

LIT 2331: Masterpieces of World Literature

Fall 2015	Sarah Moore
Section 002	Email: semoore@utdallas.edu
TR 1-2:15	Office Number: JO 4.134
Class location: CB 1.308	Office Hours: R 11:45-12:45

Note: All matters associated with this course are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any and all changes will be communicated to students in writing.

COURSE INFORMATION

[LIT 2331](#) - Masterpieces of World Literature (3 semester credit hours) A study of selected themes in world literature. This course will serve as a prerequisite for all upper-division literature courses. (3-0) Y

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is a masterpiece? How have others answered this question? How do we? Through this course, we aim to answer these questions by examining the concept of canonization and the basics of literature; how we as individuals have answered this question previously through our literary choices—low brow and high brow, required and self-directed; and how we should begin to answer this question in the future about literature and other forms of artistic expression. We focus on the genre of the short story and read works by well-known authors, including William Faulkner, Alice Munro, Anton Chekov, and Flannery O'Connor, and lesser known ones. The course uses short stories as a means of accessing a wide range of works by men and women of different races, religions, and regions with an emphasis on American and British literature from the 1830s to the present.

In short, we read the canon of the nineteenth and twentieth century short story while asking why these stories and authors receive the label of “masterpiece” and make the anthology while others might not. We ask how and why the culture or literary establishment has defined these works as great as well as what these works reveal about the author’s cultural values as well as current readers’ ideals and priorities. To do so, we practice setting literature within its historical, cultural, and literary context. To complement this, we read outside of the typical anthology and discuss parable, fairy tale, romance, magazine stories, science fiction, and mystery. This helps us to focus on how we define or create a concept of literary value and a “good” short story. We also consider the future of the short story by reading micro-fiction. However, the primary emphasis is an introduction to a wide range of authors and their various styles in hopes of demonstrating the varied definition of masterpiece.

REQUIRED BOOK

The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction, 8th edition. Eds. Richard Baush and R.V. Cassill. New York: Norton, 2015. Print. ISBN 978-0-393-93775-6. Retail \$78.75.

General Core Area 040 Language, Philosophy & Culture

Description: Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.

CORE OBJECTIVES

- Critical thinking skills – Students will engage in creative and/or innovative thinking, and/or inquiry, analysis, evaluation, synthesis of information, organizing concepts and constructing solutions.
- Communication skills – Students will demonstrate effective written, oral and visual communication.
- Social responsibility – Students will demonstrate intercultural competency and civic knowledge by engaging effectively in local, regional, national and global communities.
- Personal responsibility - Students will demonstrate the ability to connect choices, actions and consequence to ethical decision-making.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Critical thinking skills; to analyze and think critically about canonical literary works (assessed via the final project)
- Communication skills; to express through writing, discussion, and presentations the analysis of canonical literary works (assessed via the short story presentation, response papers, the final project, and class participation)
- Social responsibility; to analyze and critically evaluate canonical literary works in the context of society and culture, including history, religion and gender (assessed via the response papers and the final project)
- Personal responsibility; to compare and contrast the canonical literary works with each other in terms of personal ethics and values (assessed through discussion board papers and in-class response writing)

ASSIGNMENTS

5% presentation, 10 minutes on an author and a work	50 points
20% reading response posts, 10 total	200 points
10% course participation and attendance	100 points
40% reading response papers and projects, 4 total	400 points
20% final creative project or research paper	200 points
5% presentation on final creative project or research paper	50 points

Final grades will be assigned according to the UTD Undergraduate Catalog scale with “+” and “-”.

Grading Scale

97-100 A+	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	0-59 F
94-96 A	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D	
90-93 A-	80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-	

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Attending class and participating in discussion is the surest way of performing your best in this course. Failure to attend means missed assignment explanations, missed discussion, and missed content. If you are absent, then please contact one of your peers for the information missed. Each class, you are responsible for signing the attendance sheet. You are allowed three missed classes, no questions asked. Each absence beyond that will result in a penalty to your attendance grade. Missing more than ten class meetings will result in an automatic failing grade for the course.

