



ENGL205 Introduction to Fiction¹

Spring of 2023-24

Instructor Information

Name	Professor Angie Johnson
Email	angie.johnson@blc.edu <i>This is my preferred contact method. I check email during standard business hours (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., M-F) and only twice a day (in the morning and afternoon). You are welcome to email me apart from these hours, but you should only anticipate a response during standard business hours. Except for weekends and holidays, I will try to reply to your message within 24 hours. You should set digital boundaries, too. It's good for your mental health!</i>
Phone	507-344-7881 (x881)
Office Location #1	Honsey Hall 227
Office Location #2	Luther Hall 201 - The Ada Stokes Writing Center
Office “Drop-in” Hours in Office Location #2: LH201	<p>Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>I am the faculty coordinator of the Writing Center. During my office “drop-in” hours, you will find me in the Writing Center (Location #2).</i></p> <p><i>You do not need an appointment to meet with me; however, it's first come first served. If you are unavailable during my drop-in hours, please send an email to me to request an appointment. Thanks!</i></p>

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”
Proverbs 3:5-6

Course Description

This course introduces literary terminology commonly used in analyzing short stories and novels. Most of the literature is selected from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries.

¹ The information in the course syllabus is subject to change. Changes will be announced during class meetings.

Emphasis is placed on relationships between authors' lives and their fiction, as well as individual works of fiction that have influenced other authors' fiction. In addition, cultural literacy is addressed with a focus on the research of literary allusions.

Learning Resources

The following materials are *required* for the class:

- Short readings will be uploaded to Moodle for free
- A [large folder](#) in which to store the printed readings that will be provided for free
- A [notebook](#) of some kind in which to journal
- Pens/pencils; possibly sticky notes;
- [Speechify](#) associated with your @blc.edu acct
- [Loom](#) for screen capturing and video production associated with your @blc.edu acct
- Google Chrome and Drive associated with your @blc.edu acct (Docs, Forms, Slides, etc.)
- Headphones and a laptop
- To study "plot" you will need access to *Finding Nemo* (2003)
- Access to YouTube, Netflix, and/or Amazon Prime
- Red Bull²

The following materials are *required* for students who contract for an "A" in the course:

- A novel of your choosing or a shooting script of a screenplay that has been produced; however, do ***not*** purchase the text until you are aware of the assignment requirements
- **You must secure a physical copy of the text**
- In addition to the physical copy of the text, I highly recommend that you purchase an Audible copy of the text so you can read and listen simultaneously

Learning Objectives & Outcomes

Institutional Objectives:

1. Recognize that the historic Christian faith professes that God the Holy Trinity is the source of all knowledge and truth, and that His wisdom is most clearly revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
2. Demonstrate (a) intellectual, (b) creative, and (c) problem-solving skills.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of personal and public responsibility.
4. Develop habits of thinking that apply to a fulfilling life of learning.

The goals and outcomes specific to this particular course correspond especially with Institutional Objective 2 and 4, though we will take advantage of every opportunity to engage with all four of the Institutional Objectives.

General Education Institutional Objectives:

- Item 1: *Demonstrate the ability to closely and critically read a text*
 - While reading a variety of literary texts, students are required to read an additional text concerning literary terminology and techniques, such as direct and indirect characterization, setting, and denouement. Each week, the ideas presented in the primary sources are amalgamated; the various literary elements presented in the additional text are used to scrutinize and critique the literary texts.

² Kidding! (Sort of.)

Additionally, students who contract for an "A" are required to read one novel of their choosing (a novel with literary merit) and then submit a written analysis in order to demonstrate the ability to read a text closely and critically..

