The Short Story

Course: ENGL 3450.002 (TR 11 A.M.-12:20 P.M.)
Instructor: Shari M. Childers, Ph.D.
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Web page: Blackboard for this course
Ofc. Hours: TR 12:30 P.M. – 1:50 P.M. or by appt
Office: LANG 407C

Required Textbooks


(ISBN: 978-0-14-007949-4)

Grading

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

- 15% Class Assignments, Discussions, Quizzes, and Participation
- 20% Weekly response papers
- 10% Composition 1*
- 15% Present/Lit Analysis Argument (3+ pages)*
- 20% Final Composition w/Research (5-7 pages)*
- 20% Final Exam*

(A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F < 60)
*Failure to complete any essay or exam will result in failure of this course.

Course Description

The Short Story introduces students to the arc of development of this genre through a study of representative works, beginning with its inception in the late Eighteenth century/early nineteenth centuries. This course emphasizes the study and consideration of the literary, cultural, and human significance of selected works and is designed to expand the students’ pleasures in exploring literary masterpieces as well as to reinforce their skills in literary analysis and research. An important goal of the class is to promote an understanding of both the significant literary traditions and experiments that comprise this genre in order to put students in a continual process of interpreting, confronting, discovering, and discussing human experience within its cultural/historical context. As such, students will read selections—chosen for their general representation of the complex interplay of literary elements that define subgenres within the short story form as well as for their contemporary relevance—and analyze them, discussing philosophies and artistic mores, milieus, and concerns, with an eye toward understanding the characteristics, the shifting thought processes, and the sensibilities leading to the post-modern era and its literatures. The course’s pedagogy gives special attention to critical thinking and writing within a framework of cultural diversity as well as comparative analysis. Upon completion of this course, students will have gained a broader knowledge some of the world’s most significant International literary masterpieces, and this semester, we will wind our way through the literary landscape of the short story by following one thread...

Identity.
General Policies for Students in The Short Story

Absence Policy:

Regular and punctual class attendance is required of all students, and poor attendance may prevent students from earning a passing grade in the course for the semester. The maximum number of permissible absences before a student automatically earns an “F” or “WF” in the course is determined by the schedule of the course:

• M-W-F (class meets three times a week): 7 absences
• T-TH (or M-W; class meets two times a week): 5 absences
• M (or any class that meets only once a week): 3 absences

(Note: rare extenuating circumstances may occur which legitimize exception to rule, but no exceptions will be made without such circumstances. It is the students’ responsibility to keep track of their absences so that they don’t go over the allowed number permitted for the course.)

Course schedules and drops in the first two weeks

Students need to monitor their course schedule every day for the first two weeks of class in order to make sure that they have not been dropped from their courses by the registrar’s office. Students who are dropped from classes for nonpayment of financial aid or other reasons will not be readmitted to the course; it is the student’s responsibility to make sure that all of their financial records are in order so that they are not dropped.

Excused absences for university activities

In accordance with university policy, the only authorized absences are those due to participation in university-sponsored activities. Authorized absences must be approved in advance by department chairs and academic deans, and within three days after the absence, students must obtain an authorized absence card from the Dean of Students and present this card in person to their instructors. Students with authorized absences may make up the work missed or be given special allowance so that they are not penalized for the absence. All assignments and scheduled work must be turned in before or on the date of the excused absence.

Excused absences for religious holidays

In accordance with State law, students absent due to the observance of a religious holiday may take examinations or complete assignments scheduled for the day missed within a reasonable time after the absence. Travel time required for religious observances shall also be excused. Please see the UNT Student Handbook for information on which holidays or holy days are covered by this policy. State law also requires that students notify their teachers at the beginning of the semester if they expect to miss class on a religious holy day during the semester but want to make up the work missed. Students will be allowed to make up the work provided they have informed their teachers in writing within the first 15 days of the semester. Once again, all assignments and scheduled work must be turned in before the date of the excused absence. University policy requires that students provide their teachers with an official notification card issued by the university if they want to make up any in-class work they missed while they were involved in a university authorized activity.

Unexcused absences

Absences due to other causes, such as illness, emergency, death in the family, car trouble, etc., are not authorized by the Department of English as excusable absences, and instructors in the English Department are therefore not authorized to excuse students for such absences (even with “official” notes from medical professionals, etc.). Please note that absences for reasons other than official university business or religious holidays will count against students’ permitted absences for the semester and may also result in missed grades for quizzes, assignments, exams, or writing deadlines.

