

GSTR 100, STORIES, FALL 2004  
Sections L(11-11:50 MTWF) and Q (2-2:50 MTWF)

Randall Roberts: Office: Frost 107; Office phone: 985-3359  
Office Hours: MWF 9-11 & 1:30-2:00; T 9-11. Other hours by appointment.

**Course Description:**

Encountering Others Through Literature: Reading and responding to narratives, students will engage in social, moral, and religious inquiry. The stories provide opportunities to explore cultural heritage, cultural diversity, gender, race, and ethnicity and include material written by African-Americans and Appalachians and women writers. The readings in this course represent a diverse group of writers and settings to allow us to see the world through the eyes of others who have vastly different experiences from our own. These readings focus on the theme of the personal journey and how various experiences and people shape one's life. Students will respond to the literature in class discussions/presentations and in formal and informal writing.

**Course Goals:**

To develop an appreciation of and respect for the experiences of others, especially in terms of race, gender, and culture.  
To stimulate critical thinking and close reading skills.  
To develop communication skills, including listening, speaking, and writing.  
To introduce campus resources for learning (Hutchins Library, the Teaching and Learning Center, the Computer Center) and useful ideas and habits for learning.

**Texts and Materials:**

Cassill and Baush, Norton Anthology of Short Fiction (Shorter 6th Edition)  
Anita Desai, Clear Light of Day  
Ernest Gaines, A Lesson Before Dying  
Denise Giardina, Storming Heaven  
St. Martin's Handbook  
Journal and writing folders  
A computer disk to backup work

**Reading:**

We will begin the course with the common text, Denise Giardina's Storming Heaven, with its saga of the Appalachian coal mining wars at the turn of the century. Next we will read a number of short stories to bring more diversity of themes, settings, and writers' voices to our discussions. Other short stories will be interspersed throughout the semester. Our second novel, A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines, deals with social and racial injustice during the 1940s in the Southern United States. Finally, Anita Desai's A Clear Light of Day, set in New Delhi, India, of the 1960s, reflects back on the political issues of the 1940s at the end of World War II, with the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. Quizzes can be expected over any reading assignment.

### **Computer Policy:**

Since this course has a discussion format, students will rarely need computers in class, except for days scheduled for library research or peer review workshops or in case a student wants to use the computer for a presentation. Students may take notes on the computer if their use is not distracting to others and does not interfere with their own engagement in class discussion. Students may not be networked during class except for on-line research sessions. Students who play computer games or engage in other computer activities not related to the current class activity will lose the privilege of opening their computers during class.

### **Writing:**

1. Reader's Journal: Students will write directed responses to their readings. Entries might include a) questions about the stories, b) important issues the readings raise, c) comparisons between stories, d) responses to ideas or questions raised in class discussion, or d) observations about personal experiences that resonate with a particular passage or event. Some journal entries will also explore convocations and campus activities, especially as they relate to course themes. I will make specific assignments, and students will be asked to read their journal responses during class discussions. Entries should be legible and dated.

2. Exams: Students will write in-class midterm and final essay exams.

3. Essays: Students will write an initial diagnostic/benchmark essay and four additional essays that deal with specific topics and aspects of the texts we read. The writing process is important as well as the final product; preliminary writing, multiple drafts, peer review workshops, and a presentation copy will be required for each essay assignment.

4. Writing folders: Students should keep all written work in a folder after it is graded and returned. At the end of the term, each student will submit this folder with revisions as well as graded essays and also a letter of reflection about processes, difficulties and achievements in writing.

5. Students will participate in library assignments that familiarize them with research strategies and resources of Hutchins library.

### **Other Requirements:**

There will be two required conferences with the instructor for review of the student's work. **The first should be between Sept. 7 and Oct. 5, and the second should be between Oct. 18 & Nov. 23.** (Specifics and requirements of these conferences will be announced in class.) I also encourage students to stop by my office early in the semester to share ideas and concerns about the readings and assignments, campus life, life in general, and to workshop assigned writing. Throughout the semester, students are encouraged to confer with me during office hours as they feel a need.

