**Introduction to Fiction**

**ENGL 2370, CRN 18608**

**Fall Semester, 2014**

**Richard Gaughan**

**Irby 313**

**1:00-1:50 MWF**

Introduction to Fiction is an elective that satisfies the Humanities requirement for the General Education program and the Diversity in Creative Works requirement in the UCA Core. One reason Introduction to Fiction is part of the General Education program and the UCA Core is the central importance stories have always had in human culture. We may like to think that we live in a world of scientific facts and rational certainty, but the truth is we always have made sense of our lives through stories and continue to do so. Some of these stories may have originated as spoken stories and were passed down through the generations by bards, like Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, or they may have been stories that were meant to exist as written stories. Some are sacred stories, like those of the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur’an, and others are secular stories about ordinary people. But, in one way or another, we use stories to make sense of ourselves and our lives. Sometimes the stories seem to be based on fact (we still call news accounts stories even though we expect them to be factual and accurate), and other times they are purely imaginary, but they all tell us something important. In our class, we will look at a variety of stories, most of them of pretty recent vintage, and try to see what the writers are trying to say and how they go about saying it. To do this, we have to read carefully and attentively. We need to pay attention to the basic elements of the stories--plot, character, setting, theme—but we also need to pay attention to how the writers tell their stories and why they make the choices they do. Most of what we will be doing in class is discussing the stories in detail. Consequently, you will need to come to class prepared to discuss the stories. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Questions are often great springboards for discussion. But, read the stories carefully and thoughtfully and be ready to talk.

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**Texts:**

*Fiction 100*, Thirteenth edition, ed. James H. Pickering

*Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley

**Reading & Exam Schedule:**

“The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County,” Samuel Clemens, “Lost in the Funhouse,” John Barth, “Guests of the Nation,” Frank O’Connor, “The Lottery,” Shirley Jackson, “Saboteur,” Ha Jin, “The Grand Inquisitor,” Fyodor Dostoevsky

**Exam**

“Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?” Joyce Carol Oates, “A&P,” John Updike, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown,” Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Barn Burning,” William Faulkner, “In American Society,” Gish Jen, “Rip Van Winkle,” Washington Irving

**Exam**

“Cathedral,” Raymond Carver, “A Good Man Is Hard To Find,” Flannery O’Connor, “Shiloh,” Bobbie Ann Mason, “The Yellow Wall-Paper,” Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “A White Heron,” Sarah Orne Jewitt

**Exam**

“A Very Old Man With Enormous Wings,” Gabriel Garcia Marquez, “Gimpel the Fool,” Isaac Beshevis Singer, “The Overcoat,” Nikolai Gogol, “Bartleby the Scrivener,” Herman Melville, “The Death of Ivan Ilyich,” Leo Tolstoy, “The Things They Carried,” Tim O’Brien, “The Dead,” James Joyce

*Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley

**Final Exam**

All of the exams will be in class and will be essay in format. I will ask you to write an analytical and interpretive essay on a topic I will give you. Your essays will be approximately three to four pages long. The one thing to avoid is simply summarizing the stories. What I want you to do is analyze and interpret the stories in terms of some idea that sheds light on the story. Your grade will be based on how well you do this and how effectively you express your ideas in writing. Your final grade will be based mostly on your performance on these essays, but good class attendance and participation can help your grade if it is a borderline grade.

**Rules:**

You can miss up to three classes without endangering your grade or your standing in the class. After that, repeated absences might lead to your being dropped from the roll.

Do not plagiarize or cheat. Plagiarism is using someone else’s work, their ideas and words, without attribution. I expect you to do your own work. If you plagiarize or cheat, I will fail you for the course.

I don’t allow electronic devices in the classroom. Please, leave them at home or keep them in your pockets.

I don’t tolerate disrespectful behavior. If you disrupt the class, I’ll ask you to stop. If you continue, I’ll drop you from the class.

The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, please contact the UCA Office of Disability Services, 450-3613.

You should familiarize yourself with all the policies set forth in the *Student Handbook*, especially those concerning academic integrity and sexual harassment.

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, as 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 the university policy. I don’t tolerate plagiarism or cheating of any kind. If you cheat and I find out about it, I will fail you for the course. In case you haven’t noticed, cheating undercuts your own education, not to mention your character. Study guides can lead you into a kind of plagiarism, so you should avoid them and rely, instead, on your own ideas and work.

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.*

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Office Hours: MWF 11-1, TTH 11-12 and 1:30-2:30, and by appointment

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