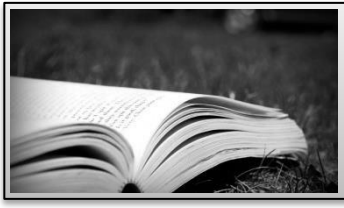

ENG 104: Introduction to Fiction
Winter 2015
Meets T/R 2:00-3:20 PM in 195 ANS
CRN#: 22041

Instructor

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Office Location: 329 PLC
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM & Thursdays 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Course Description

This course is an introduction to prose fiction, and we will work together to understand, interrogate, and challenge existing ideas about narratives in the form of fiction. We will read and study short stories, novellas, and novels, and we will also consider how glossary definitions of important terms and concepts and selected supplementary readings can open up additional meaning in our primary literary texts. This course will focus on the theme of embodiment, so we will consider what kinds of "bodily" knowledge literary texts make available; for example, how they comment on historical or contemporary bodily norms, what it means to exist in a body, or even how and why we might differentiate humans from other animal species. You will be asked to read carefully, to share your interpretations in discussion, to write often, and – as a result of these activities – to formulate your own independent arguments in response to the fiction that we read together.

We will focus, of course, on how course texts function as literature. However, we will also think about how these works of fiction (and the skills that you develop as you become a more astute reader of fiction) have significance beyond the world of literary studies. In particular, we'll try to understand what they say about human experience and about the desire that humans have for telling stories. This course demands and rewards the kind of critical thinking and careful reading and writing that is expected of you in other courses, as well as in tasks beyond school.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify and discuss the central qualities of short stories, novellas, and novels using appropriate literary studies terminology.
2. Perform "close readings" of literary texts to discover their important features, workings, and possible meanings.
3. Generate a strong and intriguing thesis concerning 1-2 texts and defend that thesis with relevant evidence and a line of reasoning to demonstrate *how* that text means what it means.
4. Write a focused, analytical essay in clear, grammatical prose and using appropriate source documentation.

Required Texts and Materials
You must bring the appropriate text for discussion to each class meeting, preferably the edition specified below so that our page numbers will all coincide:

1. *Frankenstein*, by Mary Shelley, Penguin Classics Edition (ISBN: 9780140433623)
2. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, by Robert Louis Stevenson, Dover Thrift Edition (ISBN: 9780486266886)
3. *Heart of Darkness*, by Joseph Conrad, Dover Thrift Edition (ISBN: 9780486264646)
4. *Life of Pi*, by Yann Martel (ISBN: 9780156027328)
5. Additional Readings on Blackboard (should be printed for class or brought in digital form)
6. *OPTIONAL* *Severance: Stories*, by Robert Olen Butler

Assignments and Grading

2 Short Essays = 15% each, 30% of the final grade in total
1 Mid-Term Exam = 25%
Participation & Quizzes = 20% (5% participation, 15% quizzes)
1 Final Essay = 25% (including drafts of a thesis and a paper outline)

Short Essays
You will complete two short essays during the term (approximate 2-3 pages each) in response to a prompt that I provide. Each essay will develop a particular set of close reading and argumentative skills that will ultimately help you to write the final essay at the end of the term. Specific instructions, grading criteria, and tips for these essays will be provided at least a week in advance of their due dates.

Mid-Term Exam
There will be a mid-term exam in Week 5. This exam will consist of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, and one short essay question that will test your reading comprehension, your knowledge of key literary terms and ideas discussed in class, and your application of close reading skills. Any material – from quizzes, readings, lectures, class discussions, etc. – is fair game for the exam. Except in the direst of situations, the exam cannot be rescheduled.

Participation and Quizzes
Class discussions will be an important part of this course because it will be the place where we share what we've discovered in the texts and our own interpretations. Discussions are also an ideal place to "try out" your argument about a text and allow others to respond to your ideas. Thus, it is extremely important that we make the classroom environment comfortable and welcoming for all of its members. You should feel free to constructively interrogate others' ideas with the goal of making us all better readers and stronger critical thinkers, but please do so in a way that makes learning productive; likewise, please be accepting your classmates' attempts to help you sharpen your thinking. I expect everyone to fairly share the responsibility of listening and speaking during large and small group discussions, and I will monitor and keep track of participation to give you credit toward your participation grade.

