



ENGL 2261

INTRODUCTION TO FICTION, BLENDED

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**UN 240, M, 12:30-2:35, Summer 2017,
3 credit hours**

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**Professor Stephen Logan
Nestor Hall 493
Office Hours: M 8-12:30, W 8-12**

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is an intensive study of selected short stories and a novel. Using critical reading, discussion, and writing, students will become familiar with important themes and methodologies of fiction. Throughout the course, we will analyze and discuss how authors use traditional elements of fiction (structure, setting, point of view, etc.) to express their ideas and to develop their plots and characters. This section of Introduction to Fiction is offered in a blended format, which means that it is a partly traditional, partly online course.

STEPHEN'S INTERPRETATION

This course is an introductory survey of Literature with a focus on reading short stories and a single novel. Since this is a general survey, we don't read a single time period or author; rather, we read a wide variety of classic and modern stories by American and international authors. This class is primarily a discussion-based course, with most in-class time spent discussing the stories themselves. Most out of class time is spent reading for class, completing short response assignments on Blackboard, and occasionally completing medium-length papers related to the readings. This class also includes a large amount of flexibility. Students have a lot of leeway in which stories or ideas they choose to write about, and students get a say in which stories and what novel make it onto the reading list. If this is the only Lit. class you have to take, it's a great overview.

"A good short story crosses the borders of our nations and our prejudices and our beliefs. A good short story asks a question that can't be answered in simple terms. And even if we come up with some understanding, years later, while glancing out of a window, the story still has the potential to return, to alter right there in our mind and change everything." - Walter Mosley

WHAT INTRO. TO FICTION DOES FOR YOU

General Value

- Literature is really enjoyable to read, you gain a good amount of meaning and perspective from reading it, and in-class discussions are usually a lot of fun. It also adds some creativity and variety to your degree, which is part of a good liberal arts education. All in all, it's a worthwhile class.
- If you're majoring in something other than English and this is the ONLY Lit. course you need to take for your degree, it's a great single-class overview. For English or arts majors, it's a great foundation for genres, time periods, authors, and styles that you'll build on in the future.

Degree Value

1. It fulfills an Associate Degree Requirement: it counts as a "Lit, Culture and Ideas..." requirement or as an elective for **Associate of Arts** students and as an elective for **Associate of Science** students.
2. It Fulfills a **Bachelor's Degree Literature Requirement** for transfer students: many bachelor's programs require a Literature credit. This class counts and transfers. You're getting bachelor's credit way in advance.

(As always, check with your advisor and be sure this work for you.)

UNDERSTANDING THE BLENDED FORMAT

This version of Intro. to Fiction is in a blended format, which means it is a part traditional, part online course and combines the best of both class types. This class meets face-to-face once a week and the rest of the week's work is to be completed online and on your own time.

- **Traditional:** Meets face-to-face two or more times a week, lots of in-class instruction and opportunities to speak to your instructor. Some work in-class, some work at home.
- **Online:** All class content and lectures are online. All writing is done on your own time. All contact with your instructor is through Blackboard posts or email.
- **Blended:** A mix of the above. Most class content is online and most work is done on your own. Class time is spent discussing stories and topics, answering questions, and supporting your out-of-class work.

CHOOSE A GOOD CLASS TYPE FOR YOUR LEARNING STYLE

Intro. to Fiction Semester Planning Suggestions

- Blended gives you work to do on your own, in-class support when you need it, and more flexibility in your commuting, school and work schedules. Make the most of that.
- Less weekly contact with your instructor and your classmates means that you will need to be more independent, motivated and organized than you might need to be in a traditional class.
- Students who work better with more weekly meetings and more contact with their instructor might consider taking a traditional course.
- Students who are highly motivated and cannot commit to weekly class meetings might consider taking an online course instead.

ASSIGNMENTS

Graded Assignments

- Short Story Analysis 1, 15%
- Short Story Analysis 2, 15%.
- Novel paper, 20%.
- Final exam, 15%.
- In-Class Writing and Work, 15%.
- Online Discussion Posts, 20%.

Course Readings

Over the semester, we will read approx. 20-30 short stories (2-4 a week) and one novel.

Grading Scale

90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 65-69=D, Below 65=E

Textbooks

1. The Art of the Short Story, by Gioia and Gwynn.
2. A novel, to be determined.

1. **The first and most important 'assignment' is to devote time each week to read and to actively participate during class.**
2. **Short Story Analysis One, 3 pages, 15%.** In your first analysis, you'll choose a single story from our reading list and write about the meaning, elements of fiction, relevant literary theories, and your reaction to it.
3. **Short Story Analysis Two, 3 pages, 15%.** In your second analysis, you'll choose two or three stories and write a comparison of their meaning, use of elements of fiction, literary theories, and your reaction to them.
4. **Novel Paper, 4 pages, 20%.** To support our reading of the novel, you'll either write a research paper about the background and context the novel, or you will write an analytical paper of the novel itself. This will give us a wide variety of information for our in-class discussions.
5. **Final Exam, 6+ pages, 20%.** The last assignment of the semester is a six-page final exam. I will give you a list of questions relating to all of the readings from the semester. You will pick **THREE** questions and write **TWO** pages for each question. This exam will include in-text citations and will require a deep understanding of the texts from the entire semester.
6. **In-Class Work Writing and Work, 15% total.** I will give weekly reading quizzes or ask you to do in-class work that requires you to be present and have read for the day. These will be relatively easy and will hopefully prod you to keep up with the readings and attend class on a weekly basis.
7. **Online Discussion Posts, 20% total.** To account for the online half of this blended class, I'll assign short, relatively straightforward, writing responses and discussion board topics each week related to that week's readings.

