Introduction and Course Description:

What use is literature? Why do we tell stories? As education veers further and further toward “employability” and we hear arguments about the relative usefulness of the humanities and STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, mathematics), these questions seem more and more important to answer. In this class, we will seek to understand what literature—specifically narrative—does for us that utilitarian, production-oriented work doesn’t necessarily do. We will read short stories, narrative poems, and three novels. We’ll try to understand why they affect us the way they do, what techniques the author uses, and what aspects of story the author seems to emphasize. In order to better understand how narrative works, we’ll also spend some time each week thinking about particular elements of storytelling. In the end, each student will offer a brief video presentation that answers the question “What use is narrative literature?”

Student Learning Outcomes:

English 105 carries a GLT marker and fulfills a General Education requirement at UNCG. The following student learning outcomes (SLOs) come with the GLT marker:

1. Demonstrate the reading skill required for the student of literary texts. (LG3)
2. Identify and/or describe some of the varied characteristics of literary texts. (LG3)
3. Demonstrate orally, in writing, or by some other means, a fundamental ability to use some of the techniques and/or methods of literary analysis. (LG 1 and LG 3)
4. Identify and/or describe some of the various social, historical, cultural, and/or theoretical contexts in which literary texts have been written and interpreted. (LG3)

Those SLOs labeled (LG3) relate to UNCG’s **Learning Goal #3 for General Education**, which says students will “Describe, interpret, and evaluate the ideas, events, and expressive traditions that have shaped collective and individual human experience through inquiry and analysis in the diverse disciplines of the humanities, religions, languages, histories, and the arts.” (http://uncg.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Undergraduate-Bulletin/University-Requirements/General-Education-Program)

Those SLOs labeled (LG1) relate to UNCG’s **Learning Goal #1 for General Education**. This is the ability to “think critically, communicate effectively, and develop appropriate fundamental skills in quantitative and information literacies.” (http://uncg.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2014-2015/Undergraduate-Bulletin/University-Requirements/General-Education-Program).

**Required Texts:**

*To buy:*


*Any edition is fine.*


Wilde, Oscar. *The Picture of Dorian Gray.* Originally published 1890. *Any edition is fine. You can find this work for free online, since it is out of copyright, but you may want to purchase an inexpensive copy anyway so that you can make notes in the margin.

*Links to works online:*


PDFs will be available on Blackboard (Bb) in the “Course Information” module for all other readings.
You must obtain these works in a format that allows annotation—making your own notes in the margins of the texts. For PDFs and online reading, either print out the texts so you can write on them or read them with a program that allows electronic annotation.

Assignments:

Start each week here:

Each week, I will post material on Bb in the module titled “Start each week here.” This will usually contain a 5-10 minute video lecture on the week’s reading, as well as some brief additional material about the works, time period, author, and so on. This is required viewing/reading. I may also post links to other information or additional videos—for example, during the week we begin Dorian Gray, I might post the trailer to the latest film adaptation of the novel—these additional posts are optional.

Reading and annotating (SLO 1):

The majority of your work for this course will be reading the assigned stories, narrative poems, novels, and essays about literature. “Reading” for this course does not mean simply running your eyes over all the words; it means understanding what you read, and it means paying careful attention to various literary elements of the text. Notice that demonstrating “the reading skill necessary required for the student of literary texts” is one of the student learning outcomes for this course. Look up unknown words. Reread difficult passages. Read all poetry at least twice. (The poems I’ve included in this syllabus are relatively short—I’ve allowed you enough time to read them twice.) As we read about particular elements of literature, like symbols, figurative language, types of narration, etc., make notes about significant literary elements in the margins of your work. We’ll talk more about reading literature as the course proceeds, and the journal entries on Bb are designed to help focus your attention as you read.

You are required to annotate your texts. Underline or highlight particular passages. Make stars or checkmarks. Put smiley faces beside passages you like, question marks beside passages you don’t understand, or whatever system of notation works for you. Write in definitions of unknown words. When a particular passage makes you think about something in a new way, write it in the margin.

