

ENGLISH 2370: FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR--INTRODUCTION TO FICTION (CRN 19429)

Fall 2014, 9:25-10:40 TTh, Irby 201

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Office Hours: 10:00 am-12:00 pm MWF, 2:30-4:30 pm TTh, and by appointment

COURSE GOALS:

- An understanding of the structure and purposes of the UCA Core education program, of which this course is a part
- Through the study of numerous works of fiction, the ability to identify various techniques and processes that writers from different cultural perspectives use to create their stories, to relate those techniques and processes to the expression of themes and ideas representative of different cultural perspectives, and to relate those works to their historical contexts
- Through discussion, individual writing assignments, and group presentations in class, the ability to develop and present ideas logically and effectively to enhance communication and collaboration with diverse individuals and groups

TEXT:

An Introduction to Fiction, eleventh edition, ed. X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia (Pearson Longman publishers, 2010) **NOTE: This text is required for the course. Students who fail to bring the book to class will be counted absent for that day.**

READING AND WRITING SCHEDULE:

- Aug. 21 Introduction to goals & methods of the course
- Week 1 (Aug. 26 & 28) Plot: pp. 1-22 (includes "A&P," by John Updike), 482-85 ("Happy Endings," by Margaret Atwood)
- Week 2 (Sept. 2 & 4) Point of view: pp. 25-36 (includes "A Rose for Emily," by William Faulkner), 74-75, 516-17 ("The Story of an Hour," by Kate Chopin)
- Week 3 (Sept. 9 & 11) Character: pp. 77-79, 93-106 (includes "Cathedral," by Raymond Carver), 369-79 ("A Good Man Is Hard to Find," by Flannery O'Connor)
- Week 4 (Sept 16 & 18) Writing about a story: pp. 627-53, 664-67
- Week 5 (Sept. 23 & 25) Setting: pp. 107-10, 146-47, 538-42 ("Araby," by James Joyce), 518-19 ("The House on Mango Street," by Sandra Cisneros)
- Week 6 (Sept. 30, Oct. 2) Tone and Style: pp. 149-55, 167-68, 180-82, 130-37 (includes "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place," by Ernest Hemingway), 607-12 ("I Stand Here Ironing," by Tillie Olsen) **ESSAY 1 DUE TUESDAY SEPT.**

- Week 7 (Oct. 7 & 9) Theme: pp. 183-85, 202-14, 220-22 (includes "How I Met My Husband," by Alice Munro), 579-83 ("How to Become a Writer," by Lorrie Moore)
- Week 8 (Oct. 14) Catch up, review
- Week 9 (Oct. 21 & 23) Symbol: pp. 223-33, 255-58 (includes "The Chrysanthemums," by John Steinbeck), 545-59 ("Interpreter of Maladies," by Jhumpa Lahiri)
- Week 10 (Oct. 28 & 30) Writing about a story: review of pp. 627-53; Reading a Story in Critical Context: pp. 455-70 (includes "Everyday Use," by Alice Walker)
- Week 11 (Nov. 4 & 6) Reading Long Stories and Novels: pp. 259-301 (includes *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, by Leo Tolstoy)
- Week 12 (Nov. 11 & 13) Continue with *The Death of Ivan Ilych* **ESSAY 2 DUE TUESDAY NOV. 11**
- Week 13 (Nov. 18 & 20) Preparation for group presentation on one of the following stories: "Dead Men's Path," by Chinua Achebe; "This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona," by Sherman Alexie; "Sonny's Blues," by James Baldwin; "The Gospel According to Mark," by Jorge Luis Borges; "The Swimmer," by John Cheever; "The Storm," by Kate Chopin; "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," by Gabriel Garcia Marquez; "Sweat," by Zora Neale Hurston; "Girl," by Jamaica Kincaid; "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas," by Ursula K. Le Guin; "The Things They Carried," by Tim O'Brien; "Parker's Back," by Flannery O'Connor; "My Life with the Wave," by Octavio Paz; "Harrison Bergeron," by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.
- Week 14 (Nov. 25) First set of group presentations
- Week 15 (Dec. 21 & 4) Second set of group presentations, catch up and review
- Tues., Dec. 9 **FINAL EXAM PERIOD 8-10 AM—ESSAY 3 DUE**

ATTENDANCE: Attendance--on time--is mandatory. Three or more absences will lower your class participation grade, as will recurrent late arrival. If you miss four classes, you'll have one week after the last absence to see me with a believable excuse and a promise to sin no more; if you don't make this deadline, you'll be dropped from the course with a WF grade. And if you miss a fifth class following our conference about the four absences, you'll likewise be dropped with a WF. **Important note: "Attendance" in this class is defined as being present mentally as well as physically. If you spend the greater part of a class period sleeping, chatting with those around you, doing homework for another class, texting, or in any other way failing to engage with the class discussion, you'll be marked absent for that period. All materials not essential to your participation in the class must remain in your backpack during class; this includes cell phones and other communication devices, books and notebooks for other classes, newspapers, etc.**

ESSAYS: There are no in-class exams in this course; instead, you're required to turn in three essays written outside of class on the dates specified in the reading schedule above, as well as doing one group project during the last two weeks of class. I'll hand out detailed instructions for

each assignment later in the term, but, generally speaking, they'll ask you to discuss your own reading of one or more of the stories we've covered in class. You have the option to rewrite one of the first two essays for a higher grade if you're dissatisfied with the outcome of the first version.

