

# English 209: Introduction to Fiction



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Office:

Office Hours:

## Course Description:

People have long participated in this process called story-telling. We read to children before bed, gather around book clubs, use stories as distractions on plane-rides and to ignite social change. What compels us to read stories? What roles do readers play in story-making? How do stories contribute to our understanding of the human experience? How do stories resist and conform to cultural norms? How do stories change over time? How do you know the “right” interpretation of a story? When looking at individual stories, we will continually ask: *What does it say? What does it mean? Why does it matter?* While we will not be able to cover every possible answer to these questions, they will serve as the driving force of inquiry to guide our course as we read through a variety of essays, short stories, and novels. This class is designed to expand your mind to the multiple ways that we use and interpret fiction. You will grow in your ability to ask complicated questions of a text, and you will compose in various types of writing styles and genres in response to these guiding questions.

## Course Goals:

**What we will strive for in this class (and hopefully the rest of college) (and life in general):**

1. Capacity for sustained, focused attention
2. Willingness to suspend closure
3. Willingness to take risks
4. Tolerance for failure
5. Tolerance for ambiguity, paradox, and uncertainty
6. Intellectual generosity and fallibilism
7. Metacognitive awareness

(list courtesy of Sheridan D. Blau)

*\*refer to the last page of the syllabus for a description of how this course fulfills KU's Core Goals*

## Texts:

Margaret Atwood's *Handmaid's Tale*

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Broadview Ed.

Lester Faigley's *The Brief Penguin Handbook*, 4th ed.

\*Supplemental readings will be posted to Blackboard

## Grade Breakdown:

<b>Unit 1:</b> Critical Theory Group Presentation	15%
Critical Theory Application Paper	15%
<b>Unit 2:</b> Connecting to Dystopia Paper	25%
<b>Unit 3:</b> Group Adaptation and Paper	30%
<b>Daily Work:</b> Quizzes, In-Class Writing, Homework Assignments	15%

CAL defines grades as follows: A = outstanding quality, B= high quality, C= acceptable quality, D= minimally passing, F= failing. You will be graded on a +/- scale approved by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to describe intermediate levels of performance between a maximum of A and a minimum of F. Intermediate grades represented by plus or minus are calculated as .3 units above or below the corresponding letter grade.

## Expectations and Policies

### Classroom Environment:

Our time together is made up of partner exchanges, group work, presentations, and class discussions. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. Courteous behavior and responses are expected at all times. When you disagree with someone, be sure that you make a distinction between criticizing an idea and criticizing the person. Expressions or actions that disparage a person's or race, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, gender identity / expression, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, or marital, parental, or veteran status are contrary to the mission of this course and will not be tolerated. Without respecting your own thoughts and the thoughts of your classmates, we will not get very far. All of our voices are valid and valuable and will be treated as such. (Read three more times with self-induced italics before proceeding.)

### Turning In Written Work:

You will turn in all of your major writing projects digitally via Blackboard. **All papers must be uploaded as a .doc or .docx file in order for me to open them. Failure to upload the file in the correct format will result in a late grade.** All papers are due by 11:59 pm on their due date. If you anticipate a problem meeting the due date, please talk to me BEFORE the paper is due.

### MLA Formatting:

All written work should be submitted typed, double-spaced, written in 12-point Times New Roman with 1-inch margins and a header (including your name, my name, the course title, the date, and a title).

### Email and Office Hours:

Email is the easiest/quickest way to contact me, however, questions by email should be short and require short answers. ***Before sending me an email, make sure to double-check the syllabus, assignment prompt, and blackboard for an answer to your question.*** Longer conversations are reserved for face-to-face dialogue, so please come see me during office hours or by appointment. ***(Again: Come see me during my office hours or schedule an appointment. I am happy to meet with you! This is a great opportunity to get feedback on your work, or dialogue about future projects or any confusions/questions you are working through.)***

**Technology in Our Classroom:**

I too suffer from a phone addiction. However, they are a huge distraction in class. Therefore, we will keep our phones in our backpacks/purses/pockets during our class times. Laptops are fine on workdays or periods when we are reading a text online. Otherwise your computer should be away as our class focuses on engaged discussion and interaction with course material.

