ENGLISH 237 W: 8-WEEKS – INTRODUCTION TO FICTION

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PLEASE READ ASSIGNED STORIES BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS MEETING

Course Description

This course is the study of fiction that is international in scope and spans nearly two centuries. The stories themselves are widely diversified as to type and style and offer attractions to a multiplicity of tastes and interests. They also provide the opportunity to selective approaches organized around related themes. All of the stories, by women and men, were selected for their literary merit. All reading for each session must be done prior to class.

Course Objectives

Students will have the opportunity:
- to foster an appreciation of reading and a serious study of literature.
- to learn and distinguish the elements of fiction.
- to use interpretive skills in regard to literature and life experiences.
- to improve writing skills.

General Focus

The works for this course are selected to introduce the student to serious study of literature. The fiction read will be experienced through three logical sequences. The actual reading of the work will be the obvious beginning. Then, the purpose and nature of the fiction will be analyzed by questions of craft, the so-called elements of fiction. Lastly, each author’s life will also be explored to help foster ways of seeing the works within their temporal and cultural contexts. The reading of the fiction may ultimately continue to the way we understand and experience our own lives.

I. Author Talks (8 minutes in length) DO NOT READ TO US, as this will lower the presentation evaluation by one letter grade. Each student is required to select an author from the reading list and present an 8-minute review about the author prior to discussing their work.
- Choose any author from the assigned reading list.
- Only one author talk about any given author per class section.
- The author talk will be given verbally before the class on the assigned date.
- Cite your resources in correct MLA format or points will be deducted for plagiarism.
- Use at least three different sources.
* Do not talk about a list of their works. This appears to be “filler.” Rather, touch on their major works.
* Make reference to the class selection in regard to discoveries made about the author.
* Include such things as the following:
  • where they were born
  • family
  • major works
  • formal education
  • cause of death
  • marriages
  • prizes received for work
  • other interesting trivia

* Please avoid copying chronologies from the first pages of biographies.

DO NOT SIMPLY CUT AND PASTE FROM ELECTRONIC SOURCES.

• YOU MAY USE NOTES; HOWEVER, SIMPLY READING TO THE CLASS FROM YOUR HANDOUT OR INTERNET PRINTOUTS RESULTS IN 10 POINTS BEING DEDUCTED FROM THE PRESENTATION.

• PLAGARISM IN ANY FORM WILL BE GIVEN A FAILING GRADE. TAKING ANOTHER’S THOUGHTS, IDEAS, OR INFORMATION IS A CRIME. GO AHEAD AND USE IT, BUT IT MUST BE CITED.

• Scoring for Author Talks: 8 min. = 100%
  7.5 min. = 95%
  7 min. = 90%
  6.5 min. = 85%
  6 min. = 80%
  5.5 min. = 75%
  5 min. = 70%
  4.5 min. = 65%
  4 min. = 60%
  3.5 min. = 55%
  3 min. = 50%
  3.5 min. = 45%
  3 min. = Why bother?

II. Reading Quizzes

All reading for each session must be done prior to class.

Questions will be asked about each story at the beginning of each session in a written format. These will not be interpretive level questions, but rather “Did you read it?” type questions.

One quiz each session: 320 points (8 points each story). NO QUIZ WILL BE TAKEN OR CREDIT GIVEN IF THE STUDENT DOES NOT STAY TO THE COMPLETION OF THE CLASS; YOU CAN NOT COME TO CLASS, TAKE THE QUIZ, AND LEAVE EARLY.
III. Two Essays

THIS IS A W (WRITING) CLASS

• Two 125 point essays, typewritten; double-spaced
• Due Sessions 5 and 8
• Late Essays: 11 points will be deducted FOR EACH WEEK THE ESSAY IS LATE. No essays are accepted after the 8TH week.

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ATTENDANCE IS AN EXPECTATION, NOT AN OPTION. CREDIT WILL NOT BE GIVEN FOR THIS COURSE IF TWO OR MORE CLASSES ARE NOT ATTENDED.

ALL STUDENTS HAVE THE OPTION TO WRITE ONE EXTRA ESSAY IF YOU HAVE MISSED A CLASS OR ARE DISSATISFIED WITH YOUR GRADE PERCENTILE.

Total Course Points: 720

Scale:  
97 - 100 = A+
93 - 96  = A
90 - 92  = A-
87 - 89  = B+
83 - 86  = B
80 - 82  = B-
77 - 79  = C+
73 - 76  = C
70 - 72  = C-
67 - 69  = D+
63 - 66  = D+
60 - 62  = D-
59 and Below = F

TEXT: Norton Anthology (long version). A quiz will be given the first session over the assigned readings.

• ISBN: #0393937755
• 8th edition
• Publisher: Norton
• Editors: Bausch & Cassill
• Copyright: 2015
Reading list: Begin reading immediately, as all students are expected to have completed each session’s assigned stories prior to attending class. There will be a quiz at the beginning of each class session.

Session 1:  Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown,” p. 620  
Edgar Allan Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher,” p. 1227  
Herman Melville, “Bartleby the Scrivner,” p. 1029  
Leo Tolstoy, “The Death of Ivan Ilych,” p. 1514

Session 2:  Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain), “The Invalid’s Story,” p. 288 (author bio, p. 284)  
Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge,” p. 149  
Guy de Maupassant, “Boule de Suif,” p. 436  

Session 3:  Stephan Crane, “The Open Boat,” p. 362  
Willa Cather, “Paul’s Case,” p. 231  
Sherwood Anderson, “I Want to Know Why,” p. 37  
James Joyce, “The Dead,” p. 730 (author bio, p. 726)

Isak Dineson, “Sorrow-Acre,” p. 426  
D. H. Lawrence, “The Rocking Horse Winner,” p. 846  
Flannery O’Connor, “A Good Man is Hard to Find,” p. 1160

Session 5:  Katherine Anne Porter, “The Jilting of Granny Weatherall,” p. 1254  
Truman Capote, “Miriam,” p. 188  
F. Scott Fitzgerald, “Babylon Revisited,” p. 520  
William Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily,” p. 500

Session 6:  Ernest Hemingway, “Hills Like White Elephants,” p. 642  
John Steinbeck, “The Chrysanthemums,” p. 1439  
Zora Neale Hurston, “The Conscience of the Court,” p. 663  
Issac Bashevis Singer, “Gimpel the Fool,” p. 1377

Session 7:  Eudora Welty, “A Worn Path,” p. 1638  
John Cheever, “The Enormous Radio,” p. 246  
Ray Bradbury, “The Veldt,” p. 164  
Shirley Jackson, “The Lottery,” p. 673

Session 8:  Raymond Carver, “Cathedral,” p. 202  
Alice Walker, “Everyday Use,” p. 1586  
Louise Erdrich, “Matchmanito,” p. 475  
Amy Tan, “Rules of the Game,” p. 1490