

School of Social Sciences and Humanities



English 206
Introduction to the Short Story
Fall 2026

3 Credits

Course Outline

INSTRUCTOR	Kirsten Madsen, B.A., M.F.A.	OFFICE HOURS	By Zoom, on request
OFFICE	n/a	CLASSROOM	Online class
E-MAIL	kmadsen@yukonu.ca	CLASS TIME	Thursdays 4-7 PM (Zoom sessions will be held 4 – 5:30 PM)
TELEPHONE	(867) 668-8770 SSSH Office	CRN	202601 10065
		DATES	Sept 3 – Dec 8
SSH School office, email: Ayamdigut Campus A2501, sssh@yukonu.ca			

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a comparative survey of modern short stories. Emphasis will be on close critical reading of the genre. Students will explore narrative techniques, structure, voice and storytelling. Issues such as gender, class, ethnicity, and nationality will be explored, as well as experimentation with different critical approaches. Through critical reading, discussion, and creative exercises, students will gain a deeper understanding of short fiction and improve their own writing.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisite(s):

Three credits of first-year English composition or literature (e.g., English 100 or 101) or equivalent.

EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

For information about course transferability please refer to the BC Transfer Guide at <https://www.bctransferguide.ca/> or contact the School of Social Sciences and Humanities office at (867) 668-8770.

Students are reminded that it is always the receiving institution that determines whether a course is acceptable as an applicable, equivalent course or if it may be transferred to their program for credit. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

With conscientious effort, upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to

- explain the origins and development of the short story
- have compared stories by writers from a wide range of nationalities and cultures
- be able to describe and recognize the formal characteristics of the short story such as plot, character, point of view, setting, symbol, and theme
- demonstrate the basic methods of literary analysis and criticism
- be able to analyze literature with attention to issues of gender, class, and ethnicity
- have developed and honed their writing and analytical skills by presenting organized, thoughtful, and well-written essays and oral reports

COURSE FORMAT

Delivery format

This course is delivered in a blended format, combining Zoom lectures and discussions once a week with online delivery and writing tasks on Moodle. There will be Zoom discussions most weeks during class time Thursdays 4:00 – 5:30. Access to a computer (with audio and video capability) and internet access is important. For the most part English 206 involves readings, Zoom discussions, online discussions, and written assignments.

Expectations

Each week there will be readings to do, taking approximately 2 hours, or longer depending on your reading speed. Try to read each story twice. We will then discuss these readings for an hour or so in class each week. Participation in these Zoom discussions is an important part of your course grade. There will also be online journal and Moodle discussion postings to write, alongside longer assignments (an essay, presentation and creative project) throughout the term.

You will need to visit the course Moodle site weekly prior to class time and participate in online activities and discussions as assigned and scheduled.

Reading and preparation should be done prior to scheduled class discussion forums online each week. Meetings with the instructor to discuss individual work and progress will be held over Zoom. Consultation with the instructor and use of the library and writing coaches are strongly recommended.

EVALUATION

Attendance and Participation

Discussion and participation are particularly important in English 206 and students are expected to attend Zoom classes and contribute each week to the discussion, and also to participate in online discussions regularly by weekly deadlines. Students are expected to contribute to the learning community through constructive discussion of readings and peer posts.

Assignments

The written assignments for this course consist of **a creative story project and a critical literary essay** of five to seven pages. You will submit a topic proposal for your essay to be approved by the instructor. In addition, each student will produce a **class presentation on course literature**, providing context and discussion points for the class. Each student will also submit **four reading journal** entries over the semester as well as contribute to **discussion forums** on Moodle.

You will also be graded on contributions to **in-class discussions** during the term.

Assignments		
Creative story project	25%	55%
Critical literary essay	25%	
Topic proposal for critical literary essay	5%	
Course readings class presentation		15%
Reading Journal & Discussion Forums on Moodle		20%
Class Participation & Contributions to Learning Community		10%
Total		100%

*Note on Submitting Assignments and Late Assignments

Assignments are to be uploaded to our Moodle course site by 11 PM on the due date in Microsoft Word format. Be certain to click the submit button and accept the submission statement. After the due date, the paper will be considered late and will be deducted 5% every day for a maximum of 3 days. After this point, assignments will no longer be accepted.

***A note on sources:** *All writing and ideas expressed in this class are meant to reflect your own thoughts, using the literature to back up your ideas. Using A.I. LLMs for brainstorming shuts down this thinking process before it begins. You must use text-based evidence for the papers you write: that is, you must cite the original piece of literature you are using. Essays or forum posts written using AI (like Chat GPT) will not be accepted as they will not meet assignment intentions. If you have questions about a source you're considering using, just ask me, the writing coaches, or the library staff! Please cite any texts you refer to using APA style. Failure to adequately disclose AI use will be considered plagiarism and result in a zero grade for the assignment.*

TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

All readings and class resources will be posted on Moodle.