**Late Work:**

It is important to complete the assigned work on time in order to gain the fullest benefits from doing the work. Unless we have made arrangements *in advance*, I will grade down a late writing project by one-half of a grade (or 5%) for each day it is late (including weekends). According to Department of English policy, you must turn in all major projects to pass the course, even if a project is so late that it will have earned an F. If you fail to show up for a presentation, you will receive a zero for this assignment. If you know you will be unable to attend class on a day you are scheduled to present, you must contact me well in advance. ***I will not accept late or give make-up work for other smaller writings and class activities, like quizzes or in-class writing (excepting religious holidays and university-sanctioned events, of course).*** Check your schedule for potential conflicts well ahead of due dates, and speak with me *ahead of time* if you will have trouble meeting a deadline.

**Attendance:**

Engaged attendance is expected. To attend a class well means not only being physically present but also being *prepared* and ready to participate in whatever activity class entails. Since homework and in-class activities account for 15% of your final grade, your grade will suffer from any absences by missing in-class work. Of course, speak with me if you have a medical or other crisis that will make you miss several classes. Everyone is given 4 free absences – these are to be used for any type of absence, including sick days, family emergencies, doctor’s appointments, flat tires, or slept-in-too-late days. ***After four absences, your grade will drop ½ of a letter grade for every successive absence. In addition, being tardy three times will act as the equivalent of one absence.*** You are counted tardy if you walk in the door after I take role (which I do at the beginning of class).

**Disabilities:** The Academic Achievement & Access Center (AAAC) coordinates accommodations and services for all KU students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted the AAAC, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is 785-864-4064 (V/TTY). Information about their services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu> . Please contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

**Academic Honesty:** Stealing and passing off as your own someone else’s ideas or words, or using information from another’s work without crediting the source, is called “plagiarism.” Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the Internet or published sources, submitting an entire paper written by someone else, submitting a paper written for another class (and thus not original work), and copying another student’s work (even with the student’s permission). In order to avoid unintentional plagiarism and to represent your work honestly, you will need to be meticulous about giving credit to any and all sources, whether directly quoted (even a few words) or paraphrased.

Because one of the goals of this course is to help you improve your writing, plagiarism hurts you as much as it does anyone. If you plagiarize another's work, you will not be receiving the needed feedback to improve your own writing. There will be a zero tolerance policy for any type of plagiarism in this class. All incidents of plagiarism will be penalized, reported, and kept on file in the English Department, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University Provost's Office.

**Policy on Student Academic Creations:** Since one of the aims of this course is to teach students to write for specific audiences, ungraded student-authored work will be shared with other class members during the semester in which you are enrolled in the class. Please do not submit materials on sensitive subjects that you would not want your classmates to see or read, unless you inform the instructor in advance that you do not want your work shared with others.

Other uses of student-authored work are subject to the University's Policy on Intellectual Property and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. If your instructor desires to use your work outside of this class (e.g. as a sample for another class or future classes), you will be asked to fill out and sign a written form authorizing such use.

**Other Policies:** Be sure to read Composition & Literature thoroughly for all other Departmental policies.

**Writing Center:** For help with your writing, I strongly encourage you to contact the KU Writing Center. At the Writing Center you can talk about your writing with trained tutors or consult reference materials in a comfortable working environment. You may ask for feedback on your papers, advice and tips on writing (for all your courses), or for guidance on special writing tasks. Please check the website at <http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/> for current locations and hours. The Writing Center welcomes both drop-ins and appointments, and there is no charge for their services. For more information, please call (785) 864-2399 or send an e-mail to <[writing@ku.edu](mailto:writing@ku.edu)>. The website is loaded with helpful information about writing of all sorts, so even if you consider yourself a good writer, check it out!

