

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for ENG 45

STUDIES IN FICTION

Effective: Fall 2019

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ENG 45 — STUDIES IN FICTION — 3.00 units

Form, development, and cultural insights of the novel and short story; exploration of particular themes or periods as reflected in works of fiction.

3.00 Units Lecture

Prerequisite

ENG 1A - Critical Reading and Composition
with a minimum grade of C

Grading Methods:

Letter Grade

Discipline:

- English

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering the course a student should be able to:

A. ENG1A

1. Critically read texts and materials from a variety of academic and cultural contexts, demonstrating in writing and discussion the ability to:
2. Summarize a thesis and main points;
3. Analyze main ideas;
4. Evaluate the validity and logic of the text's reasoning and support;
5. Relate ideas and information in the text to his/her own experience as well as other texts;
6. Create a coherent position or argument based on reading;
7. Write multiple-paragraph papers that:
8. Accurately and appropriately respond to a given assignment;
9. Develop a relevant, focused thesis;
10. Are well-organized and coherently move from coordinating to subordinating points;
11. Are well-developed with sufficient and relevant evidence;
12. Synthesize facts and ideas originating outside his/her direct experience to develop and support a thesis;
13. Demonstrate stylistic choices in tone, syntax, and diction;
14. Use standard American English correctly;
15. Research a specific topic using the Internet, databases, journals, and books demonstrating an ability to:
16. Review sources for relevant evidence and arguments;
17. Document sources in an academically responsible way.

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Employ a variety of techniques and methods used by authors of fiction
- B. Critique the structure of the works studied and discuss the works using appropriate literary terms such as metaphor, plot, point of view, and character development
- C. Explain the works studied in relation to and as expressions of cultural and historical influences
- D. Identify and explain common topics and themes in diverse works of fiction
- E. Analyze and evaluate critical responses to the works studied
- F. Bring various critical approaches to bear on the interpretation of fiction in take-home and in-class written work
- G. Analyze an author's use of literary techniques to develop a theme

V. CONTENT:

- A. Reading and analysis of short fiction, with attention to characterization, plot, point of view, imagery, symbolism, and theme
- B. Reading and analysis of at least two novels, with attention to characterization, structure, point of view, imagery, symbolism, and

- theme
- C. Instruction and practice writing responses to fiction
- D. Cultural and literary context of works studied
- E. Connections between writers' lives and writers' works
- F. Application of various critical approaches to works studied, including historical, formalist, ethnic, feminist, deconstructionist, and other approaches as applicable.

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Discussion** - Small group discussion and collaborative presentations
- B. Individual presentations
- C. Films based on fiction studied in the course
- D. **Lecture** -
- E. In-class visits to Internet sites related to writers and their works
- F. **Guest Lecturers** - when appropriate
- G. Films providing historical, biographical background

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading:
 1. Read Edgar Allen Poe's "The Masque of the Red Death," and come to class with three questions for class discussion.
 2. Find and read a critical essay on Poe's story, summarize it for the class, and discuss whether you agree with the critic's analysis.
- B. Collaborative Presentations:
 1. The England of Jane Austen
 2. Post Civil War America in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.
- C. Individual Presentations:
 1. Psychiatric hospitals in the time of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*
 2. Sexual Politics in Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.
 3. Uprooting of African-American communities, connecting this process to Morrison's *Sula*.
 4. 19th century dining customs, connecting them to Dickens' *Great Expectations*.
- D. Writing, listening, problem-solving, critical thinking:
 1. Write a short essay connecting the estates in Jane Austen's novels with the principles of neoclassicism.
 2. Working in a small group, find a passage from the text that you agree reveals the most about one character, and explain the passage to the class.
 3. Write a three to four page essay exploring Andre Dubus's *House of Sand and Fog* as a portrait of economic and ethnic stressors in urban America.

VIII. EVALUATION:

Methods/Frequency

- A. Other
 1. Essays
 - a. Typical questions: in-class essays and take-home essays (take-home essays evaluated somewhat more rigorously):
 1. Compare and contrast Darcy's two proposals to Elizabeth in *Pride and Prejudice*, focusing on setting, language, and outcome.
 2. Discuss the importance and effects of Shelley's use of multiple narrators in *Frankenstein*.
 - b. Typical questions: short-answer essay questions
 1. List the characteristics of romanticism that appear in *Jane Eyre*.
 2. Choose one line from the text and briefly explain its significance.
 2. Ungraded reading logs, assessed for student comprehension and beginnings of analysis
 - a. Record your thoughts and responses to this week's reading.
 - b. Based on this week's reading, develop three questions for class discussion.

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Levine, Sara, Don LePan, and Marjorie Mather, eds. *The Broadview Anthology of Short Fiction*. 3rd ed., Broadview Press, 2013.
2. Furman, Laura, ed. *The O. Henry Prize Stories 2013*., Anchor, 2013.
3. Julia, Alvarez. *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents*., Algonquin Books, 2010.
4. Dubus III, Andre. *House of Sand and Fog*., W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.
5. Hemingway, Ernest. *For Whom the Bell Tolls*., Scribner, 1995.
6. Morrison, Toni. *Sula*., Vintage, 2004.
7. Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*., Tribeca Books, 2014.
8. Boyle, T. C., ed. *The Best American Short Stories 2015*., Mariner Books, 2013.
9. Mays, Kelly. *The Norton Introduction to Literature*. 11th ed., W.W. Norton & Company, 2013.
10. Meyer, Michael. *The Bedford Introduction to Literature: Reading, Thinking, Writing*. 10th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013.
11. Hamid, Mohsin. *Exit West*. 1 ed., Riverhead Books, 2017.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: