

Course Description

English 237: Introduction to Literary Fiction

Course Description: The stories we tell define who we are. They provide a record of our greatest aspirations and most intense fears. Perhaps most importantly, they allow us to inhabit the experiences of a wide range of characters, thereby testing our beliefs and values. In Introduction to Literary Fiction students encounter various authors and fictional forms (myths, fairy tales, short stories, novels), and their origins. Students learn to analyze fiction from a variety of critical perspectives and to speculate on the psychological and cultural needs that make fiction important in the human experience.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will develop the critical skills and terminology to analyze important historical developments and techniques of fiction.
- Students will be able to describe how the literary canon is shaped and altered.
- By writing a short analysis of a story, students will demonstrate how fiction captures the human search for meaning
- Students will participate in the process of understanding fiction by engaging in class discussion, writing, and most importantly, by asking questions.
- Students will evaluate the philosophical or spiritual implications of human actions and policies
- Students will develop an understanding of their ethical values

Required Texts:

R.V. Cassill, *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction (Shorter Eighth Edition)*

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Selected Tales* (Online)

Morrison, Toni, *Song of Solomon* (Random House)

Gaiman, Neil, *The Ocean at the End of the Lane* (Harper Collins)

Policies:

I will not accept **late work** unless you make arrangements with me at least a day in advance. Late, unexcused work will receive a failing grade.

Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will result in grade reductions.

Academic Integrity: Fundamental to our mission, our core values, and our reputation, Doane University adheres to high academic standards. Students of Doane University are expected to conduct themselves in a manner reflecting personal and professional integrity. Disciplinary actions may be taken against students whose academic behavior is not congruent with the expectations of the University. Students are responsible for adhering to the standards detailed in this policy. Not being familiar with these standards does not mean that the students will not be accountable for adherence to them. Additional

details on the Academic Integrity policy for violating academic integrity are published in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs.

Accommodations: Any student who thinks they may need an accommodation based upon the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (<https://www.doane.edu/disability-services>) to coordinate reasonable accommodations as soon as possible.

Technical Support Contact Information

If you are in need of technical assistance please access the [Self Service Portal](#). You may reach the help desk at 402-826-8411 or by email at helpdesk@doane.edu.

Syllabus Changes

The instructor and Doane University reserve the right to make changes as necessary to this course syllabus. All students will be notified of any changes.

Doane Syllabus Addendum

Each student is responsible for being aware of the policies, resources, and expectations as specified in the Doane Syllabus Addendum found at: <https://www.doane.edu/Syllabus>

Grading:

- **Participation and Quizzes (100 points):** Reading quizzes will be administered as necessary. Consistent and constructive participation is required.
- **Critical Reading Papers (100 points):** Details to be announced.
- **Exams (100 points each):** Mid-term and final examinations will consist of short identifications and essay questions.
- **Group Reports (100 points):** By collaborating on a collective analysis of a work, you will encounter different perspectives while synthesizing a viewpoint. Your analysis of the work will be presented to the class as you lead a discussion and answer questions.

Schedule:

- : **Introduction and discussion of course objectives and requirements.**
- : Atwood's "Death by Landscape" (8).
- : Chapters 1-4 and 38-41 from "The Book of Job." "Water Jar Boy" <http://www.native-languages.org/pueblostory.htm>
- : "Briar Rose" and "Snowdrop" <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2591/2591-h/2591-h.htm>
- : "Ashputtel" <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/2591/2591-h/2591-h.htm>
- : "Many pelts" <https://sites.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm065.html> and "The Frog King" <https://sites.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm001.html>

- : **Symbolism and Allegory:** LeGuin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"
- : Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Minister's Black Veil"
<https://pdcrobas.webs.ull.es/fundamentos/HawthorneTheMinistersBlackVeil.pdf> Hawthorne,
- : **Theme:** Chopin, "The Story of an Hour" and Walker, "Everyday Use."
- : Proulx, "What Kind of Furniture Would Jesus Pick"
- : **Point of View and Narration:** Bierce, "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge."
- : **Characterization:** Tan, "The Rules of the Game" and discussion of dialogue.
- : **Setting and Atmosphere:** O'Brien, "The Things They Carried."
- : Gilman, "The Yellow Wallpaper."
- : Crane, "The Open Boat" and London, "To Build a Fire"
https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/to-build-a-fire.pdf
- : Melville, "Bartleby, The Scrivener."
- : Hurston, "The Conscience of the Court."
- : **Mid-Term Exam**
- : Cather, "Paul's Case."
- : Wright, "The Man Who Was Almost a Man."
- : Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Cask of Amontillado."
<https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/147/the-works-of-edgar-allan-poe/5245/the-cask-of-amontillado/>
- : O'Connor, "A Good Man is Hard to Find."
- : <https://storyoftheweek.loa.org/2024/07/in-another-country.html?m=1>
- : Cheever, "The Enormous Radio."
- : Thurber, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1939/03/18/the-secret-life-of-walter-james-thurber>
- : Film: *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*
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- : Film: *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*
- : **Group Reports:** Erdrich, "Matchimanito."
- : **Group Reports:** Mukherjee, "The Management of Grief."
- : **Group Reports:** Viamontes, "The Moths"
- : Garcia Marquez, "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings"

- : Faulkner's Nobel Prize speech/Writers and writing (in class)
- : Faulkner, "Barn Burning."
- : Faulkner, "A Rose for Emily."
- : *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, I-V
- : *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, VI-X
- : *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, XI-end
- : *Song of Solomon*, Part I, Chapters 1-2
- : *Song of Solomon*, Part I, Chapters 3-5
- : *Song of Solomon*, Part I, Chapters 6-9
- : *Song of Solomon*, Part II, Chapters 10-11
- : *Song of Solomon*, Part II, Chapters 12-15
- : Conclusions
- : **Final exam.**