Assignments will be submitted on Moodle in Microsoft Word. Access to a computer (with audio and video capability) and internet access is important.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Students may officially withdraw from a course or program without academic penalty up until two-thirds of the course contact hours have been completed. Specific withdrawal dates vary, and students should become familiar with the withdrawal dates of their program. See withdrawal information at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates: www.yukonu.ca/admissions/important-dates

Refunds may be available. See the Refund policy and procedures at www.yukonu.ca/admissions/money-matters

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Plagiarism occurs when a student submits work for credit that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, without citing the source from which the material is taken, including material generated by an A.I. LLM. Plagiarism can be the deliberate use of a whole piece of work, but more frequently it occurs when students fail to acknowledge and document sources from which they have taken material according to an accepted manuscript style (e.g., APA, MLA, etc.). Except with explicit permission of the instructor, resubmitting work which has previously received credit is also considered plagiarism. Students who plagiarize material for

assignments will receive a mark of zero (F) on the assignment and may fail the course. Plagiarism may also result in dismissal from a program of study or the University.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures (updated bi-annually) for further details about academic standing, and student rights and responsibilities: www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon University Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon University website at www.yukonu.ca/policies/academic-regulations

It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations by contacting the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC): LearningAssistanceCentre@yukonu.ca.

TOPIC OUTLINE – Introduction to the Short Story

Week / Module	Readings and Assignments
1. Introductions, expectations + a taste of story	All readings and assignments posted on Moodle (journals and Moodle discussions 20%)
2. How do short stories function?	
3. Short fiction: history and range	
4. On character and point of view: Who does the story see?	Course Readings Class Presentations begin (15%)
5. On conflict and plot: How does the story move us?	
6. On time and structure: Where does the story take us?	
7. Reading (!) Week	
8. On style: syntax, diction, rhetoric and tone: How does the story use language, imagery and sentences?	
9. On theme: what does the story care about?	Creative Project Due Nov 1 (25%)
10. Short story containers: flash fiction	
11. Short story containers: experiments with form	Topic Proposal for Critical Literary Essay due Nov 15 (5%)
12. On reading stories: gender, class, culture	
13. On reading stories: critical approaches	
14. Crafting a Conclusion: Final Class	Critical Literary Essay due Dec 1 (25%)

GRADING SYSTEM FOR ENGLISH ESSAYS

GRADE	Grade Point Value	Yukon College %	ESSAY DESCRIPTION
A+	4	95-100	EXCELLENT: An A paper is of outstanding quality in almost all respects. It has a clear, original, and engaging thesis that responds thoughtfully to the assignment. The essay is logically, coherently, and effectively organized. The author uses appropriate and compelling evidence to support the thesis with correct referencing and documentation.
A	4	86-94	The paragraphs are unified—internally and externally—coherent, and have vivid topic sentences. The paragraphs are connected with smooth transitions.
A-	3.7	80-85	The prose is clear, smooth, and consistently grammatical. The essay is mechanically perfect or nearly so.
B+	3.5	75-79	GOOD: The B paper is an above average performance but falls short of the A paper in some significant way. While the thesis statement is good, it may have some minor problems, may be difficult to find, or may lack originality and insight.
B	3	70-74	There may be a problem in organization or the order of the argument at one or two points in the essay. Evidence is appropriate and supports the thesis and is correctly referenced and documented. Although the paper may have minor weaknesses in paragraphing, it will contain evidence of the writer's ability to organize information into unified and coherent units.
B-	2.7	65-69	There may be issues of style. Text may be wordy, repetitive, vague, overly formal, or too informal. It may have passive structure, pronoun errors, or modifier errors. It may lack sentence variation or parallelism. There may be mechanical and grammatical errors sprinkled throughout the text.
C+	2.5	62-64	SATISFACTORY: A C paper has a thesis, but the thesis may not be stated, may be poorly stated, may be commonplace, or may not deal completely with the assignment. The presentation of ideas and evidence may be disorganized, meandering, or otherwise lacking in logical coherence. Evidence may be lacking, inappropriate, or inconsistently used; it may have significant referencing errors.
C	2	58-61	The essay will be organized and paragraphed well enough to allow the reader to move through it with relative ease, although there may be some disjointedness and lack of focus. The paper will generally use language accurately.
C-	1.7	55-57	The essay may contain errors in sentences (fragments, run-ons, and comma splices), in punctuation, and in usage; however, the errors are not so frequent or large to distract the reader from the content of the paper. In an essay that might otherwise be a B, sentence and grammatical errors may warrant a C grade.
D	1	50-54	MEETS MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS: This essay may be missing a thesis or indicate serious problems in formulating the thesis. The essay may miss the basic demands of the given assignment. There are serious problems in the essay's organization and development; the essay may seem chaotic at times. Evidence may be missing or inappropriate. The essay may indicate definite weaknesses in analytical thinking, and ideas may be underdeveloped. The writer's control of language may be uncertain. Usually, the D paper indicates a combination of problems: serious errors in reasoning, little or no development of ideas, lack of control of language, and many errors. Serious and frequent errors in usage, sentence structure, and mechanics interfere with the essay's readability.
F	0	Under 50	UNSATISFACTORY This essay is unacceptable because it contains plagiarized material, shows a complete misunderstanding of the assignment, or the writing fails to meet the basic communication requirements of standard written English.