

English 2370: Introduction to Fiction

Fall 2016

T/R: 9:25 – 10:40 am, Irby 310

***Instructor:* Dr. Sonya Fritz**

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***Office phone:* 450-5127 (email, however, is a much better idea)**

***Office Hours:* Mondays 11 am-12 pm and 1:30-2:30 pm, Wednesdays 11 am-12 pm and 3-4 pm, Thursdays 2:30-3:30 pm, Fridays 1-3 pm, and by appointment**

Course description

Fiction is an essential part of the fabric of our lives. Stories entertain, comfort, challenge, and convict us—stories tell us who we are. Throughout this semester, we will be reading, discussing, and analyzing fiction in a variety of forms, including short story, novel, sequential art (i.e. comics), and film. In the process, you will be initiated into beginning-level literary study from the perspective of a practitioner of English as a discipline; in other words, we will be focusing on learning how to both read and write deeply, critically, and rigorously. We will address the following questions, among others: How can the elements of a story be understood as working together to communicate greater meaning beyond a basic sequence of events? What kinds of social, cultural, political, and moral values can a story have? How can a work of fiction support a variety of interpretations? How are typical components of fiction, such as characterization, plot, and theme, incorporated and communicated across a variety of media? How can reading stories make us better people?

Additionally, this course has been designated as a First-Year Seminar (FYS). This means that, in addition to offering instruction in the discipline of English, our course will also address some of the larger issues of what it means to seek a college education, including the values and skills we hope for you to acquire through the UCA Core, as well as offering information and guidance regarding how to approach college-level study.

The primary goals of this course are to:

- Read and analyze fiction in various genres, by various authors
- Better understand the elements of fiction and how they relate to meaning
- Engage with themes and ideas found in fiction through writing and class discussions
- Consider how stories can expand our world and connect us more fully to humanity as a whole
- Practice reading and writing as an activity for inquiry, discovery, reflection, and analysis
- Develop stronger analytical, academic reading and writing skills
- Develop a stronger understanding of what it means to study at the college level and how to be a successful student at UCA

Keep in mind that the texts examined in this course may contain language or material that you may find offensive or controversial. As adults enrolled in a university course, you are expected to use discretion and engage the assigned readings and participate in class discussions in a manner that is careful, mature, respectful, and objective.

Required texts and materials

- Through the Woods*, Emily Carroll
- Station Eleven*, Emily St. John Mandel
- copies of online texts that you access through Blackboard

AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

The texts listed above are the ones that you are required to access on your own, read, and bring copies of with you to class. Our required reading for the course includes online texts of which you will not have to purchase hard copies; I will post files of the texts on Blackboard for you to access. **You are required to print copies of these files from Blackboard and bring them to class with you.**

WHY PRINT COPIES OF THE ONLINE TEXTS?

You may be thinking to yourself, “Why do I have to *print* copies of the texts posted online? Why can’t I bring my laptop to class and access them that way, or just pull them up on my smartphone?”

Here’s why: Research indicates that electronic devices such as laptops and smartphones are much more harmful and distracting to students in the classroom than they are useful; studies have shown over and over again that students with access to electronic devices in the classroom simply cannot resist using them for non-class purposes (texting, social media, gaming, etc.), and that students who take notes on electronic devices remember less of the material covered in class than students who take notes by hand. For that reason, I don’t want you pulling out your laptops or smartphones in class. Print hard copies of the online reading assignments and bring them with you to class.

FREE PRINTING RESOURCES ON CAMPUS:

- SGA Office in Student Center 208: students can print up to 25 pages a day for free
- Torreyson Library: students can use the printing credit pre-loaded on their Bear Cards to print up to 100 black-and-white pages or 10 color pages

You are also required to have:

- a functional UCA e-mail account that you check *daily*
- access to a good dictionary and a handbook with up-to-date information on MLA format
- opinions and insights that you develop and voice in class. The success of this course depends in large part on its members’ willingness to seriously and actively engage the material and participate in discussions.

Policies

Attendance. Daily attendance will be taken in this class. You are allowed **two unexcused absences**. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in the deduction of **five** percentage points from your final grade. Please use your two absences wisely—they are not intended for those days when you feel like sleeping in, but rather for days when you cannot come to class but your absence is not excused. Six or more absences, excused or otherwise, provide grounds for the student to be dropped from the course.