The following actions may also result in a student being counted as officially absent:

• Coming to class without an adequate draft on a day when a draft is due (for peer response or for an assignment)
• Showing up to class more than 10 minutes late
• Failing to attend a mandatory scheduled conference with the instructor
Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:
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). Students in all Freshman Writing courses need to be aware of the strict policies against plagiarism and academic honesty enforced by UNT and by instructors in the Department of English. All writing in Freshman English courses must be original, and all uses of other writer's material (i.e., for the purposes of research based argumentation) must be acknowledged and clearly cited.

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 your instructor if you are unsure about whether or not something is plagiarism. If your instructor believes that something you have written has been plagiarized, you will be notified of the allegations in writing and asked to meet with your instructor and respond to your instructor's arguments. After hearing your response, your instructor will decide on a course of action and notify you in writing of any penalties or other consequences. In most cases, your instructor 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 may appeal the decision of their instructor in writing to the Assistant Chair of the Department of English within 5 days of the instructor's decision.

Accommodating Students with Disabilities
In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, all instructors in the English Department will work with the Office of Disability Accommodations (ODA) to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have such a disability, please inform your instructor within the first week of the semester and provide your instructor with a Special Accommodation Request Form (available from the ODA). Students needing assistance must be registered with the ODA; if you need to register with the ODA or otherwise contact that office, the ODA phone number is (940) 565-4323, and the office is located in Sage Hall, suite 167.

Class Behavior and Disruptions
According to the UNT Student Code of Conduct (sect. V), the following actions are considered acts of misconduct and may subject a student to university discipline:

• Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary procedures or other University activities, including public service functions or other authorized activities on or off University premises. Includes interrupting, hindering or preventing classroom instruction or other official educational activities from occurring intentionally through noise, acts of incivility, or other means.

• Physical Abuse, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, coercion; and/or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person. Speech protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution is not a violation of this provision, although fighting words and statements, which reasonably threaten or endanger the health and safety of any person are not protected speech. Each allegation of a violation under this provision shall be reviewed in consideration of these factors.

• Disruptive activities as defined by Section 37.123 and 51.935 of the Texas Education Code, such as intentionally obstructing, restraining, preventing or attempting to prevent passage of individuals on campus or into/out of campus buildings by force, by violence or by the threat of same; seizing control of a building/portion of a building to interfere with an administrative, educational, research or other authorized activity; preventing participation in or the holding of a lawful assembly or attempting to prevent same by force/violence, by threat or by causing reasonable fear of force/violence; or disrupting an assembly in progress by one or more such means.

• Other disruptions, including cell phone usage and texting during class; sleeping and talking at inappropriate times during the class; and working on outside material during class are also forbidden and may affect your course grade.
Format for Formal Essays:

All essays/compositions need to be typed and submitted through the correct online Turnitin dropbox on Blackboard on the assigned due date by 11:59 p.m. For all essays, include your header—the name and the page number on the top right of each page (i.e.: Lastname 1). Please also include a heading with the date and the course number and section (i.e. ENGL 3430.002). There is no need to put your name in the heading. Use a text font for all essays (Times Roman or Garamond for example) at 12 points, with all one-inch (1”) margins, and double-spacing. Ask me if you need to see an example.

I do not accept papers late. Please contact me immediately if something may prevent you from submitting an assignment.

Attendance will be taken by means of quizzes and exercises completed or submitted at the beginning of any given class period. Reading quizzes will be based on the day’s assignment. You may use your notes. These quizzes will range from the simple, short answers to more involved short essay responses. I will not give make-up assignments, but I will drop your lowest grade in this category.

Weekly, informal essay assignments are due each Tuesday and are graded non-judgmentally (~1 typed page). I will provide you with a focus or perspective each week. Please refer to these instructions as often as necessary.

I will refer to these as “Think” Writings: Choose a text from the weekly reading list and write a short paper analyzing it. This is NOT a book report or summary; rather, the purpose is to make connections with other readings, draw attention to bias or contradiction in the text, and/or recognize the broader implications of the information presented. “Think” writings should demonstrate serious thought or reflection on form and/or content of readings. Some suggestions for approaching these essays include: in-depth analysis of a passage, treatment of a single literary technique, focusing on a particular theme, or debating with a position that is suggested by the reading.

Exams will vary with respect to formatting, but are generally a mix of short answer, matching, true/false, etc. They are just as likely to cover in-class discussion topics as they are to cover course readings.
Final Reminders and Notes:
Failure to complete any essay or exam will result in failure of this course. Please note the dates of all exams.

