**01:195:135: 90 Introduction to Short Fiction**

Instructor: Yu-I Hsieh

Email: yvehsieh@rci.rutgers.edu

Virtual Office Hours: Thursday 7pm-9pm in the course E-college chat room or by appointment.

**Course Description**:

 In Ann Charter’s introduction to her anthology, *The Story and Its Writers*, she starts by defining short fiction as “a brief fictional prose narrative, often involving one unified episode.” The establishment of “Short Fiction” as a literary genre is closely related to the rise of the novel from the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, writers began to analyze the aesthetics of short story and attempted to enrich the genre through innovative language and kaleidoscopic themes. In this course, we are going to read short stories written over the past two centuries and across different racial, national and cultural boundaries. In order to approach a wide range of texts in a more systematic way, this course will proceed along three frameworks: formal elements, historical contexts, and canonization. Students are encouraged to do close reading of the text and see how each single “text” is situated at a particular historical moment. Hopefully, by the end of the semester, students can become careful readers of “literature,” and ultimately, through the techniques they learn from reading these short stories, students will learn how to read and analyze any kind of literary and cultural texts, whether it’s a piece of writing, painting, a film or even news. At the same time, if we see literature is creativity continuously in process, students’ input and classroom interaction also create the value and meaning of the text. For this reason, writing and online participation in the class will also be the major focus of this course.

**Department Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with a variety of world literatures as well as methods of studying literature and culture across national and linguistic boundaries and evaluate the nature, function and value of literature from a global perspective.
2. They will demonstrate critical reasoning and research skills; design and conduct research in an individual field of concentration (such as literary theory, women's literature, post colonial studies, literature and film, etc); analyze a specific body of research and write a clear and well developed paper or project about a topic related to more than one literary and cultural tradition.

**Required Reading:**

*The Strange Case of Dr****.*** *Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Note that this is the only textbook required for the course; all other readings are either available on line through a direct link, or posted under the Doc Sharing tab on the E-college website. Also, per the information on Quizzes and Exams below, these are open book but TIMED exams, so if you don’t have the primary texts immediately available, you will find yourself at a disadvantage since you need to finish the exams and quizzes at a limited time.

**Course Rules and Requirements**

**Technological Requirements**: Access to a computer or laptop with broadband internet access, Windows or Mac operating system. You will need to use a compatible browser, such as Internet Explorer or Firefox—some of the videos and Flash animations may not be visible on Safari or Chrome. Also, note that all papers must be submitted in a .doc or .docx format so that I may comment upon them using the Microsoft Word Review feature. **Be sure to check your RUTGERS email accounts at least daily, as this will be the principal means of my communications with the class.**

**Course Design:**  Each week, after you complete the required reading from the texts, you will be expected to complete the following tasks in the following order:

1. Review the weekly **Lecture Notes**. The format of the weekly lecture varies; a lecture might be in the format of lecture notes, a Flash lecture on video recorded by the professor, an audio file, or a Power Point presentation.
2. Read and respond to the weekly **Discussion Forum** in a timely fashion by posting an original and intelligible response of approximately 200-250 words to the main questions listed under DISCUSSION on each weekly unit. I will at times post the first response as a model for you to follow and will facilitate the discussion by responding to your postings. Students who post earlier in the week usually have an easier time not repeating what has been said elsewhere on the **Discussion Forum**, In addition to posting your own original response, *you must also briefly respond to one or more of your fellow student’s postings each week*. In brief, this means you are required to post a minimum of **two postings** under each **Discussion Forum** per week. **In weeks where you are divided into groups, note that there will be one deadline on Friday evening (11:59pm) for the original posting and one deadline on Sunday evening for the response to your fellow students’ postings (11:59 pm). In some weeks, you are required to have four postings**, which include the two responses to the questions posted the Discussion Forum, and the other two responses to your fellow classmates’ presentations (see schedule for detailed instructions).
3. Paper Requirements: Complete the required papers and submit them on time as an MS Word attachment via the E-college course website **DROP BOX. Be aware that late papers are not accepted.** All written assignments should be typed in 12pt font Times New Roman, left justified, with one-inch margins on the left, right, top and bottom, and should have page numbers. Submission via email or any mailing service will **not** be accepted. Make sure you proofread all your writings before your hand in. Technical problems, like misspelling, grammatical errors, deficient word choices, will reduce your grade.