**Enrollment:** Students may neither add nor change sections in any English course after **Monday, January 26** without departmental permission. For courses numbered above 200, instructor's permission is required to add or change sections. The last day to petition to add classes is **Monday, February 16**. The Department of English reserves the right to terminate administratively the enrollment of any student who misses two consecutive class meetings during the first two weeks of the semester. Should an emergency situation cause the student to miss two consecutive class meetings, the student should contact the instructor(s) or the English Department, 864-4520, immediately. Students who decide to drop English classes should do so promptly so that other students may enroll in the class. The last day to withdraw from classes under any circumstances is **Monday, April 20**.

**Drop Policy:** If you are having trouble succeeding in the course, it is especially important that you consult with me so that we can develop a plan of action that may enable you to complete the course. If you decide to drop this class, please go to <http://www.registrar.ku.edu/current/schedule.shtml> From \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_, you will be assigned a grade of W. **You may not drop or withdraw after \_\_\_\_.**

### Course Goals for all 200-level English Classes:

In the spring of 2014, the English department revised the learning outcome goals for 200-level English courses. By the end of ENGL 209, you should be able to:

1. Read consciously and contextually to develop interpretations of texts
  - a. Analyze textual details to develop an interpretation of the overall text
  - b. Identify the generic features and structures of a text
  - c. Identify and explain the relationships among writers, readers, genres, and contexts
2. Demonstrate the ability to use English studies methodologies to think critically about language, texts, and experience
  - a. Demonstrate development of deeper understanding of course concepts
  - b. Form judgments about the assumptions or claims presented in the texts
  - c. Make evidence-based arguments to support conclusions
  - d. Analyze contemporary issues in language, texts, and experience based on English studies methodologies
3. Write in ways appropriate to the course subject
  - a. Compose in at least three different types of writing for different purposes, audiences, or media (e.g. creative, analytical, evaluative, or digital)
  - b. Address multiple perspectives (scholarly and otherwise) on a topic while clearly voicing your own
  - c. Effectively use critical terminology relevant to the course subject
  - d. Incorporate evidence, following the citation style particular to the course subject
  - e. Make conscious choices about language patterns, diction and style
  - f. Use feedback appropriately to improve their writing through revision

All 200-level English classes satisfy KU Core Goal 1 learning outcome 1, Core Goal 2 learning outcome 1, and Core Goal 3. All KU students must take two Core 2.1 courses. Students pursuing a BA in the College are required to take either ENGL 101 and 102, or ENGL 102/105 and a second Goal 2.1 course. All 200-level English courses satisfy the second Goal 2.1 requirement.

### Schedule of Assignments

This schedule is tentative, and it is quite likely that I will make changes to it – stay tuned in class and to your email/blackboard for notification. If you anticipate a problem with due dates, please speak with me.

*On days we have assigned reading, you will be required to bring a copy of the text(s) to class.*