Journal entries (SLOs 1, 2, 3, & 4):

Every week, you are required to write a journal entry answering one of several questions I will offer about the week’s readings. This counts as your class time, so expect to spend about three hours a week on these. These entries are your opportunity to demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the reading. They are designed to give you lots of practice thinking critically and writing clearly, and since practice is the best teacher, they will help you greatly improve your skills. Here are the requirements:

• Each entry must contain a thesis, or central argument, that answers the question you’ve chosen. Put your thesis in boldface. This helps me as a reader to see what you understand to be your central argument, but it also forces you to think carefully about what your main point is. Many times when we write, we start out making one kind of argument and end
up finding evidence for a different argument. Marking your thesis clearly helps you focus your thoughts. This skill will serve you well whatever your eventual goals.

- Each entry must contain a quotation from the text as evidence for your thesis. Do not pad your entry with long quotations; quotations must be no more than 20 words.
- Entries should be from 300-500 words long.
- Entries are due on Bb every Friday at 5:00 pm.
- At the end of the semester, you will revise three of your journal entries and reflect on your work.

These assignments will be graded on a pass-fail basis, with pass being calculated at 100% and fail at 0%. If you follow the instructions, you’ll be fine. If you do not follow instructions—for example, if you fail to include a quotation or write only 25 words—you will receive a 0. I will drop the three lowest journal grades at the end of the semester, so if you forget to include a quotation one time, your final grade will not be wrecked. But if you make a habit of not completing these assignments properly, your grade will suffer.

Reading quizzes (SLO 1):
Every Friday, you will complete a short quiz on Bb to demonstrate that you have read all the assigned texts carefully. Here again I stress that reading for this class is not just running your eyes over the material. You must take in every word. The quiz will be open-book, but it will be timed, so you will need to know where to find references in the book. These will be scored with pure percentages—that is, 4 correct answers out of 5 questions will earn you an 80%. Quizzes must be completed by 5:00 each Friday.

Midterm paper (SLOs 1, 2, 3, & 4):
This assignment will count as your midterm exam. First you will summarize a story or poem of your choice in the clearest, most straightforward way possible in no more than half a page; then you will write a 5-page paper that makes an argument about why the author chose to present the narrative in a particular way. In framing your thesis, it will be helpful to consider the following evidence: 1) the differences between your version and the original 2) the ways in which the author’s historical and geographical context may have influenced his/her choices, and 3) the effects of the author’s choices about how to tell the story. This will be due at 5:00 on October 24, and it will be graded using a 100-point scale. More information on the assignment sheet.

Summing up what you’ve learned: A final project in two parts

Part I: Revision and reflection on journal entries (SLOs 1, 2, 3, & 4):
You will choose three of your journal entries from the semester and revise them, sharpening and clarifying the argument as needed. You will also write a reflection on what you learned from these assignments. This will be graded on a 100-point scale. More information on the assignment sheet.

Part II: Video presentation (SLOs 1, 2, 3, & 4):
This 4-8 minute video can be a TED-talk-like oral presentation, an animation, or any other kind of video. Your video will make an argument that answers the question, “What use is literature?” You will refer to at least 3 of the texts studied in the course (these can be the same works you
discussed in your revised journal entries if you wish, but they needn’t be). This will be graded on a 100-point scale. More information on the assignment sheet.

Both parts of this project will be due Monday December 8 at 5:00 pm.

Grading:
Your grades can always be viewed on Bb.

Your final grade will be determined using the following percentages:
20% - an average of your journal entry grades
   (remember that I will drop your three lowest scores)
20% - an average of your reading quiz grades
20% - your grade on the midterm paper
40% - your grade on the final project (20% for each part)

Grade scale:
98-100 - A+
93-97   - A
90-92   - A-
88-89   - B+
83-87   - B
80-82   - B-
78-79   - C+
73-77   - C
70-72   - C-
68-69   - D+
63-67   - D
60-62   - D-
< 60    - F

Late work:
Late journal entries and late quizzes will receive 0s. For the midterm and final project, your grade will be lowered by 10 percentage points (a letter grade) for every day the work is late. If you have a medical or family emergency, please contact me immediately.

