

Studies in Fiction—Short Writings by American Women

Last Updated: Tue, 01/06/2026

Course prefix: LMC

Course number: 3202

Section: Tentative

CRN (you may add up to five):

Tentative

Instructor First Name: Randall

Instructor Last Name: Harrell

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

Examines the elements of fiction and what has made fiction, especially the short story, distinctive, popular, and enduring. Readings may include formal, cultural, and historical theories.

Course learning outcomes:

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Analyze Short Fiction:** Demonstrate the ability to closely read and critically analyze short stories, identifying key literary elements such as plot, character, theme, setting, point of view, and narrative techniques.
2. **Contextualize Literary Works:** Explain how historical, cultural, and social contexts influence the themes, styles, and meanings of short fiction texts.
3. **Interpret Authorial Intent and Style:** Evaluate the narrative strategies and stylistic choices authors use to shape readers' interpretations and emotional responses.
4. **Compare and Contrast Texts:** Develop comparative analyses of short stories, identifying similarities and differences in form, theme, and cultural significance.
5. **Communicate Literary Analysis:** Write clear, well-organized essays that present evidence-based interpretations of short fiction using appropriate literary terminology.
6. **Engage in Scholarly Research:** Conduct research using primary and secondary sources to support arguments in written assignments and presentations.

7. **Participate in Literary Discussion:** Engage thoughtfully and respectfully in class discussions, demonstrating critical engagement with the texts and peers' perspectives.

Required course materials:

Required Course Materials

The Story and Its Writer: An Introduction to Short Fiction

Edited by Ann Charters

Publisher: Bedford/St. Martin's

This comprehensive anthology provides a wide-ranging selection of short fiction from classic to contemporary authors. It includes contextual information about each story and author, offering students critical insights into the narrative form. The collection is widely used in literature courses and supports close reading, literary analysis, and understanding of diverse storytelling traditions.

Supplementary Readings (provided via Canvas):

- Critical essays, cultural texts, or multimedia (film clips, images, recordings) will be assigned to supplement the anthology and support major assignments.

Grading policy:

Grading Policy (Points-Based, 100 Total)

- Close Reading Exercises (4 total) – 20 points (5 points each)
- Critical Essay – 20 points
- Group Presentation: Author/Tribal Context – 15 points
- Collaborative Story Map Project (DH final) – 25 points
- Participation and Discussion – 10 points
- Short Quizzes – 10 points

Attendance policy:

Attendance Policy

Attendance is essential. You may miss up to three classes without penalty. Each absence beyond that will result in a 1-point deduction from your final grade. If you experience illness or emergency, communicate promptly to make arrangements. I reserve the right to determine what constitutes any extenuating circumstance.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of

academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts in English or other languages, or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence