Course Credit Hours:** 4

## Course Description

The student will write a book-length piece of writing in the primary genre. The writer will develop this

thesis in consultation with a thesis director and second reader. The program requires students to

complete the thesis in a publishable form as judged by the thesis advisor and MFA coordinator and

reviewed by the MFA committee.

## Subtitle for Course

Grave Architecture a Novel (or maybe Quarantine the Past, but I don’t want any mistaken pandemic association)

## Course Overview

*Grave Architecture* is a speculative fiction novel. A summary of the plot follows.

Ellie arrives at The Ogdoad, a new living facility she will be testing as one of the most desirable Lifestyle Testers on the market. However, when an overly intrusive orientation period begins poking into parts of Ellie’s past that she would rather leave untouched, she begins ignoring her responsibilities in favor of wandering The Ogdoad’s monumental halls. Here, rather than discovering neighbors or coworkers, Ellie finds herself interacting with aspects of her own and others’ memories. Eventually forced to recount her past to The Ogdoad’s management, Ellie finds a villain in the mysterious entity, coming to believe it is keeping her and others there against their will. Yet, when she awakens to an impossible, dream-like version of her own life in The Ogdoad, she gradually realizes she kept herself in place—or rather, her obsession with the past has held her captive. Recognizing this, she no longer views herself or others as The Ogdoad’s captives, and she opts to leave, feeling that though she can never quarantine the past, she can choose not to live in it.

## Course Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

* The ability to manage and create a book-length manuscript and meet the deadlines of the course in the process.
* Understand the book type and genre of the book as it fits into the style and the market of the genre type.
* The students will work with an editorial team (primary and secondary mentors) to incorporate changes and revision of the novel with the completion at the end of the semester. Skills include editing, line editing, concept development, revisions, thesis formatting, and style.

## Books/Materials Required

*For reference and inspiration*

* *The Emissary* by Yoko Tawada
* *Lanny* by Max Porter
* *The Way Through Doors* by Jesse Ball
* *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* by Italo Calvino

# Interactions:

* Student and primary mentor will meet at the semester’s start to discuss Thesis Proposal revision
* Following the submission of the Thesis Proposal (February 15), the student and primary mentor will meet bi-weekly to discuss revisions and timelines
* Student and primary mentor meetings will occur via phone calls or video calls
* Additional communication with the primary mentor will be conducted as needed
* Student will receive feedback from the secondary mentor on initial thesis draft (see “Requirements”) through in-document comments and email communication

# Course Expectations

## Attendance and Participation

The student is expected to adhere to all deadlines, attend all meetings with the instructor, and respond to all emails, keeping the communication open and fluid. If the student has an extenuating circumstance that prevents them from meeting a deadline, they are expected to make other arrangements with the instructor.

## Grading

Each submission will receive a detailed response from the instructor. The student will receive a grade at the midterm and final. The grades will be dependent on meeting deadlines, and fulfilling assignment expectations.

### Grading Breakdown

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Course Requirements | Percentage or Points |
| Creative Writing/Thesis | 800 Points |
| Thesis Proposal | 100 Points |
| Total: | 900 Points |

### Letter Grades

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Letter Grade | Range |
| A | 100% to 94% |
| A- | <94% to 90% |
| B+ | <90% to 87% |
| B | <87% to 84% |
| B- | <84% to 80% |
| C+ | <80% to 77% |
| C | <77% to 74% |
| C- | <74% to 70% |
| D+ | <70% to 67% |
| D | <67% to 64% |
| D- | <64% to 61% |
| F | <61% to 0% |

## Assignments

1. A complete draft of the thesis novel to both mentors (**January 10) –** *Primary & Secondary*
2. A finalized Thesis Proposal in accordance with MFA guidelines (**February 15) –** *Primary & Department Head*
3. Revised pages and process updates to primary mentor (**bi-weekly**) **-** *Primary*
4. A completed, coherently plotted draft of the thesis novel described above (**May 4)** *– All parties*

### Late Assignments

If the student has an extenuating circumstance that prevents them from meeting a deadline, they are expected to make other arrangements with the instructor.

