

MIDSTATE COLLEGE
411 W. NORTHMOOR RD. PEORIA, IL 61614
(309) 692-4092 – (800) 251-4299
Winter 2018

Course: ENG 340: The American Short Story

Credit: 4 Quarter Hours

Method of Delivery: Online

Course Description:

A study of the shaping and development of the modern short story as a literary form by American writers, from the early 1800s to the present. Analysis will include determining literary meaning, form, and value.

Prerequisite: ENG 117 Advanced Composition

Text:

Great American Short Stories. Eds. Wallace Stegner and Mary Stegner. New York: Random House, 1985. Print.

Topics:

1. Development of the genre through historical contexts
2. Analysis and criticism of authors' purpose and style
3. Short story tools: allegory, symbolism, point of view, language, and tone
4. Short story elements: plot, character, exposition, climax, denouement, resolution, and theme

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to do the following:

1. Recognize some key American literary criticism periods.
2. Develop an appreciation of the American short story from the vantage point of these periods.
3. Develop an appreciation of the American short story through the works of diversified authors.
4. Demonstrate an understanding and application of standard short story elements.
5. Recognize and interpret an author's theme, purpose, voice, point of view, and style.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of a short story in its historical context.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the genre through critical thinking skills.

Midstate Grading scale:

90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
0 - 59	F

Midstate Plagiarism Policy:

Plagiarism is using another person's words, either by paraphrase or direct quotation, without giving credit to the author(s). Plagiarism can also consist of cutting and pasting material from electronic sources by submitting all or a portion of work for assignment credit. This includes papers, computer programs, music, sculptures, paintings, photographs, etc. authored by another person without explicitly citing the original source(s). These actions violate the trust and honesty expected in academic work. Plagiarism is strictly against the academic policy of Midstate College. Its seriousness requires a measured, forceful response which includes consequences for inappropriate and/or no citation.

In courses containing writing assignments, the College promotes the use of an electronic resource which compares the student's writing against previously submitted papers, journals, periodicals, books, and web pages. Students and instructors can use this service to reduce the incidence of plagiarism. This electronic resource has been found to conform to legal requirements for fair use and student confidentiality. It is able to provide a report to the student indicating the parts of the assignment that match.

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Student Success:

The Office of Student Success is available to students seeking tutoring for individual classes or who need assistance with writing assignments. Information is also available on test taking techniques, how to take notes, developing good study skills, etc. Contact Student Success in Room 218 (in person); (309) 692-4092, extension 2180 (phone); studentsuccess@midstate.edu (email).

Instructor Information:

Dr. Steve Bortolotti

Office: 226

692-4092 - ext. 2260

sbortolotti@midstate.edu

Policies and Procedures:

1. There will be reading assignments every week accompanied by weekly quizzes. Keeping up with the reading is key to student success in the class. Electronic quizzes are automated and will open and close on Monday mornings. Quizzes cannot be made up.
2. A term paper is required. Students must follow Midstate's writing standards for essay writing:
 - Student heading in upper left-hand corner of page 1
 - 1" margins
 - Times New Roman 12 font
 - Black font
 - Page headers starting on page 2
3. Midstate College is currently an APA institution. Students must show a proficiency in APA documentation and citation skills. There is no APA overview or review in this course's lessons, and so students are therefore responsible for their own APA skills.
4. If students know they will miss a deadline, they should plan on asking for an extension in advance. Submission areas close promptly at 8:00 on Monday mornings, unless otherwise noted.
5. Absences do not exempt students from submitting work in on time. The instructor reserves the right to negotiate late submissions with students on a one-on-one basis.
6. If students miss multiple weeks, no matter what the excuse is, they should not expect to be able to make-up assignments.
7. It is the student's responsibility to keep all copies of papers and written assignments turned in for a grade. If a paper or other assignment is lost by the student or the instructor, the student is responsible for providing the instructor with another copy of the paper or assignment. Copies of the papers written in this course should be kept until the student receives his or her final grade for the quarter.
8. Students suspected of plagiarizing will be subject to the penalties outlined in the *Midstate College Student Handbook*.
9. Regarding written work in the class:
 - Drop boxes will be shut after the due dates.
 - The instructor reserves the right to negotiate to accept late work - in special circumstances - on a one-on-one student basis.
 - The instructor will accept assignments, but only after student contacts the instructor first to get clearance. Late papers will be subject to late points.

