

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **The Storyteller's Art I: Introduction to Narrative - Loss and Tragedy**

Course Number and Section:

ENGLISH

1027F 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

We tell stories to make sense of what it means to be human. In fact, even the most outrageous and imaginative narratives are often inspired by human desires, fears and the rich array of emotions that define us. Put another way, when we read, watch and/or listen to stories we come to better understand ourselves and those who are different from us. To study a story, then, is also to engage with the practices and beliefs of various cultures, past, present, and future.

But stories are also constructions that have been carefully shaped and ordered in particular ways. Plays are often told over five acts; novels are regularly divided into chapters; and certain poems, such as sonnets, come with fixed line lengths. To ignore the form, or what we might call the architecture of a story, is to miss an essential part of its meaning.

This course invites you to engage with a wide range of stories as told in novels, poems, plays and film relating to the theme of tragedy and loss. Why do we read, view and listen to stories of loss? How does the study of tragedy equip us to better understand the human condition? How are stories of suffering used to engage with and expose major cultural concerns surrounding racial discrimination and gender-based violence? These are just three of the overarching questions that we will explore in this iteration of the Storyteller's Art I.

Learning Outcomes:

- Improve critical reading and writing in ways that will enable success in a wide variety of University courses
- Further appreciation of diverse cultural productions and practices
- Develop an interdisciplinary perspective on a variety of narrative media: for example, the poem, the novel and the film
- Become capable of identifying, analyzing and interpreting basic narrative elements, such as plot, character, point of view, theme, setting, imagery, diction, tone, figures of speech, and tropes

- Write logically and persuasively in fluent, standard English using the appropriate conventions for scholarly-critical writing

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Shelley, Frankenstein Ed. Macdonald. Broadview (paperback)

Morrison, The Bluest Eye. Vintage. (paperback)

The remaining texts are available online or as PDFs.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Close Reading Assignment Annotations and Response	09/24/24	10
Essay 1	10/24/24	10
Essay 2	11/21/24	15
Group Project	12/02/24	15
Final Exam	TBA	35
Participation	Ongoing	15

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Thursday, August 15, 2024