There are two thinking essays (3-5 pages) required during the semester and one longer paper (5-7 pages) due at the end of the semester. Detailed instructions and topics on all three of these papers will be placed under the headings Thinking Essay #1, Thinking Essay #2, and Final Paper under **Document Sharing** tab on the course e-college site.

1. Quizzes: We have weekly quiz throughout the entire semester, except the weeks you have thinking essays due. **You have to FINISH WEEKLY QUIZ NO LATER THAN 11:59 PM EVERY SUNDAY. Quizzes are TIMED exams**. That is, you have to finish the quiz in a limited time, despite the fact that all the quizzes are open-book exams. For short-answer and fill-in-the blank questions, you might only have 10 minutes to finish the quiz. For essay questions, you normally have 30 minutes to finish the exam. Therefore, you definitely need to familiarize yourself with all the assigned texts. The contents of the quizzes will include all the texts you have read until the week you take the quiz. Specifically, the texts assigned for the week will be the main focus. For instance, the first quiz will definitely cover *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Note: You answers will be checked by turnitin.com. Therefore, do not simply cut and paste an answer from any other resources. This quiz is an assessment to see whether you have read and understand the texts. Therefore, you do not need to produce highly sophisticated writing.

1. Post under the **General Class Chat under the LIVE** tab on the e-college website as needed. This chat room is where you should post any general questions or concerns about the course or the course materials that you cannot answer by reviewing the course syllabus or the documents in the **Document Sharing** tab of the course. Please post these general comments and questions here. Do NOT send me a separate email: if you have a particular question about the course or the course materials, chances are high that some of your fellow students will have the same question. In addition, if you would like to initiate further discussions about the course readings and paper topics beyond the scope of the weekly **Discussion Forums**, or to commiserate with each other, this is the place to do so. This general forum is not graded; however, your participation will be taken into consideration when I determine the final course grades.

**Attendance:** Because this course meets entirely online, attendance is based upon your prompt weekly participation in the weekly Discussion Forums **and** Online Learning Activities. You are allowed to miss two of either of these during the semester. After you miss two, **each** Discussion and **each** Online Learning Activity that you miss will result in your final course grade being lowered by one point. It is imperative to note that although this is an asynchronous course, it is **NOT** a self-paced course. This means that you must complete each weekly Discussion Forum **and** Online Learning Activity sometime during the week in which it is assigned, between 12:01am on Monday morning and 11:59 pm on Sunday evening. After 11:59 on Sunday evenings, I will lock down the Discussion Forums and Online Learning Activities so that you will have read-only access, which means that you will not be able to post and will therefore lose the applicable participation points for that week.

**\*\*** You are allowed to miss two of either of these during the semester, which means that **you are allowed to miss TWO in total, NOT two for each category (Discussion Forum and Online Learning Activity).** So you are allowed to miss TWO online learning activities, **OR** ONE learning activity and ONE discussion forum, **OR** TWO discussion forums. After that, your grade starts to drop.

**Netiquette:** Although your postings on the Discussion Forums and your answers to the Online Learning Activities do not require as formal a level of academic English as the three papers, please try to avoid the use of internetese, such as “u” for you, etc. Since our means of communication in this course is written, please be aware of the possibility of miscommunication and compose your comments in the clearest, most constructive way that you can. It is ok for you to disagree with each other’s postings when commenting upon them; however, be certain to do so in a supportive and constructive manner.

When you post on the Discussion Forums and Online Learning Activities, you do not need to worry too much about composing beautiful sentences without any grammatically errors. We all make mistakes. The point is to deliver your ideas in a lucid manner and your comments should **respond** to the topics.

**Plagiarism/Academic Integrity Policy:**

Plagiarism is the use of other people’s words or ideas without proper acknowledgment; when referring to other people’s ideas or using other people’s words include a footnote, or a page number of the work in question, in parentheses, at the end of the sentence in which you refer to that person’s ideas or words, following MLA format. Include a Works Cited page at the end of your paper. Violations of the Rutgers University Academic Integrity policy include: cheating, fabrication, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. You should familiarize yourself with the policy in its entirety at the following link:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf>

\*\* **All your assignments will be checked automatically by turnitin.com**. This is a widely adopted procedure to ensure academic integrity. It can happen that you share similar ideas with certain published articles, but if you present ideas in exactly the same sentences and paragraphs, you might risk plagiarism. Therefore, make sure that you follow the right format, i.e. pay proper acknowledgement and paraphrase. The easiest and safest way for you to retain academic integrity is really do the homework by yourself. All you need to do is to engage in a close reading of texts, exercise your thinking when you write. I cherish your intuitive ideas more than reading the same old clichés circulated online from time immemorial.

**Grading:**

Discussion Forum and Online Learning Activity 40%

Quizzes ` 30%

Thinking Essays 20%

Final Paper 10%

**Grade Points**: A (90-100), B+ (85-89), B (80-84), C+ (75-79), C (70-74), D (60-70), F (59 and below)

**Course Schedule**: (The course schedule is subject to change)

**WEEK ONE (09/04/12 - 09/09/12)**: **Introduction to Course** and Making an Inquiry into the genre called “short fiction”

**Reading**: Read Ursula Le Guin’s “She Unnames Them”

<http://www.wfu.edu/~zulick/341/leguin.html>

**Discussion Forum**: Post a paragraph introducing yourself and stating your reasons for taking this particular course as per the guidelines listed on the Discussion Forum. Also, be sure to review the syllabus and familiarize yourself with the course requirements and format. Post any questions you have in the **General** **Chat** on the **LIVE** tab of the course e-college webpage.

**Online Learning Activity:** Write an analysis of 300 words in which you offer your definition of a “fiction” by using the example of Le Guin’s short story.

If Le Guin’s story is a feminist twist of the Genesis, why is her story considered “fictional” while the Genesis is still considered by many as an account of the origin of homo sapiens? Can we really divide fiction and non-fiction?

**Another option**: Write **an analysis** of 300 words on Le Guin’s story. In your analysis, do a close reading by focusing on one theme, one critical issue or one quotation of your own choice. Do not summarize Le Guin’s story in your analysis. Instead, illustrate your argument with solid evidence from Le Guin’s text.

After you finish your writing, be sure to post it in the **Drop Box tab under the title of “ Unit 1: Online Learning Activity**” before the due time on Sunday.

**WEEK TWO (09/10/12 - 09/16/12)**: **Character as a case study (I)**

**Reading**:

1. Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (FINISH the entire story)
2. Ed Cohen, “Hyding the Subject?: The Antinomies of Masculinity in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*” (PDF file, you can find it in DOCS sharing).

**Discussion Forum**: **I have divided the class into six groups. Each group has been assigned a question posted under the Discussion Forum. You must do your original posting under your group’s question no later than 11:59pm on Friday, September 14 and respond to one of your fellow student’s in the group by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 16.**

**Online Learning Activity:** You can do one of the two options for your Online Learning Activity.

\*\* Pay attention: Throughout the entire semester, you need to write your Online Learning Activity in a Microsoft Word document and submit it as an attachment to the Drop Box under the current unit. If you are simply writing a text under the Drop Box, the system might not save all your words, especially when your computer freezes. Also, all writing assignments need to be checked by turnitin.com. Therefore, you need to submit your writings in Word documents as attachments.

1. Write an analysis of the quote I post under the Online Learning Activity tab. In your analysis, you can draw on Ed Cohen’s article and examine the social and political meanings in the quote. You can also analyze how this quote defines or undoes the readers’ understanding of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.
2. Using Google or another comprehensive search engine, locate an image or a news item from our contemporary popular culture that resonates with a theme or scene from the fiction *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Hyde*. Since posting an image or embedding a video might make your Word file too big to upload, you can simply post the link to the news reportage, the video, or the image. Then, write an analysis of 300 words explaining how this particular image or news item connects with Stevenson’s story. **You must demonstrate in your analysis your familiarity with the text of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Hyde*. For instance, you should incorporate quoted passages from the text or make specific references to key scenes in the fiction.**

**Quiz:** Finish **Quiz #1** by 11:59pm on Sunday, September 16**.**

**WEEK THREE (09/17/12 - 09/23/12):** **Character as a case study (II)**

**Reading**:

1. Willa Cather, “Paul’s Case”
2. Freud, excerpts from Dora’s Case

**Discussion Forum**: Respond to both the question that has been assigned to your group and then respond to a fellow student’s posting in another group (see the questions in the Discussion **Forum** for further details).

**Online Learning Activity:** You can do one of the two options for your Online Learning Activity.

1.   Choose and focus on one specific textual detail from “Paul's Case” and write an analysis of 300 words. For example, Paul's outfit, his artistic taste, and his estrangement from the “realities” he lives in. **You should incorporate quoted passages from Cather’s text or make specific references to key scenes in the fiction.**

2.  Watch the documentary of Sigmund Freud posted on the Week 3 Introduction. Write an analysis of 300 words that considers the relationship between psychoanalysis and storytelling.  In your analysis, you have to use concrete examples from the assigned texts we have read (*The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* and/or “Paul’s Case”) to support your argument.

**Quiz:** Finish **Quiz #2 NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 23.**

**WEEK FOUR** **(09/24/12 - 09/30/12): Setting the story: situate the characters**

**Reading**:

1. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper”
2. Xi Xi, “A Woman Like Me”

**Discussion Forum**:

For this week's discussion forum, **you have to have a minimum of two postings.** **Choose one topic from topics 1-3 (topics on "The Yellow Wallpaper") and post a response. And choose another topic from topics 4-6 (topics on "A Woman Like Me") and post your second response.** And of course, you can have multiple postings, but your postings definitely have to cover two texts. **Each response has to be a paragraph of 200 words or more.**

**Online Learning Activity:** **Thinking Paper #1 Due by 11:59 pm on Tuesday, October 2. You can find “Thinking Essay Topics and Due Date” tab under WEEK 4 Unit. The assignment sheet with instructions and topics for thinking essay #1 is also located at the Doc Sharing tab under the category of “Paper Topics.”**

**WEEK FIVE (10/01/12 - 10/07/12):** **Occupy Wall Street**

**Reading:**

1. Herman Melville, “Bartleby, the Scrivener”
2. Read all the websites referred in the Lecture Notes.

**Discussion Forum**:

**For Discussion Forum, you must have a minimum of two postings and EACH posting needs to have a minimum of 250 words** (If the posting looks too short, I will cut and paste your posting on the MS word document to see if you fulfill the requirement). After two postings of 250 words, if you have additional postings, you do not have to worry about the word count.Answer one of the topics in Discussion Forum and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. **The due date for your original response is October 5 (Friday) at 11:59pm.** Then, you should post a response to one of your classmates' postings **by October 7 (Sunday) at 11:59pm. Remember, your response also needs to have a minimum of 250 words, which means that you cannot write "I agree with you" and "I like what you say." Instead, you should try to help your classmates to extend, complicate, and refine their ideas.**

**Quiz**: Finish **Quiz #3** to be completed NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 7.

**WEEK SIX (10/08/12 - 10/14/12)**: **The Social Underclass**

**Reading**:

1. Gustave Flaubert, “A Simple Heart”
2. Nikolai Gogol, “The Overcoat”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Online Learning Activity**: Write an analysis of 300 words to discuss the differences in the characterization of Felicite and Akaky. Submit your paragraph to the Drop Box.

Quiz: **Quiz #4** to be completed NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 14.

**WEEK SEVEN** **(10/15/12 - 10/21/12): A stranger to one’s homeland, an outsider to one’s own race**

**Reading**: Albert Camus, “The Guest”

 James Baldwin, “Sonny’s Blues”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

Quiz: **Quiz #5 to be completed NO LATER THAN 11:59 PM on Sunday, October 21.**

**WEEK EIGHT** **(10/22/12 - 10/28/12): Perspectivism and Irony**

**Reading:** Clarice Lispector, “The Smallest Woman in the World”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Online Learning Activity**: **Thinking Essay #2 DUE.** You have to submit the paper to the Drop Box no later than 11:59 PM on Sunday, October 28.

