

The Art of Fiction

ENGL 273G: Section 1

Instructor: Helen Stamatel

Room: M02-0213 M/W/F 11-11:50 A.M.

Email: helen.stamatel001@umb.edu

Office: W-6-022 - Office Hours: M/W 12-1 P.M.

Course Description: Introduction to elements and forms of fiction, with a focus on close analytical readings of short stories, the novel, and graphic novels, paying special attention to an artist's choices of form (including plot and character development, narrative perspective, thematic aspects, symbolic representation, use of tone, and employment of style). Emphasis on writing critical and interpretive papers. Please note: Students may receive credit either for this course or for ENGL C204 (The Nature of Literature: Fiction), but not for both. Capabilities addressed: Reading, writing, critical thinking, information technology, oral presentation.

About the Intermediate Seminar Program: Intermediate Seminars offer students with 30 or more credits the opportunity to work on essential university capabilities in small-sized courses that are often thematic or problem-oriented and interdisciplinary in nature. Designed in part to help students prepare for the Writing Proficiency Requirement, Intermediate Seminars put special emphasis on critical reading, thinking, and writing. They focus on other essential capabilities as appropriate to the course and might therefore include attention to library research and information technology, collaborative learning, oral presentation, and academic self-assessment. Students who practiced reading, writing, and critical thinking in a First Year Seminar at UMass Boston will develop those skills at a more advanced level in the Intermediate Seminar.

Only ONE Intermediate Seminar may be taken for credit. If you have taken another G200-level course in any department at UMB, you cannot receive credit for this one.

Prerequisites: English 101, English 102, First Year Seminar (or waiver), and 30 credits. The First Year Seminar is automatically waived for students who enter UMB with 30 or more transfer credits. Because these are intensive reading and writing courses, some students may find it helpful to enroll in CRW 221 to further develop their skills with college-level writing *before* taking an Intermediate Seminar. Discuss your situation with the instructor if you have any questions about these prerequisites or your readiness for the work in this course.

The Writing Proficiency Requirement: Students from the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Science and Mathematics, and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences complete the University's Writing Proficiency Requirement through the Writing Proficiency Evaluation (WPE). The Writing Proficiency Requirement is not the same as the writing placement test you may have taken when you entered UMass Boston. The WPE can be met through either an examination or a take-home essay submitted along with a portfolio of papers written for UMB courses. See the WPR website (http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/undergraduate_studies/writing_proficiency/) for more details about the exam and portfolio options and dates. Students who have not already satisfied the WPR should arrange to take the exam or submit a portfolio shortly after completing this course.

Support Services for Intermediate Seminar Students: The Academic Support Office offers both individual tutoring and drop-in workshops for students who need help with the critical reading, thinking and writing skills necessary for success in General Education courses such as this one. More information on their programs is available online at <http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/>, or at their Campus Center office (CC1-1300). The Ross Center for Disability Services (CC2-2010) provides accommodations and educational resources for students with demonstrated needs, as outlined on their website

(<http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability/>). Should you be eligible for these services, you should contact the Ross Center right away so that their staff can help you identify appropriate accommodations in this and other courses. If it appears that you might not pass this Intermediate Seminar and if the instructor cannot support your success in the course, the instructor might inform the Director of the Student Referral Program in the University Advising Center. This strictly confidential program is part of an early warning system designed to help students address personal and academic difficulties that may interfere with their progress in the University.

Assessment of These Courses: In addition to course evaluation forms that are routinely administered at the end of each course at UMass Boston, Intermediate Seminar students are asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire addressing their progress as critical thinkers and writers. Each term an assessment committee will look at randomly chosen student writing from a small sample of Intermediate Seminars. Please save all your writing in this course so that, if you are chosen, you will have your work available. The purpose of this evaluation is to improve the program and to improve particular courses as necessary, not to evaluate individual students. You may remove your name from your papers if you prefer to submit them anonymously.

Plagiarism: Students are expected to abide by the University's Code of Student Conduct in all their classes at UMass Boston (for more information on this, please go to the following URL: http://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/code/). Plagiarism is a particularly serious violation, as outlined in the Academic Honesty section of the code (section VI), and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work, research, ideas and/or thoughts, and will not be tolerated in this class. The following all constitute plagiarism: Using a document or part of a document written by another student; buying an essay or term paper from one of the services that sell such documents; using a document published on the Web; having someone else write an essay or term paper for you; or having someone so drastically edit your work that it no longer your work. It is always essential to use quotation marks around any words/phrases/sentences that are not yours, and to properly cite the source of the quotation or information. Plagiarism will result in failure/and or dismissal from this course.

Classroom Behavior: Please disable cell phones, ipods, or other electronic devices in the classroom, and please do not power up laptops in class. And please be mindful of your fellow students: offensive and insulting behavior undermines the sense of community that the Intermediate Seminars strive to build. Class discussion and group projects can be productive only in a climate of respect for the opinions and beliefs of all. A healthy exchange about issues may include disagreement about ideas, but it must not demean the character or background of the individuals holding those ideas.

Required Texts: For classroom purposes, *you must have the exact edition that is in the bookstore*. If you purchase your books online, make sure the edition has the same ISBN number as listed below.

Gioia/Kennedy, *An Introduction to Fiction* (11th ed.) (ISBN: 978-0205687886)
Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (2006)(ISBN: 978-0061129766)
Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* (ISBN: 978-0618477944)
Jeremy Love, *Bayou* (ISBN: 978-1401223823)

Course Grade Determination:

Paper 1 (including workshop and rough draft): 10%
Paper 2 (including workshop and rough draft): 15%
Paper 3 (including workshop and rough draft): 30%
Final presentation: 15%
Weekly Assignments (Quick Writes): 15%
Participation/Attendance: 15%

Email: I will be using wisper to send out class information and documents. Make sure your umc email address is forwarded to the email account you use regularly.

