

THE AMERICAN SHORT STORY

ENGL 4020S, American Literature Seminar, is an intensive study of major figures and ideas in a select period of American Literature. This particular instance of the course will focus on the evolution of the short story within the tradition of American literature. (3)

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN FROM THIS CLASS

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Evaluate short fictional works for their literary and cultural merits.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of American short fiction, including plot, character, theme, symbolism, irony, and setting.
- Recognize the socio-historical influences bearing on the development of the short story in America.
- Demonstrate an understanding of traditions and themes in American literature as seen in the short story format.
- Write about literature in a meaningful, thoughtful way, carefully examining the intent of the authors as well as the interpretations made by readers.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of literary criticism.

WHAT YOU NEED FOR THIS COURSE

- No books are required for this course.

WHAT YOU WILL DO FOR THIS COURSE

- *Engagement* (10%): A daily grade based on engagement with the class.
- *Coursework* (10%): A variety of short, in-class assignments.
- *Story reflections* (15%): Weekly 500-word informal responses to assigned readings.
- *Term paper* (25%): 10-page researched analysis of one or more assigned stories.
 - Annotated bibliography due 02/08.
 - Term paper draft due 03/22.
 - Term paper revision due 04/19.
- *Midterm Exam* (20%): Comprehensive short answer and essay exam. 03/08.
- *Final Exam* (20%): Comprehensive short answer and essay exam. 05/08, 8:00 am.

You must successfully complete all of the above to pass this class. Unless otherwise noted, work written outside of class and submitted for a grade should conform to academic standards. Assignments should be cleanly typed and free of spelling, mechanical, and grammatical errors. Papers suffering from excessive problems will be returned without a grade.

GRADE SCALE

Excellent		A = 93-100%	A- = 90-92%
Good	B+ = 87-89%	B = 83-86%	B- = 80-82%
Adequate	C+ = 77-79%	C = 73-76%	C- = 70-72%
Poor	D+ = 67-69%	D = 63-66%	D- = 60-62%
Unacceptable		F = 0-59%	

Please note that simply meeting the basic requirements for any assignment will never earn you better than an adequate grade. Good and excellent work go well beyond the expectations.

Office Location: LRC 534 (Center for the Advancement of Teaching & Faculty Development)

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Midterm grades will be posted to Banner by **March 13** and calculated using the following percentages:

Engagement (20%) + Coursework (20%) + Reflections (25%) + Midterm Exam (35%)

Final grades will be posted to Banner by **May 11** and calculated using the following percentages:

Engagement (10%) + Coursework (10%) + Reflections (15%) + Paper (25%) + Midterm (20%) + Final (20%)

SOME TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Preparing. This class has been organized using the inverted model, meaning you will receive much of the "content" outside of class. In addition to any assigned readings, you will often have short instructional videos that will need to be viewed before class. There will, however, be few, if any, formal lectures in class. **We will use class time to discuss and explore more complex issues, making class meetings a time for wonder and discovery. Please note, though, that coming to class unprepared will make it impossible for you to learn.**

Workload. This is a writing and reading intensive course. Throughout the semester, you will be writing or revising one or more assignments. You will need to allow yourself sufficient time to develop, draft, and revise your work. This class also requires a significant amount of reading. You will need allow yourself sufficient time to thoroughly and actively read every assigned text before class. **As with any college course, for every hour you spend in the classroom, you should expect to spend 2 to 3 hours studying outside this classroom, even when you do not have a major assignment due.**

Attendance. Ten percent of your course grade is based on your level of engagement during our class meetings. Missing a class means you earn a 0 for that day. These grades cannot be made up. Work done in class cannot be made up.

Engagement. Your active engagement in this class is critical to its success and your learning. By participating, rather than simply listening, you add to what the class as a whole learns and you enhance your own learning. *This course requires all members of the class to participate in discussions and activities.* **You should always come to class having read the assigned materials, having completed any assigned work, and having prepared to share your opinion, to listen to the opinions of others, and to ask questions relevant to the topic of class.** Please see the Class Engagement Assignment Sheet for details.

Late Work. In-class writing and other participatory work cannot be made up if you miss a class. Assigned work is due as assigned.

Classroom Decorum: Free discussion and inquiry are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior is unacceptable when it interferes with my ability to instruct or students' ability to learn from that instruction. Unacceptable behavior in class includes but is not limited to entering late or departing early, using phones (smart or otherwise) or other devices, texting, bringing guests, talking while another person holds the floor, and arguing in an uncivil way. Students whose behavior disrupts the class will be removed.

HOW YOU CAN REACH ME

Please feel free to contact me whenever you have a question or concern. I try my best to respond to emails as soon as I receive them, but when that's not possible, I will do my best to respond within 24 hours.

