

## English 3450: The Short Story

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Abigayle Farrier

**Number of Credits:** 3 credit hours

**Class Location:** Online

**Class Meeting Day(s) & Time(s):** This is an asynchronous course; you will complete the material on your own schedule. We will not meet at a set time.

**Office Hours:** I am available any time for consultation over email. If you would like to schedule a meeting over Zoom, please email me and I will be happy to set up a time for us to meet.

**Email:** [abigayle.farrier@unt.edu](mailto:abigayle.farrier@unt.edu)

**Response Time:** I try to respond to all emails sent during the week within 24 hours. Please allow 48 hours on weekends and holidays.

### Course Description

This course is a comparative survey of the short story from its inception in the 19th century to the present day, comprising representative works by African, Asian, British, Russian, North and South American, and European writers, in English or in translation.

### Course Objectives

This course fulfills the CORE curriculum requirements for the “Language, Philosophy and Culture” category. Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.

In addition to fulfilling the CORE objectives, the following are our specific Course Objectives:

- Identify the main characters and major plot points in each of the short stories that we will read
- Match the titles of the assigned readings with their authors' names
- Recognize important information conveyed in assigned supplementary readings appended to some of our stories
- Match the authors that we will read to the country with which they are most associated
- Associate the assigned short stories and their writers with contemporaneous literary and artistic movements and with relevant genres
- Match assigned short stories to the period in which they were published
- Recognize important aspects of a number of keywords drawn from literary studies, history, and theory that apply to our readings and are relevant to other humanities and social science courses and to contemporary cultural and political phenomena

- Relate the assigned short stories to broader political, cultural, and intellectual history
- Relate the assigned short stories to broader moral and ethical questions
- Analyze fiction using various techniques of literary criticism and scholarship
- Compose effective literary and textual analyses
- Contrast two of our readings that share a similar topic to develop a more effective interpretation of each work
- Develop counterintuitive explanations or surprising interpretations using the Argumentative Twist technique

## Required Texts

Standalone Texts to Purchase or Rent:

(Available at UNT's Barnes & Noble)

- Gioia, Dana, and Gwynn, R.S., editors. *The Art of the Short Story*. Pearson Longman, 2006.
- Solomon, Barbara H., editor. *Other Voices, Other Vistas: Short Stories from Africa, China, India, Japan, and Latin America*. Signet, 2002.

eBook Available through Our Library:

- Ueda, Akinari. "The Kibitsu Cauldron." *Tales of Moonlight and Rain*. By Ueda Akinari. Translated by Anthony Chambers. Columbia University Press, 2007.  
[Link to the book on the library's website.](#)

*Project Gutenberg* (Public Domain Texts)

(Available for download on Canvas in the module in which they are assigned)

- Willa Cather's "The Sculptor's Funeral" (1905)
- Charles Chesnutt's Headnote and "The Web of Circumstance" (1899)
- Joseph Conrad's "An Outpost of Progress" (1897)
- Elizabeth Gaskell's "The Well of Pen-Morfa" (1850)
- E.T.A. Hoffmann's "The Sandman" (1817)
- Rudyard Kipling "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888)
- Edgar Allan Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" (1846)
- Pu Songling's "Dragon Dormant" and "The Painted Skin" (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century)

## Teaching Philosophy

My role in this class is to structure your learning as you engage with the content in our course. I will also be actively engaged in grading - I strive to return grades rapidly and with detailed feedback. Your success is my top priority: I am here to support you and your learning.

You will also play a vital role in this class, through our online discussions and interactions. I hope you all stay open to learning from each other - I know that I will learn from each of you!

It is my goal that every person in this class feels supported, valued, included, and recognized. Your success and wellbeing are my priority, and my door is always open. Please reach out at any time. I look forward to hearing from, and learning with, you all!

## Grading

This course makes use of a grading system based on total points.

