

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Department of English**  
**ENGL 201: The Short Story**  
**Remote Delivery, Fall 2021**

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**Instructor: Chad Wriglesworth**  
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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.

**Format of Remote Delivery:**

I will post 60-minute lectures on the assigned readings twice per week (normally on Tuesdays and Thursdays). You will want to complete the assigned readings *before* viewing the course lecture. In addition, I will aim to hold 30-minute live-open discussion sessions on Fridays. These sessions will allow you to ask questions about assignments and to discuss the week's readings and lectures (a standard time for these meetings will be determined the first week of class). I will also record and post Friday sessions for those who are unable to attend. All announcements, postings, and lectures for this course will be made available through Learn.

**Required Texts:**

Dana Gioia and R.S. Gwynn, eds., *The Art of the Short Story*, Pearson: New York, 2006.  
Materials on Learn

**Marking Scheme and Due Dates:**

Critical Exercise #1 (2-3 pp.)	20%	Due: Week 4 (by midnight, Sept. 28)
Critical Exercise #2 (2-3 pp.)	20%	Due: Week 7 (by midnight, Oct. 26)
Critical Exercise #3 (2-3 pp.)	20%	Due: Week 11 (by midnight, Nov. 23)
Short Essay (5 pp.)	40%	Due: End of Term (by midnight, Dec. 13)

## **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. As a general means of information and guidance, I am providing the following description of my marking in regard to the written work 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- 9/9 Introduction: overview of syllabus, reading schedule, and assignments; Italo Calvino, “Fourteen Ways of Looking at a Classic” (Learn)

### **Week Two**

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

T- 9/14 Form and Design: What Makes a Short Story a Short Story?  
Gioia and Gwynn, “Introduction” (3-6); Edgar Allan Poe, “The Tell-Tale Heart” (721-725) and “The Tale and Its Effect” (725)

TH- 9/16 Romanticism: Nathaniel Hawthorne, “The Birthmark” (357-369) and “On the Public Failure of His Early Stories” (369)

### **Week Three**

T- 9/21 Realism: Kate Chopin, “The Storm” (153-156), “The Story of an Hour” (157-158) and “My Writing Method” (159)

TH- 9/23 Naturalism: Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” (Learn); film *An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge* (Learn, Dir. Robert Enrico, 1962)

### **Week Four**

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

T- 9/28 Modernism and the Short Story  
**Due: Critical Exercise #1 (dropbox)**

TH- 9/30 James Joyce, “Araby” (430-434) and “Epiphanies” (464)

### **Week Five**

T- 10/5 Anton Chekhov, “The Lady with the Pet Dog” (135-147) and “Natural Description and ‘The Center of Gravity’” (151)

TH- 10/7 Ernest Hemingway, “A Clean Well-Lighted Place” (372-375), “Hills Like White Elephants” (Course Reserve) and “One True Sentence” (375)

### **Thanksgiving and Reading Break (10/11 – 10/15)**

### **Week Six**

T- 10/19 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- 10/21 Shirley Jackson, “The Lottery” (390-396) and “The Public Reception of ‘The Lottery’” (396-398)

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

**Week Seven**

T- 10/26     The Short Story, Thin Spaces, and Magical Realism  
**Due: Critical Exercise #2 (dropbox)**

TH- 10/28     Aimee Bender, “The Doctor and the Rabbi” (Learn)

**Week Eight**

T- 11/2     Gabriel García Márquez, “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (289-293)

TH- 11/4     Leslie Marmon Silko, “The Man to Send Rain Clouds” (739-742) and “The Basis for ‘The Man to Send the Rain Clouds’” (742-743)

**Week Nine**

T- 11/9     Sherman Alexie, “This is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” (Learn)

TH- 11/11     Flannery O’Connor, “A Good Man is Hard to Find” (678-689, hear O’Connor reading the story through Learn) and “The Element of Suspense in ‘A Good Man is Hard to Find’” (704-706)

**Week Ten**

T-11/16     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, Learn)

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

TH- 11/18     James Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues” (27-49) and “Race and the African-American Writer” (49-52)

**Week Eleven**

T- 11/23     Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Thing around Your Neck” (Learn); “The Danger of a Single Story” (Learn)  
**Due: Critical Exercise #3 (dropbox)**

TH- 11/25 Jhumpa Lahiri, “A Temporary Matter” (Learn)

### **Week Twelve**

T- 11/30 Raymond Carver, “A Small, Good Thing” (88-104), “The Bath” (Learn), and “Commonplace but Precise Language” (104-105)

TH- 12/2 Alice Munro, “How I Met My Husband” (649-661) and “How I Write Short Stories” (661-662)

### **Week Thirteen**

T 12/7 John Updike, “Separating” (800-807) and “Why Write?” (808)  
**Due: Short Essay, Monday 12/13 (dropbox)**

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## **ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND PROCEDURES**

### **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

- All assignments will be submitted to a dropbox on LEARN. A few days before an assignment is due (for example, Week 4), I will set up a dropbox. Assignments must be submitted (preferably as a Word document) no later than midnight on the due date. Assignments submitted after the midnight deadline will be marked 2% per day late, including weekends.

### **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 responses about assignments, readings, and proofreading. If you wish to discuss these matters after reviewing guidelines for an assignment, please set up a time for a virtual office meeting. I may also save general questions to be addressed during the Friday live meetings.

### **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.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or St. Jerome's University. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student's educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner's permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA, and/or St. Jerome's University for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA, or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

## **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.](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload_file/PLCY_AOM_Student-Petitions-and-)  
[www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload\\_file/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Petitions-and-](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/).