Extra credit:
For your midterm paper, I will add 5 percentage points to your grade if you visit the Writing Center (you can do this online).
For your video presentation, I will add 5 percentage points to your grade if you visit the Speaking Center or the Digital ACT Studio.

Policies:
Technology:
This is an online class. You are responsible for maintaining a reliable internet connection and all other necessary technology, just as you would be responsible for transportation to and from a face-to-face class. “My internet quit” is not a valid excuse for missing an assignment, so please leave plenty of time for problems and have a backup plan in case your regular internet connection fails (like a campus computer or a public library). If you have a truly unavoidable emergency, contact me as soon as you can.

Note: Firefox is the recommended browser for Bb; Safari also works. For the reading quizzes, you must use Firefox or Safari. For most of the work you’ll do in class, you can try again if you have a technological glitch, but reading quizzes cannot be taken more than once, so use the right browser the first time. If you have trouble with a quiz, don’t email me about it unless you have used Firefox or Safari. If you’re still having difficulty, you can visit 6-TECH online at 6-tech.uncg.edu or call them at 336-256-TECH (8324).
Attendance:
In a face-to-face class, you would be allowed three absences at your own discretion before your grade would be affected. You would also be allowed latitude for religious holidays—I am required to include the following in my syllabus:

"You are, by state law, allowed two excused absences due to religious holidays, which do not count toward your total allowed three absences. If you plan to miss class because of your faith, you must notify me in advance of your absence."

Since your journal entries are to be treated as your class time, I will automatically delete your three lowest journal entry scores. If you need to miss an entry for religious reasons, you must notify me before the entry is due.

Contacting me:
The best way to contact me is by email (rlbowman@uncg.edu). I will try to respond promptly—my goal is to respond within 24 hours, nights and weekends excluded. Be aware that emails sent the night before an assignment is due may not be answered before the due date, so please plan accordingly. If I haven’t responded to an email within 48 hours, please resend the email.

If you have a question that you think others may benefit from hearing answered—for example, about an assignment, or about my expectations of you—feel free to post it in the question forum on Bb.

If you would like to meet face-to-face, or would like to video conference or chat online, email me to set up a meeting.

Academic Integrity:
“Academic integrity is founded upon and encompasses the following five values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Violations include, for example, cheating, plagiarism, misuse of academic resources, falsification, and facilitating academic dishonesty. If knowledge is to be gained and properly evaluated, it must be pursued under conditions free from dishonesty. Deceit and misrepresentations are incompatible with the fundamental activity of this academic institution and shall not be tolerated” (from UNCG’s Academic Integrity Policy). To ensure that you understand the university’s policy on academic integrity, review the guidelines and list of violations at academicintegrity.uncg.edu. I expect you to abide by the Academic Integrity Policy. If you violate this policy, you will be required to attend a Faculty-Student Conference with me, per UNCG’s Academic Integrity Policy. Violations will incur failing grades for the assignment or for the course, depending on the severity of the violation and the weight of the assignment within the final grade. Second-time violations will automatically result in failure of the course.

Resources:
University Writing Center:
The purpose of the Writing Center is to enhance the confidence and competence of student writers by providing free, individual assistance at any stage of any writing project. Staff consultants are experienced writers and alert readers, prepared to offer feedback and suggestions on drafts of papers, help students find answers to their questions about writing, and provide one-on-one instruction as needed. Located in the Moore Humanities and Research
Building, room 3211. Online sessions, conducted through google docs and a telephone connection, are also available. uncg.edu/eng/writingcenter

**University Speaking Center:**
The University Speaking Center provides peer-to-peer feedback, guidance, and other support in the areas of public speaking preparation and delivery, interpersonal communication, and group or team communication. Their support is designed to help speakers further develop their own oral communication confidence and competence. Face-to-face and online sessions are available. The Speaking Center is located along with the Writing Center in 3211 MHRA. speakingcenter.uncg.edu

