



LITR11043 *The Short Story*

Term 2 - 2017

Profile information current as at 14/12/2025 05:25 pm

All details in this unit profile for LITR11043 have been officially approved by CQUniversity and represent a learning partnership between the University and you (our student). The information will not be changed unless absolutely necessary and any change will be clearly indicated by an approved correction included in the profile.

General Information

Overview

A short story contains multiple points of view and myriad narrative strategies. Moreover, as Patricia Hampl notes, the short story is 'acknowledged to be the most exquisite kind of prose fiction, requiring the perfect craft, the form in which the smallest slip can bring the whole contraption—plot, character, narration—down in a crash. A delicate business'. The aim of this unit is to provide students with an opportunity to explore the complexity and delicacy of the short story while developing their text-based interpretative and analytical techniques.

Details

Career Level: *Undergraduate*

Unit Level: *Level 1*

Credit Points: 6

Student Contribution Band: 7

Fraction of Full-Time Student Load: 0.125

Pre-requisites or Co-requisites

There are no requisites for this unit.

Important note: Students enrolled in a subsequent unit who failed their pre-requisite unit, should drop the subsequent unit before the census date or within 10 working days of Fail grade notification. Students who do not drop the unit in this timeframe cannot later drop the unit without academic and financial liability. See details in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).

Offerings For Term 2 - 2017

- Distance
- Rockhampton

Attendance Requirements

All on-campus students are expected to attend scheduled classes – in some units, these classes are identified as a mandatory (pass/fail) component and attendance is compulsory. International students, on a student visa, must maintain a full time study load and meet both attendance and academic progress requirements in each study period (satisfactory attendance for International students is defined as maintaining at least an 80% attendance record).

Website

[This unit has a website, within the Moodle system, which is available two weeks before the start of term. It is important that you visit your Moodle site throughout the term. Please visit Moodle for more information.](#)

Class and Assessment Overview

Recommended Student Time Commitment

Each 6-credit Undergraduate unit at CQUniversity requires an overall time commitment of an average of 12.5 hours of study per week, making a total of 150 hours for the unit.

Class Timetable

[Regional Campuses](#)

Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton, Townsville

[Metropolitan Campuses](#)

Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney

Assessment Overview

1. **Written Assessment**

Weighting: 20%

2. **Written Assessment**

Weighting: 40%

3. **Written Assessment**

Weighting: 40%

Assessment Grading

This is a graded unit: your overall grade will be calculated from the marks or grades for each assessment task, based on the relative weightings shown in the table above. You must obtain an overall mark for the unit of at least 50%, or an overall grade of 'pass' in order to pass the unit. If any 'pass/fail' tasks are shown in the table above they must also be completed successfully ('pass' grade). You must also meet any minimum mark requirements specified for a particular assessment task, as detailed in the 'assessment task' section (note that in some instances, the minimum mark for a task may be greater than 50%). Consult the [University's Grades and Results Policy](#) for more details of interim results and final grades.

CQUniversity Policies

All University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

You may wish to view these policies:

- Grades and Results Policy
- Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)
- Review of Grade Procedure
- Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – Domestic Students
- Monitoring Academic Progress (MAP) Policy and Procedure – International Students
- Student Refund and Credit Balance Policy and Procedure
- Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure

This list is not an exhaustive list of all University policies. The full list of University policies are available on the [CQUniversity Policy site](#).

Previous Student Feedback

Feedback, Recommendations and Responses

Every unit is reviewed for enhancement each year. At the most recent review, the following staff and student feedback items were identified and recommendations were made.

Feedback from Course Evaluation

Feedback

The online forum has been great.

Recommendation

The online discussion forum continues to be a useful space for learning and teaching

Feedback from Course Evaluation

Feedback

The Moodle site was easy to navigate. Also, my assessment was returned on time and the feedback I was given supported my learning.

Recommendation

The unit coordinator attempts to be prompt and expansive in advising students on their work.

Feedback from Course Evaluation

Feedback

above. All of the content learnt in this course was stimulating and very interesting. Applying literary theory to short stories is very interesting and there was much flexibility with what to do for assignments. If anything, there was perhaps too much room for freedom, that the tasks become a bit vague.

Recommendation

In literary studies there is no "one true way" of approaching a text. Different theories yield different interpretations. Some students find this open-endedness disconcerting.