You are responsible for providing evidence and/or appropriate documentation to substantiate excused absences. Excused absences can include illness requiring a doctor's visit, the serious illness of an immediate family member or illness of a dependent, the death of a relative, etc. Please direct any questions concerning what constitutes an excused absence to me. If you know in advance that you will miss a class due to an excused absence, you are responsible for informing me and making any necessary arrangements to make up class work. Keep in mind that trips out of town for weddings or family vacations and children's school programs or ceremonies **are not** excused absences. Please also try to avoid scheduling routine medical check-ups, such as dental cleanings or yearly physicals, during class time—I will not excuse these absences.

It is important for all of us to respect one another's time and arrive promptly for class. Students who arrive to class after half of the class period (calculated by the duration of the class period in minutes) or more has passed will be counted absent. Students who arrive to class after attendance has been taken are responsible for checking with me after class to make sure their attendance has been recorded. Chronic tardiness will be penalized by counting each third tardy as an unexcused absence. Students should also come to class planning to stay for the duration of the period. An early departure from class will be recorded as a tardy and is subject to the same penalties.

If you are absent on the day of an exam, you are responsible for contacting me **as soon as possible** to schedule the make-up exam. If your absence is excusable, you are responsible for providing documentation to substantiate this at the time of the make-up exam. Ten late points will be deducted from the exam grade if the absence is not excused (i.e., you overslept); I also reserve the right to refuse to allow a student with an unexcused absence to make up an exam. Five late points may also be deducted if your absence is excused but you do not contact me in a timely manner to schedule the make-up exam. Unless other arrangements have been made with me, any exam that is not made up within two weeks of the original exam date will receive a grade of zero (0).

Students who miss class are responsible for obtaining information regarding missed class notes, material, and assignments. It is my policy to email students information regarding missed class material **only** for excused absences and **only** when the student has sent a request via email specifying student name, course number and section, and class date(s) missed. I strongly recommend that students also talk with their classmates about what they have missed, as all I can offer students are any Power Point slides and/or handouts used during the class period.

Class preparedness. Students need to complete the assigned reading before class and bring assigned reading materials to class in order to better engage in discussion and class-work. **Failure to bring the appropriate assigned reading materials to class and/or failure to demonstrate completion of the assigned reading through class activities will result in an unexcused absence for that day's class. Unexcused absences accrued in this way are subject to all the penalties and consequences outlined in the attendance policy.**

Classroom Behavior. Disruptive classroom behavior is defined as anything that would interfere with an instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program. When students come to class, they should plan to focus entirely on the activities of the class—

this means that sleeping, eating, using cell phones or other technology inappropriately, and working on other coursework or other activities during class are unacceptable. Likewise, all individuals and the opinions they express in class are to be treated with respect during class discussions—this means that carrying on other conversations or in any other way showing disregard for the individual who has the floor is unacceptable. **Students who behave rudely, inappropriately, or disruptively will be asked to leave class and will be counted absent (unexcused) for that day.**

Paper Format. Unless otherwise specified, *all* assignments, including homework, should be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font (black ink) with one-inch margins and double-spaced on white 8.5x11 paper, according to MLA guidelines, with a heading on the first page and a header (last name, page number) on every page. Documentation must be provided in MLA format. Papers must be **stapled** before they are turned in—I won't accept or grade loose pages or paper-clipped papers.

Late Papers. Hard copies of response papers and critical essays are due in class at the beginning of the period on their due dates; hard copies that are submitted late without an excused absence/absences (regardless of whether the digital copy of the assignment is submitted on time) are subject to a deduction of 10 percentage points per weekday that they are late. After I have graded a paper assignment and returned it to the rest of the class, I will not accept late submissions of that assignment. See the "SafeAssign" section below for my policy on late digital copies of assignments.

SafeAssign. We will be using SafeAssign for our papers (response papers and critical essays) to help students better understand and prevent plagiarism. In addition to submitting hard copies of your assignments in class for me to grade, you will be required to upload digital copies of your work to Blackboard. Unless otherwise stipulated, digital copies are due by 11:59 p.m. on the day the assignment is due. You must upload your assignment either as a PDF file or as a Word file. **Your assignments will not be considered completely "turned in" and will not be graded until you have uploaded a digital copy to Blackboard for SafeAssign in addition to turning in your hard copy in class. If the digital copy is not submitted by the time I'm ready to return the graded paper assignment to the rest of the class, I will no longer grade the paper and it will receive a zero.** If the hard copy of a response paper is submitted on time in class, late submissions of the digital copy to Blackboard are accepted with a 1-percentage-point deduction for each day the digital copy is late.

