

English 104: Introduction to Fiction

Fall 2013. CRN 12989. T/TH 8:30-9:50. 204 Chapman.

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Welcome to this introduction to fiction!¹ We will work together this term to understand, interrogate, and challenge existing ideas about narrative literature. To this end, we will read and study short stories, glossary definitions of important concepts, and some secondary essays. In this course, we will aim to discover what kinds of knowledge literature makes available; I hope you'll come to a conclusion about why (or if?) fiction *matters*. You will be asked to read carefully, write often, and formulate your own independent arguments in response to the fiction we read together. In particular, this course will emphasize the skill of close reading: we will examine specific passages and discuss how these inform our understanding of course texts. Paper assignments require that you put these close readings into polished written form.

We will focus, of course, on how course texts function as literature. But we will also assume that these works of fiction have significance beyond the world of literary studies; we'll therefore try to understand what they say about the human experience. This course demands and rewards the kind of critical thinking and careful writing that is expected of you in other courses, as well as in tasks beyond school. It therefore aims to facilitate your skills in these areas, as well as to make reading literature an enlightening and rewarding experience for you.

Required texts:

Introduction to Literature: Pearson Custom Library. Boston: Pearson, 2014. Print.

Secondary essays & additional stories, posted on Blackboard

**See course schedule for dates for these required readings. PRINT & bring essays or stories to class on the dates noted. I will keep our Blackboard site updated and use it to communicate with you outside of class; please check it often!*

Access:

If you have a disability (physical, psychological, or learning) that you think may affect your ability to participate in this class, please see me as soon as possible so we can make

¹ This course satisfies credits toward the Arts & Letters category general education requirement. However, these credits do not count toward the English major.

arrangements for your full access to all classroom activities. Please be aware also that the Accessible Education Center is a great campus resource in these matters.

Attendance:

Because this is a discussion-based class, its success depends upon your participation. Therefore, there is a strict attendance policy. You are allowed three absences without grade ramifications. Your final letter grade will drop by one-third for each subsequent absence. This includes absences for any university-related activity or illness. To reiterate: *I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.* See me promptly if a situation arises whereby you'll need to miss more than three class meetings; exceptions may be made in extenuating circumstances, but *only on the condition that you discuss such circumstances with me individually.*

Attendance is registered through the completion of reading quizzes (when we have them) or via an attendance sheet circulated at the beginning of the class period. It is your responsibility to be present and prepared at the beginning of class time. Two late arrivals to class will count as one absence. See me if you have questions about whether or not you've been marked "late" so that you can keep track of your attendance record. Missed quizzes, in-class writing, group work, and other in-class activities cannot be made up.

Assignments:

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| Close Reading Paper | 5% |
| Paper 1 (3 pgs) | 15% |
| Paper 2 (4 pgs) | 20% |
| Quizzes | 20% |
| Midterm | 15% |
| Final | 15% |
| Participation | 10% |

*Final grades will be calculated by the following percentages:

95-100=A; 90-94=A-; 87-89=B+; 83-86=B; 80-82=B-; 77-79=C+; 73-77=C; 70-72=C-; 67-69=D+; 63-66=D; 60-63=D-; 59 & below=F

Essays:

You will complete several formal writing assignments in this course; these include one short close reading essay and two thesis-driven analytical essays in response to course texts. The essay assignments will require you make independent arguments about the reading: you should go beyond summary or observation. I expect that your essays will be formal, polished work. Revisions are a necessity! I am always happy to talk with

you *in person* about your ideas and to look at your writing at any point in the writing process. So it will be to your benefit to work ahead.

No outside research is permitted during the process of writing these essays. Your primary source(s) must be properly documented according to MLA citation guidelines. All writing is due *at the beginning of class* in hard-copy form on the day cited in our course schedule.

All submitted work must be double-spaced and typed in black, 12-point Times New Roman font and printed on white printer paper with 1" margins on all sides. Your name, instructor name, and the date must be single-spaced in the top left corner in the same font & size as the rest of the essay. New paragraphs should be indented ½", and no extra space should appear between paragraphs. Page numbers should appear in the top right margin, beginning on the second page. *Unless otherwise agreed upon in advance, no written work will be accepted electronically.*

Late Work:

If an emergency arises and you're unable to meet a deadline for course work, please contact me *before* the due date (by email is fine). Pre-arrangements are *required* for work that will not be turned in on time. I may accept late work in extenuating circumstances, which I will determine on a case-by-case basis. Late work for which pre-arrangements have not been made will drop one third of a letter grade for every day it's late. *Work that is more than one week late will receive a 0%.* You are always welcome to turn in work early if you must be absent.

