

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: ENGL*2120*03	Course Title: Seminar: Critical Practices	Date of Offering: Fall 2018
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Course Instructor: Dr. J.R. (Tim) Struthers	Seminar
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Brief Course Synopsis:

Topic: "Learning To Read Critically: Interpreting the Short Story, the Novella, and the Story Sequence in Diverse Critical Contexts"

Please Note: This section of ENGL*2120 does NOT fulfill any of the specific "Distribution Requirements" for English Programs.

ENGL*2120 has been designated a writing- and presentation-intensive course; it provides an important opportunity for spirited study, for careful preparation of presentations and written work, and for informed conversation and it requires – more importantly, it warrants – full commitment week in and week out by every seminar member to one's own and everyone else's education. For each section of ENGL*2120 the choices of focus and texts and approach are made by the instructor, then redefined by each student. Our overall topic will be "Learning To Read Critically: Interpreting the Short Story, the Novella, and the Story Sequence in Diverse Theoretical Contexts." In this pursuit, we'll draw extensively on the discussions and the examples of different schools of theory and criticism provided in a critical edition of Irish writer James Joyce's novella "The Dead" from his 1914 collection *Dubliners* with a view to comparing that novella to Canadian writer Alice Munro's novellas "A Queer Streak" from her 1986 collection *The Progress of Love* and "Too Much Happiness" from her 2009 collection *Too Much Happiness*.

Two thoughtful, enjoyable, and, importantly, complementary contexts we'll be examining closely to achieve a more intricate sense of the nature of fictional form, technique, and style and to suggest how we ourselves might write most perceptively and most powerfully will be scholar Charles E. May's book *The Short Story: The Reality of Artifice* and creative writer Francine Prose's book *Reading Like a Writer*. To ensure that attention is given both to *what* May and Prose have to teach us and to *how* they frame and express that, and equally to encourage the development of ways of thinking both critically and creatively yourself, each seminar member will be asked to prepare, as part of the writing for the course, reading journals commenting briefly on the successive chapters in May's and Prose's studies.

In addition to studying the three novellas by Joyce and Munro, we'll have the pleasure of discussing the three-part story sequence *About Love* by the influential turn-of-the-twentieth-century Russian writer Anton Chekhov, along with contemporary American writer Richard Ford's story collection *Rock Springs*, and additional stories selected from Munro's *The Progress of Love* and *Too Much Happiness*.

<p>Course Format:</p> <p>SEMINAR/DISCUSSION</p>	<p>Methods of Evaluation and Weights:</p> <p><u>Please Note: Assignments for this section of ENGL*2120 will include a Two-Part Out-of-Class Take-Home Final Exam due during the final exam period at the time and the room assigned by the Registrar's Office.</u></p> <p>10% > <u>First Seminar</u> (10 to 12 to perhaps 15 minutes, including intervals for discussion; to be accompanied by an approx. 1½-page outline of arguments and examples in point form)</p> <p>10% > <u>Second Seminar</u> (10 to 12 to perhaps 15 minutes, including intervals for discussion; to be accompanied by an approx. 1½-page outline of arguments and examples in point form)</p> <p>15% > <u>Analytic Paper</u> of about 1,000 words (to be revised and resubmitted if requested by instructor)</p> <p>20% > <u>Reading Journal</u> in 13 parts of approx. 100 words apiece (that is, totalling approx. 1,300 words) consisting of double-spaced typed commentaries on assorted theoretical and fictional works identified by the instructor</p> <p>10% > <u>Third Seminar</u> (about 15 minutes, including intervals for discussion; to be accompanied by an approx. 1½-page outline of arguments and examples in point form)</p> <p>20% > <u>Two-Part Out-of-Class Take-Home Final</u> – each part worth 10% and each part approx. 600 to 750 words</p> <p>15% > Overall Effort, Participation, Improvement (including work on Take-Home Final Exam)</p> <p>TOTAL NUMBER OF WORDS OF FORMAL PROSE REQUIRED:</p>
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	approx. 3,500 to 3,800 words (incl. approx. 1,200 to 1,500 words in total for the Two-Part Out-of-Class Take-Home Final Exam)
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Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

CHEKHOV, Anton. *About Love: 3 Stories by Anton Chekhov*. Trans. David Helwig. Illus. Seth. Windsor, ON: Biblioasis, 2012.

FORD, Richard. *Rock Springs*. New York: Grove, 2009.

JOYCE, James. *The Dead*. Ed. Daniel R. Schwarz. Boston: Bedford Books / St. Martin's, 1994. Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism.

MAY, Charles E. *The Short Story: The Reality of Artifice*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

MUNRO, Alice. *The Progress of Love*. Introd. Richard Ford. Toronto: Penguin, 2006.

MUNRO, Alice. *Too Much Happiness*. Introd. Miriam Toews. Toronto: Penguin, 2012.

PROSE, Francine. *Reading Like a Writer: A Guide for People Who Love Books and for Those Who Want to Write Them*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.

Other information that you wish share about the course (optional):

Members of this section (03) of ENGL*2120 who wish to do some advance reading before our first class meeting are encouraged to begin with the three stories by the influential turn- of- the- twentieth-century Russian writer Anton Chekhov in the volume *About Love* translated by Canadian writer David Helwig and illustrated by Guelph artist Seth presented. Alternatively, you're welcome to treat yourself to the opening story or two of either or both of Alice Munro's collection *The Progress of Love* and Richard Ford's collection *Rock Springs*.