ENG 243: The Short Story
How Short or Long is the Short Story?

Course Description:
This course will provide an introduction to the short story as a genre, with a focus on the various lengths that the short story can encompass, from the extremely short story to short story cycles. How short is the short story exactly? What makes it different from a novel, besides length? We will look at stories that range from under 25 words to a collection that could be considered a novel to begin to understand how this genre can be defined beyond its length. In doing this, we will also focus on brevity, conciseness, the allure of the unsaid, and connections between stories. The course will culminate in a final essay that considers these issues. Authors we will read will include Susan Gaspell, Jhumpa Lahirí, Jennifer Egan, Jonathan Safran Foer, and Virginia Woolf. This course will also include instruction in and practice with the skills necessary for the analysis of literature through reading, discussion, and writing.

Course Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:
· Discuss and make arguments about literary works (both orally and in writing) with your peers and instructor;
· Compose convincing interpretations of literary works and their ideas by applying the skills of close reading, textual analysis, and literary terminology;
· Examine human differences and similarities (including language, experience, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender) across historical, social, and cultural boundaries using literature;
· Practice and improve writing skills through frequent assignments both formal and informal, submitted to the instructor for regular feedback and/or shared with peers for critical review/response;
· Speak effectively through regular required participation and discussion of texts and ideas therein, whether in full-class, individual, or group settings, and whether through informal or formal assignments.
· Learn basic skills of reference and citation.

This course fulfills URI General Education requirements for the outcomes of Humanities and Write Effectively.
Required Texts:
A Visit from the Goon Squad by Jennifer Egan
Hint Fiction edited by Robert Smartwood
The Little Seagull Handbook 3rd edition
All other readings will be provided on Sakai

Grade Distribution:
Class discussion and Participation 10%
Reading Journal and quizzes 15%
Active Reading 15%
Close Reading 20%
Midterm exam 15%
Final Analytic Essay (and any preparatory assignments) 25%

Grading, by the numbers:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-94</td>
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Mandatory Requirements:
1. Completion of all assignments on due dates (including readings and all assignments)
2. Preparation for each class and helpful contributions to class discussion; and
3. Regular attendance (see below) and communication with instructor;
4. Read this syllabus and complete the Syllabus Quiz in Sakai

Reading Schedule and assignment due dates:
Readings and homework are to be completed before class, unless otherwise noted.
Attendance is expected at every session listed, unless otherwise noted.

Unit 1: Understand the Short Story
Sept. 6 – Introduction and welcome
Sept 8 – “A Jury of Her Peers” by Susan Gaspell
Sept. 11 – “Here is a lesson in creative writing” by Kurt Vonnegut
Sept. 13 – “The Elements of Short Fiction,” in-class introduction to active and close reading
Sept. 15 – “Sexy” by Jhumpa Lahiri

Sept. 18 – Oral reading due
Sept. 20 – Oral reading due
Sept. 22 – No class, please use this time to complete “Giving Voice”

Unit 2: The Very Short Story
Sept. 25 – Dictionary exercise due
Sept. 27 – Part 1, Life & Death of *Hint Fiction* edited by Robert Smartwood
Sept. 29 – In-class: annotations and active reading

Oct. 2 – Part 2, Love & Hate of *Hint Fiction* edited by Robert Smartwood
Oct. 4 – Part 3, This & That of *Hint Fiction* edited by Robert Smartwood
Oct. 6 – Active Reading paper due

Oct. 11 – “A Primer for the Punctuation of Heart Disease” by Jonathan Safran Foer
Oct. 13 – In-class: multimodal fiction and midterm review

Unit 3: The Short Story Cycle
Oct. 16 – Midterm exam
Oct. 18 – In-class: The short story cycle introduction
Oct. 20 – “Found Objects,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad* by Jennifer Egan

Oct. 23 – “The Gold Cure,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Oct. 25 – “Ask Me If I Care,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Oct. 27 – “Safari,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*

Oct. 30 – “You (Plural),” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Nov. 1 – “X’s and O’s,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Nov. 3 – “A to B,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*

Nov. 6 – “Selling the General,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Nov. 8 – “Forty-Minute Lunch: Kitty Jackson Opens Up About Love, Fame, and Nixon!” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Nov. 10 – Debate
Nov. 15 – “Out of Body” and “Good-bye, My Love,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Nov. 17 – “Great Rock and Roll Pauses,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*

Nov. 20 – “Pure Language,” *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
Nov. 22 – Closing reading due at 2:00 pm; in-class workshop

**Unit 4: How to Write About the Short Story**
Nov. 27 – “Strategies for Arguing about Literature”
Nov. 29 – “Kew Gardens” by Virginia Woolf
Dec. 1 – “Stopping to Read the Flowers in Virginia Woolf's ‘Kew Gardens’” by Jeffrey Mather
(*Explicator*, 2014)

Dec. 4 – In-class: Thesis formation workshop
Dec. 6 – Analytic essay abstract due
Dec. 8 – In-class: Claims workshop

Dec. 11 – In-class: Analytic essay workshop

**Final exam submitted to Sakai by 11:55 PM December 20th**

**Required Assignments**

**Reading Journal - checked regularly (15%)**
You will keep a reading journal throughout the semester. In this notebook you should practice active reading, including defining words, identifying examples of literary devices, asking questions, attempting answers to these questions, formulating essay ideas, and free-writing. It will be checked at announced times and occasionally at unannounced points.