**Digital ACT Studio:**
The Digital ACT (Action, Consultation, and Training) Studio supports students, faculty, and staff in their effective creation or incorporation of digital media into projects. Consultants act as a trained, engaged audience, providing feedback on slide presentations, video projects, podcasts, digital photography, websites, and blogs by offering collaborative, dialog-based consultations. Located in the lower level of Jackson Library, within the Digital Media Commons. digitalactstudio.uncg.edu

**Learning Assistance Center:**
The Learning Assistance Center offers free services to the entire UNCG undergraduate community and is located in McIver Hall, rooms 101-104, and 150. For help with study skills, contact Erin Farrior, Academic Skills specialist. Telephone: 334-3878; e-mail: lac@uncg.edu.

**Office of Accessibility Resources and Services:**
Students with documentation of special needs should arrange to see me about accommodations as soon as possible. If you believe you could benefit from such accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Services on campus before such accommodations can be made. The office is located on the second floor of the Elliott University Center (EUC) in Suite 215, and the office is open 8am to 5pm, Monday - Friday. Telephone: 334-5440; e-mail: oars@uncg.edu.

**Course Schedule:**
The weekly rhythm of the class will generally run like this: **At 5:00 each Friday, your reading quiz and journal entry are due.** At this time each week, the content for the new unit will appear in the **Start each unit here** module on Bb. There will be an introduction to the material, usually including a **5-10-minute video lecture, which is required viewing.** I will also include links to other material that may be of interest.

Here is a schedule of the readings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: Aug 18-22</td>
<td>Literature in an Everyday Context</td>
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<td>Week 2: Aug. 25-29</td>
<td><strong>Genres: Short Prose</strong></td>
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<td>Week 3: Sept. 2-5*</td>
<td><strong>Genres: Poetry</strong></td>
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<td>Week 4: Sept. 8-12</td>
<td><strong>Genres: Novel</strong></td>
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<td>Week 6: Sept. 22-26</td>
<td><strong>Literary Elements: Plot, Characters, and Point of View</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7: Sept. 29-Oct. 3</td>
<td><strong>Literary Elements: Setting, Atmosphere, Mood, Metaphor, Simile, and Imagery</strong></td>
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<td>Week 8: Oct. 6-10</td>
<td><strong>Theoretical Lenses</strong></td>
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<td>Fall Break: Oct. 13-14</td>
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<td>Week 9: Oct 20-24</td>
<td><strong>Writing About Literature</strong></td>
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<td>Week 10: Oct. 27-31</td>
<td><strong>Americanah: More than one kind of Story</strong></td>
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<td>Week 11: Nov. 3-7</td>
<td>Adichie’s Americanah chs. 14-37</td>
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<td>Americanah: Fiction and Empathy</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 12: Nov. 10-14</th>
<th>Adichie’s Americanah chs. 38-55</th>
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<td>Americanah: Stories with a Political Agenda</td>
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<th>Week 13: Nov. 17-21</th>
<th>Lenses pp. 117-121, 153-167; Greenberg’s The Encyclopedia of Early Earth “Love in a Very Cold Climate” through “The Long Night” (1st half of the book)</th>
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<td>Encyclopedia: Visual Narrative</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 14: Nov. 24-Dec. 1**</th>
<th>Greenberg’s The Encyclopedia of Early Earth “Dead Towns and Ghost Men” through “The Gods #3” (2nd half of the book; appendices optional) READING QUIZ AND JOURNAL ENTRY DUE MONDAY DEC. 1 AT 5:00 PM**</th>
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<tr>
<td>Encyclopedia: A Plurality of Origin Stories</td>
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<th>Exam week: Dec. 3-10</th>
<th>Final projects due Monday Dec. 8 at 5:00 pm</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bringing it All Together</td>
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*Sept. 1 is the Labor Day holiday.
** Classes end for the Thanksgiving Holiday on Nov. 25th, and the semester ends on Monday Dec. 1st, so I’ve added that day to the last “week” of class.

*This syllabus is subject to change. Always be sure to check the latest version of the syllabus.*