Appropriate Attribution. Any assignment that fails to include clear and appropriate attribution of sources will receive a grade of zero ("0"). **Do not consult secondary sources for your work unless explicitly instructed to do so. Public-access internet sources such as SparkNotes, Wikipedia, and Answers.com are not appropriate to use in this course at any time.** Any assignments that reflect unauthorized aid will receive a grade of zero ("0").

Bringing visitors to class. Students **must receive permission** from me in advance in order to bring any visitors to class. If you have a child-care emergency and need to bring a child with you to class, I am willing to work with you as best I can; however, little ones must be able to be expected to remain reasonably still and quiet for the duration of the class. Please see me if you have any questions about this.

E-mail, phone, and fax. I will not discuss grades via e-mail or over the phone and, unless otherwise specified, I will not accept assignments attached to e-mail messages. I am happy to answer via email any student questions—including questions about assignments—that will take me less than 5 minutes to answer. Any questions that require a longer and more involved answer will be deferred to a face-to-face meeting. All emails should be respectfully worded and include a salutation as well a signature of the student's name. The English department will not accept papers or excuses for absences faxed to me.

Feedback on student work. I want all students to meet their full potential in this course this semester. I strongly encourage students to ask for clarification if they are confused about an assignment and to come to me for help on their work. However, I will not pre-grade, edit, or proofread students' work for them; I will offer feedback, but only when students formulate and articulate specific questions about their work that they want me to address. I do this because I want all students to function as active thinkers and learners throughout the semester; this is not happening if I am doing the work of cataloging every aspect of a paper that a student needs to change or improve. Likewise, students should understand that getting feedback on their work does not guarantee that they will earn a certain grade on the assignment.

Electronic devices. In a perfect world, we could all have our cell phones, laptops, and tablets out during class without being distracted by them or distracting others. This is not a perfect world. The use of electronic devices in class is thus generally not allowed unless otherwise specified. Students who use electronic devices in an inappropriate way during class will be asked to leave and will be counted absent for the day. **Cell phones must remain off (not simply on vibrate) and out of sight in one's pocket or bag, not in one's lap, for the duration of class.**

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 thirteenth week of instruction through the end of finals week by logging in to myUCA and clicking on the Evals button on the top right.

Scholastic Dishonesty Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty. 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.

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.*

Other University Policies. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the policies outlined in the UCA Student Handbook.

Students needing support service

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.

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.

The University Writing Center

The UCA Writing Center, located in Thompson 109, offers students one-on-one tutoring and online assistance with their writing. For more information, see the web site: www.uca.edu/writingcenter.

Course Requirements and Grade Determination:

Response papers (3)	26%
Critical essays (2)	26%
Peer review workshops (3)	12%
Critical essay revision assignment	13%
Exam 1	11%
Exam 2	11%
Syllabus quiz	1%

All assignments must be typed and submitted as a hard copy unless I instruct you otherwise. See the instructions on paper format in the “Policies” section of the syllabus. Students must **complete all assignments** in order to earn a passing grade in the course.

- **Response papers:** Throughout the semester, you will write three response papers, each about 650-750 words in length (**2 full pages, minimum**). Each response paper is worth 20 points for a total of 60 points. Response papers should follow the paper format guidelines given in the “Policies” section of the syllabus. They should also obey the rules correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling; use the appropriate language, tone, and style for an academic audience; and follow the general conventions of essay writing and demonstrate good organization. Response papers will be graded on the quality of your writing and how thoroughly, thoughtfully, clearly, and effectively you address the assigned questions. Details for each response paper topic (including assigned questions and various stipulations for each paper) will be posted on Blackboard.
- **Critical essays:** Over the course of the semester, you will write two critical essays, each about 1300-1500 words in length (**4 full pages, minimum**). Each critical essay is worth 50 points for a total of 100 points. For each essay, you will choose one of the topics given and write a paper that addresses that topic, providing a thesis statement and developing a well-organized literary analysis that supports your thesis. More details on each critical essay, including essay topics, will be provided in assignments sheets and rubrics.
- **Peer review workshops:** Before each critical essay is due (including the critical essay revision assignment), we will hold an in-class peer review workshop, during which students will break into small groups to read, discuss, and offer constructive feedback on one another’s papers. Worksheets to guide the peer review process will be provided. Students will be graded on

preparedness for and active and thoughtful participation in each workshop. More information on the workshops will be given in class.