As you can see from the syllabus, this course features a fairly heavy reading load. Plan ahead to complete the readings and course assignments. Annotating your readings and/or keeping reading notes in a notebook is helpful. You are responsible for all material covered.

Course Schedule:
(Notes: Schedule is provisional and may change; I reserve the right to add supplemental essays or make additional changes as needed. All assignments are due on the class period listed below.

SS= The Art of the Short Story by Gioia & Gwynn
TALE = The Art of the Tale by Halpern

Week 1 (Jan 20, Jan 22)
• Introduction to policies, instructor, and course plan
• In-class Writing
• Class discussion: what is literature? Why does it matter?

• Horror and Dark Romanticism/Psychology
  • Class Discussion: Literature as Experience
  • Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown” (SS)
  • Poe, “The Tell-Tale Heart” (SS)

Week 2 (Jan 27, Jan 29)
• Realism/Insignificant and Vile
  • Class discussion: critical reading strategies
  • Gogol, “The Overcoat” (SS)
  • Boll, “Action will be Taken” (TALE)
  • Kafka, “The Metamorphosis” (SS)

Week 3 (Feb 3, Feb 5)
• Realism/On Suffering
  • Class discussion: Literature as Representation
    • Flaubert, “A Simple Heart” (SS)
    • Maupassant, “The Necklace” (SS)
    • Chekov, “Misery” (SS)

Week 4 (Feb 10, Feb 12)
• Naturalism
  • Cather, “Paul’s Case” (SS)
  • Crane, “The Open Boat” (SS)
  • London, “To Build a Fire” (SS)

Week 5 (Feb 17, Feb 19)
• Madness and the Move to Modernism
  • Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (SS)
  • Chopin, all (SS)
  • Woolf, “A Haunted House” (SS)
  • Mansfield, “Miss Brill” (SS)

Week 6 (Feb 24, Feb 26)
• Modernism: Existentialism and Absurdism
  • Camus, “The Adulterous Woman” (TALE)
  • Mahfouz, “Conjurer Made Off with the Dish” (TALE)
  • Gordimer, “The Life of the Imagination” (TALE)
• Essay 1: Literary Analysis Argument Due

Week 7 (Mar 3, Mar 5)
• Southern Gothic, a Return to Psych. Horror
  • Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily” (SS)
  • O’Connor, “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (SS)
  • Capote, “Children on Their Birthdays” (TALE)
• Mid-term Exam??
Week 8 (Mar 10, Mar 12)
• Modernism, Lexis, Perspective
  • Nabokov, “Spring in Fialta” (Tale)
  • Patrick White, “Five-Twenty” (Tale)

Spring Break (Mar 16-20)

Week 9 (Mar 24, Mar 26)
• Modernism, Who Am I Now?
  • Kundera, “Let the Old Dead Make Room for the Young Dead” (Tale)
  • Fuentes, “The Doll Queen” (Tale)

Week 10 (Mar 31, Apr 2)
• Magical Realism
  • Cortazar, “Bestiary” (Tale)
  • Marquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (SS)

Week 11 (Apr 7, Apr 9)
• Postmodernism/Fabulation
  • Barthelme, “Cortes and Montezuma” (Tale)
  • Coover, “Quenby and Ola, Swede and Carl” (Tale)

Week 12 (Apr 14, Apr 16)
• Science/Speculative Fiction; Who Might We Be?
  • Jackson, “The Lottery” (SS)
  • LeGuin, “The One Who Walk Away from Omelas” (SS)

Week 13 (Apr 21, Apr 23)
• Minimalism
  • Beckett, “First Love” (Tale)
  • Carver, “A Small, Good Thing” (SS)
  • Mason, “Shiloh” (SS)
  • Mrabet, “Doctor Safi” (Tale)

Week 14 (Apr 28, Apr 30)
• Explorations of Cultural Identity & Spaces
  • Walker, “Everyday Use” (SS)
  • Mishima, “Patriotism” (SS)
  • Cisneros, “Barbie-Q” (SS)
  • Narayan, “Naga” (Tale)

Week 15 (May 5, May 7)
• Explorations of “Othering”
  • Baldwin, “Going to Meet the Man” (Tale)
  • Achebe, “Dead Men’s Path” (SS)
  • Ha Jin, “Saboteur” (SS)
  • Oz, “Nomad and Viper” (Tale)
• Essay 2: Research Essay Due

Week 16 (Tuesday, May 12)
• Final Exam, 8:00a – 10:00a