- Email: jtodd1@xula.edu / j.todd.la@gmail.com
- Office: 504-520-7207 / Mobile: 601-818-2602

My office is in LRC 534, inside the Center for the Advancement of Teaching and Faculty Development. For this semester, my scheduled office hours are the following:

- Mondays 1:00-2:00
- Tuesdays 1:30-2:30

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- Wednesdays 10:00-11:00
- Thursdays 11:00-12:00

During my scheduled office hours, I am available to meet with any student who wishes to meet with me. I encourage you to come speak with me about any concern or question you have about this class or even your other classes. I do my best not to allow other commitments, such as committee meetings, to interfere with my office hours; however, there will likely be times when I must attend a meeting during office hours.

You should feel free to come speak with me anytime you have something you wish to discuss, regardless my scheduled office hours. I am on campus most Mondays through Thursdays from 9am to 4pm. Scheduling an appointment is best, but if you want to just stop in, please do so.

You can most easily schedule a meeting with my by going to jtodd.youcanbookme.com.

Please come speak to me any time you have a question or concern about this class, your other classes, or anything else. If you cannot make it to my listed office hours, speak to me after class or send me an email, and we will schedule a time to meet.

A FEW OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As students of Xavier University, you are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Behavior that violates the standards described on page 15 of the University Catalog is not acceptable and shall be grounds for disciplinary action. Plagiarizing and cheating will not be tolerated. See the College of Arts and Sciences Academic Integrity Policy and the English Department Plagiarism Statement on Blackboard for details. All written work will be checked using TurnItIn, an originality checking system. **The consequences for plagiarism will be determined on a case by case basis but will range from the student having to rewrite the assignment to the student receiving a 0 for the assignment.** All violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

WRITING RESOURCE CENTER

You are strongly encouraged to make use of the free services provided by the Writing Resource Center, where peer tutors and professional instructors offer individual assistance on a full range of writing strategies and concepts. The Writing Resource Center is located in Room 106 of the St. Joseph Student Academic and Health Center. You are strongly encouraged to call to make an appointment (504-520-6282). Students whose writing demonstrates particular problems will be referred to and may be required to attend tutoring at the Writing Resource Center.

BRIGHTSPACE & INSTRUCTIONAL CONTINUITY

Throughout the semester, we will rely on Brightspace as a means of delivering content and information. You will submit all papers through and receive all input via Brightspace. You will be able to monitor your grades through Brightspace, as well. I will post readings, videos, and other materials to Brightspace. You are responsible for keeping up, so be sure to log into our course at least once a day. Brightspace also has a robust and adaptable notification system. If you need help setting that up, please let me know.

If the campus is closed for 24 hours or less, log in to Brightspace when you can to receive updates about schedule changes and possible work assignments. If the campus is to be closed for more than 24 hours, we will use Brightspace as the primary means for keeping the class going. If an evacuation is necessary, once you are at a safe and stable location, log into Brightspace to make contact and discuss plans. How we

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proceed will depend upon how far along into the semester we are when the closure occurs. Information about emergency preparedness is available on the university website a www.xula.edu/emergency.

MLA DOCUMENTATION

This class will adhere to the documentation standards set forth in the 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook*. This edition made a number of significant changes to how we document sources, so please familiarize yourself with the new standards. If you have any questions or problems, please come see me. The *MLA Style Center* is a great resource for this and other writing matters: <https://style.mla.org>.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students requiring special assistance or consideration in order to meet academic requirements should advise the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to the nature of their disability upon admission to Xavier or as soon as the need for assistance is known to exist. Students should also contact the Office of Disability Services to arrange access to services available.

DATES YOU NEED TO PUT IN YOUR CALENDAR

- Last Day to Add a Course or Change a Section: January 12
- Last Day to Drop a Course without a "W": January 26
- Last Day to Remove an "I": February 23
- Mid-Semester Evaluations Due: March 13
- Comprehensive Examinations for Seniors: March 17
- Last Day to Petition a "W" in a Course (Drop a Course): April 6
- Registration for Spring Semester: April 9-13
- Last Day to Officially Withdraw from Xavier: April 20
- Last Class Day Before Final Examinations: April 30
- Quiet Day: May 1
- Senior Grades Due: May 1
- Final Examinations: May 2-9
- Final Grades Due (Noon): May 11

EXPECTATIONS

While the last two pages have explained what I expect of you for this class, you have a right to expect the following from me as your professor:

- To teach useful and effective ideas and concepts in an interesting and compelling way;
- To be open to questions and discussion in and out of class;
- To provide useful and timely grades and feedback on all coursework;
- To be available for support, assistance, and advice outside of class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is an approximation and subject to change as needed.