- Item 2: *Demonstrate an understanding of ideas from different cultures and time periods*
 - In ENGL 205, students are required to read a wide variety of literary texts written by authors who are diverse in nature (i.e., Ha Jin, Pramoedya Toer, Z.Z. Packer) and who present cultural and personal ideas that are different from popular perspectives and backgrounds. Additionally, the publication of these texts ranges from the 19th century to the 21st century.
- Item 3: *Demonstrate the ability to identify a diversity in perspective, ideology and religion*
 - Again, students are required to read a wide variety of literary texts written by authors who are diverse in nature (i.e., Eudora Welty, Gish Jen, Bernard Malamud) and who present cultural and personal ideas different from popular perspectives and backgrounds. Additionally, the publication dates of the texts range from the 19th century through the 21st century.

English Program Learning Outcomes (PLO):

The goal of ENGL205 is to encourage students to...

- Adjust their use of written language and their writing processes to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences for different purposes;
- Write in a variety of modes for reflection, writing-to-learn, various audiences, and presenting research in a creative format (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1);
- Apply correct MLA formatting guidelines to projects;
- Demonstrate basic cultural literacy pertaining to course content, including correctly identifying allusions of the times, excerpts from renowned works, and works written by key authors (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);
- Ask effective questions of a literary text, based on their own interaction with the text, including how the text is significant in relation to their own lives and the lives of others, and in relation to other texts (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);
- Exhibit a minimum competency of a foundational knowledge of literary terminology and use said terminology to analyze and evaluate works read (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1 and Item 2);
- Develop an appreciation for literature so that as educated young people they will lead fuller and satisfying lives.

Course Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Correctly identify allusions taken directly from literature selected for this course (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);
- Correctly identify excerpts from literature selected for this course (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);
- Correctly identify excerpts from works written by authors read in this course (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1);
- Ask effective questions of the various texts selected from this course (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);

- Define literary terminology and then apply it to course texts for evaluating its usage by authors read in this course, both on paper and in discussions (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);
- Respond personally to literature in at least one way not previously experienced (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1, Item 2, and Item 3);
- Write persuasively, using literary terminology correctly (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1);
- Write creatively in a manner used by one or more authors read in this course (Gen Ed Ob. 2a Item 1).

Professionalism, Reliability, Engagement

College is a professional space organized around a single goal: *learning*. Learning is an active process. One must be *actively engaged* in the course materials and activities to achieve the desired outcomes. Part of your “grade” is determined by your demonstrated investment in the culture and goals of the course.

Factors that influence this grade include class preparation, taking an active role in class discussions (be vocal), workshops, presentations, group work, more group work, writing assignments, project activities, attentiveness to details, etc.

Professional interaction with your instructor and peers is required. Consider that if you are absent from class for a week, you cannot demonstrate engagement in that week’s activities. If you skip materials and attend some weeks without having done the assigned reading(s), you’ve demonstrated unreliability and cannot engage with the activities.

Be professional. Be reliable. Get engaged.

Evaluation: The Labor-Based Grading Contract

So we can focus on the readings and our discussions (and not microfocus on traditional “grades”), this course will use a labor-based grading system to evaluate your learning. Students will “contract” for a letter grade. The Labor-Based Grading Contract is found in the class portal and will be explained during the first week of class. Within the Labor-Based Grading Contract, you will find information that addresses the following:

- Attendance
- Late Work
- Letter Grade Breakdowns (e.g., how to earn an “A” in the course)
- Table: Summary of Effort Required for Final Letter Grades

Unit Breakdown

Unit 1: Fiction Structures in Short Stories

- Read and discuss short stories to analyze story structures: figurative language, characterization, theme, setting, story form, POV, etc.
- Unit 1 Performance & Assessment: WebQuest (group presentation)

In this unit, we will read these short stories:

Year	Short Story Title	Author
1941	“Why I Live at the P.O.”	Eudora Welty
1958	“The Magic Barrel”	Bernard Malamud
1960	“The Scarlet Ibis”	James Hurst
1961	“An Ounce of Cure”	Alice Munro
1961	“A & P”	John Updike
1966	“Where are you going, where have you been?”	Joyce Carol Oates
1975	“Where have you gone, charming Billy?”	Tim O’Brien
1985	“Greasy Lake”	T. C. Boyle
1996	“Saboteur”	Ha Jin
1999	“Who’s Irish”	Gish Jen
2003	“Brownies”	ZZ Packer
2004	“Circumcision”	Pramoedya Toer
2017	“Big Momma”	Joyce Carol Oates

Unit 2: Fiction Structures in Cinema

- Read and discuss the hero’s journey in sitcoms, film, and/or a stage play with the following components: characterization, theme, setting, story form, point of view, etc.
- Unit 2 Performance & Assessment: Short Story Writing. Using a hero’s journey cheat sheet provided by the professor, students will outline an original short story.

Academic Integrity Policy

In *Rules for Writing*, author Diana Hacker asserts that research “is a collaboration between you and your sources. To be fair and ethical, you must acknowledge your debt to the writers of these sources. If you don’t you are guilty of plagiarism, a serious academic offense.” Hacker also lists three different acts of plagiarism a writer can commit, including: “(1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words.” The only information you do not need to cite in academic work is “common knowledge,” or information readers can find easily in general sources because many people know it already (110).

In short, to plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written or thought of something that you have in fact borrowed from someone or something else (people or chatbots). Writers certainly may use another person’s words and ideas, but if these words and ideas are copied word for word they must have “quotation marks” and they must be cited immediately—before the end of the sentence – like this (Johnson 5). If words are paraphrased or summarized, cite the source by the paragraph’s end.

If a student is found to have plagiarized, the professor reserves the right to fail him or her for the assignment and/or the course.

Students are required to follow the [Academic Honor Code](#) and the [Academic Honor System](#) instituted by Bethany Lutheran College.

Chatbots: AI-Generated Writing Policy

While students are prohibited from using AI to *replace* their thinking and learning, they are welcome to use AI to *support* their thinking and learning. There's a world of difference! Think of the help you get from tools like ChatGPT as a *much less sophisticated* version of the assistance you can get from a tutor in The Ada Stokes Writing Center.





Depending on where you are in the writing process (early, middle, or final draft of a presentation or novel critique), a tutor might ask you questions to jump-start your imagination, help identify poorly organized ideas, teach you how to conduct research and help you correct errors in source integration techniques, spelling, and grammar and mechanics. **A tutor will never do the writing (the *thinking*) for you.** If another person does the writing (the *thinking*) for you, that's cheating.

Chatbots are not human. They are machines. Machines are adept at recognizing patterns and reflecting those patterns back to us; machines cannot think for themselves (yet), and they cannot think for you (ever). **AI should never do the writing (the *thinking*) for you.** If an AI does the writing (the *thinking*) for you, that's cheating.

Don't cheat.

With these things in mind, here are the course policies for AI-generated writing tools:

Appropriate Uses of AI (using AI to <i>support</i> your thinking and learning)	
Help Understanding an Assignment	Although AI can sometimes help you better understand an assignment (and you're welcome to try it), talk to your professors, classmates, and tutors if you are confused or lost. AIs can lead you astray!
Help with YOUR Ideas	<p>You are welcome to present your ideas and your thoughts to chatbots; you can ask chatbots thought-provoking questions to help kickstart your own thinking: <i>I am writing about xyz and think xyz about it. What are the potential holes in my thinking? Are there counterarguments I should be aware of?</i> In this way, chatbots can present alternative viewpoints to stimulate creativity and help you explore new concepts and angles, but beware! Warning!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Danger, Will Robinson! Danger!</p> <p>First, chatbots like ChatGPT are known for making up information that is incomplete, incorrect, and nonexistent. This is called "hallucinating." For example, I tested ChatGPT for research purposes, and I asked it to create a timeline of the US-Dakota War of 1862. The timeline was <i>awful</i>. ChatGPT told me that the Dakota Indians went to war on Sunday, August 17 and the war ended on Wednesday, November 26, when 29 Braves were hanged in New Ulm.</p>