OTHER GRADE-RELATED ITEMS

- **Extra Credit:** Around midterms, I'll assign an extra credit project worth 1-5% depending on your effort. Ideally you don't need it, but it's a good way to either repair a weak grade or bolster an already strong grade.
- **Class Charity:** Since Literature largely boils down to an appreciation of the human experience, I'll tally the total number of A's and B's at the end of the semester and donate that to a local charity inspired by our readings (5 dollars for A's, 3 dollars for B's). You're more than welcome to contribute as well, though it is by no means required or even expected.

TWO MAJOR DECISIONS FOR THE SEMESTER

The first half of our reading list remains largely unchanged each semester, but there is a lot of room for flexibility and student input as well. Students can suggest stories to read in the “Outside Stories, TBA” days on the calendar, and students will vote and decide which novel to read at the end of the semester. In other words, the reading list for ENGL 2261 is always changing and can include your own interests as well as your instructor’s story preferences.

DECISION 1 - VOTING ON A NOVEL

While the majority of the class is spent reading short stories, the final few weeks are spent discussing a full length novel. What novel you choose to read is up to you as a class. Your vote for which novel we read is due early in the semester to give you the longest possible period of time to read it. You have several choices:

1. **Homegoing, by Yaa Gyasi (2016).**
2. **Exit West, by Moshin Hamid (2017).**
3. **The Association of Small Bombs, by Karan Mahajan (2016).**

Previous Student Novel Choices, 2013-present: Written on the Body by Jeanette Winterson, Falling Man by Don DeLillo, The Road by Cormac McCarthy, The Invaders by Karolina Waclawiak, Gold Fame Citrus by Claire Vaye Watkins, The Sellout by Paul Beatty.

DECISION 2 - SUGGESTING A SHORT STORY

The reading list for the first half of the semester comes from our textbook, but the few weeks between the textbook readings and the novel has a rotating reading list of stories that I find in outside publications. I’d like for you to make suggestions for stories you would like to read:

a short story you read that you’d like included on the reading list; an author you really like or someone you heard is good; a genre of fiction you enjoy; a short story that represents a time period, perspective or voice that differs from our ‘typical’ reading list.

I’ll try to incorporate as many of your suggestions as I reasonably can.

IMPORTANT COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance and participation are crucial parts of this class. You should plan to attend all or, realistically, most classes. We will begin promptly at the class start time. Missing class will hurt your understanding of the readings and the assignments, which will inevitably damage your grade.

Face-to-Face vs. Online Work

Keep in mind that in a Blended class, your in-class participation and your online work are equally important and that you can't pass the class by doing one and not the other. Make a plan to be in class each week AND have time scheduled and a technology plan for the online half of the class. Students who skip multiple in-class sessions are at risk of being dropped.

Respect

This class frequently discusses sensitive and controversial topics. I assume that we can be civilized people and that conversations can be difficult, but still respectful and productive. I'll moderate discussions as needed and will shut down anything needlessly sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory. Students who cannot abide by this policy should drop or might be asked to leave.

Major Assignment Policies

Major assignments are due on the date listed on the calendar and they can be submitted during class or on Blackboard. No emailed work is accepted. For major assignments, you have until the end of the next class after the due date to submit your work, but assignments submitted after that receive a '0'. You also have the option to revise many of your major assignments once beyond your initial grade. A separate revision policy will be posted on Blackboard in the "Course Information" link.

Minor Assignment Policies

At-home writings and responses submitted on Blackboard are either due on the date listed on the calendar or the date listed in an Announcement. Since these are small, simple, and represent weekly out-of-class work, there are no revisions or late turn-in options. In-class writing is completed during class and is turned in by the end of class. These may or may not be announced as they double as attendance points. Since these are small, simple and represent weekly in-class work, there are no revisions or late turn-in options. In general, no emailed minor assignments will be accepted.

Policies for Me

I try to be: on time, prepared with good content, organized, positive, willing to help, available outside of class, clear about requirements, and timely and transparent about grading. I also reserve the right to make exceptions based on individual student needs. I encourage you to give me feedback about my teaching to help me improve this class.

Department Syllabus

There are important college and department policies on the department's master syllabus. You are expected to read through the entire document and ask any questions if you have any.