	WHAT WE WILL COVER IN CLASS	WHAT YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE THIS CLASS MEETING
Tue 09 Jan	*FOUNDATIONS; Twain	Read: Twain, "Jumping Frog"
Thu 11 Jan	*FOUNDATIONS; Hawthorne	Read: Hawthorne, "Major Molineux"
Tue 16 Jan	*PLACE; Irving & Chestnut	Read: Irving, "Rip Van Winkle"; Chestnut, "Grapevine" Submit: Reflection #1, Twain & Chestnut
Thu 18 Jan	*PLACE; Irving & Chestnut	
Tue 23 Jan	*PLACE; Faulkner & Walker	Read: Faulkner, "Barn Burning"; Walker, "Flowers" Submit: Reflection #2, Faulkner & Walker
Thu 25 Jan	*PLACE; Faulkner & Walker	
Tue 30 Jan	*TIME; Hemingway & Baldwin	Read: Hemingway, "White Elephants"; Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues" Submit: Reflection #3, Hemingway & Baldwin
Thu 01 Feb	*TIME; Hemingway & Baldwin	
Tue 06 Feb	*TIME; Bierce & Wolff	Read: Bierce, "Owl Creek"; Wolff, "Bullet to the Brain" Submit: Reflection #4, Bierce & Wolff
Thu 08 Feb	*TIME; Bierce & Wolff	Submit: Annotated Bibliography
Tue 13 Feb	MARDI GRAS HOLIDAY	NO CLASS
Thu 15 Feb	MARDI GRAS HOLIDAY	NO CLASS
Tue 20 Feb	*NARRATOR; Poe & Gilman	Read: Poe, "Amontillado"; Gilman, "Wallpaper" Submit: Reflection #5, Poe & Gilman
Thu 22 Feb	*NARRATOR; Poe & Gilman	
Tue 27 Feb	*NARRATOR; Welty & Johnson	Read: Welty, "P.O."; Johnson, "Car Crash" Submit: Reflection #6, Welty & Johnson
Thu 01 Mar	*NARRATOR; Welty & Johnson	
Tue 06 Mar	Un-class	
Thu 08 Mar	MIDTERM EXAM	
Tue 13 Mar	*CHARACTER; Toomer & Wright	Read: Toomer, "Moon"; Wright, "Almost a Man" Submit: Reflection #7, Toomer & Wright
Thu 15 Mar	*CHARACTER; Toomer & Wright	
Tue 20 Mar	*CHARACTER; Roth & Alexie	Read: Roth, "Conversion"; Alexie, "Lone Ranger" Submit: Reflection #8, Roth & Alexie
Thu 22 Mar	*CHARACTER; Roth & Alexie	Submit: Term Paper Draft
Tue 27 Mar	EASTER HOLIDAY	NO CLASS
Thu 29 Mar	EASTER HOLIDAY	NO CLASS
Tue 03 Apr	*IRONY; O. Henry & Crane	Read: O. Henry, "Last Leaf"; Crane, "Open Boat" Submit: Reflection #9, O. Henry & Crane
Thu 05 Apr	*IRONY; O. Henry & Crane	
Tue 10 Apr	*IRONY; O'Connor & Barthelme	Read: O'Connor, "Good Country People"; Barthelme, "Game" Submit: Reflection #10, O'Connor & Barthelme
Thu 12 Apr	*IRONY; O'Connor & Barthelme	
Tue 17 Apr	*METAFICTION; Barth & Silko	Read: Barth, "Funhouse"; Silko, "Storyteller"
Thu 19 Apr	*METAFICTION; Barth & Silko	Submit: Term Paper Final
Tue 24 Apr	Un-class	
Thu 26 Apr	Un-class	
Tue 08 May	FINAL EXAM @ 8am	

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CLASS ENGAGEMENT

PURPOSE

10% of your grade for this class is based on your engagement in the class. Effective student engagement is essential to a successful seminar class. You will learn more and your classmates will learn more if you are actively engaged in every class meeting.

TASK

Engagement does not necessarily mean talking a lot or showing everyone else what you know or have studied a lot. For example, good discussion participation involves people trying to build on, and synthesize, comments from others, and on showing appreciation for others' contributions. It also involves inviting others to say more about what they are thinking. Some of the most helpful things you can do are call for a quiet interlude, bring a resource to the class, or post an observation on-line. So there are multiple ways quieter learners can still demonstrate engagement. Below are some specific behavioral examples.

