

Sul Ross State University
English 2341
Forms of Literature
Spring II 2024

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Course Text: *Norton Introduction to Literature, Shorter*

Course Objectives and Descriptions: English 2341, Forms of Literature, is a course which seeks to expand several aspects of literacy for students. Primarily, the course examines techniques of critical analysis of major literary forms—prose fiction and poetry—through close readings, discussions, writings, and examinations based on these literary forms. English 2341 will focus its discussion of forms through cultural and social expressions. That is, the course will attempt to uncover the sense that literature is not created outside of or despite existing cultures and social occurrences; rather, it speaks directly to our own experiences and lives. This helps develop our personal and professional lives in terms of aesthetics, communications, and our literacies.

Course Expectations:

English 2341 is an online, independent-study course, designed so that students benefit, learn, and, ultimately, increase literacy, through close and detailed study of the assigned readings and concepts. Students will be expected to carefully complete the assignments for each class unit as assigned (in order of assignment for the most successful understanding of the concepts and materials). These assignments will range from readings, informal writings in the forms of journal exercises, and formal writings in the forms of creative manuscripts and an analytic final examination.

First Class and Beyond:

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss or clarify any of the concepts in the text and course. You may be getting started during the holiday, but note that I will be on vacation from 22nd December to 4th January.

Coursework:

****Please note that you should write attached assignments in Microsoft Word to ensure we may all utilize them. Work may be submitted in “.doc, .docx, or .pdf. Please contact Tim Parsons if you have technical problems or questions. Blackboard only works best in **Firefox**, Safari, or Chrome (rather than Explorer). It is free to download.****

Assignments: English 2341 will be graded according to the following assignments:

Fiction Manuscript	20%
Poetry Manuscript	20%
Journal Elements	40%
Final Examination	20%

Grading Percentages: English 2341 will be graded on the percentage of 100: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=59-below

The vast majority of this course will be completed via the study of both literature and theoretical readings regarding techniques which make up literature. We will read and write about selections from the required text for the course. You are expected to participate fully in a completely engaged manner and will be held accountable for your participation, both in formal and informal forums, throughout the completion of the course's work. We will write one short fiction manuscript and one poetry manuscript. You will also complete a course journal that will hold assigned materials generated this semester. The course journal will consist of only assigned writings in the form of "elements." It will be one continuous document and turned in only once, at the end of the semester. The elements will be titled by number and each appear with a page break between. Finally, you will turn in a final examination in essay form, which pulls together the work from the semester.

Detailed Assignment Description:

**See the "assignments" link in Blackboard for long-form descriptions of the formal assignments.

Readings—The readings for the course involve short fiction and poetry by masters of world literature, as well as discussions of the elements that make up the forms. Thus, we will be able to read great and varied examples of various genres as a way to model techniques while also comparing and contrasting genres and subgenres of the forms. This allows us to increase confidence in our writing and analytic abilities as a way into our life experiences as members of our own cultures. Writing never occurs in a vacuum; it informs and is informed by its surrounding cultures. The readings will highlight this crucial fact.

Short Fiction Manuscript—The fiction manuscript will as you first to write a brief essay in which you identify and analyze the techniques in one or more of the short stories we have read and which you admire and attempt to model in your own writing. This should be no more than a

page in length. Then the short story will be an original piece of yours in which you indeed attempt to develop techniques of the form. The story will be typed, in Times New Roman font, double-spaced, 2-3 pages in length, and utilize MLA style.

Poetry Manuscript—This assignment requires you to write a three-page manuscript of poems. Like the fiction manuscript, you will write a brief analysis of one or more of the poems we read for class and which you admired, identifying and critically discussing the elements that make the form successful. You will then write three pages of original poems which also attempt to develop the techniques of the form.

Course Journal—The course journal will consist of prompts from the text which ask you to journal about what you read, analyze techniques authors use when writing, or to expand your own ideas for course writings. The goals of journal exercises are to facilitate clear understanding of the literature as well as develop your abilities to write freely and with confidence. Obviously, the responses are as valuable as the effort put into them. Please feel free to use any of the notebook exercises as inspirations for further, more formal assignments—they are meant to be such. I will evaluate your effort on these exercises once, at the end of the course. It will be turned in as a single Word attachment. But please write the exercises as they are due—this will maximize their success for your endeavors. Each entry should be a minimum of 300 to 500 words. The precise prompts are listed in the syllabus.

Final Examination—The final examination will pull together the key ideas and aspects of the course. That is, I will ask you to write fully-developed essays that explore key concepts and personal analyses of the session's work. The goal of this assignment is to apply our discussions and growing skills in analysis of literature, the readings of such, and the cultural and historical impact of cultures on literatures. It will also measure your ability to pull together the session's significant ideas comprehensively and clearly.

Grading Scale:

Percentages and Grade Equivalents:

A= 90-100% B=80-89% C=70-79% D=60-69% F=59% or below

Disabilities Statement: Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations should contact me as soon as possible so that we may make arrangements to ensure the most hospitable and enhancing (cyber) learning environment as possible.

Academic Ethics: It is the responsibility of students and instructors to help maintain scholastic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty. Any student who represents someone else's work as his or her own will automatically receive a zero for that assignment, which will likely result in a failure for the course. Plagiarism can be purposeful or inadvertent, but either results in an unacceptable and unethical academic performance. Plagiarism will most likely result in a failure for the course.

