Université Laval: Fall, 2026

ANG-1000 Literary Genres: Short Fiction

This course introduces students to the analysis and critical interpretation of short fiction through the reading of a representative selection of texts.

Instructor: Dr. A McPhail
Office: CSL-4455
Office Hours: 12:00-2:00 and/or by appointment
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Course Description:
Through the study of select works of short fiction, students will develop critical reading and writing skills. This will include comprehension, interpretation, analysis, and evaluation of various works. Topics to be discussed will include narrative strategies, characterization, imagery, symbolism, theme, tone, and the relationship between the reader the text. Classes will generally consist of lectures, discussions and, perhaps, some group work.

Course Details:
Type: In-class
Dates: August 31, 2026 to Dec. 11, 2026
Day: Wednesday
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.
Building: Félix-Antoine Savard-040

CRN 82428
Maximum capacity: 60 students

Note 1 - Students from outside the program registering for this course must possess advanced-level English proficiency (TOEIC 850 or VEPT 63).
Note 2 - Students from outside the program must contact the course instructor for further information or to have their English proficiency assessed if they have not taken the TOEIC or VEPT.
Note 3 - Regarding CAESLS students, only those enrolled in the Teaching English as a Second Language program are permitted to register for this course. Please contact gestion.ELS@flsh.ulaval.ca

Required Text:
Bausch, Richard., and R. V. Cassill, Editors. *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*. Shorter 8th ed. W. W. Norton. 2015.

- A good quality English (paper) dictionary is also highly recommended.

Course Policies:

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:
Attendance will not be officially taken, but there is a direct correlation between good grades and class attendance. English courses, in particular, rely on discussing and building an analysis of subject matter by way of class participation. If you miss class, you will miss crucial information and discussion, and you will likely find answering exam questions difficult or nearly impossible.

You are responsible for reading all the assigned texts before the class in which they will be discussed.

Please Note: This class is a community and should be a place to relax and learn together. Respectful discussion, debate, and fielding of ideas are welcome and, indeed, strongly advised and encouraged. Note also that I'm generally accessible to you; if you have any questions or concerns or need some help, please feel free to see me after class or during office hours.

Tentative Course Schedule: Given the nature of this course, this constitutes a **guide** to readings and course material. Changes may (and probably will) occur, so any changes will be announced in class, yet another reason to attend regularly.

Note Also: Works in the schedule that are not in the Norton text will be posted online.

Tentative Schedule*

Weekly Schedule*

**Please note that this schedule is subject to change. You are responsible for keeping apprised of any changes announced while you are absent.*

Week 1: September 2

Please Note: I will be at the European Society for the Study of English conference this week. Our first class will be on September 9th. Please have read both "The Cask of Amontillado" by Edgar Allan Poe and "Boys and Girls" by Alice Munro for next class:

https://poemuseum.org/the-cask-of-amontillado/

https://www.planksip.org/boys-and-girls-by-alice-munro/

Week 2: September 9 Introduction to the course. The Short Story: Forms and Elements of the genre. "The Cask of Amontillado"—An object lesson in reading and exegesis (interpretation) "Boys and Girls" by Alice Munro.

Week 3: September 16 “Boys and Girls” continued? Archetype, Allegory, Motif, “Araby” by James Joyce. Ways of Analyzing Literature.

Week 4: September 23 Narrative Point of View. “Gusev“ by Anton Chekhov, “The Open Boat” by Stephen Crane.

Week 5: September 30 “The Chrysanthemums” by John Steinbeck. “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. **In-class Quiz/Test (10% of grade).**

Week 6: October 7 Allegory: “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne. “The Metamorphosis” by Franz Kafka. Thesis statements, Unity and Coherence.

Week 7: October 14 Essay Checklist. “Hills Like White Elephants” by Ernest Hemingway (symbolism). “Hell-Heaven” by Jhumpa Lahiri. “Royalty” by Anita Desai.

Weeks 8: October 21

Midterm Exam (in-class essay, 25% of grade) 2 Hours

Assign Critical Essay

Week 9: October 28 Reading Week: No Class

(If you have not already done so, please read *Heart of Darkness*)

Week 10: November 4 *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad (Modernism)

Week 11: November 11 *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Leo Tolstoy (Existentialism). “In the Cemetery Where Al Jolson Is Buried” by Amy Hempel.

Week 12: November 18 “Autopsy” by Ivan Vladislavic (Postmodernism). “Silent Snow, Secret Snow” by Conrad Aiken

Week 13: November 25 “A Good Man is Hard to Find” by Flannery O’Connor. “Cathedral” by Raymond Carver. “The Conversion of the Jews” by Philip Roth

Critical Essay Due (35%)

Week 14: December 2 Review and preparation for final examination.

Week 15: December 9 Final Exam (30%)

Final Examination You must be available during this time period for your final exam. Do not make travel or work plans until after the exam date.

***Note: This schedule is subject to change. You are responsible for keeping apprised of any changes announced while you are absent.**

Assignments:	**Percentage of Final Grade**
Quiz/Test	10%
Midterm Test	25%
Critical Essay	35%
Final Exam	30%

Marking Scheme

Cote	% minimum	% maximum
A+	94	- 100
A	89	- 93,99
A-	85	- 88,99
B+	82	- 84,99
B	78	- 81,99
B-	75	- 77,99
C+	72	- 74,99
C	68	- 71,99
C-	65	- 67,99
D+	61	- 64,99
D	55	- 60,99
E	0	- 54,99

Please Note:

Classes start on time; please be punctual.
Assigned reading must be done before class.
All assigned essays must be submitted in class on the due date. Late essays will not be accepted without a doctor's note or my prior permission. Penalties of one half of a grade per day may be applied to late essays.
Plagiarism and cheating are **serious** academic offences. Please listen carefully to what I will say regarding these matters.
Intelligent participation in class discussions is strongly advised.
Note also that term work will not be considered after the final exam has been written.
Remember that I am generally accessible to you. **If you have any concerns, questions, or problems, please feel free to see me during office hours or by appointment.**