

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Voyage: Spring 2014

Discipline: English Literature

ENSP 1559-101: International Short Story

Division: Lower

Faculty Name: John N. Serio

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

As a form of literature, the short story is among the richest. With its sharp focus, usually on one character or incident, the short story provides lasting insight and enduring enjoyment. As we voyage around the world, we will read stories from different countries that will serve as excellent portals into the lives, interrelationships, and issues facing local inhabitants. We will explore the social, political, religious, and economic forces at work in the respective cultures and the impact local customs have in defining people's position and role in society. These stories, often by internationally acclaimed authors, will represent as many countries on our voyage as possible. We will approach the short story as a distinct art form, one that gives shape both to the inner life and to the outer reality. They will learn to examine the various functions of setting, style, characterization, point of view, symbol, and theme as each contributes to the artistry of expression. Students will sharpen their critical thinking and writing skills through class discussion and expository essays.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To teach students an appreciation of the pleasures and significance of short fiction.

To help students gain insight into the various countries on our voyage by reading a wide range of international writers from our ports of call.

To explore how the short story enables readers not only to penetrate deeper into themselves, but also to step outside of themselves to appreciate and understand others.

To demonstrate how the elements of fiction—plot, setting, style, characterization, point of view, symbol, irony, and theme—may be used to elucidate both the meaning and the artistry of the short story.

To sharpen students' critical thinking and analytical skills through discussion and expository writing.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

AUTHOR: Barbara H. Solomon, Editor

TITLE: *Other Voices, Other Vistas: Short Stories from Africa, China, India, Japan, and Latin America*

PUBLISHER: Signet Classic

ISBN #: 0-451-52840-9

DATE/EDITION: 2002

AUTHOR: Daniel Halpern, Editor

TITLE: *The Art of the Tale: An International Anthology of Contemporary Short Stories*

PUBLISHER: Penguin

ISBN #: 978-0-14-007949-4

DATE/EDITION: 1987

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Key: Voices=Other Voices, Other Vistas; Tale=Art of the Tale; PDF=In Course Folder

A1 January 12 Introduction The Elements of Fiction (PDF)

W. Somerset Maugham (England), "The Appointment in Samarra" (PDF)

A2 January 14 US & Canada	Woody Allen, “The Kuglemass Episode” (PDF) Margaret Atwood (Canada), “Rape Fantasies” (PDF)
A3 January 16 Japan	Kobe Abe, “The Magic Chalk” (<i>Voices</i> 315–328) Sawako Ariyoshi, “The Tomoshihi” (<i>Voices</i> 329–347)
<i>January 17 Hilo, U.S.</i>	
A4 January 19	Yuko Tsushima, “The Silent Traders” (<i>Voices</i> 413–424) Yukio Mishima, “Patriotism” (<i>Tale</i> 459–475)
A5 January 22	Yasunari Kawabata, “The Moon on the Water” (<i>Voices</i> 348–359) Yasunari Kawabata, “One Arm” (<i>Tale</i> 351–363)
A6 January 25 China	Wang Anyi, “The Destination” (<i>Voices</i> 115–140) Wang Meng, “Kite Streamers” (<i>Voices</i> 156–180)
A7 January 27	Chen Rong, “Regarding the Problem of Newborn Piglets in Winter” (<i>Voices</i> 181–194) Lu Wenfu, “The Man from a Peddlers’ Family” (<i>Voices</i> 195–213)
<i>January 29–February 3 Yokohama, Transit, Kobe, Japan</i>	
A8 February 4 Viet Nam	Tim O’Brien, <i>Going After Cacciato</i> (selections) Ch. 13 “Falling Through a Hole in the Road to Paris” (PDF) Ch. 14 “Upon Almost Winning the Silver Star” (PDF) Ch. 15 “Tunneling Toward Paris” (PDF) <i>from</i> Ch. 17 “Light at the End of the Tunnel to Paris” (PDF) Ch. 31 “Night March” (PDF)
<i>February 6–11 Shanghai, Transit, Hong Kong, China</i>	
A9 February 12	Tim O’Brien, “The Things They Carried” (PDF) Duong Thu Huong, “Reflections of Spring” (PDF)
<i>February 14–19 Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam</i>	
A10 February 20	T. Coraghessan Boyle, “Greasy Lake” (<i>Tale</i> 133–140) Laurie Moore, “How to Become a Writer” (PDF)
<i>February 22–23 Singapore</i>	
A11 February 24 India	Anita Desai, “Pigeons at Daybreak” (<i>Voices</i> 219–228) Mahasweta Devi, “Dhowli” (<i>Voices</i> 229–257)
<i>February 27–March 4 Rangoon, Burma (Myanmar)</i>	
A12 March 5	Ruth Praver Jhabvala, “The Interview” (<i>Voices</i> 258–271) Khushwant Singh, “The Wog” (<i>Voices</i> 291–310)
A13 March 7	R. K. Narayan, “A Horse and Two Goats” (<i>Voices</i> 272–290) R. K. Narayan, “Naga” (<i>Tale</i> 502–508)
<i>March 9–14 Cochin, India</i>	
A14 March 15	In-Class Essay/Examination
A15 March 18 US/Nigeria	Ernest Hemingway, “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” (PDF) Chinua Achebe, “Civil Peace” (<i>Voices</i> 27–34) Chinua Achebe, “The Sacrificial Egg” (<i>Tale</i> 5–8)
A16 March 20 Kenya Zimbabwe	Ngugi wa Thiong’o, “A Meeting in the Dark” (<i>Voices</i> 95–110) Charles Mungoshi, “Who Will Stop the Dark?” (<i>Voices</i> 74–94)
<i>March 21 Port Louis, Mauritius</i>	
A17 March 23 South Africa	Nadine Gordimer, “Africa Emergent” (<i>Voices</i> 35–51) Nadine Gordimer, “Once Upon a Time” (PDF)
A18 March 26	Bessie Head, “The Collector of Treasures” (<i>Voices</i> 52–73) Zoë Wicomb, “You Can’t Get Lost in Cape Town” (PDF)