# Course Policies

## Students with Disabilities

\*AccessAbility Services engages in an interactive process with each student and reviews requests for accommodations on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature of the functional limitations of the student’s documented disability, he/she may be eligible for accommodations. AAS collaborates with students and their faculty to coordinate approved accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact AccessAbility Services (AAS) as soon as possible. You may contact AAS by calling (203) 837-8225 (voice), (203) 837-3235 (TTY) or by e-mailing [aas@wcsu.edu](mailto:aas@wcsu.edu). Detailed information regarding the process to request accommodations is available on the AAS website at: [AccessAbility Services](https://www.wcsu.edu/accessability) ([www.wcsu.edu/accessability)](https://www.wcsu.edu/accessability). If your request for accommodation(s) is approved and you request accommodation letters, an accommodation letter will be emailed to faculty members. (Note: Student request for accommodations must be filed each semester and accommodations are not retroactive.)

## Department of Creative and Professional Writing Policy on Academic Honesty

The Department of Creative and Professional Writing follows the University guidelines regarding academic honesty and issues of plagiarism, which are available in the catalog on the University website at <https://www.wcsu.edu/catalogs/undergraduate/academic-services-procedures/>.

In the specific context of writing, we highlight some particular problems with plagiarism. Plagiarism violations include:

* Submitting material that is not one’s own. **This includes the use of any artificial intelligence tool for composing any assignment.**
* Using material – words and/or ideas – directly from a source without proper citation and attribution.
* Submitting a project written for one course, past or present, as new material in another course without the explicit permission of the instructor.

**To emphasize: the use of artificial intelligence or other text generators for any assignment is prohibited in all Writing courses. Using ChatGPT or other similar tools to "get started" is a violation of this policy.**

In accordance with University policy, plagiarism on an assignment may be grounds for failing the course and the filing of an Academic Dishonesty Report, which will escalate the situation to higher administrative decisions. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious academic offenses and will be treated as such in this course. Please familiarize yourself with the university’s policy on plagiarism in your academic catalogue and/or student handbook. Plagiarism is the use of another writer’s words or ideas without acknowledgment of their source. The penalty for plagiarism will be course failure and will be reported to the appropriate Dean(s) and other university officials.

We encourage students to speak with us openly and honestly regarding any questions surrounding academic honesty and plagiarism.

## The Writing Center

Experienced writers know the best way to become an even stronger writer is to *talk with other writers*. The Writing Center is a great place to do that. The Writing Center offers one-to-one consultations on writing for any class, at any stage, from brainstorming and developing outlines to writing strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, visit the [Writing Center website](https://wcsu.edu/writingcenter) ([wcsu.edu/writingcenter](https://wcsu.edu/writingcenter)).

## 

## Syllabus Modifications

Note: This syllabus is subject to modifications by the instructor.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement  
I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design and supports diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences as well as honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). To accomplish this:

* If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official WCSU records, please let me know.
* If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don’t hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.
* I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students.

## Mental Health Support

College students often experience issues that may interfere with their academic success such as stress, difficulty sleeping, managing expectations/responsibilities, life events, relationship challenges and feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, and depression. At any point in the semester, if you encounter difficulty with the course or feel you could be performing at a higher level, please schedule a time to meet with me. Should you be struggling in multiple classes, or unsure what academic resources are available to you, please outreach to your Advisor. For mental health challenges, please reach out to our Counseling Services for counseling and psychiatric services. Counseling Services can be reached at 203-837-8691.   
**24-Hour Emergency Numbers:**

* Suicide Prevention Line:  988
* Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
* Crisis Text Line for Students of Color: Text STEVE to 741741
* Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ): 866-488-7386
* Trans Lifeline: 877-565-8860
* National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-7233 or Text Loveis to 22522
* Sexual Assault Hotline: 888-999-5545