Unit Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. interpret, analyse and evaluate selected short stories from the nineteenth and twentieth century using a variety of advanced text-based interpretative and analytical techniques;
2. analyse and compare selected short stories within a framework of issues such as ideology, gender, race and the politics of literature;

N/A

Alignment of Learning Outcomes, Assessment and Graduate Attributes



Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Learning Outcomes

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes	
	1	2
1 - Written Assessment - 20%	•	•
2 - Written Assessment - 40%	•	•

Assessment Tasks	Learning Outcomes	
	1	2
3 - Written Assessment - 40%	•	•

Alignment of Graduate Attributes to Learning Outcomes

Graduate Attributes	Learning Outcomes	
	1	2
1 - Communication	•	•
2 - Problem Solving	•	
3 - Critical Thinking	•	•
4 - Information Literacy	•	•
5 - Team Work		
6 - Information Technology Competence		
7 - Cross Cultural Competence		•
8 - Ethical practice		•
9 - Social Innovation		
10 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures		

Alignment of Assessment Tasks to Graduate Attributes

Assessment Tasks	Graduate Attributes									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 - Written Assessment - 20%		•	•							
2 - Written Assessment - 40%	•	•	•	•		•				
3 - Written Assessment - 40%	•	•					•	•		

Textbooks and Resources

Textbooks

There are no required textbooks.

Additional Textbook Information

There are no set texts for this unit. Details of readings will be provided on the Moodle website.

IT Resources

You will need access to the following IT resources:

- CQUniversity Student Email
- Internet
- Unit Website (Moodle)

Referencing Style

All submissions for this unit must use the referencing style: [Harvard \(author-date\)](#)

For further information, see the Assessment Tasks.

Teaching Contacts

Stephen Butler Unit Coordinator

s.butler@cqu.edu.au

Schedule

Week 1 - 10 Jul 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Introduction and Overview; John Updike, 'Leaves'		

Week 2 - 17 Jul 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Analysing the short story: 'The purloined letter'		

Week 3 - 24 Jul 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Kate Chopin, 'Désirée's baby'		

Week 4 - 31 Jul 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Nikolai Gogol, 'The overcoat'; Guy de Maupassant, 'A country outing'		Short Paper Due: Week 4 Friday (4 Aug 2017) 11:45 pm AEST

Week 5 - 07 Aug 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Charles Dickens, 'The signalman'; Joseph Conrad, 'An outpost of progress'		

Vacation Week - 14 Aug 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Week 6 - 21 Aug 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Nathaniel Hawthorne, 'The minister's black veil'; Ambrose Bierce, 'An occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge'		

Week 7 - 28 Aug 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
James Joyce, 'A painful case'; Katherine Mansfield, 'The garden party'		

Week 8 - 04 Sep 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Franz Kafka, 'A hunger artist'; Thomas Mann, 'Mario and the magician'		Forum Papers and Responses Due: Week 8 Friday (8 Sept 2017) 11:45 pm AEST

Week 9 - 11 Sep 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Ernest Hemingway, 'Hills like white elephants'; Katherine Porter, 'The grave'		

Week 10 - 18 Sep 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Alain Robbe-Grillet, 'The shore'; Thomasso Landolfi, 'Gogol's wife'		

Week 11 - 25 Sep 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
John Cheever, 'A country husband'; Donald Barthelme, 'At the end of the mechanical age'		

Week 12 - 02 Oct 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
Jorge Louis Borges, 'Borges and I', & 'Everything and nothing'; Julio Cortazar, 'Axolotl'		Essay Due: Week 12 Friday (6 Oct 2017) 11:45 pm AEST

Review/Exam Week - 09 Oct 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Exam Week - 16 Oct 2017

Module/Topic	Chapter	Events and Submissions/Topic
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Assessment Tasks

1 Short Paper

Assessment Type

Written Assessment

Task Description

Using the techniques for analysis discussed in weeks 1-3 in the unit (see Moodle website for resources), analyse, interpret and develop an argument using any short story listed in the unit profile. At the very least you should compare and contrast the chosen story with the generally acknowledged attributes of the short story form.

Assessment Due Date

Week 4 Friday (4 Aug 2017) 11:45 pm AEST

Return Date to Students

Week 6 Friday (25 Aug 2017)

Weighting

20%

Assessment Criteria

This short paper will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. The level of demonstrated and appropriate (short story) analytical skills;
2. The sustained use of recommended theoretical concepts in developing an argument;
3. The careful editing for presentation (expression, spelling and grammar);
4. The proper acknowledgement of **all** sources using the [Harvard \(author-date\) referencing style](#)

Referencing Style

- [Harvard \(author-date\)](#)

Submission

Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- interpret, analyse and evaluate selected short stories from the nineteenth and twentieth century using a variety of advanced text-based interpretative and analytical techniques;
- analyse and compare selected short stories within a framework of issues such as ideology, gender, race and the politics of literature;

Graduate Attributes

- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking

2 Forum Papers and Responses

Assessment Type

Written Assessment

Task Description

Students will present a short paper answering one of the questions listed below. This paper should be posted in the discussion forum of the week from which the question has been chosen. You will then upload your response to Moodle by the end of Week 8.

