

The American Short Story (ENGL 221) / Fall 2006
9-9:50 am MTRF Boyle Hall 425

Instructor: Dr. Jose Dalisay (jose.dalisay@snc.edu)
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Office Hours: 11-12 Thursdays and Fridays, and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

As described in the catalog, this course will be devoted to the technical development of the American short story by studying selected works of Irving, Hawthorne, Poe, Twain, Bierce, Crane, James, Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Welty, Carver, Oates, and others, including minority voices from past and present. The course includes the formal analysis of individual stories and some attention to general literary trends and theories of fiction that have affected the short story in its historical development in America.

We will read the stories for their intrinsic value as works of art, but we will also endeavor to locate these stories within the historical context of their creation and reception, examining them as cultural artifacts, as windows on various phases and aspects of American social and cultural life.

I will point you in certain directions, but I expect you to do much of the research and the reading yourself, and to be able to write original, interesting, and well thought-out pieces on your discoveries about this most global and yet also most American of literary genres.

Course Requirements and Grading

Aside from the midterm and final exam, I will be giving you periodic quizzes and a term paper on a topic we will mutually agree upon.

We will have three scheduled long quizzes, with one more quiz to be given at my discretion; if we exceed three quizzes, the lowest grade of the four will be dropped. Each long quiz (really a short exam, with an objective and a short writing component) will count for 10% of your grade.

The midterm and final exams will count for 20% each of your final grade. The term paper assignment will be worth 25% of your grade. Finally, I will reserve the remaining 5% for class participation—meaning, tangible and substantial contributions to classroom discussions and consistent attendance; I will also use this margin for students who might wish to propose special projects to make up for deficiencies in other areas. No make-ups or accommodations will be given for quizzes or exams except for reasons and under conditions prescribed by Academic Services.

Summary of Grading:

Quizzes (3)	30%
Midterm	20%
Final	20%
Term Paper	25%
Class Participation	5%

I expect you to be in class unless you have a valid reason to be absent. I will take attendance regularly for the first several meetings of class, and will do so thereafter at my discretion. I may also call on you from the class list at any time; that, too, will count as an attendance check. If you are absent for a majority of those instances, I may give you a failing grade for class participation.

The Honor Code

Read my lips: *no cheating, and no plagiarizing. If you cheat, you will fail.* I expect you to be honest in all you do for and in this class, and to know and abide by the St. Norbert College Academic Honor Code.

All papers and exams submitted to me must be personally signed by you, and your signature will mean that you have personally written or properly attributed every word of that document.

References

Our main textbook for this course will be *American Short Stories*, 7th edition, edited by Bert Hitchcock, Virginia M. Kouidis, and Eugene Current-Garcia (New York: Longman, 2002). I will supplement this book with individual works that I will post in a commonly accessible Web storage area, and with Internet references.

Schedule

I will endeavor, as far as humanly possible, to observe the following schedule, but take this as indicative rather than prescriptive. I will give you fair warning of any major changes in the schedule or in the course content.

August 28, Monday

Introduction to the course and the syllabus; class expectations.

August 29, Tuesday

A general introduction to the short story: history, structure, and elements.

August 31, Thursday

Continuation of introduction: formalist and non-formalist readings of the short story.

September 1, Friday

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Washington Irving (1783-1859).

September 4, Monday LABOR DAY (no classes)

September 5, Tuesday

Young Goodman Brown, Nathaniel Hawthorne (1809-1864).

September 7, Thursday

The Black Cat, Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849).

September 8, Friday

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) (1835-1910).

September 11, Monday
The Outcasts of Poker Flat, Bret Harte (1835-1902).

September 12, Tuesday
Europe, Henry James (1843-1916).

September 14, Thursday
A White Heron, Sarah Orne Jewett (1849-1909).

September 15, Friday
The Passing of Grandison, Charles W. Chesnutt (1858-1932).

September 18, Monday FIRST QUIZ

September 19, Tuesday
An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge, Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914).

September 21, Thursday
The Storm, At the 'Cadian Ball, Kate Chopin (1851-1904).

September 22, Friday
The Yellow Wallpaper, Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935).

September 25, Monday
The Caballero's Way, William Sydney Porter (O. Henry) (1862-1910).

September 26, Tuesday
The Blue Hotel, Stephen Crane (1871-1900).

September 28, Thursday
Paul's Case, Willa Cather (1873-1947).

September 29, Friday
To Build a Fire, Jack London (1876-1916).

October 2, Monday
A Jury of Her Peers, Susan Glaspell (1876-1948).

October 3, Tuesday MIDTERM EXAMS

October 5-8 LONG WEEKEND (no classes)

October 9, Monday
The Use of Force, William Carlos Williams (1883-1963).

October 10, Tuesday
The Gilded Six-Bits, Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960).

October 12, Thursday and October 13, Friday MIDTERM ASSESSMENT & TERM PAPER TOPIC CONSULTATIONS

October 16, Monday

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, James Thurber (1894-1961).

October 17, Tuesday

Babylon Revisited, F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940).

October 19, Thursday

Barn Burning, William Faulkner (1897-1962).

October 20, Friday

Hills Like White Elephants, Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961).

October 23, Monday

The Chrysanthemums, John Steinbeck (1902-1968).

October 24, Tuesday

Thank You, Ma'm, Langston Hughes (1902-1967).

October 26, Thursday SECOND QUIZ

October 27, Friday

The Hitch-Hikers, Eudora Welty (1909-).

October 30, Monday

The Swimmer, John Cheever (1912-1982).

October 31, Tuesday

The Magic Barrel, Bernard Malamud (1914-1986).

November 2, Thursday

Samuel, Grace Paley (1922-).

November 3, Friday

Sonny's Blues, James Baldwin (1924-1987).

November 6, Monday

The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas, Ursula K. Le Guin (1929-).

November 7, Tuesday

The School, Donald Barthelme (1931-1989).

November 9, Thursday

A & P, John Updike (1932-).

November 10, Friday

Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been? Joyce Carol Oates (1938-).

November 13, Monday

A Girl's Story, Toni Cade Bambara (1939-1995).

November 14, Tuesday
Boxes, Raymond Carver (1938-1988).

November 16, Thursday
Shiloh, Bobbie Ann Mason (1940-).

November 17, Friday THIRD QUIZ

November 20, Monday
The Things They Carried, Tim O'Brien (1946-).

November 21, Tuesday
Gryphon, Charles Baxter (1947-).

November 22-26 THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 27, Monday
The Reach, Stephen King (1947-).

November 28, Tuesday
The Race of the Patient Motorcyclists, Lydia Davis (1947-).
Cheers, Jayne Anne Phillips (1952-).

November 30, Thursday
Pet Fly, Walter Mosley (1952-).

December 1, Friday
Term Papers Due
Fleur, Louise Erdrich (1954-).

December 4, Monday
Cariboo Café, Helena María Viramontes (1954-).

December 5, Tuesday
Birthmates, Gish Jen (1956-).

December 7, Thursday
This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona, Sherman Alexie (1966-).

December 8, Friday
This Blessed House, Jhumpa Lahiri (1967-).

December 11-15 FINAL EXAMS