

## COURSE SYLLABUS

Section A, 90355	Tues/Thurs	10:00-11:15 a.m.	Lafayette 102
Section B, 90356	Tues/Thurs	11:30-12:45 p.m.	Votey 220

Office hours: Wednesdays, 1 – 3pm (& by appointment), 417 Old Mill  
Telephone: 656-3838 on campus; 434-5688 (emergencies)  
Email: [Angela.Patten@uvm.edu](mailto:Angela.Patten@uvm.edu)

TEXT: Fiction 100: An Anthology of Short Fiction (Twelfth edition) by James H. Pickering

COURSE OVERVIEW: This course will introduce students to the art of fiction through the study of modern and contemporary short stories. Through extensive reading and discussion, students will consider and write about the basic elements of fiction (plot, setting, characterization, dialogue, etc.) while also considering the historical and cultural contexts in which the narratives were created. The course is designed to broaden students' literary tastes and foster critical thinking while deepening appreciation of "that most basic human activity" – storytelling.

BLACKBOARD: There is a website for this course, available at <https://bb.uvm.edu> (use your UVM user id and password to log-in). The syllabus is available on the site (should you lose it) and other resources will be added during the semester.

REQUIREMENTS: It should go without saying that it is necessary to do the reading and to think about what you read. Responses to the readings should be thoughtful and constructive and demonstrate increasing knowledge of the vocabulary and elements of the art of fiction. While in-class discussions are informal, your final grade will reflect not only the frequency of your participation, but also its quality.

The class will regularly break into small groups for discussion, and you are expected to contribute thoughtfully to these discussions as well as to discussions in the class as a whole. (Do not enter into private conversations, however). I expect you to read, view, consider and discuss the material and to take these obligations seriously. If it becomes evident to me that you have not done the reading, or

you are not contributing seriously to discussion, or you miss class more than a couple of times for good reasons (email me to let me know), or are regularly late for class (if you have to be late, please find a seat as unobtrusively as possible), your grade will suffer.

## GRADING

- Class participation: 15%
- Two reading quizzes: 20%
- Mid-term paper (3-4 double-spaced pages) 25%
- Final critical paper (7-8 double-spaced pages) 40%

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### WEEK ONE

Tuesday, Sept 1: Introductions; review of syllabus

Thursday, Sept 3: Introduction to the Short Story: Fable, Parable & Tale

### WEEK TWO

Tuesday, Sept 8: Plot  
Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) "Young Goodman Brown"  
Stephen King (1947 - ) "The Man in the Black Suit"

Thursday, Sept 10: Discussion cont'd.

### WEEK THREE

Tuesday, Sept 15: Plot, continued  
William Faulkner (1897-1962) "A Rose for Emily"  
H. H. Munro ("Saki") (1870-1916) "The Open Window"

Thursday, Sept 17: Discussion cont'd.

### WEEK FOUR

Tuesday, Sept 22: Character  
James Joyce (1882-1941) "The Dead"  
Louise Erdrich (1954 - ) "The Red Convertible"

Thursday, Sept 24: Screening of "The Dead" (1987) directed by John Huston

## WEEK FIVE

Tuesday, Sept 29: Setting  
Kate Chopin (1851-1904) "The Storm"  
Tobias Wolff (1945 - ) "Powder"

Thursday, Oct 1: Discussion cont'd.

## WEEK SIX

Tuesday, Oct 6: Point of View  
Ernest Hemingway (1898-1961) "Hills Like White Elephants"  
T. Coraghessan Boyle (1948 - ) "The Love of My Life"

Thursday, Oct 8: Discussion cont'd.

## WEEK SEVEN

Tuesday, Oct 13: Point of View, continued (Mid-term Paper due)  
Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?) "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"  
Anton Chekov (1860-1904) "The Lady With The Dog"

Thursday, Oct 15: Discussion cont'd.

## WEEK EIGHT

Tuesday, Oct 20: Point of View, continued  
Sandra Cisneros (1954 - ) "The House on Mango Street"  
Gish Jen (1956 - ) "In The American Society"

Thursday, Oct 22: Discussion cont'd.

## WEEK NINE

Tuesday, Oct 27: Point of View, continued  
Eudora Welty (1909-2001) "A Worn Path"  
Sherman Alexie (1966 - ) "This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona"

Thursday, Oct 29: Screening of "Smoke Signals" (1998) directed by Chris Eyre

## WEEK TEN

Tuesday, Nov. 3: Theme  
D. H. Lawrence (1885-1930) "The Rocking-Horse Winner"  
Tessa Hadley (1956 - ) "A Mouthful of Cut Glass"

Thursday, Nov. 5: Reading Quiz #1

## WEEK ELEVEN

Tuesday, Nov 10 Frank O'Connor (1903-1966) "Guests of the Nation"  
Donna Tartt (1963 - ) "Ambush"

Thursday, Nov 12 Discussion cont'd.

## WEEK TWELVE

Tuesday, Nov 17: Symbol & Allegory  
Shirley Jackson (1919-1965) "The Lottery"  
Gabriel García Márquez (1928 - ) "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings"

Thursday, Nov 19: Discussion cont'd.

## WEEK THIRTEEN

Tuesday, Nov 24: Reading Quiz #2 (covers all readings since Quiz # 1)

Nov. 25-27 Thanksgiving Recess

## WEEK FOURTEEN

Tuesday, Dec 1: Style & Tone  
William Faulkner (1897-1962) "Barn Burning"  
George Saunders (1958 - ) "Bohemians"

Thursday, Dec 3: Screening of "Barn Burning" (1980) directed by Peter Werner

## WEEK FIFTEEN

Tuesday, Dec 8: Last day of class / Course evaluations  
Final Critical Paper #3 due