ENGLISH 104 SYLLABUS
INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE: FICTION
Spring, 2003

Instructor: Terrance Lane Millet
Office & Tel: Takena 208; 917-4555
E-Mail: terrance@peak.org
Office Hours: MWF: 11 a.m. –12 p.m.; TR: 1–2 p.m.
Class time & Place: CRN 40030: MW 2:00–3:20 p.m. T 205
CRN 41036: TR 9:30–10:50 a.m. IA-232
Texts required:
• ENG 104 Packet. Literature: Fiction.
• The Eloquent Umbrella, 2002 edition
• A black, 3-ring binder for your notes.
Prerequisites: WR 121. It is strongly recommended that you take WR 121 before you take this or any other Literature class. If you have not, see me.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A great poet writes that poetry has never killed anyone, but every day people die because poetry has not been read. The same could be said about literary fiction.
Hello, and welcome to all of you. The goal of this course is to bring literary fiction to life.
We’ll read, discuss, and write about fiction, and come to understand the elements of a short story: voice, figurative language, allusion, symbol, imagery, form.
We’ll be writing our own essays and stories, and will have the chance to read them in class.
We’ll sharpen our conscious and unconscious perceptions of literature through patient reading and analysis, and learn how short fiction reflects and enhances our own lives, and how it relates not only to our feelings and thoughts, but to the world around us as well.

My Own Philosophy of Fiction:
What we are forced to look at in the stories by Munro and Carver and Oates and Chekov and Hemingway— in most good literary fiction—is the discrepancy between inner lives and outer lives, between who we want to be and who we become, between the lives we want to live and the lives we feel we ought to live because the former are too chancy and the latter are endorsed by society, by family and friends.
That’s what I try to put into every story I write, and it’s a primary component in how I judge fiction.
The resonance for us as readers comes from a recognition in our own lives, as Joan Didion puts it, of the “apparently bottomless gulf between what we say we want and what we do want, what we officially admire and secretly desire, between, in the largest sense, the people we marry and the people we love.”
And that’s something we’ll be looking for in the stories we read this term.
You’ll notice that many divisions of art and fiction are artificial and arbitrary. The thematic components we look at under any author (family, the journey, self-discovery) can be seen in any other author. The groupings we’ve made here are no better or worse than any other, nor more meaningful. All good writing will share components, though some may highlight some over others for the sake of the style. Don’t be tempted into seeing stories mainly in terms of groupings. And don’t confuse the merely familiar with the superior. Put on your Sociological Imagination. Look up
CW Mill’s *The Sociological Imagination* and hand in a review of it for a jump-start of 25 points. The secret to reading texts effectively is to read everything you can that lends a new or different perspective to your understanding.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** When you’ve successfully completed ENG 104, you should be able to:
- Recognize how literature helps in understanding the human condition.
- Interpret literary works, short fiction, and some visual art through critical evaluation.
- Demonstrate how literature enhances personal awareness and creativity.
- Write and speak confidently about your own and others’ ideas.

**COURSE THEMES AND CONCEPTS:** To demonstrate our learning outcomes, you’ll need to understand these themes and concepts:
- Heart of a Story
- Single Effect
- Metaphor
- Myth/Realism/Magical Realism
- Author’s Intent
- Theme in fiction and story
- Event/character-driven plot
- Ironic Distance
- Flat/static vs. round/dynamic character
- Cosmology

**SKILLS:** To reach our learning outcomes, you’ll need to master the following skills:
- Critical reading
- Literary analysis using the above themes and concepts
- Essay writing and the use of MLA standards.
- Collaborative teamwork.
- Connecting the short story to our own lives, sharing these connections in our discussions and writings.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:** You will have the opportunity to demonstrate our learning outcomes by accomplishing the following tasks:

1. **Writing Exercises (100 points, 4@25):** These interactive creative writing exercises taken from *The Eloquent Umbrella* will illustrate the connection between the creative imagination, the creation of art, and formal analysis of both the process and product of our own and others’ art. It will help us see that the story is not on the page—it is in our hearts and minds.

2. **Summary -Response (240 points):** There will be a summary-response each class on the assigned story. These will be given check plus, check, or check minus (√+; √; √-) out of 25.

