

U350-611 The Contemporary Short Story

Course Format: Print-based

Course Author: Joan Bell-Kaul, Ph.D.

Course Credits: 3

Prerequisites: Completion of an introductory course in literature with a C or better or the equivalent

Course Level: Intermediate; Appropriate for second year or higher college students.

Course Description: This course looks at some of the most provocative short fiction of our time. Students will examine high-interest contemporary issues: relationships (couples, parents, and children), self-discovery, poverty, career and workplace, and escape from reality (fantasy, science fiction, horror). Authors include Raymond Carter, John Updike, Joyce Carol Oates, Louise Erdrich, Richard Ford, Stephen King, and Ray Bradbury.

Required Course Materials:

- *U350-611 Course Guide*
- Pickering, J. H. (2011). *Fiction 100: An anthology of short stories* (13th ed.). Pearson.

Optional:

- Pickering, J. H. (2001). *A reader's guide to accompany Fiction 100* (9th ed.). Prentice Hall.
The first section of this supplementary guide, "Reading and Studying Short Story," discusses and defines the elements of fiction and style, which may be helpful in doing some of your assignments. Another section that you might want to use for your assignments is "Writing About the Short Story," which provides model papers to follow, if you need them. In addition, there is a section on locating critical resources other than the ones listed at the end of each unit and a final section entitled, "The Historical Development of the Short Story," showing you how the short story has developed into its present-day form.

Course Overview:

UNIT #	UNIT TOPIC	EVALUATED ACTIVITIES
1	Relationships: Male/Female Perspectives	Written Assignment
2	Relationships: Troubled Marriages/Divorce	Written Assignment
3	Relationships: Parents and Children	Written Assignment
4	Self-Discovery: Adolescent Epiphany	Written Assignment
5	Self-Discovery: Adult Epiphany	Written Assignment
6	Gothic Literature/Horror Fiction, Science Fiction, and Fantasy	Written Assignment
7	Gothic Literature/Horror Fiction, Science Fiction, and Fantasy (cont.)	Written Assignment
8	Poverty and the Individual	Written Assignment
9	Career, Workplace, and the Individual	Written Assignment
10	Optional Unit with Reading of Choice	

Course Organization and Procedures:

The course consists of ten units with written assignments for each. You'll start each unit by reading the assigned stories, which are listed on the first page of each unit in the *U350-611 Course Guide*. Take notes on significant points and write

down supporting quotes and page numbers as you go. This will save your having to go back to the story, again and again, when you actually write your assignment.

STUDY NOTES

Study notes are provided for each unit. After reading all of the assigned stories for the unit, carefully read the Study Notes for that unit.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

As part of the course requirements, you will need to complete nine written assignments. The Written Assignment section of each unit contains instructions. There are always several choices of assignments; choose one, indicate which one you selected for analysis, and begin writing your paper. Number all pages that follow the first written page of each unit. The suggested length for your essay is from four to six typed, double-spaced pages. Use basic essay format, with an introduction, body of support, and concluding paragraph. Be sure to use examples or incidents and short quotations from the stories to illustrate key discussion points.

Write each analysis as you would a longer essay or short analytical paper, in complete sentences and connected, coherent paragraphs. Check your work for proper spelling, punctuation, and clear, coherent sentence structure. When referring to a particular story, always identify it by the author and/or title. Your paper should follow the same standards in composition as any work you would submit for a traditional college-credit course.

Preparing Written Assignments

After you've completed all the reading for a particular unit you should be able to start the written assignment that you will submit for grading. Students in print-based courses have two options for submitting assignments: (1) submit electronically via our Independent Learning website (preferred method) or (2) submit assignments via postal mail.

To submit your assignment, follow the instructions below:

- **STEP 1:** Prepare your assignment in a word processing program (e.g. Microsoft Word). If you don't have access to a word processing program but would still like to submit a handwritten assignment using the process below you may do so as long as your scanned file type and size meet the criteria outlined in step 2.
- **STEP 2:** Save your assignment using one of the supported document file types: rtf, doc, docx, pdf. Make sure the file size does not exceed the 10MB limit. If your required scanned documentation is over 10MB please lower the settings on your scanner enough to meet the file size limit, while ensuring that the scan is still legible.
 - Be sure to save a copy of your assignment for your records.
 - Type your full name, course, assignment number and date at the top of your assignment document. Name your document file using your name and course (e.g. Doe.Jane.AmericanIndianLit.docx).
- **STEP 3:** When you've finished your assignment, return to the Independent Learning website (<https://il.wisconsin.edu>) and log into your Student Account. Access your Courses section, locate your print-based course, and follow the prompts to attach your assignment file. Alternatively, you may submit your assignment via postal mail to:

UW-Extension Independent Learning
5602 Research Park Blvd., Suite 300
Madison, WI 53719

After You've Submitted a Written Assignment

Proceed to the next unit and continue making progress in your course. If you submitted your assignment electronically you should expect to receive feedback electronically within 3 business days. Feedback from assignments submitted via mail will take longer.

