

This syllabus has been provided as a reference tool for students considering this course. It has been modified to follow Senate regulations. Current students enrolled in any undergraduate course must obtain the most recent syllabus from their course instructor or from their course website. This is not the latest version.



Department of English & Writing Studies

Studies of Narrative Theory English 2220F (001) Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. D. Palmater Pennee

Date/Time: Tuesday 7:00pm-10:00pm

Location: Kresge Building K103

Prerequisites

At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the study of narrative theory, primarily through a semiotic (Saussurian) approach to understanding language and a semiotic and narratological approach to understanding narrative and narrativity.

*Narratives require close study because stories structure the meanings by which a culture lives. Our culture depends upon numerous types of narrative: novels, short stories, films, television shows, myths, anecdotes, songs, music videos, comics, paintings, advertisements, essays, biographies, and news accounts. All tell a story. [...] [T]he events making up a story are only available to us through a telling. (Cohan and Shires. *Telling Stories: A Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction*, 1)*

We will focus on understanding and analyzing how texts mean, more so than on the more typical or casual reading practice of paraphrasing what they mean.

The theories and methods of reading studied in this course will provide you with a deepened appreciation of the complexity of how language and narratives encode and structure not only our understanding of what we read but also of what we bring to what we read, and what reading can enable beyond the texts studied. The strongly recommended text *Telling Stories: A Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction*, by Steven Cohan and Linda M. Shires (London: Routledge, 1988) provides concepts and terminology that will be introduced in mini-lectures, and discussed and applied in in-class work throughout the term.

As much as possible, teaching and learning will occur by facilitated discovery, application, and practice in class, with mini-lectures for concepts and examples. In the main, we will learn by doing in this course, and methods of assessment will correspond to the means by which teaching and learning occur during class time. The weight of assignments is small early in the term and will increase as students build knowledge of narrative theory over the term. and hone their analytical reading and writing skills through hands-on work in the classroom and feedback on out-of-class work.

The structure of the course and individual classes will seek to provide as much opportunity as possible for:

- Reading deeply and closely to discover, identify, and explain the components of semiotics and narrativity at work in selected short stories and two novels;
- Applying narrative theory in detailed analyses in in-class work and discussion;
- Applying narrative theory in short out-of-class essays and / or for those students who wish it, in one short in-class oral presentation instead of one short out-of-class essay;
- Demonstrating your knowledge and comprehension (the most basic learning objectives that enable the more sophisticated objectives of analysis, application, and synthesis) of semiotic and narratological terms, in in-class tests.

Following on these methods for building your knowledge of and facility with concepts of how narratives work, you will have the opportunity in the final examination to:

- Demonstrate the synthesis of your course learning on a work of literature not studied in class or analyzed in out-of-class work (or perhaps on a work of literature only partially studied in class).

Because the learning activities for this course provide (and require) time for reading and re-reading, you will be given advanced notice of the work of literature to be analyzed during the final examination; that is, you will have the opportunity to study this work of literature prior to writing an analytical essay about its narrative features in the final examination time slot (scheduled by the Registrar's office).

More detailed information about this course will be available by the first class via an on-line (OWL) course site. When necessary, the Instructor and/or GTA will communicate with the class as a whole through the OWL site, but inquiries from individual students should be sent directly to the instructor's e-mail address: d9ennee@uwo.ca For purposes of communication and co-mentoring, please copy the GTA on queries to the instructor (the GTA's e-mail address will be provided in our first class and thereafter in the OWL course site

Objectives:

Successful students who complete the course will be better able to:

- To facilitate students' **knowledge and comprehension** of selected concepts and terminology appropriate to the study of narrative, narration, and narrativity;
 - For example, can you identify, define, and differentiate terms and concepts, and recognize them at work in sample readings?
- To provide opportunities **for analysis, application, and synthesis** of students' knowledge and comprehension of the course materials;
 - For example, can you use the appropriate terminology and concepts to illustrate and explain how the components of a given passage of writing function to create meaning and/or other effects?