**WEEK NINE** **(10/29/12 - 11/04/12): Tradition vs. Modernity**

**Reading**: Lu Xun, “A Madman’s Diary”

 Lu Xun, “New Year’s Sacrifice”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Online Learning Activity**: Use Lu Xun’s short stories to refer back to the definition of character as “case study” at the very beginning of the course. Considering the bigger political agenda Lu Xun has in his writings (i.e. to criticize tradition), discuss the specific ways his conception of “character” differs from or shares similarities from Stevenson’s characterization of Mr. Hyde/Dr. Jekyll. Write an analysis of 300 words and submit it to the Drop Box.

**Quiz**: Finish **Quiz #6** no later than 11:59 PM on Sunday, November 4.

**WEEK TEN (11/05/12 – 11/11/12)**: **Gothic Convention (I): History and Memory**

**Reading**:

1. Williams Faulkner “A Rose for Emily”
2. Flannery O’Connor “A Good Man is Hard to Find”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Online Learning Activity:** Read the PDF document “The Southern Gothic Literary Tradition” posted on Doc Sharing tab. Then **choose one quote** either from Faulkner and O’Connor and **analyze how** this quote contains the elements of Southern Gothic. Submit an analysis of 300 words to the Drop Box.

**Quiz:** Finish **Quiz #7** no later than 11:59 PM on Sunday, November 11.

**WEEK ELEVEN**: **(11/12/12 - 11/18/12):** **Gothic Convention: Edgar Allen Poe**

**Reading**:

1. Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher”
2. Poe, “The Black Cat” and “The Cask of Amontillado” (The second group needs to present “The Black Cat” and “The Cask of Amontillado” together).

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Online Learning Activity:** Compare Poe’s gothic fictions with the Southern Gothic stories we have read. Write a short paragraph of 300 words to discuss the similarities and differences between Poe’s gothic stories and the stories of Faulkner and O’Connor. You should include quotations in your analysis.

**Quiz: Quiz #8 to be completed NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm on Sunday, November 18.**

**WEEK TWELVE (11/19/12 - 11/26/12)**: **Truth and Falsity**

**Reading**: Ryunosuke Akutagawa, “In the Grove” & “Rashomon”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Online Learning Activity:**  Watch the film *Rashomon* posted on the Webliography tab. Compare Akutagawa’s original texts with Kurosawa’s film, and look at specific details in narrative structure, characterization, tonality, setting, themes, and ending. Focus on ONE aspect and discuss how Kurosawa’s work adheres to and/or differ from Akutagawa’s texts simultaneously. Write an analysis of 300 words and submit your analysis to the Drop Box.

\*\* No Quiz because of Thanksgiving Break.

**WEEK THIRTEEN (11/26/12 - 12/02/12): Modernism**

**Reading**:

1. Chekhov, “The Lady with the Little Dog”
2. Joyce, “The Dead”

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

Online Learning Activity: Read the introduction of modernism in Lecture Notes. And write a paragraph of how both Joyce’s and Chekhov’s modernist approaches redefine the notion of “character,” especially compared to the idea that an individual character is a “case study” as proposed by psychoanalysis and criminal science. Use specific textual evidence, quotations for instance, in your answer. Post a paragraph of 300 words in the DROP BOX.

**Quiz: Quiz #9 to be completed NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm on Sunday, December 2.**

**WEEK FOURTEEN (12/03/12 - 12/09/12):** **Becoming Animal**

**Reading:** Franz Kafka, *Metamorphosis*

**Discussion Forum**: Answer one of the suggested questions and respond to it in a brief paragraph of 250 words. Do not forget to respond also to one of your fellow classmate’s postings.

**Quiz: Quiz #10 to be completed NO LATER THAN 11:59 pm on Sunday, December 9.**

\*\*\*\*FINAL PAPER DUE IN THE DROP BOX NO LATER THAN 11:59PM ON 12/14/12\*\*\*\*\*