I reserve the right to make exceptions to this policy in case of extreme circumstances.

GRADING CRITERIA

Submissions for the final grades of the assignments should be carefully proofread and represent your best work. As stated on the first day of class, I do notice and report plagiarized essays. All papers will be graded electronically. View my comments on your papers by going to the same place where you submitted the papers. Check for your grades to be posted in the eLearning grade book throughout the course.

LATE WORK

Written papers. Late submissions are unacceptable in this course. Papers will be subject to a 1 percent per hour penalty. 24 hours late = 24 percent off. Since all assignments are turned in online, you should be able to plan and to work ahead. I reserve the right to make exceptions to this in the case of a documented emergency.

Presentations. Late presentations will disrupt the flow of the course and are not accepted. I reserve the right to make exceptions to this as time permits in the course.

EXTRA CREDIT

Although individual extra credit is not offered in this course, I am happy to work with you on your major assignments or meet with you to discuss strategies for success in this course.

CLASSROOM CITIZENSHIP

Please follow the posted policies in the room on food and drink. Turn off electronic devices unless otherwise directed. Electronic devices should only be used to further the course, and class participation grades can be affected if they are used otherwise.

COURSE CALENDAR

Any changes will be posted as an eLearning announcement.

Date	Post Online	In-Class Assignment	Readings
Aug. 25		Writing activity, "What is a masterpiece"	
Aug. 27		(I give sample presentation.)	<i>Young Goodman Brown</i> , Hawthorne, <i>The Fall of the House of Usher</i> , Poe
Sept. 1		Presentations Begin	<i>Bartleby, the Scrivener</i> , Melville <i>The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County</i> , Clemens Skim Marx essay, 1769
Sept. 3			<i>The Death of Ivan Ilych</i> , Tolstoy Skim <i>What is Art?</i> , Tolstoy, 1733
Sept. 8		Bring draft of Story & Music response paper to class.	<i>A New England Nun</i> , Freeman <i>The Story of an Hour</i> , Chopin
Sept. 10	Story & Music Reading Response Paper		<i>The Yellow Wallpaper</i> , Gilman
Sept. 15			CHEKHOV <i>Gusev</i> <i>Anna on the Neck</i>
Sept. 17			CHEKHOV Skim materials in back of book
Sept. 22		Bring draft of Story & Art response paper to class	<i>Paul's Case</i> , Cather Barrett essay, 1755 <i>Xingu</i> , Wharton
Sept. 24	Story & Art Reading Response Paper		<i>A Rose for Emily</i> , Faulkner
Sept. 29			Bring book. <i>Barn Burning</i> , Faulkner
Oct. 1			<i>The Horse Dealer's</i>

			<i>Daughter</i> , Lawrence <i>Hills Like White Elephants</i> , Hemingway
Oct. 6			<i>Babylon Revisited</i> , Fitzgerald
Oct. 8		Bring draft of Story & History response paper to class	<i>The Chrysanthemums</i> , Steinbeck
Oct. 13	Story & History Reading Response Paper		<i>The Lottery</i> , Jackson, Adaptations.
Oct. 15			<i>The Use of Force</i> , Williams <i>The Enormous Radio</i> , Cheever
Oct. 20			<i>A Good Man is Hard to Find</i> , O'Connor <i>Good Country People</i> , O'Connor
Oct. 22			Bring book. Discuss O'Connor.
Oct. 27		Bring draft of Story & Idea OR Story & Reader Response paper to class	<i>The Conversion of the Jews</i> , Roth <i>The Man Who Was Almost a Man</i> , Wright
Oct. 29	Story & Idea Reading OR Story & Reader Response Paper		<i>A&P</i> , Updike <i>The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World</i> , Marquez
Nov. 3			<i>How I Contemplated the World from the Detroit House...</i> , Oates <i>Convalescing</i> , Oates
Nov. 5			Bring book to review Oates materials in the back.
Nov. 10			<i>The Management of Grief</i> , Mukherjee Skim related essays
Nov. 12			<i>The Things They Carried</i> , O'Brien
Nov. 17			MUNRO <i>Royal Beatings</i> <i>Miles City, Montana</i>