***A Writer's Reference:* I strongly recommend all students and instructors of writing and literature own and utilize Diana Hacker's *A Writer's Reference*. It is a sound, credible, and particularly usable stylebook.**

Miscellaneous but Important:

If you require accommodations to ensure your successful completion of this course, please contact me immediately.

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8203.

Syllabus

Date

Assignment

Unit One

*read course introduction and policies

Read: Part One: Fiction (excluding stories unless otherwise noted below).

“Cathedral”

Journal Element 1: Discuss what you learned reading the chapter. What are the themes of “Cathedral”?

Unit Two

Journal Element 2: What is the significance of a character-driven plot to fiction? Why are we more attracted, as readers, to this type of piece? Evidence at least one story read for this week in your discussion.

Read: Chapter One, “Plot,”

“Sonny’s Blues”

“A&P”

Journal Element 3: Answer the questions after the assigned stories when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Three

Journal Element 4: Both “Sonny's Blues” and “A&P” are considered initiation stories. Discuss in what ways, specifically, each story functions in this way. What crucial realizations do the characters make about themselves and others?

Read: Chapter Two, “Narration and Point of View”

“The Cask of Amantillado”

“A Rose for Emily”

Journal Element 5: Answer the questions after the assigned stories when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Four

Journal Element 6: Identify the different points of view used in the two stories assigned in Unit Three. How do the points of view develop meaning in the stories? Can the narrator be the main character in a story? How is this true or not true in the pieces we read? Which point of view most interests you for your writing?

Read: Chapter Three, “Character”

“Barn Burning”

“A Good Man Is Hard to Find”

Journal Element 7: Answer the questions after the assigned stories when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Five

Journal Element 8: Discuss the concepts of sympathetic characters versus unsympathetic characters. Discuss character as narrator. Discuss protagonist versus antagonists in fiction. Why is it crucial that enjoyable fiction be character-driven? Why must the characters illicit emotions in us, the readers? In the discussion, cite stories read thus far, especially those read last week.

Read: Chapter Four, “Setting”

“A Pair of Tickets”

“Volar”

Journal Element 9: Answer the questions after the assigned stories when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Six

*Read detailed assignment short story manuscript

Journal Element 10: How can setting function as a central component of a story? Does it at times feel almost as important as the characters? Note the importance of setting in the stories read last week. In which stories does setting function as a part of the characterization and theme of the pieces?

Read: Chapter Five, “Symbol and Figurative Language”

“The Birth-Mark”

“The Jury of Her Peers”

Journal Element 11: Answer the questions after the assigned stories when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Seven

Journal Element 12: Identify the symbols used in the stories read in the previous week. How do they significantly develop the central meaning of the stories, what you take away from the stories?

Read: Chapter Six, “Theme”

“Love Medicine”

“Shiloh”

Journal Element 13: Answer the questions after the assigned stories when applicable. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Eight *Short fiction manuscript should be written before moving to the poetry section of course.

Journal Element 14: The stories read last week develop poignant themes. Discuss the themes in each of the stories. Which elements are utilized to develop meaning?

Read: "Poetry"

"The Art of Reading Poetry: An Album"

(All poems in the above sections)

Journal Element 15: Choose three poems with questions and answer them (the questions will be bullets). Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Nine

Journal Element 16: The text gives you many techniques for reading and understanding poems. Which of these reading techniques works best for you? Discuss these in terms of your reading of any one of the poems.

Read: Chapter Ten, "Speaker: Whose Voice Do We Hear?"

"Exploring Gender: An Album"

*All poems in above sections

Journal Element 17: Answer the questions after any three of the assigned poems. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Ten

Journal Element 18: Define poetic voice and discuss its particular significance to poetry as a genre. Is the speaker and the poet necessarily one in the same? Discuss the voice in three poems read last week. What makes the voice unique to the meaning of the poems?

Read: Chapter Eleven, "Situation and Setting: What Happens? Where? When?"

“Homelands: An Album”

*All poems in above sections

Journal Element 19: Answer the questions after any three of the assigned poems. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Eleven

Journal Element 20: Using two poems from the “Homelands” album, discuss the significance of the situation and setting to the messages of these poems. How do the poets create a landscape of culture in the poems, and what is the significance of details of place and situation to the poems’ messages?

Read: Chapter Twelve, “Theme and Tone”

“Family, An Album”

*All poems in above sections

Journal Element 21: Answer the questions after any three of the assigned poems. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Twelve *Read detailed poetry manuscript assignment

Journal Element 22: Discuss how the themes of poems may be developed by tone. Also, in what ways do poets achieve particular tones in their pieces? In the discussion of these concepts, please specifically evidence your points using a poem read last unit.

Read: Chapter Thirteen, “Language, Word Choice, and Order”

“Chapter Fourteen, “Visual Imagery and Figures of Speech”

*All poems in above sections

Journal Element 23: Answer the questions after any three of the assigned poems. Fully evidence answers textually and with critical detail.

Unit Thirteen

Journal Element 24: Discuss the success of images as they determine your reading satisfaction in a poem read last unit. How did the poets create details, draw images? Respond to 2 posts!!

Read: Chapter Fifteen, “Symbol”

Chapter Sixteen, “Sounds”

*All poems in sections

Journal Element 25: Which genre did you enjoy reading and/or writing the most? Which pieces did you find most interesting and satisfying, meaningful?

Unit Fourteen

Submit Poetry Manuscript

Submit Journal

Read assignment for final examination

Complete Final Examination