



Loyola University Chicago
John Felice Rome Center – Fall 2019
English 273: EXPLORING FICTION

Instructor: Elizabeth Geoghegan
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 Office Hours: By appointment, Thursday 930-12am

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This core course will focus on the understanding, appreciation, and criticism of prose fiction. In particular, the class will explore narratives of foreigners and expatriates abroad that grapple with issues such as love, war, race, class, gender, identity, and migration. Through the examination of superlative examples of literature, students will hone their oral and written critical thinking skills and better understand fiction. Through close readings of the texts, the class will emphasize the complexities of narrative language and the diverse points of view and traditions that inspire literary fiction.

Outcome: Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of prose fiction as a means of exploring the human experience and be able to use the technical vocabulary necessary for understanding fiction.

Knowledge Area(s) satisfied:	Literary Knowledge and Experience
Skill(s) Developed:	Critical Thinking and Reading Communication Skills – Written & Oral
Values Requirement(s) satisfied:	

TEXTBOOKS:

- Daisy Miller*, Henry James (1879)
- Giovanni’s Room*, James Baldwin (1956)
- The Sun Also Rises*, Ernest Hemingway (1926)
- The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Patricia Highsmith (1955)
- Beautiful Animals*, Lawrence Osborne (2017)
- Home Fire*, Kamila Shamsie (2018)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Through the careful analysis of representative texts, this class will deepen student knowledge of fiction and increase understanding of the human experience reflected in literature.

—Students will practice thinking and reading critically and improve critical skills by analyzing varied interpretations and assumptions connected to the texts. The course will encourage students to develop their own hypotheses, theories, and interpretations of the literature covered.

—Students will acquire the technical vocabulary for understanding works of fiction (plot, theme, etc.) and practice their descriptive, analytical, and argumentative skills in orally and in formal, written analyses. They will improve their ability to frame questions, present background information, analyze specific images, symbols, or passages and to present interpretations of literary work in both oral and written form.

—The course will improve student ability to understand how multiple interpretations of literary works are possible, and how differing interpretations reflect particular cultural and historical conditions that change over time. They will improve their ability to understand meaning in a historical context and to develop a facility for using different critical approaches to produce different interpretations of the texts.

SKILLS — CRITICAL THINKING /READING, WRITING & ORAL COMMUNICATION:

Through in-class discussions, writing assignments and oral presentations, students will learn to understand, paraphrase, summarize, and contextualize the meaning of assigned texts and develop their own ideas, hypotheses, theories, questions, and proposals about the works in question, synthesizing ideas to support their own arguments and analyses of the text(s).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES: Readings and discussions will provide information regarding the texts, placing them in an historical context and providing avenues for critical analysis. Student(s) will be expected to read the materials in advance and be prepared to both ask and answer questions about the reading assignments. Discussion, homework assignments, written responses (of varied lengths), a midterm, an oral presentation, and a final paper will be used to assess literary knowledge, as well as writing and critical thinking and communication skills.

EVALUATION & GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Participation & Attendance	10%
Midterm Exam	25%
Response Papers/Homework/Quizzes	15%
Oral Presentation	25%
Final Research Paper	25%

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Please note that course attendance is based on prompt class attendance, preparation and active participation in class discussions. In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets once a week, thus a total of one (1) unexcused absence(s) will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a 1% lowering of your final grade after the “approved limit.”

DISABILITY POLICY: If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me within the first week of classes

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Plagiarism is considered a serious offense, will be reported to the Dean of the Loyola Rome program, and could result in expulsion. Please see me if you have questions about how to do research, document and cite sources, or with any other questions you may have about papers and assignments.

COURSE CALENDAR: This is an overview; please note this schedule is subject to change.

Week 1	Thurs 9/6 Class Overview & Introduction
Week 2	Read Daisy Miller & be prepared to discuss. Pick a scene each that best sum up Daisy & Winterbourne and be prepared to discuss informally in class.
Week 3	Post WWI Europe, Intro to Modernism & Hemingway’s <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> . READ Books 1 & 2 and be prepared to discuss. HOMEWORK: pick any line, paragraph or scene in first half and be prepared to present a “close reading” of it in class. (Informal pres.)
Week 4	Secular France & Catholic Spain in <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> : READ Books 3 & HOMEWORK: Pick any image in Parts 3 & 4 that you feel illustrates a key theme in the book and prepared to discuss your ideas with the class. (Informal pres.)
Week 5	Post WWII France + James Baldwin, Identity, Race & Sexuality in <i>Giovanni’s Room</i> READ entire novel and be prepared to discuss. Consider the ways in which Baldwin’s “expatriate Paris” is similar to or differs from Hemingway’s. HOMEWORK: Pick a scene in the text that illustrates this to share with the class.
Week 6	Midterm
Week 7	Fall Break
Week 8	Read <i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i> (first half): The Not-So-Innocent Abroad & Sexual confusion and fetishizing of class in <i>Ripley</i> in Patricia Highsmith’s <i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i>
Week 9	Migration meets Privilege in Lawrence Osborne’s <i>Beautiful Animals</i> . (Homework TBA). OVERVIEW OF ORAL PRESENTATIONS. (Note these groups and the guidelines will be made available via Sakai prior to Fall Break.)
Week 10	Oral Presentations
Week 11	Exploring “Antigone” in the post 9/11 world. Read the first half of <i>Home Fire</i> by Kamila Shamsie and be prepared to discuss.
Week 12	Read the 2 nd half of <i>Antigone</i> ; Abstracts for final papers due (see guidelines on Sakai)

Week 13

Thurs 11/28 Thanksgiving; no class (see makeup schedule)

Week 14

Final Papers Due. No exam for this class. No late papers. No exceptions.

Papers uploaded to SAKAI + backup to my email egeoghegan@luc.edu