Goals of the course: This course aims to introduce students to the elements of short fiction (such as focalization, narrative time, perspective, metaphor, allegory, and voice) and to foster an appreciation for evolving forms of the story within culturally diverse literary traditions. We will pay particular attention to intergenerational and cross-cultural conversations (implicit and explicit) between selected texts, examining the works at hand in their sociohistorical contexts. This course also has a strong focus on writing. Students will learn 1) to develop a thesis that argues for a particular interpretation of a literary text and 2) to support that thesis by quoting from the text and analyzing closely the passages quoted.

Required Texts: Ann Charters, *The Story and Its Writer, 8th edition*  
Adrian Tomine, *Shortcomings*  
Diane Hacker, *Rules for Writers* (you may substitute another writing handbook if you already own one)  
All books available at the Duck Store, 13th and Kincaid.

Requirements:  
Class attendance is mandatory. Everyone is allowed three unexcused absences. Unexcused absences after that may affect your grade. Please come to class having read the work listed for that day. (Participation counts for 5% of final grade). Writing requirements and other projects are as follows:  
1) Quizzes: We will have pop quizzes about once a week. These are meant to encourage you to keep up with the reading and will consist of 5-6 multiple choice questions and a brief essay question. I will drop out your lowest quiz grade. (20%)  
2) 2-page close reading exercise of a portion of a work read in the first 3 weeks, due at the end of the third week of class (15%).  
3) 3-4-page essay on an aspect of the reading, due at the end of the sixth week. Rough draft MUST be included with final version of essay and final version should show substantial revision. Creative alternative on narrative voice. (25%)  
4) 3-4-page essay on an aspect of the reading, due during finals week. Rough draft MUST be included with final version of essay and final must show substantial revision. Creative alternative discussed in class. (30%)  
5) In-class writing exercises from Hacker’s book (or handbook of your choice). (5%)

If I see particular writing problems in your individual essays, I will assign specific exercises from the writing handbook. These will be due a week after the day you receive your essay back from me. If these problems are repeated in the next essay I will ask you to correct them before I record your essay grade. This process is meant to help you master persistent writing difficulties that might get in the way when you try to communicate good ideas.
Reading Schedule (All readings in Charters unless otherwise noted):

**Week One: Literary Conversations**
Monday, Jan. 3rd—Introductions.
Friday, Jan. 7th—Will Eisner, “The Fall of the House of Usher” [graphic story].

**Week Two: Stories About Talk, Talk About Stories**
Monday, Jan. 10th—Anton Chekhov, “The Lady With the Little Dog”; Joyce Carol Oates, “The Lady With the Pet Dog.”
Friday, Jan. 14th—Excerpt from Robert Altman film based on Carver, “Short Cuts.”

**Week Three: Writing Social Injustice**
Friday, Jan. 21st—Ralph Ellison, “Battle Royal.”

**Week Four: Narrative Time and Perspective**
Julio Cortazar, “A Continuity of Parks.”
Friday, Jan. 28th—Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour.”

**Week Five: Voice and Identity in Narrative**
Monday, Jan. 31st—Tillie Olsen, “I Stand Here Ironing.”
Friday, Feb. 4th—In-class exercise on writing narrative voice.

**Week Six: Voice and Identity continued**
Wed., Feb. 9th—Alexie and Cisneros continued.
Friday, Feb. 11th—Film interview with Sherman Alexie.

**Week Seven: Worlds Imagined and Remembered**
Wed., Feb. 16th—Octavio Paz, “My Life with the Wave.”
Friday, Feb. 18th—Jane Urquhart, “Dreams.”

Week Eight: Connection and Interpretation
Friday, Feb. 25th—Lahiri and Baldwin continued.

Week Nine: Graphic Storytelling—Identity in Context
Monday, Feb. 28th—Marjane Satrapi, “Persepolis.”
Wed., March 2nd—Film of “Persepolis.”
Friday, March 4th—Film continued. Discussion.

Week Ten: Graphic Storytelling continued
Monday, March 7th—Adrian Tomine, Shortcomings, first half.
Wed., March 9th—Tomine, second half.
Friday, March 11th—Conclusions.