	<p>Wrong. Wrong, wrong, wrong. The war started on Monday, August 18, and it ended on Friday, December 26, when 38 Dakota Indians were hanged in Mankato. When I told the chatbot that it was wrong (without providing the correct information), it began to hallucinate and it spewed out all kinds of nonsense.³</p> <p>Another problem is this: Chatbots can generate biased information which college students and professionals need to avoid at all costs. Danger, Will Robinson! Danger!</p>
Help with Organizing YOUR Ideas (e.g., outlines)	<p>After brainstorming and developing your ideas, the next step is to organize them. One method of idea organization is <i>outlining</i>. If you create an outline—or if you use another method to organize your ideas—you may use chatbot <i>recommendations</i> to make <i>tweaks</i> to the work you have already produced, but not the other way around.</p>
Spelling, Grammar & Mechanics	<p>You are welcome to use AI to spell-check and identify errors in grammar and mechanics. To learn more about grammar and mechanics, chatbots can be quite fun:</p> <div data-bbox="565 831 1310 890">  Okay, how the heck are semicolons used? Define and explain. Use funny, ridiculous examples to make reading fun (incorrect and correct). </div> <div data-bbox="565 957 1396 1178">  Meet Mr. Semicolon, the world's best matchmaker! He's adept at linking related thoughts: "I ate 12 donuts; now, I can't button my pants." Not: "I ate 12 donuts, now I can't button my pants." He's the donut to your coffee!</div> <p>Plus, he's a maestro at handling lists like a juggler at a circus. Correct: "My pet dragons are: Bob, the fiery; Sally, the icy; and Ted, the strangely cuddly." Not: "My pet dragons are: Bob, the fiery, Sally, the icy, and Ted, the strangely cuddly." See? Semicolon, your sentence superhero!</p> <p>You can even ask AI to quiz you!</p> <div data-bbox="565 1331 868 1369">  Quiz my use of semicolons. </div> <div data-bbox="565 1436 1408 1789">  Sure, let's play a game of "Semicolon or Not". I'll provide a sentence and you have to decide whether it's correct or not. If it's incorrect, try to correct it. Here we go: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "I love to eat strawberries; they are my favorite fruit." "I have a big test tomorrow; but I can't study tonight." "She studied all night for the test; consequently, she aced it." "On our trip, we visited Paris, France; Madrid, Spain; and Rome, Italy." "The cat ate its dinner; it then went for a nap." "We're visiting New York, New York; Los Angeles, California; and Orlando, Florida." <p>Now it's your turn! Correct the sentence if you believe it's wrong, or confirm it's right.</p> </div>

³ The test was conducted on July 11, 2023.

Inappropriate Uses of AI (using AI to <i>replace</i> your thinking and learning)	
Using AI to Generate Ideas & Organize Them	Just as a tutor will not create ideas or organize them for others, you are prohibited from using AI to generate, develop, and organize ideas for you to use as your own. Instead, ask the machine to help <i>you</i> with the ideas that <i>you</i> have already outlined, and not the other way around.
Using AI to Generate Your Writing (Your <i>Thinking</i>)	<p>You are prohibited from using AI to write full sentences, paragraphs, pages, or entire assignments or projects for you. Develop your <i>own</i> thinking; develop your <i>own</i> voice. You have one of those, you know. Use it!</p> <p>To ensure you have space to do your <i>own</i> thinking and develop your <i>own</i> voice, you will not be graded on the <i>quality</i> of your writing (although each assignment must fulfill particular benchmarks to be accepted). Instead, we will employ a labor-based grading contract, and your <i>labor</i> and <i>effort</i> will be graded. The contract will provide you with an opportunity to make mistakes and improve on those mistakes without punishment... so really, you don't <i>need</i> to have a chatbot do the thinking for you!</p>
Using AI to Translate Your Writing in English (e.g., Google Translate)	<p>Is English your second (or third or fourth or fifth) language? Awesome! People who speak two or more languages typically have enhanced cognitive flexibility and improved memory, and they are more marketable than someone who speaks only one language. Already, you're a leg up in the workforce!</p> <p>If you are nervous about presenting your writing in English, I get it. Relax. As stated earlier, the <i>quality</i> of your writing will not be graded in this class. Instead, we will use a labor-based grading contract, and your <i>labor</i> and <i>effort</i> will be graded. This will provide you with an opportunity to make mistakes and improve on those mistakes without punishment.</p> <p>In this class, I want you to focus on improving your written English. While you are encouraged to use your preferred language when you <i>draft</i> for ideas, you are required to translate your writing into English on your own. Your English will not improve if you do not struggle with the language. The struggle is good. Embrace it. :)</p>