SELECTED CRITICAL RESOURCES

If you need help interpreting some of the assigned stories, you can find – and quote in your analyses – what the literary critics have to say. Current books, magazine articles, and Internet resources that pertain to the stories are listed at the end of each unit.

However, most students find that the Study Notes in each unit (which are equivalent to a classroom lecture on the stories) provide sufficient help to understand anything in the stories that might prove difficult to interpret. Though “detective work” is fun to do, especially on the Internet, the focus of your work should be on your original analysis of the stories and your ability to support your points.

Evaluation Methods:

Your final grade will be based on a weighted average of your performance on the following:

- 1) Written Assignments & Final Exam (100%)

Written Assignments and Final Exam

Written assignments and the final exam are weighed equally and will cumulatively account for 100% of your final course grade. You will take the final exam after you have completed Unit 9. For the exam, you will be asked to discuss some of the focal issues of the twentieth-century short story from the nine units in the *U350-611 Course Guide* and to support your points with details from the story regarding themes, actions, and characterizations. As well, you will be asked to discuss the use of metaphor, symbol, irony, hyperbole or any other techniques of style that will be discussed. It is helpful to review the Study Notes so that you can recall specific characters, events, themes, and any special features (e.g. an abundance of dearth of dialogue, narration styles, use of dialect, metaphor or symbol, irony, foreshadowing, tone) to support your responses to the exam questions. To this end, a review of your returned assignments should also prove useful.

Exam Method: In-person proctor

This course requires all students to complete the final exam with an in-person proctor. Students receive two attempts on the exam. If you elect to take a second attempt, the average score of both exams will be recorded. Students must identify an eligible exam proctor for the final exam at the time of their request.

To submit a proctor and request an exam:

- **STEP 1:** Identify a qualified proctor in accordance with our policies located on our website (<https://il.wisconsin.edu>) and confirm their willingness and availability to proctor your exam.
- **STEP 2:** Log into your Student Account on our website, access your Courses section and locate your course. Follow the prompts to submit a proctor for approval and request your exam. Be sure to fill in all requested fields completely to avoid delays in processing your request. Our Student Services team will respond to your request via email.
- **STEP 3:** Once you receive email notification from our Student Services team that your proctor is approved, arrange time to take your exam with your proctor at their place of employment.



- **STEP 4:** Take your exam in the presence of your approved proctor at their place of employment. When you finish, your proctor will submit your completed exam to our Student Services team and you will receive email notification when we receive it. Your Course Facilitator will grade your exam.

Grading Scale:

The following grading scale is used for evaluating all course requirements and determination of final grade earned:

A = 93-100	B = 83-87.9	C = 70-77.9	D = 60-69.9
AB = 88-92.9	BC = 78-82.9		F = Below 60

Pass/Fail Option

Students who enroll in an Independent Learning (IL) course under the pass/fail option will receive a final grade of S in place of a final grade equivalent to an A, AB, B, BC, or C and a final grade of U in place of a final grade equivalent to a D or F.

Requesting a Transcript: Students may request for an official transcript upon completion of the course. Instructions for requesting a transcript are available on our Independent Learning website: <https://il.wisconsin.edu>.

Completing a Course Evaluation: The UW Independent Learning team is committed to continuous improvement and ensuring that all students have a positive experience in our courses. Students will receive a link to a course evaluation upon completion of the course. Your feedback will allow us to make our program, courses, and student support services better.

Student Success Coach: University of Wisconsin Independent Learning has an excellent support team of Student Success Coaches, skilled professionals who serve as your academic case manager and advocate, ready to help you succeed in your coursework. Reach out to your Success Coach for support with developing individualized action plans, accessing resources for online learning, or answering questions or concerns that may arise throughout your coursework.

Contact your Success Coach between 8 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. CT Monday through Thursday and Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. via email at il@uwex.edu, phone at 1-877-895-3276 or chat on our website at <https://il.wisconsin.edu/chat.htm>.