124-08 Studies in Fiction

Jodi Wyett
wyett@xavier.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/english_syllabi_spring_2014

Recommended Citation
http://www.exhibit.xavier.edu/english_syllabi_spring_2014/46
Spring 2014

Studies in Fiction

3:00 pm - 4:15 p.m. WF
Hailstones Hall 7
Professor: Dr. Jodi L. Wyett
Office: Hinkle 304
E-mail: wyett@xavier.edu
Office Phone: 745-3158
Office Hours: WF, 1:00-2:30 p.m. and by appointment

Required Texts:
Title: Literature: Craft and Voice (Volume 1, Fiction) [Paperback]
Nicholas Delbanco (Author), Alan Cheuse (Author)
Paperback: 672 pages
Publisher: McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages; 1 edition
(January 7, 2009)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0073104442
*** This is an out-of-print title that could cost you up to $100 if you try to buy a new copy of it. That's the bad news. The GOOD news is that it is readily available as a USED book for more like $5! So BUY USED (Amazon is a good source) unless you have loads of cash and can't bear the thought of dealing with the markings of some highlighter-happy former student. Please note this is the FIRST VOLUME ONLY of the FIRST EDITION of this book (The second edition combines all three of the volumes from the first edition and cuts out a substantial number of readings). The second edition will not work for this class. DO NOT BUY THE SECOND EDITION. DO NOT BUY ANY VOLUME OTHER THAN THE FIRST OF THE FIRST EDITION.

There is also one short story that you must print out from e-reserve, “Brokeback Mountain,” by Annie Proulx. It is indicated on the syllabus with an asterisk (*). The e-reserve password is “fiction” but you can also just link to it from our Canvas site.

Course Description:
This course fulfills the 3 credit hour literature requirement of the Xavier undergraduate core curriculum. We will read, write about, and discuss a variety of short stories with an emphasis on reading closely for meaning. All literature (okay, the good stuff anyway) tells us something about the human condition, about human meaning, and we determine what a story means by exploring the way it is crafted, the elements of its construction. Thus in this course we will begin by studying the elements of fiction to help us find meaning in a variety of short stories. Then we will tackle a number of stories holistically in two thematic units. The short story is a particularly useful genre for our purposes because short stories must convey a lot in a little bit of time and space while their subtlety demands close, careful reading. Please note that the structure and subject matter of this course demand maturity as well as sensitivity to the opinions and beliefs of others.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives:
The aims of this course include to help students to:
• read critically, closely, and effectively;
• articulate ideas orally;
• identify the elements of literature;
• understand how the elements of literature create textual meaning;
• understand the relationship between textual meaning and human reality;
• write literary analysis that emphasizes the ways in which fiction conveys meaning about human reality.

Requirements:
Since another course goal is to strengthen and to emphasize the relationships between your reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, you will read and/or write every day for this course. Three in-class essay exams and two formal comparative analytical essays (5 pp. long) are required. You will give a group presentation that identifies one literary element we will be covering in one of the short stories we will be reading and explains how that element helps to reveal meaning. Weekly unannounced reading quizzes will also be required. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class. If you are late for class on a quiz day you will receive a zero for the quiz. Please note that due to the nature of the quizzes, they cannot be made up under any circumstances.

All reading assignments must be prepared before scheduled discussions. Bring texts to be discussed to class. Failure to do so is akin to being absent.

Attendance and Participation: Class discussions and in-class activities are essential to this course. Thus if you wish to succeed in this class, you need to attend and participate every day. Participation includes not only coming to class but also arriving prepared, on time, and ready to contribute to class discussions and activities. Your contribution will be measured by the “step up/step out” method. That is, you’ll be expected to offer thoughtful comments during discussion (step up), but you should do so without monopolizing the class or blurting out whatever crosses your mind (step out). Also note that for the duration of the class period, you will be expected to disconnect from your personal technology. No phone calls or texts should be coming in or going out during class. Laptops should be stowed unless you have a documentable need for one. Adult comportment is expected of all students.

If you must miss class, consult as soon as possible with a trusted classmate for any notes and announcements. Attendance will also be taken into consideration when calculating participation grades. Sustained habitual absences, defined as missing a week’s worth of consecutive classes, will result in a grade of VF (vanishing failure).

Grading: You are responsible for your own grade in this course. You must be actively engaged in claiming an education. I cannot help you with problems in this class if you do not tell me what they are. You are encouraged to make individual appointments to see me, to come to my office hours, to call me at my office, to send me e-mail messages, and, of course, to speak up in class! Be aware that e-mail is not an appropriate venue for discussing certain issues and I do not always check my email on the weekends.

I do not accept late assignments or e-mail attachments. Late is defined as anything turned in after the beginning of the class period in which it is due and I must receive a hard copy of your work at that time. Except in the most dire, unavoidable and documentable circumstances, you must have prior approval from me for any late or missed assignments.

Plagiarism, the use of another person’s words or ideas as one’s own (yes, this applies to anything you find on the internet, too), will not be tolerated. It is against the law. If you plagiarize, it will result in, at the very least, failure of this course and may result in further academic discipline from the University. Don’t do it.
Everything will be graded on a 100-point scale (e.g., 80-82=B-, 83-86=B, 87-89=B+).

Assignments will be weighted as follows:
- Exam #1 — 10%
- Exam #2 — 10%
- Exam #3 — 10%
- Paper #1 — 20%
- Paper #2 — 20%
- Quizzes and Exercises — 10%
- Presentation — 10%
- Participation — 10%

**Tutoring:**
A valuable resource for all students is the Writing Center, 400 Conaton Learning Commons, 745-2875. Tutors can help you on an individual basis with any aspect of your writing at any stage in the writing process. They will not write papers for you nor will they proofread.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**
*All assignments are to be read or completed for the day on which they are listed. Any changes to the schedule will be discussed and announced in class.*

**WEEK I**
**W 1/15** Syllabus, course expectations, presentation assignment, introductions.
**F 1/17** “Reading a Story for its Elements,” pp. 2-3 & 9-12; THEME, pp. 260-1 & 270-3. Presentation sign-up.

**WEEK II**
**F 1/24** PLOT, pp. 74-5 & 83-5; T.C. Boyle, “Greasy Lake,” pp. 76-82. Presenters: _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________, _______________.

**WEEK III**

Presenters: _______________, _______________, _______________,
_____________, _______________, _______________.

Presenters: _______________, _______________, _______________,
_____________, _______________, _______________.

**WEEK IV**
**W 2/5** Catch-up and Exam #1 Review including writing essay exams.
**F 2/7** In-class Essay Exam #1
WEEK V

________________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________.


WEEK VI
W 2/19 LANGUAGE/TONE/STYLE, pp 232-3 & 238-43. Junot Diaz, “How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie.” Presenters:

________________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________, ______________.


WEEK VII
W 2/26 Catch-up and Exam #2 review.
F 2/28 In-class Essay Exam #2

WEEK VIII  SPRING BREAK

WEEK IX

WEEK X  No Class (I will be at a conference—work on Paper #1 ideas).

WEEK XI

WEEK XII
F 4/4 Peer review: complete draft of Paper #1 and thesis statement due.

WEEK XIII
WEEK XIV
F 4/18  no class-EASTER BREAK

WEEK XV

WEEK XVI
W 4/30  Paper #2 Due. Course evaluations.
F 5/2  Exam #3 review.

EXAM #3: 2:00 - 3:50 p.m., Friday, May 9