3. **Mid Term Essay (100 points):** This five-page essay will demonstrate an analysis of a short story to be announced, revolving around the concepts of short fiction we’ve discussed in class. You may choose to write your own short story, demonstrating your skill with these same concepts in lieu of an essay.
4. **Group Project (100 points):** The class will be divided into eight base groups of up to five people, and each group will be responsible for its own presentation. Choose a work of fiction, a genre, or an author to analyze and present to the class. Each team’s presentation should last thirty minutes or so, and can involve visual aids, auditory aids, or class-involved activity. See Class Performance Guidelines. The groups will select a facilitator, a script recorder, and a speaker. All members of the group will be discussion participants. The facilitator’s job is to see that all members have the opportunity to participate; the recorder takes specific notes, including who contributed what to the discussion; the speaker will represent the group in the final whole class discussion.

5. **Final Exam (100 points):** The final exam will be a take-home test and will give you a chance to show the skills you’ve learned during the term. You must cite three sources to back up your claims and demonstrate facility with MLA standards, including in-text citation and a separate Works Cited page. You will also include with this final a printout of all the sources you have used with the relevant portions highlighted.

Each week we’ll read 2 or more stories. Please read the work before class and intensely examine its meaning. Don’t be afraid to well mark the pages in your texts. Please allow at least two hours of outside work for each hour of class and be sure to have all assignments done before class.

**Summary -Responses** are due by the beginning of class for hard copy and for email versions. Late work will not be accepted.

Please word-process and double-space your work, and include your name, the class time, the instructor’s name, and the assignment title and type at the top left of the first page of all tests and assignments.

Begin the reading well in advance. That way, the reading will be reasonable and spaced out. If you wait until just before class, you will not have time to cover the material.

**ATTENDANCE:** It's important that you attend all the classes. Every class will entail points towards your grade. Most of the work will be in-class writes and discussion (class participation)—and you’ll be graded on this. The revision process occurring in class is crucial to developing your skills in writing, and your team members will depend on you. Also, material is often covered in class that is not in your texts.

**CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE:** Writing is an intense process, a skill acquired through diligence and work. It is a personal act as well that demands honesty, focus, and openness. To help each other in this process, it’s important that an attitude of civility, a habit of positive suggestions, and a posture of support be the rule.

**Resources:**

- My Web Page has a list resources and templates.
- See pages 18-19 in the General Catalogue for a list of campus resources. The Writing Desk is an excellent place to get professional help with your essays.
- **Ezra Pound:** A Guide to Kulchur.
  
  The ABC of Literature.

For a jump-start, review either of Pound’s books, or C. W. Mill’s, and earn 25 bonus points.
Grades:
A—90-100
B—80-89
C—70-79
D—60-69

A = You perform consistent and excellent work on time. You come to class having read the material actively and thoughtfully. Your writing makes insightful connection between the literature and the issues involved.

B = You show consistent work, but you may not have always understood the literature and your writing might not express clarity all the time. Minor errors impede the writing.

C = Also means consistent work, but you have occasionally struggled with the reading and your writing shows recurring errors. You missed an occasional assignment.

D = You fall behind, miss an assignment, and attempt to turn in work late. You attend class irregularly and do not contribute to class or group work.

F = You complete less than 2/3rds of the work. Most students fail because they stop trying or don’t seek help before it’s too late.

Y = Means you complete so little work (less than 25%) that there is no basis for a grade.

NOTE:
I urge you to submit your essays electronically. E-mail them to me at terrance@peak.org as attached documents in Microsoft WORD format only and in Optima 12 font. These assignments (except the summary responses) are due by midnight on the due dates. You will get them back sooner than written work (which is also due earlier, in class), and have the opportunity to get more feedback on them.

Electronic submissions must be attached files that are named with your last name, the class days, and the assignment. For example: SmithTRwr121essay#1; ReedMWwr121wrex#2, etc.
Tentative Schedule (subject to revision, with notice)

indicates stories that are to be summarized and responded to.

**Week 1**  Magic and Fable:
March 31-April 4

**Mon/Tues**  Malamud: “The Magic Barrel.” (indicates stories that are to be summarized and responded to)
Irving: “Rip Van Winkle.”
Introductions. Syllabus and overview.
Read “The Magic Barrel” for next class.

**Wed/ Thurs**  Gilman: “The Yellow Wallpaper.”
The short story and it’s single effect. Internet orientation on the web site.