- Ask a question or make a comment that shows you are interested in what another person says.
- Ask a question or make a comment that encourages another person to elaborate on something they have already said.
- Bring in a resource (a reading, web link, video) not covered in the syllabus but adds new information/perspectives to our learning.
- Make a comment that underscores the link between two people's contributions & make this link explicit in your comment.
- Summarize the conversation so far and/or suggest new directions and questions to be explored.
- Make a comment indicating that you found another person's ideas interesting or useful. Be specific as to why this was the case.
- Contribute something that builds on, or springs from, what someone else has said. Be explicit about the way you are building on the other person's thoughts.
- Make a comment on your CIQ that prompts us to examine discussion dynamics.
- When you think it's appropriate, ask the group for a moment's silence to slow the pace of conversation to give you, and others, time to think.
- Make a comment that at least partly paraphrases a point someone has already made.
- Make a summary observation that takes into account several people's contributions & that touches on a recurring theme in the discussion.
- Ask a cause and effect question; for example, "Can you explain why you think it's true that if these things are in place such and such a thing will occur?"
- Find a way to express appreciation for the enlightenment you have gained from the discussion. Try to be specific about what it was that helped you understand something better. Again this can be done online if this suits you better.

Source: Brookfield, Stephen. *Workshop Materials*. 11 Feb. 2012. Web. 12 Aug. 2012.

ASSESSMENT

For each class session, you will receive a participation grade as follows:

✓+	5 pts.	In class on time with good engagement.
✓	4 pts.	In class on time with adequate engagement.
✓-	3 pt.	In class on time with no participation; or in class late; or in class but playing with phone or other device.
X	0 pts.	Not in class.

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STORY REFLECTIONS

PURPOSE

The story reflections are designed to help you gather your thoughts about the stories we read in preparation for discussion. They are also excellent opportunities for you to practice your analytic writing skills, especially in terms of comparison and synthesis.

TASK

Most every week, we will read two stories. For each of these assigned readings, you will write a 500-word informal reflection on both of the stories. These reflections are not to be summaries, nor are they to be literary analyses; rather, they are to be descriptions of your unique response to those stories.

Such a response can take many forms. The *suggestions* that follow are *only a few of the ways* you can approach this assignment. However, for each week, you will need to consider the specified literary device that is our current area of focus.

- Discuss how you felt as you were reading the stories. Were you confused? If so, try to figure out what confused you. Trace your steps back through the story to find where you started to get lost. Consider if the author did this intentionally and, if so, why. Were you enrapt? If so, what pulled you in? What about the story kept you so engaged?
- Discuss how the story or some part of it stirred up a memory. What led you to make the connection between what happens in the story and what happened in your life. How did that connection affect your reading of the story?
- Draw a connection between some part of the story and something entirely outside of the story. This might be something you've learned in another class or something you heard on the news or another book you're read or movie you've seen. Investigate the connection. What causes it and how does it affect your understanding of the story?
- Pose a question about something in the story and try to answer the question. This should not be a formal literary analysis, though. Don't analyze the theme or some symbol. Instead, ask yourself, why did the author choose to do X?

ASSESSMENT

Each reflection will be worth up to 10 points and will be assessed using the rubric below.

	Mastery (5 pts)	Proficiency (4 pts)	Emerging (3 pts)	Unacceptable (0 pts)
Active Reading	Reflection demonstrates successful active reading of the story.	Reflection demonstrates good active reading of the story.	Reflection demonstrates only a surface-level reading of the story.	Reflection demonstrates a cursory or incomplete reading of the story.
Story Engagement	Reflection offers a creative consideration of the story.	Reflection offers a reasonable attempt at considering the story.	Reflection offers a minimal attempt at considering the story.	Reflection offers no serious attempt at considering the story.

SCHEDULE

Reflections must be posted to Brightspace before class on the day they are due.

1. Irving & Chestnutt: **Tuesday, January 16**
2. Faulkner & Walkner: **Tuesday, January 23**
3. Hemingway & Baldwin: **Tuesday, January 30**
4. Bierce & Wolff: **Tuesday, February 06**
5. Poe & Gilman: **Tuesday, February 20**
6. Welty & Johnson: **Tuesday, February 27**
7. Toomer & Wright: **Tuesday, March 13**
8. Roth & Alexie: **Tuesday, March 20**
9. O. Henry & Crane: **Tuesday, April 03**
10. O'Connor & Barthelme: **Tuesday, April 10**

LEAD READER EXEMPTION

For each pair of readings, one student will be assigned as the *lead reader*. As the lead reader, you will be responsible for preparing a 5-minute presentation on **each** of the authors we have read that for that week. These presentations must include a handout that lists what you consider to be the most important information. You will also need to be prepared to start (or to re-start) the discussion of the two stories by having planned a number of complex questions about the stories.

When you are the designated lead reader, you are exempt from the story reflection for that week.