ENG 104: Introduction to Fiction
Elements of Modern Fiction

260 Condon Hall
9:00-9:50 MWF
CRN: 12096

Contact Info
Instructor: Alexander Steele
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Email: asteele@uoregon.edu

Communication through Canvas’s Inbox is much preferred over email, though either is fine.

Course Description
ENG 104 introduces you to prose narrative and its formal elements by reading, discussing, and writing about works of modern literature. Each week will target a key element in fiction, such as focalization and symbolism, by considering stories which illuminate these features. By isolating key individual elements of fiction, we will build a vocabulary and framework for better comprehending and analyzing texts. The goal is not to “solve” or “answer for” any particular story, but to learn instead how to grapple with some of the best classic stories in short fiction — and to discover for yourselves what sort of responses these stories evoke for you.

Required Texts
All texts available at the DuckStore
- The Art of the Short Story (First Edition), edited by Dana Gioia and R.S. Gwynn
- A Pale View of Hills, Kazuo Ishiguro
- The Body Artist, Don DeLillo

Learning Goals
By the end of this course, the successful student will be able:
1. To understand works of fiction and their conventions.
2. To draw on relevant cultural and/or historical information to situate texts within their social contexts.
3. To analyze literary fiction formally and critically.
4. To write focused, analytical short writing assignments and essays in clear, grammatical prose.
5. To make comparisons and contrasts between literary fiction and the stories we tell and hear in
everyday life, and to consider how stories contribute to our worldviews.

**Evaluation**

- (97.5-100 A+, 93.5-97.4 A, 89.5-93.4 A-, 87.5-89.4 B+, 83.5-87.4 B, 79.5-83.4 B-, 77.5-79.4 C+, 73.5-77.4 C, 69.5-73.4 C-, 59.5-69.4 D, 00.0-59.4 F)

**Grading Breakdown**

- Weekly Canvas Reading Journal Discussion Posts: 30%
- Midterm: Short-Answer and Multiple-Choice Assignment: 30%
- Final Essay: 40%

**Assignments**

**Weekly Canvas Reading Journal Discussion Posts: (30% of Course Total)**

- Once per week throughout the term, you will respond on Canvas to a series of prompts asking you to write about your encounters with that week’s readings. These will be both directed toward the particular topic or narrative element for that week, as well as more free-form responses to the stories. These won’t be too long or taxing, but **they will give you the opportunity to share and explore your encounters with our readings with your peers, as well as demonstrate your critical engagement with them.** Because I have weighted these posts so heavily in overall course grades, I would encourage you to treat them as much more than “busy-work” and instead to give them your full attention. While this writing space is primarily for you to grapple with and explore our readings, I will also chime in occasionally by offering additional perspectives to consider. These posts are as important to me in the class as your formal assignments and should be approached as such. More information will follow.

**Midterm: Short-Answer and Multiple-Choice Assignment: (30% of Course Total)**

- During the term (in Week 6) you will complete a midterm comprised of both short-answer and multiple-choice questions. **The midterm asks you to carefully consider and respond in short-answer and multiple-choice form to a set of questions about the elements of fiction and texts covered in the first half of the term.** While the short-answers are not to be confused with mini-essays, they will need to be polished, attentive to detail, and demonstrate both critical thinking and an earnest engagement with the material. More information will follow.

**Final Essay: (40% of Course Total)**

- At the conclusion of the class, you will compose a short essay (4-5 pages) that asks you to take a few of the critical reading skills and terms you will have learned throughout the term and to apply them to the more complex form of the novel. For your Final Essay you will write about the short novels we will read in our final two weeks. **The essay will ask you to produce a formal short piece of argumentative writing on a literary element of your choice that’s been covered in the course, and to argue how it operates within the novels.** A successful short essay must have a convincing thesis statement, proper topic sentences and developed paragraphs, supportive textual evidence, and critical analysis of said evidence. More information will follow.

**Course Policies**

**Attendance**

- Attendance is required. You may miss the equivalent of one week of class meetings (3 classes maximum) for any reason. **I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.** Additional absences will each lower your course grade by 1/3. For example, the first additional absence after one week of absences will reduce a B- to a C+, the second additional absence will reduce a C+ to a C, and so on. Please notify me ahead of time if you must miss class, will be late, or leave class early. You are responsible for anything you miss if you are not in class (do not email me).
Any absence after two full weeks of missed class may result in course failure. Any absence after three full weeks of missed class will result in course failure.

Best Effort
- You should complete all assignments to the best of your ability. If your assignment does not meet minimum word and page counts (not including formatting and references), you will be docked a letter grade (10%). If you are significantly under the word count (<100 words), you will fail the assignment immediately. A page count means writing to the end of that page, not the start of it.