*Further reading: Malamud: “Idiots First.”*

**Interactive Exercise #1**
**Interactive Writing Exercise #1** due by Friday noon for hard copy, or Friday Midnight for internet versions.

**Week 2: Family & Realtieship:**

**Mon/Tues**  Beatie: “The Burning House.”
Chopin: “The Story of an Hour.”

**Wed/Thurs**  Welty: “A Worn Path.”
Munro: “Circle of Prayer”

*See also: Carver: “What We talk About When We talk About Love”; Tiwa Myth; Hemmingway; and so on.*

**Week 3: Style and Symbol:**

**M/T**  Hemingway: “Hills Like White Elephants.”
Capote: A Diamond Guitar.”

**W/R**  Fitzgerald: “Winter Dreams.”
Poe: “The Cask of Amontillado.”

**Interactive Writing Exercise #2** due by Friday noon for hard copy, or Friday Midnight for internet versions.

**Week 4: The French Connection**

**M/T**  Camus: “The Guest.”
Flauber: “The Legend of St. Julian Hospitaler.”

**W/R**  Blaise: “I’m Dreaming of Rocket Richard.”
**Week 5: Native Americans: Myth and Legend**

**M/T**  → Alexie: “A Good story.”

Brant: “Native Origin.”

**W/R**  → Sioux Myth: “Sun Creation.”

Tiwa Myth: “The Faithful Wife and the Woman Warrior.”

Further resources: Alexie: “The Lone Ranger and Totno Fistfight in Heaven”; the film “Smoke Signals.”

**Interactive Writing Exercise #3** due by **Friday** noon for hard copy, or Friday Midnight for internet versions.

**Week 6: The Narrative Craft and Author’s Intent**

**M/T**  → Carver: “Cathedral”;

“What We Talk About When We talk About Love.”

**W/R**  → O’Brien: “The Things they Carried.”

Further reading: Chekov: “The Lady With the Pet Dog.”

**Midterm Essay Due:** On Sherwood Anderson: either “Hands,” or “Death in the Woods.”

**Week 7: Metaphor and Symbol**

**M/T**  → Kafka: “The Hunger Artist.”

Compare this to Malamud and Anderson.

**W/R**  → Walker: “Everyday Use.”

**Week 8: Morality Tales**

**M/T**  → Twain: “War Prayer.”

Bierce: “Chicamauga.”

**W/R**  → Wilde: “The Happy Prince.”

Highly recommended: Baldwin: “Sonny’s Blues.”

**Interactive Writing Exercise #4** due by Friday noon for hard copy, or Friday Midnight for internet versions.
**Week 9:**

**NO CLASS MONDAY: MEMORIAL DAY**

- Presentations: Capstone Project

**Week 10**

- Presentations: Capstone Project

**Final Exam** handed out at the beginning of week 9. This take-home exam is due in my office (hard copy) noon Friday or Friday midnight if you e-mail them me as an attached Microsoft WORD document.

**Week 11** Finals Week

- indicates stories that are to be summarized and responded to.

**NOTE:**

Again, I urge you to submit your essays electronically. E-mail them to me at terrance@peak.org as attached documents in Microsoft WORD format only and in Optima 12 font. These assignments (except the summary responses) are due by midnight on the due dates. You will get them back sooner than written work (which is also due earlier, in class), and have the opportunity to get more feedback on them.

Electronic submissions must be attached files that are named with your last name, class days, and the assignment. For example: SmithTRwr121essay#1; ReedMWwr121wrex#2, etc.
Assignment Log
Check each of the following to stay current and keep track of what you have done.

Summary Responses (240 points: 15 each)
1. ___ Malamud
2. ___ Gilman
3. ___ Beatie
4. ___ Welty
5. ___ Hemingway
6. ___ Fitzgerald
7. ___ Camus
8. ___ Blaise
9. ___ Alexie
10. ___ Sioux Myth
11. ___ Carver
12. ___ O’Brien
13. ___ Kafka
14. ___ Walker
15. ___ Twain
16. ___ Wilde

Mid Term Essay (100 points)
___ Title:

Interactive Writing Exercises (100 points)
___ Writing Exercise #1
___ Writing Exercise #2
___ Writing Exercise #3
___ Writing Exercise #4

___ Project/Presentation (100) Title:_________