

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A VERY TENTATIVE SYLLABUS FOR THIS COURSE. THE ONLY THING THAT IS CERTAIN ABOUT THESE READINGS ARE THE READINGS FOR THE FIRST COUPLE OF DAYS (THE WEEK OF JULY 5). ONE THING WE WILL DO IN THE FIRST DAY OF CLASSES IS COME UP WITH A SYLLABUS CONTAINING STORIES THAT YOU WANT TO DO. (YOU CAN THINK ABOUT THAT IN ADVANCE.)

English 180a
Summer 2021

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All classes conducted via Zoom. The Zoom classes will be recorded unless there is explicit objection, so that if you miss a class, ask me for a link. I will try to remember to announce those recordings at the beginning of each class, but I am notifying you here as well.

Tentative Syllabus

Week by week schedule. Most of the stories will be available through Latte.

July 5: Chopin, “The Storm”; Hemingway: “A Day’s Wait” and “Hills Like White Elephants”; West, “Miss Lonelyhearts”

July 12: Hawthorne: “Rappaccini’s Daughter”; Poe: “Masque of the Red Death”; Gilman: “The Yellow Wallpaper”; London: “To Build a Fire”; Macleod: “The Boat”

July 19: O’Connor: “A Good Man is Hard to Find”; Baldwin: “Going to Meet the Man”; Wolff: “Bullet in the Brain”; Diaz: “How to Date a Brown Girl”; Lahiri: “Interpreter of Maladies”; Danticat: “One Thing”

First paper due July 20

July 26: Faulkner: “Barn Burning”; Salinger: “For Esme with Love and Squalor”; Munro: “Meneseung”; Denis Johnson: “Car Crash While Hitchhiking,” “Emergency”; Anderson: “Maidencane”; Chiang: “The Great Silence”

August 2: Borges: “The Bribe”; Bradbury: “The Veldt”; King: “Last Rung on the Ladder”; McFarlane: “Demolition”; Cortázar: “Continuity of Parks”; Garcia Marquez: “A Very Old Man”; Bolaño: “Prefiguration of Lalo Cura”

Second paper due August 9

Requirements: Two papers, 1,000-1,500 words each. **Over the course of the two papers you should discuss at least three different stories.** (This gives you flexibility: you could do one paper on a single story, as long as the other paper was about two other stories, or you could do two papers on two stories each, which might mean discussing four stories, but could mean discussing only three if you talked about one of the stories twice; or you could do a paper on one story and then a second paper on three stories including the story you did in the other paper, etc. If you're not sure, ask me.) **At least two of the stories you write about should come from the syllabus, but if you want to write about another story or stories, you can, but check with me first.**

Grading: Each paper is worth up to 50% of your grade; "up to" means that nothing else is required, but class participation can always help, and improvement can help. So the lowest grade you'd be get would be a strict average of the grades on both papers, but you might do better than that strict average.

The learning goals of this class: to learn more about how short stories work and why.

Boilerplate. Incorporated by reference is the language that Brandeis suggests for syllabi, here: <https://www.brandeis.edu/arts-sciences/faculty/resources/teaching-resources/syllabus-checklist.html>.

Essentially what it says is this: **don't plagiarize or cheat.** English teachers are particularly unhappy about such things because it is our vocation to want to get you to read and to think, to have the experience of reading and thinking. So we react badly to plagiarism or any other kind of cheating.

Brandeis will **accommodate documented disabilities** as appropriate. Let me know if you need accommodation.

You're supposed to be doing a total of **180 hours of work** to get a good grade. That comes to three hours of work outside of class for each of the 39 contact hours in class.

Since there's an online component to every class at Brandeis, there are **privacy issues** that may come up. There are requests you can make to enhance your privacy, like using pseudonyms or screen names, if you want to. See the link above. The class is being recorded for students who miss it, so let me know if that's an issue or if you don't want to be recorded.