JOURNALS: Each student must keep a journal of his or her thoughts on the assigned readings, with one entry devoted to one of the stories for each week before we discuss it in class (for example, during the first week you'll write about "A&P" but not "Happy Endings," in the second week "A Rose for Emily" but not "The Story of an Hour," etc.). Ordinarily, I'll pose a question for you to respond to in each entry, **with that response consisting of at least three paragraphs**, and ask you to end by raising a question or observation of your own about the story. Beyond that requirement you're also free to write as much as you wish about whatever intrigues you, inspires you, confuses you, or upsets you about the work in question, and about this work's relationship to other works you've read and its relevance to human life in general and your own life in particular.

There are two goals to this assignment, both of which you're probably already aware of. First, the act of writing stimulates thinking: even if at the outset you feel you have nothing at all to say about a given work, you'll find that putting fingers to keyboard will bring ideas forth; if you do have some ideas to start with you'll find that writing them down will cause you to extend and refine them. Second, as might be obvious from what's just been said, these entries will prove a rich source of class discussion and essay topics.

You'll submit these journals by e-mail to the address listed for me at the top of the syllabus. Each entry must reach me no later than 24 hours prior to the first class meeting during which we'll discuss that work (I'll give a more precise deadline with each specific assignment). **I won't accept a journal entry after the due date, but you are allowed to miss one journal with no penalty.** I'll grade you for each submission: if your entry shows an honest, thoughtful effort to come to grips with the work, you'll get somewhere from 8 to 10; if it shows a solid but not all that insightful effort, you'll get somewhere from 4 to 7; if you don't do the entry, or if you blow it off with superficial comments, you'll get somewhere from 0 to 3. At the end of the semester, I'll figure your final journal grade by taking the ratio of the total points you've earned to the total points possible. If we do twelve journals, for instance, then the total possible score will be 120; if you earn 100, then your percentage is 84, which means a B for your final journal grade. (My grading scale is 91-100=A, 80-90=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, below 60=F.)

GRADES: Your final grade will come from the following percentages:

Attendance/	
Participation:	20%
Journal :	20%
Essay 1:	10%
Essay 2:	15%
Essay 3:	15%
Class Presentation	20%

COURSE EVALUATIONS (in which *you* get to grade *me*): Student evaluations of a course and its professor are a crucial element in helping faculty achieve excellence in the classroom and the institution in demonstrating that students are gaining knowledge. Students may evaluate courses they are taking starting on Monday, Nov. 24, through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Knowingly presenting someone else's work as your own, whether in an exam, journal, or any other format, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism carries serious penalties, from failure on a particular assignment to failure for the course. If you ever have any questions on this subject, please feel free to ask me about them, without fear of embarrassment, and/or consult this file for more information:

<http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/files/2012/08/Plagiarism.pdf>

Here is UCA's official policy statement regarding academic integrity: The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

DISABILITIES: UCA adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3613.

BUILDING EMERGENCY PLAN: An Emergency Procedures Summary (EPS) for the building in which this class is held will be discussed during the first week of this course. EPS documents for most buildings on campus are available at <http://uca.edu/mysafety/bep/>. Every student should be familiar with emergency procedures for any campus building in which he/she spends time for classes or other purposes.

TITLE IX DISCLOSURE: If a student discloses an act of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, or other sexual misconduct to a faculty member (as it relates to "student-on-student" or "employee-on-student"), the faculty member cannot maintain complete confidentiality and is required to report the act and may be required to reveal the names of the parties involved. Any allegations made by a student may or may not trigger an investigation. Each situation differs and the obligation to conduct an investigation will depend on those specific set of circumstances. The determination to conduct an investigation will be made by the Title IX Coordinator. For further information, please visit: <https://uca.edu/titleix>. **Disclosure of sexual misconduct by a third party who is not a student and/or employee is also required if the misconduct occurs when the third party is a participant in a university-sponsored program, event, or activity.*

Journal question on "A&P"—due via e-mail by noon Wednesday, 8/27

In this story the overt conflict is between Sammy and Lengel about how the girls should be treated. Why, in your view, does Sammy want to make this issue a conflict, to take the girls' side—what do the girls and Lengel seem to represent to him about his dissatisfactions with his own life? Don't forget to ask a question or make an observation of your own after you deal with this question.