Late Work
- All work is due at the beginning of class on the specified dates; papers that come in after this time are late. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day, including weekends.

Access
- If you have a disability (physical or learning) that you think may affect your performance in this class, please see me during the first week of the term so we can make arrangements, if necessary, for your full access to classroom activities.

- 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.

Class Courtesy
- Our work this term will be challenging and interesting. Please come to class promptly, prepared, and ready to do your best. Bring your text every day. Failure to do so will result in dismissal and a zero taken for the day's participation. Do not be afraid to share your ideas, ask questions, and have a sense of humor. Treat peers and their ideas with respect. Take an interest in your classmates’ work and accept constructive feedback on your own. However, do not mistake being asked to support your claims with being attacked for them. This is a safe space, but it will not always be comfortable.

Academic Honesty
- All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course, which means you may not submit papers or portions of papers you have written for any other 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 academic misconduct has been clearly established, the award of up to an F for the final course grade is the standard practice of the Composition Program. Please see me if you have any questions about your use of sources.

Paper Format
- All work completed outside of class should be typed and double-spaced using 12-point Times New Roman font, with 1” margins all around. Please place your name, my name, the course number, the date, and word count in the upper left-hand corner of Page 1. Use MLA style to cite and properly document any outside sources you use. We will talk more about MLA format and citation in class. Unless instructed otherwise, papers must be submitted electronically to Canvas as a MS Word (.doc/.docx) file and possibly as a hard copy as well.
**Schedule of Readings**

(All page ranges for weeks 1-8 reference Gioia and Gwynn’s *The Art of the Short Story*)

*Subject to change with advanced notice

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 1    | Tone (Irony)           | W (10/2): Syllabus and Introductions; In class: Kafka’s “Before the Law” (pp. 466-467)  
→ R (10/3): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm ←
| 2    | Allegory and Parable   | M (10/7): Shirley Jackson, “The Lottery” (pp. 390-396)                  |
|      |                        | W (10/9): Ursula K. Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” (pp. 531-535)  
→ R (10/10): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm ←
F (10/11): Reread one of this week’s stories & read the “Author’s Perspective” which follows it |
| 3    | Symbol and Metaphor    | M (10/14): Sherwood Anderson, “Hands” (pp. 15-19)                        |
|      |                        | W (10/16): Ernest Hemingway, “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” (pp. 372-375)  
→ R (10/17): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm ←
F (10/18): Reread one of this week’s stories & read the “Author’s Perspective” which follows it |
|      |                        | W (10/23): Gabriel García Márquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (pp. 289-293)  
→ R (10/24): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm ←
F (10/25): Reread one of this week’s stories & read the “Author’s Perspective” which follows it |
### WEEK 5—SETTING

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<th>M (10/28):</th>
<th>James Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues” (pp. 27-49)</th>
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<td>W (10/30):</td>
<td>Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (pp. 297-308)</td>
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→ R (10/31): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm

F (11/1): Reread **one** of this week’s stories & read the **“Author's Perspective”** which follows it

### WEEK 6—ALLUSION

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<th>M (11/4):</th>
<th>Katherine Anne Porter, “Flowering Judas” (pp. 727-736)</th>
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→ R (11/7): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm

→ F (11/8): In Class: Midterm: Short-Writing and Multiple-Choice Assignment

### WEEK 7—EPIPHANY

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<th>M (11/11):</th>
<th>Raymond Carver, “Cathedral” (pp. 77-87)</th>
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<td>W (11/13):</td>
<td>James Joyce, “Araby” (pp. 430-434)</td>
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→ R (11/14): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm

F (11/15): Reread **one** of this week’s stories & read the **“Author's Perspective”** which follows it

### WEEK 8—FOCIALIZATION

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<td>W (11/20):</td>
<td>Ralph Ellison, “A Party Down at the Square” (pp. 218-222)</td>
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→ R (11/21): Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm

F (11/22): Reread **one** of this week’s stories & read the **“Author's Perspective”** which follows it

### WEEK 9—TYING IT ALL TOGETHER: EXPERIMENT 1

|------------|--------------------------------------------------|

→ Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by Midnight

F (11/29): NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>M (12/2)</td>
<td>Don DeLillo, <em>The Body Artist</em> (pp. 1-62)</td>
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<tr>
<td>W (12/4)</td>
<td>Don DeLillo, <em>The Body Artist</em> (pp. 62-126)</td>
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<td>R (12/5)</td>
<td>Contribute to the Canvas Discussion Board by 10 pm</td>
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<td>F (12/6)</td>
<td>Wrap-Up</td>
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**Finals Week: NO CLASS**

→ Final Papers Due Monday (12/16) by 10 am on Canvas