

### Course Outline

<b>SP-7248 El cuento corto: proceso y problemática</b> Thursdays 16 - 18:50 (LE-256) 16 weeks - 3 credits I-2017	M.L. Vanessa Pacheco Padilla Office 346LE (office hours Thurs. 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.) Email vanep@gmail.com
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#### I. Course Description

This course is an elective for students of the Master's Program in English Literature. It is designed to explore the genre of short story through analysis of selected short story theories and issues and consideration of the same in a variety of literary texts.

#### II. General Objectives

- A. Acquire a solid foundation of basic short story theory.
- B. Foment understanding and appreciation of the short story genre.
- C. Develop ability to respond critically and creatively to literary texts.

#### III. Specific Objectives

- A. Manipulate basic concepts and vocabulary associated with short story theory and practice.
- B. Identify and take clear positions on basic issues of modern short story theory.
- C. Analyze narrative strategies.
- D. Examine story elements as cultural manifestations.
- E. Investigate interrelationships of the reading process, perception, and story structuring.
- F. Recognize the interrelationship among the creation, form, contents, and reading of short story in terms of a signifying process.

#### IV. Contents

- A. Origins and history of the short story
  - 1. Parables, fables, myth, novella, fairy tale, art-tale
  - 2. Riddle, hoax, conundrum
- B. Defining the short story
  - 1. Traditional vs. modern definitions

2. Genre as category vs. genre as characteristics
  3. (Re)cognition and (re)consideration of short stories definitions
- C. The reading process
1. Storyness
  2. Discourse analysis
  3. Preclosure and story processing
- D. Narrative strategies
1. Closure and preclosure
  2. Gaps and second stories
  3. Framing
  4. Recalcitrance
- E. Creative writing
1. The role of imagination
  2. Elements of fiction and design

## **V. Methodology**

There will be extensive reading assignments of short story theory and literary texts. Class time will be used to discuss, clarify, and put into practice the ideas and vocabulary from the theory readings through their application to individual short stories. Students are expected to participate actively and responsibly in this exploration process through discussion, presentations, pair/group work, written responses (both formal and informal), and creative assignments. This presupposes critical inquiry, curiosity, and creativity in probing both theory and a wide selection of literary texts.

## **VI. Evaluation**

The final grade for this course will be determined on the following basis:

Creative writing .....	15%
Oral presentations .....	15%
Short papers and/or reactions .....	30%
Final paper .....	40%

## **VII. Selected Bibliography**

Theory selections from

Abbott, H. Porter. *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. 2nd ed., Cambridge UP, 2008.

Hoffman, Michael J., and Patrick D. Murphy, editors. *Essentials of the Theory of Fiction*. 2nd ed., Duke UP, 1996.

Iftekharuddin, Farhat, et. al., editors. *Speaking of the Short Story: Interviews with Contemporary Writers*. Mississippi UP, 1997.

Lohafer, Susan, and Jo Ellyn Clarey, editors. *Short Story Theory at a Crossroads*. Louisiana State UP, 1989.

March-Russell, Paul, editor. *The Short Story: An Introduction*. Edinburgh UP, 2009. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sibdilibro-ebooks/detail.action?docID=434307>.

Masih, Tara L. *Field Guide to Flash Fiction: Tips from Editors, Teachers, and Writers in the Field*. The Rose Metal Press, 2009.

May, Charles E., editor. *The New Short Story Theories*. Ohio UP, 1994.

Vandermeer, Jeff. *Wonderbook: The Illustrated Guide to Creating Imaginative Fiction*. Abrams Image, 2013.

### VIII. Tentative Timetable\*

Week	Date	Readings (theory)	Evaluations
1.	March 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Introduction to the course</li> <li>✚ Review of narrative elements</li> </ul>	
2.	March 23	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Short story: origins and history</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ “Origins: From Folktale to Art-Tale” by Paul March-Russell</li> </ul>	Presentation #1
3.	March 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ “Riddles, Hoaxes and Conundrums” by Paul March-Russell</li> </ul>	Presentation #1
4.	April 6	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Short story: definition and problematic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ “Poe on Short Fiction” by Edgar Allan Poe</li> <li>✚ “The Philosophy of the Short-Story” by Brander Matthews</li> </ul>	Reaction paper
5.	<b>April 13</b>	<b>Holy Thursday</b>	
6.	April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ “The Lonely Voice” by Frank O’Connor</li> <li>✚ “What Makes a Short Story Short?” by Norman Friedman</li> <li>✚ “The Short Story: The Long and the Short of it” by Mary Louise Pratt</li> </ul>	Short paper #1
7.	April 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ “Recent Short Story Theories: Problems in Definition” by Norman Friedman</li> </ul>	Reaction paper

		✚ “On Defining the Short Story: The Genre Question” by Austin M. Wright	
8.	May 4		Presentation #2
9.	May 11	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Reading Process</b></p> <p>✚ “Story Comprehension: An Introduction” by Teun A. Van Dijk</p> <p>✚ “A Cognitive Approach to Storyness” by Susan Lohafer</p> <p>✚ “An Interview with Susan Lohafer” by Hilary Sibert</p>	Reaction paper
10.	May 18	<p>✚ “Chapter 2: Defining Narrative” by H. Porter Abbott</p> <p>✚ “Discourse Analysis and the Short Story” by Suzanne Hunter Brown</p> <p>✚ “Preclosure and Story Processing” by Susan Lohafer</p>	Reaction paper
11.	May 25	✚ <i>Discussion of short papers</i>	Short paper #2
12.	June 1	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Narratives techniques</b></p> <p>✚ “Chapter 5: Closure” by H. Porter Abbott</p> <p>✚ “Second Stories” by Armine Kotin Mortimer</p> <p>✚ “Destabilizing Frames for Stories” Ian Reid</p>	Reaction paper
13.	June 8	<p>✚ “Chapter 7: Interpreting Narrative” by H. Porter Abbott</p> <p>✚ “Recalcitrance in the Short Story” by Austin M. Wright</p>	Reaction paper
14.	June 15	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Creative Writing</b></p> <p>✚ Reading selection from <i>Wonderbook</i> by Jeff Vandermeer</p>	
15.	June 22	✚ Flash fiction & exercises	
16.	June 29	✚ <i>Discussion of papers</i>	Essay
17.	July 6		Creative writing

\*This chronogram is tentative and subject to changes as deemed appropriate by the professor.

\*A list of short stories will be given on a separate document with its corresponding bibliographical entry.

## IX. Additional Information

No late work will be accepted. Assignments must be submitted no later than 15 minutes after the beginning of the class. Only under very special circumstances, at the professor’s discretion, will late assignments be accepted. In this case, from 10% to 50% may be taken off of the assignment’s grade.

Students are required to submit an electronic version of their out-of-class papers, along with the printed version, to be kept as a backup document by the Literature Department. However, unless told otherwise by their instructor in advance, the electronic version does not replace the printed version. The printed version is the only valid document to be evaluated and taken into account regarding late assignments.

Papers that do not follow the established MLA format regarding font size, margins, spacing, headings, or any other MLA standard, will not be accepted.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated as this constitutes a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will be given a zero; an account of the student's fault will be kept in his/her records.