Quizzes:

We will have 10 quizzes during the term. Quizzes will most often be given at the beginning of class; if you miss the quiz due to tardiness, it cannot be made up. These quizzes may be fact-based questions about the day's reading assignment, written responses to the text, creative exercises, or mini-close reading assignments. In every case, they will reveal whether you have done the required reading, and demand that you engage with it in a thoughtful way. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Technology in the Classroom:

Our class is only 80 minutes long; I firmly believe that all 80 of these minutes are valuable in facilitating our course goals. It is, furthermore, essential that all members of our class are present, engaged, and undistracted. For this reason, *cell phones are prohibited* in the classroom. I will require that every one of us turn our cell phones off completely so that we can authentically engage with our classmates, course

material, and our own thoughts. If you use your cell phone during class, you will be marked absent.

Personal computers are not permitted unless you have a compelling reason to use yours in class. I am happy to hear these reasons, and to make arrangements on a case-by-case basis; please see me after class or visit my office hours to discuss this.

Academic Integrity:

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. Please refer to the *Student Conduct Code* on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. In cases where plagiarism has been clearly established, the award of an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the English Department.

When you claim authorship of an assignment, you are claiming everything in it as your own, and you will be held accountable for it. Therefore: always see me *before* you turn in an essay for a grade if you have *any* doubt about your citation practices. I am happy to help you better understand MLA formatting rules. Please be aware: I take issues of plagiarism and academic integrity very seriously. Plagiarism is cheating, and I will treat it as such.

**This syllabus is our contract. Continued enrollment in this course indicates that you have read the syllabus and agree to its expectations. I may make changes to the syllabus or course schedule at any time. If I do so, I will promptly notify you via Blackboard and email.*

ENG 104 * Fall 2013 * Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change!

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| T 10/1 | Introductions. Syllabus. Writing & discussion. TO DO: Buy textbook. Read textbook intro: "How to Read a Story." Read headnote on Tim O'Brien. Read O'Brien, "The Things They Carried." |
| TH 10/3 | Discuss David Foster Wallace quotation (Bb), O'Brien's "The Things They Carried," "How to Read a Story." TO DO: Read Fitzgerald, Hemingway. |
| T 10/8 | Introduce UNIT I: MODERNISM. Discuss Fitzgerald, Hemingway. TO DO: Read Joyce. Definitions: "epiphany," "atmosphere," "motif." |
| TH 10/10 | Discuss Joyce. Close Reading Paper due. TO DO: Read Faulkner. Definitions: "gothic fiction," "narrator," "local color," "regionalism," "plot." |
| T 10/15 | Discuss Faulkner. TO DO: Read O'Connor (2 stories). Read Oates essay "The Parables of Flannery O'Connor" (Bb). Definitions: "dialect," "parable," "characterization." |
| TH 10/17 | Discuss O'Connor. TO DO: Read Bowen (2 stories). Definitions: "atmosphere," "image/imagery," "motif," "style," "flashback." |
| T 10/22 | Discuss Bowen. Paper 1 Part 1 due. TO DO: Read Baldwin. |
| TH 10/24 | Discuss Baldwin. TO DO: Read Kafka. Read Wallace essay "Some Remarks on Kafka's Funniness..." (Bb). Definitions: "allegory," "style." |
| T 10/29 | Discuss Kafka. Review for midterm. |
| TH 10/31 | Midterm Exam. TO DO: Read LeGuin, Definition: "utopia." |
| T 11/5 | Introduce UNIT II: CONTEMPORARY & EXPERIMENTAL SHORT FICTION. In-class self-assessment of Paper 1. Discuss LeGuin. Paper 1 due. TO DO: Read Butler. Definitions: "dystopia," "afterword." |
| TH 11/7 | Discuss Butler. TO DO: Read Saunders, "Brad Carrigan, American" (Bb). Definitions: "parody," "satire." |
| T 11/12 | Discuss Saunders. TO DO: Read Vonnegut. |
| TH 11/14 | Discuss Vonnegut TO DO: Read Wallace, Foer. |
| T 11/19 | Discuss Wallace, Foer. Introduce Crumb, the graphic novel. TO DO: Read Crumb. Definition: "allusion." |
| TH 11/21 | Discuss Crumb. Paper 2 thesis due (to noyce@uoregon.edu). TO DO: Read Alexie, Díaz |
| T 11/26 | Discuss Alexie, Díaz. Introduce short shorts. TO DO: Read short short stories (TBA, Bb). |
| TH 11/28 | THANKSGIVING. Enjoy!!! |

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| T 12/3 | Discuss short shorts. Prepare for Paper 2. |
| TH 12/5 | Reflection. Revisit David Foster Wallace quote. Prep for Final Exam. Paper 2 due. |
| F 12/13 | 8:00 a.m. Final Exam. |