I will give approximately 8 unannounced quizzes during the term. These quizzes will be 3-5 questions each, often a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and mini-essay, and are

intended to reward you for keeping up with the reading assignments and taking good notes in class. Quizzes cannot be made up in the case of an absence, but I will drop your lowest quiz score at the end of term.

Final Essay
The final essay will function as your "capstone" for the course, as it will require you to put all of the skills that you have developed in the course to work on a more complex close reading of one or two texts (5-6 pages). Prompts will be provided for this assignment, and we will take time in class to help each other develop ideas and to provide peer critiques (completion of a thesis draft and a detailed paper outline will count in your overall essay grade). The essay will be submitted during finals week.

Course Policies

Attendance & Late Work
Regular attendance and participation are central to this course because texts become much more dynamic when a community of readers and thinkers comes together to discuss them. Please arrive on-time and having completed the reading assignment for the day, and be prepared to participate in large and small group activities. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have signed in on the sign in sheet for every class period.

You may miss TWO classes without penalty. Your final grade will drop 1/3 of a letter grade for each subsequent absence. At the 5th absence, you are in danger of failing the course, and you will fail the course with 6 or more absences. If you are absent, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate on any material covered in class. If a writing assignment is due on a day you are going to be absent, you must EMAIL me the assignment by class time and then turn in a hard copy ASAP. Late assignments will drop a letter grade for each day that they are late.

That being said, I understand that unexpected events happen to everyone. Please be in contact with me NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF A DEADLINE if an emergency arises. I will not grant any extensions without this minimum advance notice. Please note that printer problems are not a valid excuse for late work. If you encounter a problem printing your assignment, email it to me before the deadline and make arrangements with me to submit a hard copy ASAP. I will not grade digital copies of assignments.

Blackboard & Email Communication
You should regularly check the class Blackboard page. I will post announcements, class materials, etc. there, so it is imperative to stay updated with that page. The same goes for your University email account, which you should check at least once per day. If I need to contact you, I will email your UO address (rather than a Gmail or Hotmail account).

Assignment Submission and Formatting
You must submit all assignments in hard copy (for grading) *as well as* through SafeAssign on Blackboard by the deadline. I will not grade assignments submitted by email, except in extenuating circumstances. Each essay must be double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1" margins on each side. The standard citation style for the humanities is MLA (Modern Language

Association), so I expect you to follow MLA citation and formatting guidelines for all written work. We will cover MLA citation style in class, and a guide will be posted on Blackboard.

Outside Research

None of your assignments require outside research. In fact, I strongly discourage you doing research for your paper because you will get bogged down by others' ideas and I am really most interested in hearing *your* thoughts about the text. Note: you should not Google your text or topic to see what people have said about it and then simply skip citing any of this information. Not only could this practice constitute plagiarism, but you will miss an opportunity to sharpen your critical thinking skills and you do yourself a disservice by not challenging yourself to formulate your own ideas. I will equip you will the tools you need to generate a thesis on your own, and you are welcome to come speak to me during office hours if you need further guidance or assistance.

If you feel you absolutely must incorporate outside research into your paper, you *must get approval from me in advance of the assignment deadline*. If I approve your request, you will be responsible for documenting that research appropriately using MLA guidelines. Assignments using unauthorized research will receive failing grades of no more than 50%. Papers plagiarized in whole or in part are subject to the Academic Honest policy (see below).

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. Unacknowledged borrowing of others' words or ideas constitutes plagiarism, a serious academic crime that results in disciplinary action up to expulsion. If you use someone else's words or ideas, you must quote them and provide relevant citation information. If you have any questions about plagiarism or the University's policy on it, talk with me or refer to the summary of the Code of Student Conduct on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website. In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, awarding an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the English Department, so it is imperative that you speak with me about any questions regarding outside sources.

