

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Department of English**  
**ENGL 201: The Short Story**  
**T/TH, 10:00-11:20, SJ2 2002, Fall 2019**

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**Office Hours: T/TH, 2:30-3:30**

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**Course Overview and Objectives:**

This course provides an historical and thematic introduction to short fiction while tracing its rising popularity during the nineteenth century, its flourishing during the modernist period, and its resurgence in the present day. Historically speaking, we will focus on the artistic conventions and innovative changes that have taken place within the broadly constructed tradition of literary realism, but along the way we will also pause to explore some of the social, cultural, and metaphysical questions that these stories ask us to consider. In order to do this, we will be highly attentive to the subtleties of language and the intricate design of each story.

By the end of the term, you will be well acquainted with a wide range of authors and styles of writing, some of the critical conversations about literature, and various strategies for writing about short fiction. In the process of earning university credit, you will further develop your critical thinking skills by reading, conversing, and writing about the genre. However, it is also my hope that you will find pleasure when reading these unique and often undefinable depictions of reality, and occasionally stop to ponder the nuances and particularities that are embedded in these accounts of our mutual human existence.

**Required Texts:**

Dana Gioia and R.S. Gwynn, eds., *The Art of the Short Story*, Pearson: New York, 2006.  
Materials on Course Reserve (access available via UW library website)

**Marking Scheme and Due Dates:**

Critical Exercise #1 (2 pp.)	15%	Due: Week 4 (Tuesday, 9/24)
Critical Exercise #2 (2 pp.)	15%	Due: Week 7 (Tuesday, 10/22)
Critical Exercise #3 (2 pp.)	15%	Due: Week 10 (Tuesday, 11/12)
Exam (written in class)	20%	Due: Week 13 (Tuesday, 12/3)
Short Essay (4 pp.)	25%	Due: Thursday, 12/5 (by 4:00 PM)
Participation	10%	

**General Instructions for Assignments:**

As the course progresses, instructions and expectations will be distributed for the critical exercises and the short essay. Generally speaking, the **critical exercises** will provide opportunities for you to examine the workings of a specific nuance, feature, or aspect of design within a particular short story. I will provide the guidelines and general topics for each exercise. The **short essay** will allow you to develop an idea for a slightly longer, thesis-driven essay on a specific short story from the course. The in class **exam** will be closed book and may consist of short passages of identification and analysis, and/or an essay question. As a general means of information and guidance, I am providing the following description of my marking in regard to the types of essays and written work that I tend to receive:

“90-100” indicates that an assignment is worthy of truly exceptional recognition. The work is original and presented with qualities of voice and argumentation that suggest the emergence of a future scholar. After encountering such work, I tend to remember the assignment for months (perhaps years) to come. Work of this caliber is a rare species.

“80-89” indicates that an assignment reflects excellence in all areas. The work is not only thought provoking and structurally polished, but it is also completed with a high level of style and critical independence. The work presents obvious signs of fresh and independent thinking, a sense of skilled organization, and excellent control over mechanics and style.

“70-79” indicates that an assignment is average or above average. The work explores difficult questions in ways that are creative, critical, and thought provoking. The work is critically and organizationally sound, contributing to the interpretive concerns present in the course.

“65-69” indicates that an assignment meets the minimum requirements. The work is functional and all aspects of the assignment have been addressed, but the assignment may be hindered by a lack of critical argument, sophistication, or organizational clarity.

“55-64” indicates that an assignment is presented in a way that is haphazard, incomplete, or reckless. The work tends to be completed in haste and suggests a lack of commitment. Major portions of the assignment are completed poorly and are in need of revision.

## **SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Week One**

TH- 9/5 Introduction: overview of syllabus, reading schedule, and assignments  
A “prose poem” to consider: Robert Hass, “A Story About the Body”

### **Week Two**

#### **Nineteenth Century Variations on the Short Story: Romanticism, Realism, and Naturalism**

T- 9/10 Gioia and Gwynn, “Introduction” (3-6); Edgar Allan Poe, “The Tell-Tale Heart” (721-725) and “The Tale and Its Effect” (725)

TH- 9/12 Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Birthmark” (357-369) and “On the Public Failure of His Early Stories” (369)

### **Week Three**

T- 9/17 Kate Chopin, “The Storm” (153-156), “The Story of an Hour” (157-158) and “My Writing Method” (159)

TH- 9/19 Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” (Course Reserve), film *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* (Online, Dir. Robert Enrico, 1962)

#### **Week Four**

##### **Variations of Twentieth Century Modernism: Objects, Images, and the Body**

T- 9/24 James Joyce, “Araby” (430-434) and “Epiphanies” (464)  
**Due: Critical Exercise #1**

TH- 9/26 Anton Chekhov, “The Lady with the Pet Dog” (135-147) and “Natural Description and ‘The Center of Gravity’” (151)

#### **Week Five**

T- 10/1 Ernest Hemingway, “A Clean Well-Lighted Place” (372-375), “Hills Like White Elephants” (Course Reserve) and “One True Sentence” (375)