Total Possible Grade for the Semester = 100%

- A=100%-90%
- B=89.9%-80%
- C=79.9%-70%
- D=69.9%-60%
- F=59.9%-0%

## Course Activities and Assessments

### Activities

- Reading Check Quizzes (RCQ) (15%)
- Journal Entries and Discussion Posts (15%)

### Assessments

- Point of Contrast Exercise (10%)
- Context Test #1 (10%)
- Contrastive Essay (25%)
- Context Test #2 (10%)
- Signature Assignment (15%)

### Extra Credit

- Practice Quizzes (up to 5% extra credit)

### **Reading Check Quizzes**

Each module will include a brief quiz on the module's readings that is worth five or ten points. They will cover important details about, among other things, the plot and characters of the stories we will read. They will also often include key points from the assigned supplementary readings appended to the stories in *The Art of the Short Story*. These questions are not intended to be difficult, but they are intended to encourage you to do the reading and to read attentively. It's also a way to exercise control over your grade in the course. If you do well on these, it can help keep your grade up even if you aren't the best writer in the class. Also, at the end of the semester when your instructor considers borderline grades, this is a place one can look to see how much effort you put into the course.

### **Context Tests**

Although one could argue that literature courses aren't primarily informational, it is important that you come away from the course knowing more about literature, theory, and history than you did going in. Toward that end, these two exams will cover contextual information supplied via either Canvas, in the form of micro lectures, keyword pages, and other support materials, or our assigned anthologies, in the form of author headnotes and keywords and other supplementary documents, mostly drawn from *The Art of the Short Story*. In addition to the keywords and their application to the stories, these tests will ask you to identify the short story writers' countries of origin and the period when their fiction was published. Context Tests I & II will consist of multiple-choice and matching questions.

### **Practice Quizzes**

To assess how well you are learning the supplementary material and authorial information mentioned above, each module will include an extra-credit practice quiz that has multiple-choice questions and, in the first few weeks of the course, definition matching questions. Correctly answered questions on quizzes in the first 6 modules are worth .1 extra credit points and .2 thereafter. That may not seem like a lot but you can earn nearly 30 bonus points over the entire semester. But there is another reason why you should take these quizzes. Their questions will constitute the question pool for the two context tests that you will take this semester. (A word about the practice quiz grades: Canvas, unfortunately, does not have an extra credit quiz option. Therefore, it will appear as though your final grade is out of slightly over 1000 total points, but your final grade will in fact be calculated out of 1000 points (i.e. it's theoretically possible to earn, something like, 1018/1000 points in this class). Just keep this in mind if you look at your percentage grade throughout the semester, it'll probably appear slightly lower (like a percentage point or two), than it truly is.)

### **Journal Entries**

To help you to build in arsenal of critical techniques that you can use in your longer papers, we will do a number of low-stakes writing assignments and upload them as journal entries. You will be responsible for a number of these assignments over the course of the semester. Each paragraph will be worth 10 pts. and have a 250-word minimum. (You may *slightly* exceed this minimum, but try not to go beyond 350 words

on these assignments). The prompts, which include brief explanations and rationales for the techniques, are included within the modules in which you should complete them.

### **Online Discussion Posts**

The online discussions will be another venue for you to develop your thinking about our readings and to gain practice writing about literature. Like the journal entries, they will be relatively low stakes, but substantive. Posts will vary in value, between 5 and 10 points, and have a 150-word minimum, but I suspect that you will sometimes exceed this word count. Discussing the readings in a literature course is essential not just because it makes the class feel like a collective enterprise but, even more importantly, it enables us (the instructor included) to learn from one another.

### **Point of Contrast Exercise and Contrastive Essay**

The Point of Contrast Exercise is a writing assignment designed to introduce you to the format of one of the two longer essays for this course. Although it is worth (100 pts.) substantially more than the other forms of low-stakes writing this semester, it is still worth substantially less than the major essay you will write. The Contrastive Essay, which is worth 250 pts., asks you to put two works that share a common topic, theme, or motif into conversation with one another. By juxtaposing texts that possess a shared element, we can sharpen our perception of how each work handles that topic, theme, or motif. However, the format of this essay is quite different than the traditional thesis-driven five-paragraph essay that you are probably familiar with, so please read the instructions for how to structure these assignments carefully and email your instructor with any questions.

### **Signature Assignment**

The Signature Assignment is required in all UNT English CORE classes. In this essay, you will develop a thesis-driven argument about an ethical dilemma presented in a work or across two works. You will perform a close reading of one (or possibly two) of our literary readings for how it presents and comments on an ethical problem. The ethical issue that you address could be primarily interpersonal (e.g., how does the writer explore the ethics of certain behaviors or actions as they relate to individuals or families?) or primarily social (e.g. how does the writer explore the ethical implications of societal forms of oppression, such as racism, classism, sexism, or homophobia?) or, perhaps more likely, could involve the intersection between the two. In your conclusion, you will reflect on your own view of the ethical issue raised in part one.

