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Professor of English and Comparative Literature  
English 176-1, MW 1:30-2:45, SH 413

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## ENGLISH 176 "THE SHORT STORY" COURSE SYLLABUS

(This syllabus is online at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/forms/greensheets/>)

**Course Description and Objectives:** English 176 is a course in the analysis and interpretation of selected American and European short fictive prose from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present, representing the essential philosophical, literary, and aesthetic movements of the genre as it transformed from "the tale" to "the short story." Students will learn the identifying thematic and aesthetic characteristics of each movement - aesthetics being a focus on the art of the genre, its creative sources, its forms, and its effects - and be able to distinguish between various types within each movement through close readings of the texts as well as writing both analytically and creatively about them.

**Course Student Learning Objectives (SLO):** The Department of English and Comparative Literature has established the following Student Learning Objectives (SLO) for its baccalaureate courses, such as English 176: Students will demonstrate the ability to 1) read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric; 2) show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature; 3) write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject; 4) develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively; 5) articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

### **Required Texts:**

Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Tales* (Signet Classics)  
Gogol, *The Diary of a Madman, The Government Inspector & Selected Stories* (Penguin)  
Chekhov, *The Lady with the Little Dog and Other Stories, 1896-1904* (Penguin Classics)  
Chopin, *The Awakening and Selected Stories of Kate Chopin* (Signet Classics)  
Porter, *The Collected Stories of Katherine Anne Porter* (Harcourt Brace)  
Hemingway, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories* (Scribner's)  
Cheever, *The Stories of John Cheever* (Vintage)

### **Assignments and Correspondence to SLO, Grading, and Due Dates:**

4 written assignments, as follows:

- I. Oct. 03<sup>rd</sup>: 1<sup>st</sup> exam (take-home) due. 30 points. Meets SLO 1, 2, 3, and 5.
- II. Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>: 2<sup>nd</sup> exam (take-home) due. 30 points. Meets SLO 1, 2, 3, and 5.
- III. Story and aesthetic statement, in final form, due one week after workshop. \*  
25 points. (15 for the story; 10 for the aesthetic statement)  
Meets SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.
- IV. Written critiques of 3 student-stories, each due at the story's workshop. \*  
15 points, 5 points for each of the three 1-2 pp. critiques you will write as a lead discussant during the course's workshop segment.  
Meets SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

\*Your workshop and lead discussant dates will be set well in advance.

Note: Graduate students must write *two* story assignments, only one of which will be workshopped. One will be modeled on a story from among those covered for the first examination and the other from among those covered for the second. You will not have an opportunity to revise the story that isn't workshopped, which story is due our final class meeting, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Each examination is worth 30 points; your workshopped story 15 points (10 for the story, 5 for the aesthetic statement); your other story 10 points (5 for the story, 5 for the aesthetic statement); and your critiques 15 points, as above.

The 4 assignments (5 for graduate students) comprise 100 points. The points represent percentages which graduate, in accordance with University policy, as follows: 100-98=A+; 97-94=A; 93-90=A-; 89-87=B+; 86-84=B; 83-80=B-; 79-77=C+; 76-74=C; 73-70=C-; 69-67=D+; 66-64=D; 63-60=D-; 59-0=F.

The Department of English and Comparative Literature reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the official SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A=excellent; B=above average; C=average; D=below average; F=failure. In English and Comparative Literature courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

**All due dates are absolute. Failure to hand in an assignment on its due date will result in a lowered grade for that assignment.** In case of a legitimate - and verifiable - emergency, please contact me **before** the assignment is due, if possible. **All assignments must be typed in 12-point, double-spaced, paginated - and must be handed in to me during class. You must turn in a hard copy of each assignment. Emailed assignments are not accepted and will not count.** However, excepting the hard copies of your story assignment provided to 3 discussants and to me, you may email your story assignment to the class for your workshop turn.

### **Procedures:**

The length of each exam will vary from student to student, of course. Generally, the *approximate* length of a take-home exam is 7-8 pp. The length of your story will be determined in large measure by the model you choose to follow, but generally 5-7 pp. is a good guideline. Your story, accompanied by an aesthetic statement of 1-2 pp., must reflect in manner and style one of the stories on the Class Schedule below (except as noted). Your aesthetic statement must be clear and focused, stating which author and which fictive piece are reflected by your story's technique, mood, theme, plot, structure, characterizations, etc. Be specific as to the type of your story - romantic, fantastic, realistic, impressionistic, etc. - and be certain to identify and articulate other elements of your story such as the use of humor, irony, narrative point of view, political or social ideology, history, etc. that reflect similar aesthetic practices by the author and story you have chosen to model. In short, you are to explain your story's technique and composition in specific relation to your chosen model. Two examples of this assignment will be made available, one based on Gogol's "Diary of a Madman" and the other on Chopin's "The Story of an Hour." You may **not** use either that particular Gogol or Chopin story to fulfill your assignment. You are free to use any other Gogol or Chopin story on the Course Syllabus.