### **Attendance and Class Participation:**

This course will follow a discussion format. Participation in small group and class discussions will be evaluated on the willingness to share ideas with others and the quality and thoughtfulness of listening and responding. Since participation is an integral part of this course, attendance and careful preparation for each class meeting are essential. A student who must miss class because of illness or a family crisis should contact me as soon as possible and may make up work missed. Students who miss a class for any reason are responsible for all material covered. Missing more than three classes will result in the final grade being lowered, and missing more than six classes will result in automatic failure.

### **Grading Policies:**

Your grade for this course will be based on a combination of class participation, small group work (research and presentations/discussions), quizzes, formal and informal writing, two exams, and your final portfolio. Late assignments will be penalized. Students must complete all major course requirements (essays, exams, and presentations) to pass the course.

College-wide definitions of grades are as follows. They also include plus and minus grades:

An "A" grade signifies consistently outstanding achievement in the course.

A "B" grade reflects work of good to very good quality. Work at this level often has outstanding characteristics but is not consistently outstanding throughout the course.

A "C" denotes that the student has attained an acceptable level of competence. The student has demonstrated a basic understanding of the course material and abilities sufficient to proceed to more advanced courses in the area.

"D" work is minimally adequate. A "D" raises serious concern about the readiness of a student to continue in related course work.

"F" work is unsatisfactory and unworthy of credit.

Grades will be averaged using the following percentages:

Class participation	10%
Quizzes and journal entries	10%
Group library research assignments and oral presentations	20%
Four essays(process and product) and course folder	40%
Midterm exam	10%
Final exam	10%

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(Assignments should be read by the date noted.)

- Sept.
- 1 W Introduction to course and texts.
- 3 F In-class diagnostic essay.
- 6 M Giardina, Storming Heaven, chaps. 1-4. Journal entry is due. Distribute handouts on journal and discussion topics & study guide for the novel. Discussion of Lexington Herald Leader photo essay on coalmining in Appalachia.
- 7 T St. Martin's Handbook (SMH), chapter 64, "Writing for the Humanities," pp. 870-900. SMH chaps. 1-4, overview of the writing process, including the establishment of the thesis statement; in-class discussion of introduction to SMH.
- 8 W Storming Heaven, chaps. 5-9. Journal entry is due.
- 10 F Storming Heaven, chaps. 10-17. Journal entry is due.
- 13 M Storming Heaven, chaps. 18-25 & Afterword. Journal entry is due.
- 14 T Meet in library for introduction to library resources. In preparation, read SMH "Using Research and Doing Documentation," Part IV. Pay close attention to chaps. 16, 17, & 18, on quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, plagiarism, and documentation-- parenthetical citations and works cited.
- 15 W Meet in the library to continue library work that focuses on political issues in Appalachia as presented in Storming Heaven.
- 17 F Norton Anthology of Short Fiction (NASF), Chopin, "The Story of an Hour" and Short Story Packet (SSP), Still, "The Run for the Elbertas"
- 20 M Small group oral presentations/discussions of library research on Storming Heaven.
- 21 T Review carefully SMH writing process, focusing especially on chapter 4, "Revising and Editing," including the thesis statement, and chapter 5, "Paragraphs," including transitions. Also review "The 20 Most Common Writing Errors" in the introduction. Pay close attention to chapters 39 and 40. In-class peer review workshops of essay #1.