March 28–April 2 Cape Town, South Africa

A19 April 3 Ghana Ama Ata Aidoo, “A Gift from Somewhere” (PDF)
Ama Ata Aidoo, “Nowhere Cool” (PDF)

A20 April 5 Morocco Paul Bowles (U.S.), “A Distant Episode” (*Tale* 124–132)
Abdeslam Boulaich, “Cowardice” (*Tale* 122–123)
Mohammed Mrabet, “Doctor Safi” (*Tale* 481–487)

A21 April 8 Argentina Julio Cortázar, “Bestiary” (*Tale* 230–240)
Peru Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru), “The Challenge” (*Tale* 402–410)

April 10–14 Takoradi and Tema, Ghana

A22 April 15 Ireland William Trevor (Ireland), “Beyond the Pale” (*Tale* 711–729)
Edna O’Brien (Ireland), “Sister Imelda” (*Tale* 519–532)

A23 April 17 England V. S. Pritchett, “The Saint” (*Tale* 612–621)
Graham Greene, “Two Gentle People” (*Tale* 341–346)

A24 April 20 United States Tobias Wolff, “Hunters in the Snow” (*Tale* 774–785)
Richard Wright, “Big Black Good Man” (*Tale* 786–795)

April 23–27 Casablanca, Morocco

A25 April 28 A Day Finals: In-Class Essay/Examination

May 2 *Arrive in Southampton, England*

Note: There will be three out-of-class essays (including the Field Lab), format and dates to be announced, and possibly pop quizzes.

FIELD WORK

Friday, 14 February, Ho Chi Min City, Viet Nam: The Củ Chi Tunnels and the Vietnam War

Having learned about the Vietnam War through class readings from the American perspective, students in this Field Lab will experience firsthand aspects of the conflict from a Vietnamese perspective. They will travel to an immense matrix of underground tunnels in Củ Chi, located about 25 miles northwest of the former Saigon. This network of mostly hand-dug tunnels—estimated to cover nearly 150 miles and to stretch from Saigon to the Cambodian border—served as a base for Viet Cong operations in the South. Besides concealing guerrilla fighters, the tunnels contained supply routes for weapons, food, and medicines. The tunnels served as staging areas for strategic attacks, such as the Tet Offensive of 1968, against American and South Vietnamese forces. Students will learn about the unbearable conditions the Viet Cong had to endure in order to survive under these conditions, and they will gain a profound understanding of the ingenuity and unstoppable determination of the Viet Cong.

ACADEMIC OBJECTIVES OF FIELD LAB

1. To enhance the literary accounts we have read in class of the Vietnam conflict with actual, personal experience
2. To reflect on the Vietnam War from both the Vietnamese and American perspectives
3. To develop a cogent and critical written response to the literature about the Vietnam War we have read

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

Since the Field Lab constitutes 20% of the coursework, students will be required to write a critical essay on their experience. In particular, they will be asked to relate what they have witnessed and learned on their Field Lab to their readings. How has the day’s Field Lab enhanced their understanding of the stories about the Vietnam War that they have read? What, in particular, struck them the most and provided insight into, not only the Vietnam War itself, but also the literary expression of it? How well do the American and Vietnam perspectives on the conflict align themselves?

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

- 30% Class participation/attendance/quizzes (the Socratic method of teaching will be employed and students will be encouraged to volunteer their contributions to class discussion and not simply respond when called upon)
- 30% Two in-class essays and/or examinations
- 20% Formal critical essay
- 20% Formal critical essay on Field-Lab Assignment

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

AUTHOR: Kate Figes, Editor
TITLE: *The Penguin Book of International Women's Stories*
PUBLISHER: Penguin Group USA
ISBN #: 9780140261882
DATE/EDITION: 1997

AUTHOR: Daniel Halpern, Editor
TITLE: *Art of the Story: An International Anthology of Contemporary Short Stories*
PUBLISHER: Penguin Group USA
ISBN #: 9780140296389
DATE/EDITION: 2000

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

PDFs of required works will be supplied.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

None

HONOR CODE

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus they bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."