- To enable students to bring all of these learning objectives together in the **evaluation** of students' own and others' work on narrative, narrativity, and narrative theory (in draft written form and in oral presentations).
 - For example, can you differentiate between and rank others' analyses of given passages or whole literary works that employ the terminology and concepts used in the course, provide an explanation for the ranking, and provide informed feedback for improvement?

By the end of this course you will have had ample opportunity to work toward meeting these learning objectives. Your part in meeting these learning objectives will be to bring the following to your own learning:

- A willingness to make and take the time to read more than once the literature studied in this course (the reading list is limited to accommodate this necessity);
- An ethic of preparedness, attentiveness, engagement, discipline, rigor and commitment to what is studied and taught, all the while recognizing that writing, reading, and other skills vary from individual to individual, and may vary within a single individual's own work over time.

Needless to say, regular attendance can also facilitate success, though attendance alone may not suffice without the other items listed above as part of your role in meeting the course learning objectives.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

Gaunce, Julia et al., eds, *The Broadview Anthology of Short Fiction*. Second edition.

Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2012.

Duncan, Sara Jeannette. *The Imperialist*. 1904. Ed. Misao Dean. Broadview Critical Editions.

Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 2005.

Findley, Timothy. *The Wars*. 1977. Modern Penguin Classics. Toronto: Penguin, 2005.

Strongly Recommended Text: Cohan, Steven and Linda M. Shires, *Telling Stories: A Theoretical Analysis of Narrative Fiction*. London: Routledge, 1988.

This text was transferred to digital print in 2003: those of you who have an e-reading device may wish to purchase it in this form. This text should also be available in used form at a cheaper price in Western's bookstore or through on-line vendors. A few new copies should also be in Western's Bookstore. One copy of this textbook will be placed on 2-hour reserve in Weldon Library. Note: Given that this book's technical complexity requires time to read and re-read, reliance on the reserve copy is not recommended for more than limited use.

Methods of Evaluation

Details about each type of assessment will be provided in advance in the OWL website for our course. Rubrics for grading of out-of-class essays and in-class oral presentations will be posted to the OWL site. The Learning Contract for the area of choice within the types of assessments below will also be posted to the OWL site.

- 5%** In-class test #1 (identifying semiotic and narrative features at work in short passages of literature and short-answer definitional questions) (Week 4/ October 1)

- 10%** In-class test #2 (applying in an in-class essay your knowledge and comprehension of semiotic and narrative features at work in a selected short story) (Week 6/ October 15)
20% One SOC-word essay OR In-class Oral Presentation (5 minutes) (Week 8/ 29 October)

AND

- 30%** One 1000-word essay OR In-class Oral Presentation (7 minutes) (Week 11 / 19 November)

NOTE: *Choices within this 50% portion of your grade (you cannot give two oral presentations but you can submit two essays; you cannot analyze the same work of fiction twice for the two essays or for one essay and one oral presentation):*

Choice A: Submit 500-word essay (20%) and 1000-word essay (30%) OR

Choice B: Submit BOO-word essay (20%) and Deliver 7-minute in-class presentation (30%) OR

Choice C: Deliver 5-minute in-class presentation (20%) and Submit 1000- word essay (30%)

Individualized learning contracts will be provided to permit your choice for this portion of the grade. You must abide by the choice you make because class time will need to be set aside for oral presentations, and class-mates will need to prepare for providing feedback (in writing in class) on oral presentations.

- 35%** Final examination to be written in the time slot scheduled by the Registrar's office

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Assignments:

NOTE on submitting out-of-class work: Unless otherwise indicated, out-of- class assignments must be submitted either directly to the instructor or TA during regular class time or to the drop box in the English department. Do not slide papers under office doors.

Written work prepared outside of class must conform to the MLA formatting guidelines, tips for which are available at: <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info-for-students.html>

Late work will be penalized at a rate of 10% per day or part thereof, including Saturdays, Sundays, and religious and statutory holidays, except where academic accommodation is granted by the Academic Counselling Office.

For **missed in-class work** for grades, accommodation must be sought through the Academic Counselling Office. Instructors and departments do not grant academic accommodation: it must be sought using the appropriate procedures and forms through the Academic Counselling Office.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.