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Methods of evaluating student performance:

- Week 1 Lecture quiz = 10 points
- 13 Weekly Quizzes on Short Stories @ 15 points each = 195 points
- 5 Discussion Forums @ 10 points each = 50 points
- 3 Response Papers @ 25 points each = 75 points
- Term Paper = 150 points

Instructor's Grading Scale:

Total number of points: 480 points

480 – 432 = A

431 – 384 = B

383 – 336 = C

335 – 288 = D

287 – = F

Weekly Lessons

Week 1: Introduction to the Genre

Topic: Historical context and the short story is part of the emphasis this week, as it is each week.

Readings: Week 1 lecture - A Short History of the American Short Story

Quiz on lecture

Week 2: The Birth of the Genre – Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne

Topics: Language; plot; theme; purpose

Readings: "Rip Van Winkle," "Young Goodman Brown"

Quizzes: "Rip Van Winkle," "Young Goodman Brown"

Discussion Forum #1

Week 3: The American Renaissance – Edgar Allan Poe and Herman Melville

Topics: Language; plot; theme; purpose; Renaissance, Romanticism, Humanism

Readings: "Tell-Tale Heart," "Bartleby the Scrivener"

Quizzes: "Tell-tale Heart," "Bartleby, the Scrivener"

Response Paper #1

Week 4: Realism – Mark Twain and Bret Harte

Topic: The rise of a more realistic vision in American short stories.

Readings: "Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," "Tennessee's" Partner"

Quizzes: "Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County," "Tennessee's" Partner"

Discussion Forum #2

Week 5: Naturalism – O. Henry and Edith Wharton

Topic: Understanding sub-genres, justifying their existence.

Readings: "The Gift of the Magi," "Roman Fever"

Quizzes: "The Gift of the Magi," "Roman Fever"

Week 6: Historical Fiction – Stephen Crane

Topic: A specific type of realism

Readings: "The Open Boat"

Quiz: "The Open Boat"

Response Paper #2

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Week 7: Modernism – James Thurber and John Steinbeck

Topic: A break from literary traditions
Readings: “The Catbird Seat,” “The Snake”
Quizzes: “The Catbird Seat,” “The Snake”
Discussion Forum #3

Week 8: Modernism – John O’Hara

Topic: Further exploration of the break from literary traditions
Readings: “Over the River and through the Wood”
Quiz: “Over the River and through the Wood”
Discussion Forum #4

Week 9: Post-modernism – Toni Morrison

Topic: Post war influences
Readings: “Recitatif”
Quiz: “Recitatif”
Response Paper #3

Week 10: Term Paper

Discussion Forum #5

Week 11: Term Paper

Week 12: Finals Week

Discussion Forum #6

American Literary Movements		
Name of Period	Years	Defining Qualities
Native American		Oral tradition
Colonial	1620-1750	Desire to purify Church of England; journals, histories; focus on God
Enlightenment	1750-1800	Understand the world via reason and deduction, not faith; focus on man; humanism.
Romanticism	1800-1865	Focus on imagination; individual freedom was important; supernatural themes and settings.
Transcendentalism*	1840-1860	Focus on self-reliance and individualism; stressed the divine spirit in all of us; stressed a resistance to institutions; reliance on nature.
Realism/Naturalism	1868-1914	Focus on everyday life and people.
Modernism	1914-1945	Break from literary traditions; formed a new reality; focus on individual struggles and optimism.
Lost Generation, Jazz Age*	1917-1937	Reactions to Prohibition and World War I
Beat Generation	1950-1965	Anti-establishment; revolt against societal prudery and values; non-conformity; hedonistic.
Postmodernism*	1950-Present	Influences: media, technology; nothing is unique - culture endlessly duplicates itself.

* The years assigned to these periods are approximate. Notice how some movements overlap in time.