*Bb = Blackboard*

*HT = Handmaid's Tale*

### Schedule of Assignments Tu/Th

Date	Class Goals	To Be Completed Before Class
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WEEK 1 Day 1	Welcome to English 209! Introductions Go Over Syllabus	
Day 2	Preparing for a semester of Reading Fiction	<b>Bring to Class:</b> Completed Syllabus Quiz <b>Read:</b> link “Does Anyone Read Books the Right Way Anymore” and “Why Do We Read Stories_ Thoughts from Writers” (posted to Bb)
WEEK 2 Day 3	Which Interpretation Is Right? Introduction to Unit 1 and Literary Theory	<b>Read:</b> “Marzipan” by Aimee Bender (Bb) “Everything You Wanted to Know About Critical Theory But Were Afraid to Ask” (Bb)
Day 4	Introduction to Disability Studies <b>Sign-Up for Critical Theories</b>	<b>Read:</b> “Introduction: Disability, the Missing Term in the Race, Class, Gender Triad” Lennard Davis (Bb) “Persistence of Vision” by John Varley (Bb – pg 188 to end)
WEEK 3 Day 5 – Day 6	<b>WORK WEEK</b>	Groups are not required to meet in class this week. Instead, this week is devoted to giving groups a time to touch base, collaborate, brainstorm, and plan their cultural theory presentations. I will be available to answer questions through email.
WEEK 4 Day 7	<b>GROUP PRESENTATION:</b> Marxist Theory	<b>Read:</b> “Marxist Criticism” (Bb) “Bartleby the Scrivener” Herman Melville (Bb) “A Rose for Emily” William Faulkner (Bb)
Day 8	<b>GROUP PRESENTATION:</b> Race Theory	<b>Read:</b> “African American Criticism” (Bb) “How to Date a Browngirl, Blackgirl, Whitegirl, or Halfie” Junot Díaz (Bb) “Desirée’s Baby” Kate Chopin (Bb)
WEEK 5 Day 9	<b>GROUP PRESENTATION:</b> Feminist Theory	<b>Read:</b> “Feminist Criticism” (Bb) “The Yellow Wallpaper” Charlotte Perkins Gilman (Bb) “Girl” Jamaica Kincaid (Bb)
Day 10	<b>GROUP PRESENTATION:</b> Queer Theory	<b>Read:</b> “Lesbian, Gay, and Queer Criticism” (Bb) “The Rememberer” Aimee Bender (Bb) “Paul’s Case” Willa Cather (Bb) “Happy Endings” Margaret Atwood (Bb)
WEEK 6 Day 11	Peer Review	<b>Bring to Class:</b> 2 hard-copies of a complete draft of unit 2 paper
Day 12	Introduction to Unit 2: Dystopia	<b>Unit 2 Individual Application Papers due to blackboard by 11:59 pm</b>  <b>Read:</b> “The Lottery” Shirley Jackson (Bb) “Harrison Bergeron” Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (Bb)
WEEK 7 Day 13		<b>Read:</b> <i>Handmaid’s Tale</i> , Margaret Atwood, p 1 – 85

Day 14		<b>Read:</b> <i>HT</i> p 85 – 127
WEEK 8 Day 15		<b>Read:</b> <i>HT</i> p 127 – 188
Day 16		<b>Read:</b> <i>HT</i> p 188 – 223
WEEK 9 Day 17		<b>SRPING BREAK</b>
Day 18		<b>SPRING BREAK</b>
WEEK 10 Day 19		<b>Read:</b> <i>HT</i> p 224 – 311
Day 20	Introduction to Unit 3	<b>Unit 2 Paper “Connecting to Dystopia” Due to blackboard by 11:59</b>
WEEK 11 Day 21		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> p. 43-100
Day 22		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , p. 100-140
WEEK 12 Day 23		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> , p. 140-204
Day 24		<b>NO CLASS</b>
WEEK 13 Day 25		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> p 192-271 “Appendix A: Parliamentary Debate on the Marriage Act of 1754,” p 387-393
Day 26		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> p 271-308 “Appendix B: From the Conduct Books,” p 394 – 412
WEEK 14 Day 27		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> p 308-345
Day 28		<b>Read:</b> <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> p 345-385
WEEK 15 Day 29 – Day 30	Work Week	This is your opportunity to touch base with me as a group get details ironed out with group members and to make sure all of the elements of your group project are coming together well – take advantage!
WEEK 16 Day 31 – Day 32 (last week of class)	Presentations of Group Adaptations	On your assigned presentation day, bring with you all materials (props, notecards etc.), as well as your peer-evaluation forms.
	Stop Day	
		<b><i>Final group papers due to blackboard by 11:59, Thursday, May 14</i></b>