TH- 10/3 D.H. Lawrence, “Odour of Chrysanthemums” (503-517) and “The Novel is the Bright Book of Life” (528-529)

#### **Week Six**

T- 10/8 Doris Lessing, “A Woman on a Roof” (538-545); Nadine Gordimer, “A Company of Laughing Faces” (333-343) and “How the Short Story Differs from the Novel” (345-346)

TH- 10/10 Shirley Jackson, “The Lottery” (390-396) and “The Public Reception of ‘The Lottery’” (396-398)

#### **Thanksgiving and Reading Break (10/14 – 10/18)**

#### **Week Seven**

##### **Questioning the Nature of Reality: Magical Realism, Liminal Spaces, and Dreamscapes**

T- 10/22 Aimee Bender, “The Doctor and the Rabbi” (Course Reserve)  
**Due: Critical Exercise #2**

TH- 10/24 Gabriel García Márquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (289-293)

## Week Eight

- T- 10/29 Leslie Marmon Silko, "The Man to Send Rain Clouds" (739-742) and "The Basis for 'The Man to Send the Rain Clouds'" (742-743)
- TH- 10/31 Flannery O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (678-689, hear O'Connor reading the story through Course Reserves) and "The Element of Suspense in 'A Good Man is Hard to Find'" (704-706)

## Week Nine

- T- 11/5 No Class – Away at a Conference
- TH- 11/7 Joyce Carol Oates, "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" (664-675); Bob Dylan, "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" (1965) and "Like a Rolling Stone" (1965, Handout)

## Week Ten

### **Between the Said and the Unsaid: Relationships in Modern and Contemporary Short Fiction**

- T-11/12 James Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues" (27-49) and "Race and the African-American Writer" (49-52)  
**Due: Critical Exercise #3**
- TH- 11/14 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Thing around Your Neck" (Course Reserve); "The Danger of a Single Story" (Course Reserve)

## Week Eleven

- T- 11/19 Jhumpa Lahiri, "A Temporary Matter" (Course Reserve)
- TH- 11/21 Raymond Carver, "A Small, Good Thing" (88-104), "The Bath" (Course Reserve), and "Commonplace but Precise Language" (104-105)

## Week Twelve

- T- 11/26 Alice Munro, "How I Met My Husband" (649-661) and "How I Write Short Stories" (661-662)
- TH- 11/28 John Updike, "Separating" (800-807) and "Why Write?" (808)

## Week Thirteen

- T 12/3 **Exam (in class)**  
**Short Essay (Due: Thurs. 12/5, by 4PM, dropbox in Sweeney Hall)**

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND PROCEDURES

### LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION

- **Late Assignments:**  
All assignments are to be handed in (hard copy) at the start of class on the due date. **Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day late, including weekends.** Late assignments must be submitted to me as an email attachment (so I know when they were completed) and then submitted in hard copy to my dropbox at the entrance of Sweeney Hall.
- **Participation:**  
It should go without saying that I expect that you will attend class on a regular basis. I also expect that you will have read the material for each day in thoughtful and critical ways. In addition, I also expect that you will have something to say about the readings, meaning that you should attempt to contribute to class discussion on a regular basis. In terms of participation marking, you should expect the following: if you do not attend class on a regular basis, your participation mark will be assessed at 0-50; if you attend class, but do not contribute to course discussion on a regular basis, expect a mark between 60-70; if you attend class regularly and participate in meaningful ways, you should expect a participation mark ranging from 75-100.

### EMAIL COMMUNICATION AND OFFICE HOURS

Students using email to contact me should include their first and last names, as well as the course in which they are enrolled in the email subject line. Feel free to contact me about the course through email, but please keep the following in mind:

- I am unable to provide in-depth email responses about assignments, readings, and proofreading. If you wish to discuss these matters, please stop by during office hours.
- I am unable to provide in-depth email responses about materials and lectures that you missed due to an absence.
- I am unable to answer last-minute emails about assignments, formatting, or editing. For questions about MLA formatting, you may want to consult Purdue University's Online Writing Lab. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

### CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

I am committed to establishing a face-to-face classroom environment that is conversational and relational. For this reason, please be respectful to others and their ideas, and please, do not text or be distracted with your phone during class.

### UW POLICY REGARDING ILLNESS AND MISSED TESTS

The University of Waterloo Examination Regulations ([www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf](http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf)) states that:

- A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the "University of Waterloo Verification of Illness" form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or at [www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health\\_Services/verification.html](http://www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html).

- If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor.
- The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations.
- Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

## **THE WRITING CENTRE**

The Writing Centre works across all faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their voices, and communicate in the style appropriate to their disciplines. Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, using and documenting research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit [www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre). Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available. Communication specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances.](#) [www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload\\_file/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances\\_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload_file/PLCY_AOM_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline.](#) [www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Discipline\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Discipline_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo Policy 71, Student Discipline,

[www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties, check the Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#), [www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Appeals\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Appeals_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term, [www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/).