You must distribute to the class your story and aesthetic statement – hard copies for the 3 lead discussants and for me; via email to the rest of the class – at least the meeting *before* your assigned workshop date. Failure to do so will result in losing your turn – and a corresponding grade reduction for the assignment. You will be given the opportunity to revise your story and aesthetic statement after your workshop. The story and aesthetic statement are due in final form *one week* after your workshop turn.

**Concerning Attendance:** I strongly advise your making a friend in the class from whom you can get notes for any lecture or discussion you should happen to miss. I cannot conduct private tutorials with you, either by email or during office hours, in order to replicate what you missed by not attending class. Please do not ask me to do so. However, after you've caught up on the reading and thoughtfully considered your friend's notes, feel free to ask me specific questions should you need clarification. **Please do not ask for special treatment of any kind or to be exempted from any course procedure.**

**University Policies:** You are responsible for reading the SJSU academic policies available online (<http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>). **Academic Integrity Policy** (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>); **Add/Drop Deadlines** ([http://www.sjsu.edu/academic\\_programs/calendars/academic\\_calendar/](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/)); **Late Drop Policy** (<http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy>). [Note: Tuesday Sept. 4<sup>th</sup> is the last day to **Drop** without a transcript notation, and Tuesday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> is the last day to **Add** courses and register late.] **Campus Policy in Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act:** If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please see me as soon as possible. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC (<http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/>) to establish a record of their disability.

**The Center for Literary Arts (CLA) Fall 2012 Schedule:** All events are free and begin at 7:00 p.m.  
 Sept. 12 (Wed.) **Karen Tei Yamashita** Reading and Book Signing, ENGR 189  
 Oct. 03 (Wed.) **Nick Flynn** Reading and Book Signing, ENGR 189  
 Oct. 24 (Wed.) **Michael Ryan** Reading and Book Signing, MLK Library 225/229  
 Nov. 13 (Tues.) **Stephen Elliott** Reading and Book Signing, MLK Library 225/229  
 For more information see <http://www.litart.org> or call the Event Hotline: (408) 924-4600.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

- Aug. 27 Brief history of the short story. **Romanticism.**  
 29 Poe, "The Black Cat" (p. 99) and "The Tell-Tale Heart" (p. 172)
- Sept. 03 Labor Day. (No Class – Campus Closed.)  
 05 Poe, "The Cask of Amontillado" (p. 152)
- 10 Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" (p. 109) and "The Balloon-Hoax" (p. 1)  
 12 **Fantasy.** Gogol, "Diary of a Madman" (p. 174)  
**CLA Event: Karen Tei Yamashita Reading and Book Signing, ENGR 189, 7:00 p.m.**
- 17 Gogol, "The Nose" (p. 113) and "The Overcoat" (p. 140)  
 19 **Realism.** Chekhov, "The Kiss" (handout) and "The Bishop" (p. 293)

- Sept. 24 Chekhov, "Man in a Case" (p. 61), "Gooseberries" (p. 74), and "About Love" (p. 85)  
 26 Chekhov, "The Lady with the Little Dog" (p. 223). Chopin, "The Story of an Hour" (p. 217)  
 and "The Kiss" (p. 225)
- Oct. 01 Chopin, "At the 'Cadian Ball" (p. 178), "The Storm" (p. 267), "A Shameful Affair" (p. 162),  
 and "A Respectable Woman" (p. 212)
- 03 **FIRST EXAMINATION DUE.**  
Impressionism. Porter, "Theft" (p. 59) and "The Jilting of Granny Weatherall" (p. 80)  
CLA Event: Nick Flynn Reading and Book Signing, ENGR 189, 7:00 p.m.
- 08 Porter, "Old Mortality" (p. 173)  
 10 Porter, "Noon Wine" (p. 222)
- 15 Extraordinary Realism. Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (p. 3)  
 17 Hemingway, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (p. 121)
- 22 Cheever, "O Youth and Beauty!" (p. 210) and "The Housebreaker of Shady Hill" (p. 253)  
 24 Cheever, "The Country Husband" (p. 325) and "The Swimmer" (p. 603)  
CLA Event: Michael Ryan Reading and Book Signing, MLK Library 225/229, 7:00 p.m.
- 29 **SECOND EXAMINATION DUE.**  
 31 Distribution of Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> workshop stories. Story Traditions. *Oh, Happy Halloween!*  
 "Thy soul shall find itself alone / 'Mid dark thoughts of the gray tombstone - /  
 Not one, of all the crowd, to pry / Into thine hour of secrecy."  
 —Edgar Allan Poe, "Spirits of the Dead"
- Nov. 05 Workshop. (3)  
 07 Workshop. (3)
- 12 Veteran's Day. (No Class - Campus Closed.)  
 14 Workshop. (3)
- 19 Workshop. (3)  
 21 Open.
- 26 Workshop. (4)  
 28 Workshop. (3)
- Dec. 03 Workshop. (4)  
 05 Workshop. (3)\*
- 10 Workshop. (4)\* \*For those of you workshopping on December 5<sup>th</sup>, your revised  
 story and aesthetic statement are due in my office the following Wednesday, December  
 12<sup>th</sup>; for those workshopping the 10<sup>th</sup>, your revised story and aesthetic statement are due in  
 my office the following Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.