

# news

## English department holds reading series

*Featuring Robert Olmstead, Elissa Washuta and Mark Jarman*

**MADISON GRAVER**  
@AUCollegian

The AU English Department is holding their Spring Reading Series starting Feb. 21 at 3 p.m. with a reading by award winning writer and educator Robert Olmstead. Olmstead's presentation will be followed up with a visit by nonfiction writer Elissa Washuta on Feb. 27 at 4 p.m. and poet Mark Jarman on April 8 at 4 p.m.

All of the readings will be held in Ronk Lecture Hall in the Dwight Schar College of Education and are free and open to the public.

Deborah Fleming, Professor of English and organizer of this event, said that "the guests are dis-

tinguished authors who can introduce students to new ideas."

The first reader, Robert Olmstead, is currently the Director of Creative Writing at Ohio Wesleyan University and will be presenting a fictional reading. He has written the novel's America by Land, A Trail of Heart's Blood Wherever We Go and Coal Black Horse amongst others.

Coal Black Horse, released in 2007, received national acclaim including the 2007 Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize for fiction. The sequel to it titled Far Bright Star was named by Booklist as one of the Top Ten Westerns of the Decade.

Olmstead's most recently released book is titled Savage Country and

was released in September 2017.

The series' second reader will be at AU on Feb. 27 and is assistant professor of Creative Writing at The Ohio State University, Elissa Washuta.

Washuta is a member of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe and a nonfiction writer. She has published two books titled Starvation Mode and My Body Is a Book of Rules.

She said she was "happy to receive the invitation to read at Ashland University and has been thrilled to have the opportunity to meet students around the state."

My Body Is a Book of Rules was named as a finalist for the Washington State Book Award.

According to Washuta's website,

"she has received fellowships and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Artist Trust, 4Culture, Potlatch Fund, and Hugo House."

For the event, Washuta plans on reading from her manuscript in-progress titled "White Magic".

The final presenter of the series is poet Mark Jarman who will be visiting on April 8 in celebration of Ashland Poetry Press's 50th Anniversary.

Jarman is a professor of English at Vanderbilt University and is the author of 11 books of poetry, two books of essays, and co-authored another book of essays with Robert McDowell.

Some of his works include The

Black Riviera which won the 1991 Poets Prize, Questions for Ecclesiastes which was a finalist for the 1997 National Book Critics Circle Award in poetry, and Bone Fires: New and Selected Poems which won the 2013 Balcones Prize.

His other awards include a Joseph Henry Jackson Award, three grants from the NEA, and a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation.

Fleming says she "hope[s] visitors to the readings find a deeper appreciation for literature."

For more information on this event please contact Lindsay Brandon-Smith at 419-289-5110 or lb-rando2@ashland.edu.



Robert Olmstead, Elissa Washuta and Mark Jarman are the guests that are involved with the Spring reading series.

ASHLAND UNIVERSITY

## Psychology students participate in DARPA

*"Leaving a mark on this endeavor to set the record straight"*

**CHRIS MARTUCCI**  
@AUCollegian

With disinformation being such a big issue in the modern world, many groups or organizations in the scientific community are looking for ways to combat this phenomenon.

Outside of just news, there are also instances of disinformation in scientific studies. One particular example that comes to mind is the link between vaccines and autism, which has been proven to be false years after the study was published.

At Ashland University, a group of psychology majors led by Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Christopher R. Chartier hopes to leave their mark on this endeavor to set the record straight.

The nine-student group has been selected to participate in the Defense Advanced Re-

search Project Agency's (DARPA) new program to evaluate if machines can distinguish between sources that are credible and those that are filled with false information.

The title of the program is "Systematizing Confidence in Open Research and Evidence" (SCORE) and will be done through the Psychological Science Accelerator (PSA).

PSA has between 300-400 labs in 50 countries around the world.

The group was given a three-year, \$7.6 million contract to help fund their efforts as they look to re-replicate over 3,000 studies done in the past.

Senior Nick Bloxsom, a double major in psychology and criminal justice, said that when Chartier first described the project, he said wanted it to be the "CERN for psychology."

CERN is a European organization that

deals with major science projects, such as the hadron collider.

"Psychologists and other scientists are peahacking in order to get the results that they want to find, rather than the results they should actually be finding," Bloxsom said. What we are doing is trying to make open science more popular and making methods more transparent in the future through this project."

Bloxsom has been Chartier's research assistant since his sophomore year, and said that what started the project was a viral blog post by Chartier.

"It went viral in the academic world, and then we just picked up the responsibilities associated with the creation of the project," Bloxsom said.

Another student involved with the project, junior Savannah Lewis, hopes that the

group can help improve psychology's reputation with the public.

"The field has gotten some bad press because of the whole 'vaccines cause autism' controversy, and so we're trying to ensure these problems don't happen in the future," Lewis said. "We're trying to do science right."

The way that the group will choose studies to examine is by a 30-60 person committee that will choose a few in one particular field. From there, the entire group will select one from that batch.

"Research is such a big thing in the field of psychology because without the research, we wouldn't have the information that we have now," Lewis said. "It's important to me not just for my undergrad, but also as a future psychologist."

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