Attendance: Attending class and arriving on time is crucial to your success in this course and to the success of the course in general. *You may not miss more than 5 class sessions and pass the course. Missing more than 3 classes will negatively affect your grade.* Two “tardies” will become an absence. ***Any student who misses more than four classes by the November 10th withdrawal deadline will be recommended to drop the course.***

Participation: English discussions rely on your thoughts, ideas, and interpretations; participation is imperative. Come prepared by reading the assigned materials.

Weekly Assignments: Quick writes, written responses to the readings, will take place at the start of every class. During a five minute period, you will write as much as you can in response to a prompt question about the assigned reading. The purpose of quick writes is to ensure that students are keeping up with the reading by tying these mini-assignments to class participation grades, and to stimulate thought for class discussion. The instructor will monitor participation in quick writes and collect and grade them. Please save all quick writes as they might help you formulate ideas for longer papers.

Submission of Assignments: All assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted. Rough drafts cannot be turned in late because you cannot make up peer reviews or conferences. A paper received after class is considered late and will be marked off one full letter grade. A full letter deduction will accrue for each day the paper is late after its due date.

Email Attachments or Any Other Form of Electronic Copies of Papers Will Not be Accepted

Formal Papers: In addition to quick writes, your formal papers are the best way to demonstrate what you have learned about literature and to showcase your ability to express your thoughts clearly and cohesively through written language. There will be three papers, in addition to a final project, and all of these papers combined make up more than half of your final grade.

Final Presentation: A formal assignment explanation will be handed out toward the end of the semester. These final projects will allow you to creatively express your individual understanding of literature and literary studies, which will be worth 15% of your final grade. As we get closer to the end of the semester, you will receive a handout, which will contain the specifics of your final project assignment and presentation.

Disabilities: If you have a disability and need accommodations in order to complete course requirements, please contact the Ross Center for Disability Services at 617.287.7430 (CC-2-2010).

How to succeed in this course: Come prepared, participate, and engage!

A final note on the Intermediate Seminar: Professor Cheryl Nixon is supervisor of the Intermediate Seminar English courses. Please expect occasional visits to our class from Dr. Nixon, as well as from other Intermediate Seminar instructors.

273G: Class Schedule*

*Subject to change at instructor's discretion

Note: All Unit 1 readings are from the fiction anthology, unless otherwise noted as PDF

UNIT I – Elements of Fiction: How Stories Are Told – The Short Story

Week 1 - Introduction and Plot

Monday, September 5	Labor Day – No Class
Wednesday, September 7	Syllabus, Course Overview, Microfiction Exercise
Friday, September 9	Ch. 1: “Reading a Story” [pp. 5-6]; “Plot” [pp. 11-16] John Updike, “A&P” [pp. 16-20]

Week 2 – Character

Monday, September 12	Ch. 3: “Character” [pp. 77-79] Raymond Carver, “Cathedral” [pp. 93-103]
<i>(Tuesday, September 13 – Add/Drop ends)</i>	
Wednesday, September 14	Louise Erdrich, “The Years of My Birth” [PDF] Paper #1 Assigned – Close Reading
Friday, September 16	George Saunders, “Victory Lap” [PDF]

Week 3 Point of View/Theme

Monday, September 19	Ch. 2: “Point of View” [pp. 25-29] William Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily” [pp. 28-34] Jamaica Kincaid, “Girl” [pp. 543-544]
Wednesday, September 21	Ch. 6: “Theme” [pp. 183-185] Franz Kafka, “The Hunger Artist” [PDF] Paper #1 Due
Friday, September 23	Alice Munro, “How I Met My Husband” [pp. 202-214]

Week 4 Symbol

Monday, September 26	Ch. 7: “Symbol” [pp. 223-225] Ursula Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas” [pp. 242-246]
Wednesday, September 28	Shirley Jackson, “The Lottery” [pp. 247-252]
Friday, September 30	John Cheever, “The Swimmer” [pp. 234-241] Introduction to Paper #2: Juxtaposition

Week 5 Tone & Style

Monday, October 3	Ch. 5: “Tone and Style” [pp. 148-151] Ernest Hemingway, “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” [pp. 152-155]
Wednesday, October 5	Raymond Carver, “Cathedral” [pp. 93-103]
Friday, October 7	Sherman Alexie, “This is What it Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” [pp. 474-482] Peer Review/Workshop on Paper #2

****PLEASE BRING THREE COPIES OF YOUR DRAFT TO CLASS****

UNIT II – Theme in Fiction – The Novel

Week 6 *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, Edward Abbey

Monday, October 10	Columbus Day – No Class
Wednesday, October 12	Introduction to Unit II Farmer, “Glen Canyon and the Persistence of Wilderness” [PDF] Paper #2 Due
Friday, October 14	MWG – Prologue and Chapters 1-5 [pp. 1-70]

Week 7 *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, Edward Abbey (*Mid-Semester*)

Monday, October 17	MWG – Chapters 6-8 [pp. 71-128]
Wednesday, October 19	MWG – Chapters 9-11 [pp. 129-164]
Friday, October 21	MWG – Chapters 12-14 [pp. 165-204]

Week 13

Monday, November 28

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*, Ch. 6-end

Wednesday, November 30

Jeremy Love, Bayou

Friday, December 2

Jeremy Love, Bayou

Week 14

Monday, December 5

Presentation summaries due

Wednesday, December 7

Presentations

Friday, December 9

Presentations

Week 15

Monday, December 12

Presentations

Wednesday, December 14

Classes End – Course Evaluations