**Oral Reading - due Sept. 18 (10% of class participation grade)**
This memorized reading will be presented in-class. Attention should be given not only to the words being said, but how they are said.

**Active Reading - due Oct. 6 (15%)**
This 300-word paper will require you to identify one element of a text (keyword, allusion, literary device) and discuss how it is use and meaning within the story.

**Midterm - Oct. 16 (15%)**
The midterm will be an in-class exam
Closing Reading - due Nov. 22 (20%)
This 600-word paper will consist of a careful discussion of one text from the class. One passage of the text should be identified and interpreted for meaning.

Analytic Essay - due Dec. 20th (25%)
This essay serves as your final for this class. The paper should be 1,500-words on a text from the course with a clearly articulated thesis, supported by evidence from the story, including quotations, discussion, analysis, and synthesis. An abstract for this paper will be due Dec. 6.

Attendance
The small-class environment of ENG 243 classes makes dedicated attendance and full participation the responsibility of each and every class member. Attendance will be recorded at each class meeting. Students who miss classes are responsible for 1) explaining the absence and/or verifying its necessity; 2) getting the assignments from a classmate or the instructor; and 3) if the instructor agrees, making up the missed work. If students notify the instructor in advance, absences for religious holidays, athletic participation, or other university-sanctioned events are excused. Other absences (for illness, accident, or personal tragedy) may be instructor-approved; however, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor—via email or a phone message—to explain the absence within 12 hours of the missed class, or to provide documentation at the following class meeting. Absences that are not university-sanctioned or instructor-approved will mean a loss of points or a deduction to the final grade. While allowance can be made for an emergency, generally students who miss a total of three weeks of classes will fail the course: 9 absences for MWF classes.

Repeated absences will result in a lowered grade.
NOTE: Check for announcements about class cancellations online or call the Weather Line at URI: 874-SNOW (874-7669). The policy on snow days is this: if a workshop is planned, we will honor it on the next class meeting (unless an online alternative is created using Sakai, etc.). Since all papers will be submitted electronically, due dates will remain as scheduled.

Deadlines and Due Dates
All work produced out of class is due at the beginning of the class meeting on the date specified. Unless special arrangements have been made with me, penalties will be applied to late papers.
You can expect to be deducted one letter grade for each day your assignment is late. You must complete all assigned writing projects in order to pass the course.
Formatting Papers
All papers should be in MLA format. Be sure to save all drafts of all projects on online storage space, a hard drive and/or disk. Each project must be submitted with your name, the date, the course and section number, and the instructor’s name.

Academic Honesty
You need to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Please consult the URI Student Handbook about academic honesty and related issues. You may wish to also review URI's Report of Cheating or Plagiarism. The penalty for plagiarism is a zero for the assignment and a report to your academic dean, who has the option to fail you for the course; in addition, the charge of academic dishonesty will go on your record in the Office of Student Life. Instructors may require a paper to be rewritten, with or without credit. The Little Seagull Handbook and many online resources offer extensive help on matters of plagiarism and how to acknowledge source material. If you need more help understanding when to cite something or how to make clear your references, please ask.
From the URI University Manual:
8.27.10 Cheating and Plagiarism. Students are expected to be honest in all academic work related to the classroom, online, internships, co-ops, study abroad, independent studies, research projects, practica, or other experiential placements.
8.27.11 A student’s name on any written exercise (theme, report, notebook, paper, examination) shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student’s own thought and study, stated in the student’s own words and produced without assistance, except as quotation marks, references and footnotes acknowledge the use of other sources of assistance. Occasionally, students may be authorized to work jointly, but such effort must be indicated as joint on the work submitted. Submitting the same paper for more than one course is considered a breach of academic integrity unless prior approval is given by the instructors.

Courtesy
Students are expected to treat faculty and fellow classmates with dignity and respect. Students are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to the published “Student Code of Conduct” which can be accessed in the University Student Handbook
If you must come in late, please do not disrupt the class.
Please turn off all cell phones and any electronic devices that emit noise, except when explicitly approved for an in-class activity. If you are seen using your cell phone, it will be considered an absence.
While laptop computers are not required and their use will not be allowed in most classes without a documented reason, there are times when I will ask you to bring your laptop to class. If
you do not have a laptop, this will not impact your ability to participate in the lessons that call for laptop use.

Writing Center
The Writing Center serves all writers, all disciplines, all levels, at all stages of writing. It is located in 009 Roosevelt and the peer tutors are always happy to help. Now, it is easy to make appointments online at https://uri.mywconline.com/.

Academic Enhancement Center
The Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) in Roosevelt Hall is another resource on-campus you should utilize. The AEC offers a comfortable environment in which to study alone or together, with or without a tutor. AEC tutors can answer questions, clarify concepts, check understanding, and help you to study. You can make an appointment or walk in during office hours — Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 9 pm, Friday from 9 am to 1 pm, and Sunday from 4 pm to 8 pm. For a complete schedule — including when tutors are available specifically for this class — go to web.uri.edu/aec, call (401) 874-2367, or stop by the fourth floor in Roosevelt Hall.

Note on Access
Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact the instructor early in the semester so that reasonable accommodations may be worked out to support his or her success in this writing course. Please also contact Disability Services for Students, Office of Student Life, 330 Memorial Union, 874-2098.

Subject to Change of Notice
All material, assignments, and deadlines on the syllabus are subject to change without prior notice. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of all course timelines, announcements, and communications from the professor pertaining to changes in course meeting dates, assignments, and due dates.