



ENG 104
Introduction to Literature: Fiction
Fall 2020

Instructor: Damien Weaver
Email: weaverd@linnbenton.edu
CRN: 26962
Office: Online

Location: Online
Meeting times (virtual): M/TH 3:00 PM
Credit Hours: 3
Office Hours: Thursday, 4:00 – 5:00 PM

Prerequisites: College level reading and writing skills (WR 121) are strongly recommended for success in this course.

Course Description

In a 1955 essay on the Russian author Isaac Babel, Lionel Trilling gives fiction writers a unique job description: “To reveal the human fact within the veil of circumstances.” In describing the effect of Babel’s remarkable manipulation of voice and structure in fictional narrative, Trilling summons James Joyce’s notion of “the epiphany, a showing forth. Joyce had the ‘theory’ that suddenly, almost miraculously, by a phrase or a gesture, a life would thrust itself through the veil of things and for an instant show itself forth, startling us by its existence.” Literary fiction, then, in Trilling’s view, is not just concerned with conveying what life *is*, in a statistical or journalistic sense, but rather with how it *feels* to experience it. The perpetual vacillations between ecstasy and agony, passion and ennui, hope and despair, etc. that characterize human existence.

This course proceeds on the basis of such a notion. Here, we will read and discuss numerous works of short fiction with the aim of cultivating an awareness of writerly craft and “the human fact” it seeks ever to convey. We will familiarize ourselves with the basic elements of narrative—character, setting, plot, symbolism, theme, structure, style, tone, and so forth. Overall, we’re concerned with thinking about how different writers seek to convey “the human fact” as a timeless, universal condition and as something shaped by the specific contexts—social, cultural, historical, etc.—in which these stories are set and in which they were written. We’re also concerned with the significance of the text at the time of its reading, i.e., how is this relevant to us in the current moment of 2020?

Required Resources and Materials:

- Textbook: None. Everything is provided for you on Canvas.
- Internet and Canvas access to complete assignments.
- Access to a word processing program such as Microsoft Word: While Google Docs is robust and useful tool, it can be difficult to properly format documents on that platform. Microsoft Word is much easier and it is available for free to teachers and students. Click [here](#) for details.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader DV or similar program that allows you to make notes and highlights on a .pdf. Click [here](#) to download Acrobat for free.

Discourse Community and Assignments:

This course treats writing and the analysis of it as an inherently social act. Thus, it is heavily discussion and workshop based. Everything you write for the course constitutes a contribution to the broader discourse created by the class. Weekly written responses to assigned readings are posted to a discussion board on Canvas where students can view and respond to one another. There are two major papers due: a mid-term essay and a final essay. These will be written in stages and peer-reviewed by your classmates. So, you will have the opportunity to share your own writing with your peers in addition to the published authors we read.

GRADING BREAKDOWN	
<p>Literary Responses</p> <p>Each week you will produce two analytical responses to one of the assigned stories. These are posted to a discussion board.</p> <p>Minimum length: 150 words.</p>	60%
<p>Peer Responses / Participation</p> <p>After you have submitted your literary response, you will respond to at least two peers' posts with the aim of furthering the discussion initiated by their writing.</p> <p>Minimum word count for each peer response: 50 Words.</p> <p>During Weeks 5 and 10, you will be workshopping a draft of your major essay in small groups. Your job is to provide at least two peers with ample feedback and suggestions for revision.</p>	15%
<p>Mid-term Essay</p> <p>This major essay assignment is similar in nature to your weekly responses, but the style is more formal and the scope is broader to include multiple texts. It requires some outside research. A draft of this will be peer workshopped.</p> <p>Word count: 1,000 – 1,250 words.</p>	10%
<p>Final Essay</p> <p>This major essay assignment asks you to draw upon all of the skills cultivated throughout the term and produce a scholarly analysis of multiple texts and incorporate outside research. A draft of this will be peer workshopped.</p> <p>Word count: 1,250 – 1,500 words.</p>	15%
<p>Note: Full and detailed descriptions of assignments are available on Canvas.</p>	

LATE WORK:

Assignments are due at the assigned dates and times, otherwise they are considered late. Weekly literary response assignments and your mid-term essay drafts may be submitted late at a grade penalty of 10 percent per day up to 3 days. After three days, late submissions are not accepted. Submitting major essay drafts late will also affect your peer review grade, which is not possible to make up. The final draft of your final essay cannot be submitted late.

Note: I will drop the lowest grade on your weekly literary response submissions.

CLASSROOM DECORUM (Applies to the virtual space as well):

Because much of this course is discussion-based, the ability for each student to learn is affected by the contributions and behaviors of every other student. Please show respect to your instructor, to your classmates, and to the process of learning as a whole. Allow others time to talk, try not to interrupt, and above all refrain from rude, offensive, or belittling comments. Remember, we critique writing and ideas, not people. No deliberate derision of your peers or myself will be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, offensive speech regarding one's nationality, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or disability.

Academic Honesty Policy: When using ideas, words, and short passages from other people's writing in your own writing, you are *required to acknowledge the source*. Failure to acknowledge the contribution of others is considered plagiarism, a serious academic offense; fabrication of sources is another form of academic dishonesty. We'll discuss academic honesty more in class, but note that suspect papers (e.g., those without drafts or works cited pages, papers which make large departures in style from your other work) may be submitted to Turnitin.com as part of the grading process.

WRITING RESOURCES

Office Hours You're welcome to come to office hours any time you'd like to discuss questions or concerns related to this course. If you have a time conflict with my office hours, please schedule an appointment.

LBCC Writing Center

From initial ideas to final drafts, the LBCC Writing Center can help you take your writing to the next level. Please feel free to drop in during regular hours to work one-on-one with one of the supportive Writing Assistants. In addition to your draft, please bring your assignment and any questions you have. You may also submit your writing online at lbcc.writingcenteronline.net where you will receive a personalized response within 1-2 business days. For more information, visit the Writing Center online at <http://www.linnbenton.edu/go/learning-center/writing-help>

SCHOOL POLICIES

Disability Services

If you have a documented disability, I will help you in any way I can. Talk to me during the first week of class. If you think you might have a disability, but you are not sure, contact Disability Services, 917-4789. [Here is a lot more useful information about Disability Services and LBCC's disability policies.](#)

LBCC Non-Discrimination Policy

Everyone is welcome at LBCC, regardless of whether they are black, white, Latino, native, gay, straight, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, atheist, male, female, transgendered, married, disabled, a veteran, a non-English speaker, an immigrant, or any number of other categories not listed here. [For the official nondiscrimination policy click here.](#) What is more, LBCC sees our differences as a source of strength and an important part of education. [Click here to see what the LBCC board has to say about diversity.](#)