- **Critical essay revision assignment:** For the final writing assignment of the semester, you will choose one of your two critical essays and engage in a revision and expansion of the essay. This assignment will require you to complete a number of steps in the revision process, culminating in a final draft of your revised essay, which will be submitted at the end of the semester along with various supporting materials. More details on the assignment will be provided in an assignment sheet and a rubric.
- **Exams:** The exams will be objective, covering the texts we have read and the material that we have discussed in class. They will include multiple choice, passage identification/explication, and paragraph-answer questions.

Final grade values:

A	90-100	B	80-89
C	70-79	D	60-69
F	59 and below		

Schedule of Reading, Assignments, and Paper Due Dates

This schedule is subject to change at the professor's discretion. The readings and assignments listed under each date are those that you will be expected to have completed **by that date**.

Week One:

Thursday, August 18: Introduction to course

Week Two:

Tuesday, August 23: Discussion of UCA CORE. **Syllabus quiz.**

Wednesday, August 24: Change-of-course period ends for Aug. 18 – Dec. 9 classes: final date to register, add classes, and drop classes with a 100% refund.

Thursday, August 25: “Bluebeard”—posed as a file on Blackboard.

Week Three:

Tuesday, August 30: “Fitcher’s Bird”—posted as a file on Blackboard.

Thursday, September 1: “The Story of Grandmother” and “Little Red Cap”—posted as a file on Blackboard.

Week Four:

Tuesday, September 6: “Wolf” and “The Werewolf”—posted as a file on Blackboard.

Thursday, September 8: Introduction to graphic novels and sequential art—posted as a file on Blackboard. **Response paper 1 due (on Blackboard and in hard copy).**

Week Five:

Tuesday, September 13: “An Introduction,” “Our Neighbor’s House,” and “A Lady’s Hands Are Cold” from *Through the Woods*. **DISCUSS CRITICAL ESSAY 1 ASSIGNMENT AND RUBRIC**

Thursday, September 15: “His Face All Red” and “My Friend Janna” from *Through the Woods*.

Week Six:

Tuesday, September 20: “The Nesting Place” and “In Conclusion” from *Through the Woods*.

Thursday, September 22: **Peer review workshop 1:** bring **two** typed copies of a **complete** rough draft of your Critical Essay 1.

Week Seven:

Tuesday, September 27: *Through the Woods*, discussion continued. **Critical Essay 1 due (on Blackboard and in hard copy in class).** **EXAM REVIEW**

Thursday, September 29: **Exam 1.**

Week Eight:

Tuesday, October 4: *Interstellar*—view film in class.

Thursday, October 6: *Interstellar*—continue film in class.

Week Nine:

Tuesday, October 11: *Interstellar*—continue film in class and begin discussion.

Thursday, October 13: **FALL BREAK**

Week Ten:

Tuesday, October 18: *Interstellar*, discussion continued. **Response paper 2 due (on Blackboard and in hard copy in class).**

Thursday, October 20: *Station Eleven*, chs. 1-14.

Tuesday, October 25: *Station Eleven*, chs. 15-26.

Week Eleven:

Thursday, October 27: *Station Eleven*, chs. 27-43.

Friday, October 28: Final date to officially withdraw from Aug. 18 – Dec. 9 classes or the university with a W grade unless already dropped for non-attendance

Week Twelve:

Tuesday, November 1: *Station Eleven*, ch. 44-end of novel.

Thursday, November 3: Work day, no class: instead, use the class time to work on Critical Essay 2.

Week Thirteen:

Tuesday, November 8: **Peer review workshop 2:** bring **two** typed copies of a **complete** rough draft of your Critical Essay 2.

Thursday, November 10: “Bloodchild”—posted as a file on Blackboard. **Critical Essay 2 due (on Blackboard and in hard copy in class).**

Week Fourteen:

Tuesday, November 15: “The Paper Menagerie”—posted as a file on Blackboard.

Thursday, November 17: “One Out of Many”—posted as a file on Blackboard. **Response paper 3 due (on Blackboard and in hard copy in class).**

Week Fifteen:

Tuesday, November 22: No class: meet instead with Dr. Fritz for your scheduled student conference.

Thursday, November 24: **THANKSGIVING**

Week Sixteen:

Monday, November 28: Final date to officially withdraw from Aug. 18 – Dec. 9 classes or the university with a WP or WF grade unless already dropped for non-attendance

Tuesday, November 29: **Peer review workshop 3:** bring **two** typed copies of a **complete** rough draft of your Critical Essay Revision assignment and your completed peer review paperwork (see Blackboard).

Thursday, December 1: “Do Not Go Gentle”—posted as a file on Blackboard. **Critical essay revision assignment due (on Blackboard and in hard copy)**

Tuesday, December 6, 8-10 am: **Exam 2.**