As you can see, there is a clear distinction between using AI to help **support** your learning and using AI to **replace** your learning. In class, we will further discuss the policies on the use of AI and their implications. We'll even play around with ChatGPT. I dig it!

Finally, everything that comes across my desk (or screen) will be treated as if the ideas belong to you. I refuse to police students. I don't have the time, and it's not my job. My job is to coach a room full of thinkers to become better thinkers, and I cannot develop a healthy relationship with the class if I approach teaching as though you are habitual cheaters. Eww. That's a terrible foundation for building a healthy relationship. I won't do it!

Additionally, you are adults. Unlike K-12, you don't need to be here. Attending college is a choice. You are paying good money to develop your thinking and take up a seat in this class, so I assume that you understand and embrace these two truths:

The Attitude	Two Lies	Two Truths
Student: “My professor didn’t know my papers were written by a chatbot and I earned a good grade in the course! Yea!”	Lie #1: The student outsmarted the professor.	<p>Truth #1: Professors are not out to “catch” students. That’s ridiculous, and it’s not their job. The only person the student outsmarted was himself. He paid \$3,000 to take the class and then had a chatbot do the thinking for him. By cheating his way through the class, the student has...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retarded his cognitive and critical thinking abilities, rather than developed them. ● Taught himself to rely on others’ thinking rather than his own, which will come back to bite him. Habitual cheating chips away at a person’s authenticity, identity, and self-esteem, and it negatively affects mental health and relationships. ● Habitual cheaters often wind up turning into adults who need a <i>lot</i> of external validation. They are unable to develop original ideas, they experience impaired decision-making, and they can become morally bankrupt. <p>And you know what? The whole time this student thought he outsmarted the professor, the professor still got paid. (Who’s the dummy, now? 😏)</p>
	Lie #2: The student <i>earned</i> the grades to pass the course.	<p>Truth #2: The student didn’t <i>earn</i> good grades to pass the course and he knows it. Furthermore, his comment highlights an unsettling sense of entitlement: <i>I can get ahead in life without following the rules or doing the work! Yea!</i> Gross. This is <i>not</i> the kind of partner, family member, friend, community member, or employee that adults want in their lives. People who feel and behave as though they are entitled to something are toxic. Run away!</p>

Recording & Privacy

Due to the sensitivity of the course material and discussions, software will NOT be used to record live class sessions. In other words, relax! None of you will be recorded.

Course Accommodations

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require that “no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, be excluded from participation in, or the benefits of services, programs or activities or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance.” If you have a disability or feel you require accommodations, please contact Kristi Ringen in the Academic Resource Center (kringen@blc.edu or 507-344-7730). If you have an accommodations letter from the Academic Resources office, please discuss your accommodations and needs with me as early in the semester as possible. We will work together to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate.

Final Notes from Your Professor

I want this class to feel like a “break” in your day and resemble a book club. A book club is a relaxed gathering of adults who agree to read the same texts. Weekly, these adults gather to discuss the texts to help them gain a deeper understanding of their own thinking, their communities, and the world at large.

We are those adults.

Book clubs do not work well with too many members. As such, I will divide the class in half. We are scheduled to meet twice a week. On one of the days, you will be sent to another room to complete the reading(s). On the other day, you will engage with your “book club” group to discuss the readings.

For our book club meetings, I will roll a Keurig to the room so we can sip on something warm. Bring a mug!

