

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS
ENGLISH 2370 – INTRODUCTION TO FICTION (22559)
SPRING 2012

Instructor: Mr. Aaron Penn

Classroom: Irby 201

Class Time: 12:40-1:30

Office Hours: MWF 9am-11am

TTH 1:30-2:30 (Or by appointment): Activities during X-Period may sometimes interfere with these office hours.

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Required Books: Ann Charters, *The Story and Its Writer: An Introduction to Short Fiction* (8th Edition)

Introduction:

As the Undergraduate Bulletin indicates, this class satisfies a three-hour humanities requirement within the general education program. This class will expose students to fiction within a variety of short stories and perspectives. This course reveals the development of fiction and how fiction is a process of cultural, historical and social issues.

In other words, this class introduces students to the art and significance of short fiction: short stories and novellas. Students will learn to read stories carefully and analytically and be encouraged to see the way stories both reflect and enhance our understanding of life, the universe, and everything (42).

Purpose/Course Goals:

In this course, we will read, study, and discuss short literary works from around the world written during the past several centuries. As we do so, we will pursue the following goals:

1. Read literary works actively, closely, and carefully in order to understand the different levels of meaning that may be present in the text.
2. Learn to form interpretive readings of literary works and support those interpretations with evidence and illustrations drawn from the text of the works; this skill includes learning to express those interpretations in clear and organized writing. **Writing will be an important part of this class, and the ability to write well in Standard Academic English is vital to success in the course.**
3. Understand how literary works both reflect and influence the culture that produces them while exploring cultural differences and similarities.
4. Attempt to appreciate, as much as we can, the aesthetic aspects of literary works and find what makes them enjoyable to read.
5. Explore what relevance these literary works might have for us now.

Course Requirements

Here is the final grade breakdown:

Quizzes	15%	Exams	30%
Essay #1	10%	Essay #2	20%
Final exam	20%	Participation	5%

Quizzes: Throughout the semester we will have daily quizzes to show that you have read and thought about the material. The quizzes will cover the material assigned for that day, which means you need to have read the assignment **before** you come to class. At the end of the semester, I will drop at least three of your lowest scores: Therefore, regardless of the reason, I do not allow quizzes to be made up. **(15%)**

Exams: There will be two exams and a final. The exams will consist of an ID section and a short answer section. The final will be just like the first two exams except a short essay section will be added. The final exam will be comprehensive, so keep all notes and previous tests to use for studying. Any student who misses an exam **might** be allowed to make it up at my discretion. **(50%)**

Essay #1: This short, two page paper is a close analysis of one of the short stories of your choice. Choose one element of the work and explore it in detail. This element could be a theme, an image, or a character, to name a few. **DO NOT** use outside sources (especially the Internet). **(10%) Due January 29th**. The essay is due at the beginning of class and **will not** be accepted late.

Essay #2: For this 5-6 page essay, students will respond to a prompt of their choice from a series of prompts given by me. The prompts will be given to you at least three weeks before the final and due on the last day of class (not including the final). Using outside sources is highly discouraged, but if used must be cited in MLA formatting. **(20%) Due April 25th**.

Essay Format: Standard MLA formatting. 12 point Times New Roman, double-spaced. Only one space between sentences, no extra spacing between paragraphs. The **header** should have no more than your last name and the page number. The paper should begin with a **heading** including your name and class period, though you may use the full MLA heading on the second essay. The heading should also be double-spaced. 1" (One inch) margins on all sides. You must write the entire amount of the minimum page requirement (i.e. two pages means two **full** pages—even one line short will cost you several points).

Participation and Attendance: This is a combination of attendance and in-class discussion. Students are required to participate in class discussions on the works assigned, which means you need to keep discussion points in mind as you are reading the required materials. You will lose one point from this portion of your grade for each period missed. You will also lose a portion of this grade by not participating in class. **After four unexcused absences you will be dropped from the course. (5%)**

Extra credit: There is no extra credit. Do the work right the first time and you won't need it.

University Policies

The university's two academic bulletins – the University of Central Arkansas *Undergraduate Bulletin* and *Graduate Bulletin* – are the official publications for all academic programs and policies. Students are urged to study these bulletins. In addition, students should familiarize themselves with the various policies in the *Student Handbook*, some of which are outlined in the following sections. The Handbook may be accessed online at http://uca.edu/student/files/2011/06/student_handbook.pdf.

Academic Misconduct/Plagiarism. The student handbook contains the following statement:

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.

In accordance with this policy, PLAGIARISM or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in

an F for the assignment and/or an F in the course. Plagiarism is representing the work of another as your own. This would include taking the words *or ideas* of a published source without giving that source proper credit; giving credit to a published source but representing the source's words as your own (i.e., not putting the author's ideas into your own words, or not using quotation marks around quotations); or using the work of other students and passing it off as your own. A longer discussion on plagiarism with examples can be found at <http://uca.edu/academicaffairs/files/2012/08/Plagiarism.pdf>.

Sexual Harassment. (*Student Handbook* 112-115) Sexual harassment by any faculty member, staff member, or student is a violation of both law and university policy and will not be tolerated at the University of Central Arkansas. Sexual harassment of employees is prohibited under Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and sexual harassment of students may constitute discrimination under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

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

Evaluations. 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 the Monday of the twelfth week of instruction, April 1st, through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

Readings for this course. These are subject to change over the course of the semester. I will keep you updated in class and will give you a revised list if significant changes are made.

Section 1: 11

Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Red-Headed League* (2nd story in this collection:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1661/1661-h/1661-h.htm>)

James Baldwin, *Sonny's Blues*

Lynda Barry, *San Francisco*

Alison Bechdel, from *Fun Home: Old Father, Old Artificer*

Ray Bradbury, *August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains*

Raymond Carver, *Cathedral*, *A Small, Good Thing*, and *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*

Sandra Cisneros, *Barbie-Q*

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

Junot Diaz, *How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie*

Section 2: 11

Ralph Ellison, *Battle Royal*

Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*

Ernest Hemingway, *Hills Like White Elephants*

Shirley Jackson, *The Lottery*

Jamaica Kincaid, *The Girl*

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*

Joyce Carol Oates, *The Lady with the Pet Dog* and *Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?*

Flannery O'Connor, *Everything That Rises Must Converge*, *Good Country People*, and *A Good Man Is Hard to Find*

Section 3: 10

Edgar Allen Poe, *The Cask of Amontillado*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, and *The Tell-Tale Heart*

Philip Roth, *The Conversion of the Jews*

Joe Sacco, from *Palestine: Refugeeland*

Marjane Satrapi, from *Persepolis: The Veil*

Leslie Marmon Silko, *Yellow Woman*

Amy Tan, *Two Kinds*

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., *Harrison Bergeron*

Virginia Woolf, *Kew Gardens*