# Policies

## Late Work

Please do your best to submit your assignments and assessments on or before the day they are due. But if you do miss the deadline, a two-day grace period, beyond the official due date, has been built into the course for every assignment *except the final assignments*. That is, aside from the final assignments, you have 48 hours after the official deadline to complete any outstanding assignments or assessments at no penalty. As a general rule, no reading check quiz, practice quiz, journal entry, online discussion post, or exam can be made up once the grace period for that assignment or assessment has passed. *Having said that, if you are dealing with extenuating circumstances, please contact me (preferably in advance) and I will do my best to work with you.*

## Grading Concerns

It is my hope that my grading choices are clear (this is another reason why I give you my rubrics before your assignments are due!), but if you have a question about a grade you received, please contact me. Know that I am always happy to elaborate and explain my decisions - I ask only that you please be respectful in your communications.

## Turnaround Time

I'll aim to respond to your journal entries and your posts in the discussion forums within one week after the grace period ends. I'll aim to respond to your higher stakes writing assignments (Three-Paragraph Writing Exercise, and Five-Paragraph Writing Exercise) within two weeks. When this is not possible, I will send an announcement to the class or to individuals who are affected.

## Plagiarism

The UNT Policy Manual defines plagiarism as: “(a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.” (18.1.11). All writing in this course must be original. Writing produced by ChatGPT and other AI writing programs is therefore prohibited. All uses of other writers' material (e.g. for the purposes of research-based argumentation) must be acknowledged and clearly cited in any writing submitted for a grade.

The consequences for plagiarism at UNT are severe, and may include failure for the course, loss of scholarships, and in some cases dismissal from the university. Please talk with me if you are unsure about whether or not something you are doing in your writing might be identified as plagiarism. If I believe that something you have written has been plagiarized, you will be notified of the allegations in writing and asked to meet with me and respond to my argument. After hearing your response, I will decide

on a course of action and notify you in writing of any penalties or other consequences. I will also send a copy of the allegations and sanctions to the Academic Affairs office. Please note that instructors in the English Department are authorized to fail students for an assignment or for the course if they judge that an assignment is knowingly or negligently plagiarized. Students have the option of appealing in writing to the Assistant Chair of the Department of English within 5 days of the instructor's decision.

## **Academic Integrity**

The University of North Texas promotes the integrity of learning and embraces the core values of trust and honesty. Academic integrity is based on educational principles and procedures that protect the rights of all participants in the educational process and validate the legitimacy of degrees awarded by the University. In the investigation and resolution of allegations of student academic dishonesty, the University's actions are intended to be corrective, educationally sound, fundamentally fair, and based on reliable evidence. [You will find the policy and procedures at this link.](#)

## **Confidentiality in the Classroom**

I will not share student writing on social media, and the English department expects you, as good classroom citizens, to show the same discretion. Please don't share your classmates' posts or your instructor's or any of the class materials on social media. The recorded lectures in this course are the intellectual property of the university and course designer and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

## **Technology Requirements**

Minimum technology skills for successful completion of this course include:

- Sending and receiving email
- Creating, sending, and receiving Microsoft Word documents
- Posting to discussion boards
- Printing Word documents OR opening and printing pdf files, using free [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)
- Navigating Canvas

## **Statement on Americans with Disabilities**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time,

however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access web site](#). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

## **Blanket Trigger Warning**

Serious literature, by definition, takes up difficult, even distressing subject matter. Topics such as, but not limited to, sex, rape, death, murder, mental illness, war, genocide, racism, and enslavement will show up in this semester's readings. By remaining in this class, we have all agreed to discuss these topics with the maturity they deserve. Please remain respectful.

If you experience a psychological or emotional crisis during the semester, whether it is triggered by the reading or by ongoing events in your life, I urge you to make [use of UNT's free counseling services](#).

## **Additional Support for Students**

If, at any point during the semester, you feel that you are struggling with the course, please contact me. I am more than happy to help in any way that I can.

Additionally, if you are on campus and feel that you could benefit from UNT's mental health services, please know that if you are uncomfortable going to the UNT Counseling Center or seeking help alone, I am more than willing to walk with you and help you find the resources you need. If you live off-campus, know that these resources are available to you remotely, and I am also happy to help you navigate that.