MY THOUGHTS ON SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE

This class is a lot of fun and the workload is fairly reasonable. You'll certainly be challenged, but it's nothing you can't handle. Here are a few strategies to make this class as successful as possible:

Read Before Class

Before coming to class, you should thoroughly read the story(ies) to be discussed that day. **On average, you need to schedule 2 hours per week to read.** I read at an average pace and it takes me two minutes to read one page out of our textbook, with a little more added to underline, take notes, look up words, etc. Some stories in our book are as short as one or two pages, whereas others are 15-20. You should schedule a good, uninterrupted chunk of time to read and prep before each class.

Prep and Take Notes

You should also come to class with notes. For each story: highlight, underline or mark key details of the story; mark two or three aspects of the story you liked (or disliked) the most; and jot down any questions, comments, or issues you had with the story. This will help give us good basis for the day's discussion.

Help Make This a Good Discussion Class

- I run a pretty low-key class discussion, so feel free to share your thoughts during class. Don't feel like you have to have anything terribly insightful to say (though clearly you can share those things too). Remember to allow room for others to share their thoughts as well. Everyone should get a say each day during discussion.
- Literature almost always touches on social class, race, religion and other sensitive topics. Feel free to share your perspectives, but be respectful of others in the class, their lives, their views and their opinions.
- Be aware that many of the readings will contain sensitive, controversial, or downright offensive content. That's all part of the emotional, intellectual and social challenge of the class.

Assignment Support

It's not exactly rocket science, but do your work. Follow the calendar, read the assignments, plan ahead, and ask questions. Since you successfully passed one or more Composition classes, and since this is not a writing class, we will not spend a large amount of in-class time reviewing your writing. I assume that you can format, brainstorm, plan, research, write and edit your work. Feel free to stop by my office to discuss ideas or drafts, email me questions or make an appointment at the Writing Center for feedback.

My CSCC My Courses My Organizations Student Mail Help Student

Announcements

ENGL-2261-SHELL-BLENDED (* Introduction to Fiction (Blended Shell))

Announcements

Orientation - Start Here

Course Information

Writing Assignments

Discussion Board

Additional Readings

My Grades

Assignment Submissions

Email Instructor

Course Tools

ENGL 2261 to Fi

Announcements

Welcome to ENGL 2261. Introduction to Fiction

Posted on: Saturday, January 28, 2017 12:02:03 PM

ENGL 2261B students,

I hope you had a restful break. Before we start the class.

First, all of the files for our class are (or will be) in the Course Information area and the Course Tools area.

We will be using two books this semester: *The Daylight Marriage* by Dana Gioia and *The Daylight Marriage* by R.S. Gwynn. We will have copies available at the CSCC bookstore for you to purchase or you can buy a copy elsewhere if you feel like it (Amazon, etc.).

Keep in mind that this is a Blended course. The remainder of your work will be completed through the features of traditional and web courses. Students who learn best through face-to-face instruction will do best through independent work off campus.

Parking on campus is usually a challenge. Lot 28-S on a campus map. It's the one minute walk from there to the center of campus. I park there by default if I ever have to park on campus.

Feel free to email any questions you may have.

OUR BLACKBOARD PAGE

This is generally what our Blackboard page is going to look like. A few things to know:

Announcements: I'll post weekly announcements that keep you updated on our readings and work. General due dates and long-term scheduling is listed on the calendar, but weekly updates will be posted here.

Course Information: Anything that generally relates to this class will be here - the syllabus, the calendar, policies and anything else not tied to a specific writing assignment. Read everything here during week one and refer to it as needed throughout the semester.

Writing Assignments: All formal assignments will be posted here including support materials, writing guides, and samples. Refer to this link when you see an assignment due date coming up on the calendar.

Discussion Boards: Any time I ask you to post to the Discussion Board, go here. These posts count in part as the work you do out of class during the week.

Additional Readings: Anything I want you to read that is not in the textbook (listed on the calendar as BB) will be posted here in PDF format. Read the story online or print a hard copy if you prefer.

Assignment Submissions: If you prefer to submit digitally instead of hard copy, all of your major assignments should be submitted here.

WHAT'S NEXT?

It's week one of the semester and this is a somewhat off-beat course. A couple of suggestions for what to do next:

- 1. BLACKBOARD:** Once you finish reading this syllabus, take some time and look through our class's Blackboard page. Look at the tabs on the left, look through the content, and generally get to know our our class.
- 2. START READING:** Go buy the textbook (at the bookstore, online, etc.), look at the readings listed on the calendar and start reading. Getting a little ahead will help you get off to a good start.
- 3. COME TALK TO ME:** If you you have any questions or you're unsure of this course, come talk to me. I'd be more than happy to talk with you, answer your questions, and help you have a successful semester.
- 4. SEE AN ADVISOR:** In general, make an appointment to see an advisor and, in particular, ask them if this class counts toward your degree. This is a great class, but if it doesn't contribute to your educational goals, you might consider taking something different.