Technology in the Classroom

You MAY NOT use cell phones at any time during class, unless you must be reachable during class for an emergency situation and have spoken about the situation with me in advance. Any cell phone use will result in a deduction from the participation grade without notice from the instructor.

Computers and tablets are allowed for note-taking, but because they can be a distraction to other students, please sit on the sides of the room or toward the back of the room if you are using them. Please do not abuse this policy by being off-task on your computer or tablet during class.

Access

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me in week one if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You may also wish to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments

		Daily Class Meeting Topics (Readings Due on the Day Listed)	Writing Assignments Due	Terms for the Week
1	T	• Introduction to the Course • What is Narrative Fiction Good At?		Genre Character Character Development Novel/Novella Setting Frame Narrative Author
	R	• **Focus: Genre, Plot, and Characters** • *Frankenstein*: Volume I (p. 13-86) • Read "Week 1 Terms" on Blackboard		
2	T	• **Focus: Genre, Plot, and Characters** • *Frankenstein*, continued: Volume II (p. 87-144)		Antagonist Protagonist Hero/Antihero Plot Structure Ambiguity
	R	• **Focus: Genre, Plot, and Characters** • *Frankenstein*, continued: Volume III (p. 145-215)		
3	T	• **Focus: Narration and Time** • *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*: "The Story of the Door" (p. 1) – "Remarkable Incident of Dr. Lanyon" (p.24)		Didactic Literature Foreshadowing Flashback Episodes Epistolary Narrative
	R	• **Focus: Narration and Time** • *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, continued: "Incident at the Window" (p. 25) – end (p. 54) • Idea Generation Workshop in preparation for Short Essay #1		
4	T	• **Focus: Point of View** • *Heart of Darkness*: Part I (p. 1-27)	**Short Essay #1 Due (also submit to SafeAssign!)**	Narrator Types Interior Monologue Stream of Consciousness
	R	• **Focus: Point of View** • *Heart of Darkness*, continued: Parts II & III (p. 27-71)		
5	T	• Mid-Term Exam Review		
	R	***Mid-Term Exam***		
6	T	• **Focus: Symbol** • "The Yellow Wallpaper," by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (BB)		Short Story Symbol Allegory Motif
	R	• **Focus: Symbol** • "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," by Ursula K. Le Guin (BB)		

7	T	• **Focus: Style** • "A Clean, Well-Lighted Pace," by Ernest Hemingway (BB)		Diction Imagery Tone Syntax
	R	• **Focus: Style** • "Barn Burning," by William Faulkner (BB)		
8	T	• **Focus: Style** • Selections from *Severance*, by Robert Olen Butler (BB)	**Short Essay #2 Due (also submit to Safe Assign!)**	Theme Figurative Language
	R	• **Focus: Style** • Group Analysis Presentations of one selection from *Severance* • Start reading *The Life of Pi* – a large section of reading is due by next Tuesday!		
9	T	• **Focus: The Close Reading Toolbox** • *The Life of Pi*: Author's Note & Chapters 1-36 (p. 3-93)		Realism Naturalism Bildungsroman
	R	• **Focus: The Close Reading Toolbox** • *The Life of Pi*, continued: chapters 37-60 (p. 97-177)		
10	T	• **Focus: The Close Reading Toolbox** • *The Life of Pi*, continued: chapters 61-93 (p.177-284) • Final Paper Thesis Workshop	**Final Paper In-Progress Thesis Due**	Close Reading
	R	• *The Life of Pi*, continued: chapters 94-100 (p. 284-319) • Final Paper Outline Workshop • Course Wrap-Up	**Final Paper Detailed Outline Due**	
Finals Week		There is no final exam in this course. The final essay is due in *hard copy* in Katherine's Office by **11:30 AM on Tuesday, March 17th** (one day later than our scheduled final exam period). You may turn your paper in any time before the deadline by sliding your paper under Katherine's office door. Don't forget to submit your paper to SafeAssign as well as in hard copy!		