Nov. 19			Flash Fiction
Nov. 24			Student Choice, post-1990. Select one story from book or elsewhere to read and to discuss in class.
Dec 1	Final Project		In-class conferences.
Dec 3		Final Presentations	--
Dec 8		Final Presentations	--

1. Presentation

On your chosen date, give a 10-minute presentation on one author and his or her work. The aim of the oral presentation is to enable you to explain the context of an author and his or her short story. You should have a clear focus, but you do not need a thesis-type argument. There is no set format for the presentation. You have the opportunity—and responsibility—of deciding what will interest the class and help to “teach” or explain this author or work. That means you may focus on the historical context or the artistic context (or music, science, history, etc.). You should not give a close reading of the story as we will discuss the story in class.

Requirements:

1. Use a minimum of three sources.
2. E-mail the professor five discussion questions for the class at least 48 hours before the presentation.
3. Turn in one Works Cited page of all the sources used for the presentation. No other slides or papers are necessary or required to be submitted.
4. A strong presentation will give the class the information needed to understand the story, author, or the larger literary movement or something related to the author or time. This information will likely include information about the author, about how other critics have viewed the literary work, and about the social or historical context.
6. A strong presentation “interests” the audience. Ways to engage listeners include visuals, audio, short video clips (anything more than 1 minute does not count toward your 10-minute time), or handouts.

2. Discussion Board Posts

Length: one sentence in the form of a discussion question and two to three sentences explaining the question or giving your answer, posted to the discussion board on eLearning before the class in which we discuss the text

Select from any of the class meetings with readings and post a discussion question for that day’s readings on the discussion board. Please use complete sentences and remember that your classmates can and probably will read your work.

For the explanation, you may post a personal response (“I was confused when Jane said...”). You may also post a more traditional literary response; see questions in the anthology’s introduction.

3. Reading Response Papers and Projects

Length: varies, in MLA style, posted to the TurnItIn.com drop box on eLearning

The five papers engage how you feel about a text, what you find matters, and/or what you think helps to explain the concept of a masterpiece. You also engage several theories about how readers and critics read, use, and analyze literature.

Five Response Papers

Story & Music: Create a musical playlist to complement the short story.

Story & Art: Illustrate the story.

Story & History: Write a two-page paper about an aspect of the cultural or historical setting.

Story & Idea: Write a two-page paper that discusses an idea, theory, or belief system that you identify in one of the stories.

Story & Reader Response: Write a two-page paper that compares and contrasts how you respond to the text to how others respond to a text.

Requirements:

Use MLA format

For more information, see the handouts on eLearning.

4. Final Creative Project or Research Paper

Creative Option: Create a project that speaks to or explains the work of an author read this semester. Projects could range from FanFic to artistic representation in anything from animation to dance. You will submit a one-page explanation of the project and a supporting visual (if not a written project). You will then present the project to the class on the last week in a 5-minute presentation. See me if you feel that you will need more time. See handouts on eLearning.

Research Option: Write a five-page research paper about one of the works and/or authors in the Norton Anthology. You are not limited to what we have read in class. This more traditional option will engage a text using the literary approaches as discussed in the introduction to the anthology. You should use at least three scholarly (peer-reviewed) sources as part of your academic conversation about the work. See handouts and sample paper on eLearning.

5. Presentation on Final Project or Paper

Length: 5-minute, in-class presentation

In these somewhat relaxed presentations, you will explain your final project. For those writing a research paper, you can read one page of your paper (cutting the five pages to one rather than simply reading the first page). For those doing a creative project, you should

show/demonstrate/perform your creative project and have the option to read the one-page analysis or simply discuss the project.

A successful presentation will explain the project.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures	<i>The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus.</i> <i>Please go to http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies for these policies.</i>
---------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.