



Thursday, January 12, 2012

General Education and I-Series Course Submission and Review

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ENGL246 Introduction to the Short Story

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General Information

Title	Introduction to the Short Story
Course Number	ENGL246
College	ARHU - Arts and Humanities
Department	English
Submitted By	Thomas Colborn Moser Jr

CORE Information

CORE Fundamental Studies	No
CORE Distributive/Advanced Studies	(HL) - Literature
CORE Diversity	No

General Education Information

Fundamental Studies	None
Distributive Studies	Humanities

Diversity None

Course Questions

General Questions

Please give a brief description of the course:

A study of a wide-range of anthologized short stories, considering the nature and intention of the form and the elements of its artistry—conflict, character, voice, point of view, tone, style, structure, image, and metaphor. Once we have practiced examining the illuminated moments of individual stories, we will study the greater resonances suggested when viewing multiple works of a single author, thus considering the short story collection as a form unto itself.

Please list any pre- or co-requisites for this course:

None

If there are pre- or co-requisites, please justify them with respect to their appropriateness for a General Education course:

N/A

Please list any restrictions (e.g. majors only) placed on this course:

None

What is the approximate course size (students/academic year)?

70

Please describe how student learning will be assessed (i.e. exams, homework, papers, group projects, etc.):

Assignments: • Weekly Response Posts You are required to post a weekly response to the assigned readings. Occasionally, I will assign topics for these posts. Usually, you may use them for thoughtful consideration of any aspect of the text that interests you: a character; a theme; a narrative technique. These posts may be brief—but they must be incisive, clearly written, and demonstrate careful contemplation of the texts—even if the texts leave you baffled. The posts give you an opportunity to explore and formalize some of your initial thoughts on the text, to prepare you for an active and intelligent discussion, to make sure your observations become part of the dialogue, to participate in the class discussion— even if the classroom itself is not your favorite forum for participation. These posts also allow you to communicate any questions and confusion you might have about the reading, which I can then address in class. Finally, these posts can serve you as notes for

your exams. Posts must be submitted to our course discussion board on Blackboard by 5pm on Mondays. While I will seldom comment on your individual posts, they will be graded. They mark your engagement with the material and your involvement in the class, and so they are a crucial component to your successful class participation—which, as noted below, amounts to 25% of your grade. • Quizzes 6 scheduled (and, possibly, several unscheduled) in-class quizzes will engage your knowledge of the texts and themes covered in individual stories and/or in class discussions. Your diligence as readers directly influences the likelihood of unscheduled/pop quizzes. If it's clear to me that the class is keeping up with the reading, there may, in fact, be no surprise quizzes. Quizzes will be worth 25% of your grade. • Mid-Term Essay There will be one 4- to 5-page essay due during the 5th week of the semester. Essay topics will be assigned two weeks prior. This essay will be worth 25% of your grade. • Final Essay There will be one 6- to 8-page essay due at the time of our designated final exam. Essay topics will be handed out 2 weeks in advance. Essays should demonstrate a cumulative knowledge of the materials covered and of the course's themes. You will be required to engage a specified number of the texts we've read. Essays must be typewritten, double-spaced, proofread, stapled, honor-coded, and delivered to my office by the end of our designated final exam time. This essay will be worth 25% of your grade. Grading Summary: Response postings/class participation: 25% Quizzes: 25% Midterm Essay: 25% Final Essay: 25%

Comments on the course that you feel may be useful for the review process. Also, if this is an existing course that you are planning on making changes to via VPAC (i.e. changing the title), please list those proposed changes here:

This is a long-standing and popular course. It has been taught intermittently in recent years, depending on the availability of teachers. We would like to offer it regularly.

Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are phrased as "*At the completion of this course, students will be able to...*". Answers are expected to demonstrate how the course will (1) give students the ability to meet the learning objective and (2) determine that students were successful in meeting the learning objective.

Learning outcomes in **this color** are **REQUIRED**

Humanities

Courses in the humanities disciplines study history and the genres of human creativity, and they include courses in the practice of architecture and the visual, literary and performing and creative arts. Under "Humanities," students will find courses in cultures and literatures in any language, creative writing, art, architecture, art history, classics, history, linguistics, philosophy, and the performing arts (dance, music, theatre) and their histories.

Must address **at least 4** of the following Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will be able to...

...demonstrate familiarity and facility with fundamental terminology and concepts in a specific topical area in the humanities.

Students will move from a more basic “appreciation” of the short story to a deeper understanding of the author’s craft by recognizing patterns in narrative, character construction, and stylistic technique. A weekly response paper assures that students are recognizing and deploying these formal concepts in their own writing and becoming more comfortable with them as they proceed. Students will also demonstrate this familiarity with formal technique in two major papers.

...demonstrate understanding of the methods used by scholars in a specific field in the humanities.

...demonstrate critical thinking in the evaluation of sources and arguments in scholarly works, or in the evaluation of approaches and techniques in the visual, literary, or performing arts.

Because we read a wide-range of anthologized short stories, students must demonstrate how to be flexible and even original in interpreting stories they’re assigned. Students will be expected to not only find the crucial technical moments in a story, but will be asked why those moments are important to a greater understanding of the text. Almost all of our class activities—from discussion, to responses, to papers—relies upon this pivot from the small details of a story to the larger implications contained within them. As an imaginative exercise towards the end of the course, we will ask ourselves how the meaning of a short story can change when it is read in a collection. Students will be able to show how stories are not just discrete performances, but how they can be contextualized and changed by the other stories around them. Students will also be able to demonstrate intellectual agility by taking up a different paradigm of reading: from a single short story to a collected works. Because our short-story collection comes at the end of our course, our remaining response papers and final exam will ask students to demonstrate this agility.

...describe how language use is related to ways of thinking, cultural heritage, and cultural values.

...conduct research on a topic in the humanities using a variety of sources and technologies.

...demonstrate the ability to formulate a thesis related to a specific topic in the humanities and to support the thesis with evidence and argumentation.

Just as our authors formulate various narrative “arguments” in their short fiction, students will be expected to demonstrate and support a thesis in their academic non-fiction. Although our two major papers will ask students for rigorous argument, our ongoing written responses will also expect students to back up their claims with evidence. Finally, I encourage the judicious use of imagination and the cultivation of a writerly voice.

...demonstrate understanding of the creative process and techniques used by practitioners in a specific field of the visual, literary, or performing arts.

(By juxtaposing different authors each week—until we arrive at George Saunders' "Pastorella"—this course emphasizes the similarities and differences in the construction of certain types of short stories. Not only will students demonstrate an awareness of the short story's technical artistry in all of their written work, but students will be adept enough with the language of form to be able to compare vastly different short stories. Additionally, although this class is not research or context-oriented, we will oftentimes engage the author's biography during discussion in order to accurately get at his writing process. Students are expected to be familiar enough with biography to make informed comments about the author's writing process, but delicate enough in their thinking not to let biography overtake completely their interpretation of the author's finished product.

Course Syllabus

View the course syllabus [here](#).

Note: Your browser may download the syllabus, in which case you will have to open it in a separate program, i.e. Adobe Acrobat or Micro\$oft Word, in order to view it.

Another Note: Some people are uploading Word .docx files (newer Word format). If your computer doesn't have a fairly recent version of Word installed (2007 or later), your computer won't know what to do with a .docx file and may try to open it as a "zip" file. You will have to either upgrade your version of Word, or install Micro\$oft's Compatibility Pack to allow earlier versions of Word to open the file.

Review and Sign-Off

Submission Log

Departmental Review

College Review

Faculty Board: Humanities

Date	Submitted By	Comment
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