- 22 W SSP, Hurston, "Conscience of the Court." Journal entry is due.
- 24 F Presentation copy of essay #1 is due and SSP, Salih, "A Handful of Dates."
- 27 M NASF, Olsen, "Tell Me a Riddle." Journal entry is due.
- 28 T Review SMH chap. 5, "Constructing Paragraphs," focusing especially on topic sentences and transitions. Also read SMH chaps. 6, 10, & 68. Also review SMH chaps. 33 & 34, "Verbs." Journal entry is due (convocation).
- 29 W NASF, Walker, "Everyday Use" and Joyce, "Araby." Journal entry is due.  
Oct.
- 1 F SSP, Gordimer, "The Bridegroom" and Ogot, "The Green Leaves."  
Typed, revised journal entry is due.
- 4 M NASF, Cather, "Paul's Case." Journal entry is due.
- 5 T SMH, Parts VII & VIII, "Sentences." Review of journal writing. Journal entry is due (convocation).
- 6 W NASF, Mason, "Shiloh," and LeGuin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas." Journal Entry is due.
- 8 F NASF, Baldwin, "Sonny's Blues." Journal entry is due. Bring to class Gaines, A Lesson Before Dying.
- 11 M Midterm Reading Period; no classes.
- 12 T Midterm Reading Period; no classes.
- 13 W Midterm exam.
- 15 F Gaines, A Lesson Before Dying (LBD), chaps. 1-6. Journal entry is due.
- 18 M LBD, chap. 7-16. Journal entry is due.
- 19 T Review student writing samples in SMH: introduction, chap. 4, chapter 64. Also review the green pages, chaps. 20-23.
- 20 W Mountain Day; no classes.
- 22 F LBD, chap. 17-26. Journal entry is due. Introduce library research and oral presentation/discussion assignment on LBD. Schedule film version of LBD.
- 25 M LBD, chap. 27-31. Journal entry is due. Assign essay #2.

- 26 T Review SMH chaps. 16 – 18. Meet in library for research work on LBD.
- 27 W NASF, Atwood, “Death by Landscape.”
- 29 F Small group oral presentations/discussions of library research on Lesson Before Dying.
- Nov.  
1 M NASF, Tan, “Rules of the Game.” Journal entry is due. Introduction to small group work on selected short stories.
- 2 T Presentation copy of essay #2 is due. Bring journals and writing folders to class for review.
- 3 W Small group work on selected short stories: in-class presentations and discussion.
- 5 F Small group work on selected short stories: in-class presentations and discussion.
- 8 M NASF, Woolf, “Kew Gardens.” Journal entry is due. In-class introduction to Desai, Clear Light of Day.
- 9 T Desai, Clear Light of Day, part I. Journal entry is due.
- 10 W In-class discussion of selected student essays from previous classes. In-class viewing of selected parts of the film Ghandi and recordings of sitar music to connect with Clear Light of Day.
- 12 F Clear Light of Day, part II. Journal entry is due.
- 15 M Clear Light of Day, part III . Journal entry is due.
- 16 T Meet in library to research political issues, historical and contemporary, found in Clear Light of Day.
- 17 W Clear Light of Day, part IV. Journal entry is due (11/18, convo. sitar music).
- 18 F Small group oral presentations/discussions of library research on Clear Light of Day.
- 22 M Presentation copy of essay #3 is due. SMH, chaps. 48 & 49 “Commas” & “Semicolons,” chap. 52, “Quotation Marks,” and p. 782, “Dashes.”
- 23 T NASF, Faulkner, “The Bear,” parts I and II.
- 24 W & 26 F Thanksgiving Holiday
- 29 M NASF, Faulkner, “The Bear,” parts III, IV, and V. Journal entry is due.

30 T NASF, O'Connor, "A Good Man Is Hard to Find." Journal entry is due.  
Dec.  
1 W Small group presentations/discussions of selected short stories.  
3 F Small group presentations/discussions of selected short stories.  
6 M Presentation copy of essay #4 is due.  
7 T Review SMH chapter 68, "Writing Essay Exams," and chapter 69, "A Writing Portfolio."  
8 W Course evaluation. Focus on end-of-semester details and course writing folder.  
10 F Final Exam Reading Day.  
13-16 FINAL EXAMS