Assessable component

1. You are expected as a minimum to post your answer (no less than 1200 words) to the relevant weekly Moodle discussion forum (this is worth 30%). General comments will be made on your answer by other students on the forum itself, and a Marks Sheet will be returned to you by the course coordinator after the assignment is uploaded to Moodle in Week 8.
2. You are expected to engage with at least *two* of the answers of other students during the term (no less than 200 words for each response), and to post these to the relevant forum (this is worth 10%). Once you have made these responses, you will collect them (*and* the original answer to which you responded) in a word document and submit them via the Moodle submission system. These will be returned to you as soon as practicable after submission.
3. Although you are only required to respond to two of the answers of other students, you may respond to as many as you like on the discussion board.
4. Your answers and responses must demonstrate evidence of reading, research and the development of an interpretation and argument. Plot description (merely retelling the story) is not acceptable.
5. All papers and responses must be submitted by the Friday of Week 8.
6. Demonstrated evidence of library research is compulsory (at least three references in addition to the set texts).
7. It is recommended you use the five paragraph essay format (see Study Net: [Five Paragraph Essay](#)). For assistance with essay writing, go the [Purdue University: Online Writing Lab](#)

Total word length: no less than 1600 words.

NB. Stories used in the seminar/online presentation may not be used in the short answer papers or the essay (except in consultation with course coordinator).

Week 4

1. According to Stone (1983, p. 5): 'The short story depends on concreteness, on sensual impressions that deliver their meaning without waste. Like the lyric, it is a lean form; it can tolerate little if any digression, and it stays within the world it creates. The action of the conventional short story is compressed within a short (usually continuous) time frame and space. The characters, few in number, are revealed, not developed. The background and setting are implied, not rendered. Like most drama, the short story's action begins *in media res*. The story gets going as quickly as possible. 'The overcoat' by Gogol breaks all of these rules yet is considered to be the forerunner of the modern short story. Explain this in terms of the interplay of realism and fantasy and the story's narrative structure.
2. How does desire function in de Maupassant 'A country outing'? Analyse descriptions of the setting and character in formulating your response. Is the reader positioned to endorse or condemn the actions of Henri and Henriette?

Week 5

1. According to Rosemary Jackson (1981, p. 2), 'fantasy characteristically attempts to compensate for a lack resulting from cultural constraints: it is a literature of desire, which seeks that which is experienced as absence and loss'. Test this theory by applying it to 'The signalman' by Charles Dickens.
2. What makes Kipling's 'At the end of the passage' a ghost story? How do its fantastic elements challenge notions of literary realism and the ideologies of scientific rationalism and western imperialism?

Week 6

1. On one level Hawthorne's 'The minister's black veil' is a Christian parable about sin. But it can also be read a cautionary tale about the dangers of extreme beliefs. Paying close attention to the contrast between the opening and closing paragraphs, develop an argument about the effect of Reverend Hooper's actions on the community.
2. In Bierce's 'An occurrence at Owl Creek bridge', Peyton Farquhar resists dying with an elaborate fantasy. What is the broader significance of this fantasy in relation to traditional beliefs about the "afterlife" and how does the style of language throughout the story reflect his evolving mental state?

Week 7

1. Joyce writes naturalistically, with 'scrupulous meanness' (Stone 1983, p. 299) insofar as 'language mirrors subject matter'. Yet he also developed modernist techniques such as the epiphany and stream of consciousness. Consider the use of these devices in 'A painful case' as you discuss its themes and issues.
2. Much modern fiction represents an attack on middle-class values. Mansfield's 'The garden party' can be said to have a "coming of age" theme. Develop an argument about the significance of the story with an emphasis on the motif of the hat and narrative structure. What is conspicuous by its absence from the story?

Week 8

1. It has been said that 'The hunger artist' is an allegory about the way the modern world treats artists. Research modernism in the arts and find evidence in the text to support this reading.
2. 'Mario and the magician' is viewed as an allegory of the rise of fascism in Italy before WW2 but in what ways can it also be read as a critique of humanism? Consider this question by focusing on the length of this short story, the narrator's discursive style and 'high-brow' tone of voice.

Week 9

1. The striking formal elements in Hemingway's 'Hills like white elephants' are the direct observer point of view, symbolic description of the setting, and dialogical style of the narrative. How do these devices affect our understanding of the story's themes and issues?
2. According to Stone (1983, p. 5) a short story is 'compressed within a short (usually continuous) time frame and space'. Porter's 'The grave' clearly breaks this 'rule'. Consider the implications of this subversion together with the story's detailed focus on the psychology of the protagonist.

Week 10

1. Alain Robbe-Grillet's story 'The shore' has a camera-like direct observer point of view, and there is little plot or character development. What effect does this create on the story's meanings, and how does it relate to literary theories such as Roland Barthes' "death of the author"?
2. 'Gogol's wife' is clearly absurd but its dark satire conceals a serious agenda relating to the treatment of women in "reality" and literature. Assuming that Caracas is a pun on characters, what does this suggest about characterization general? What techniques does Landolfi use to trick the reader into believing the story about Gogol?

Week 11

1. In Cheever's 'A country husband', the suburb of Shady Hill and its characters are described in affectionate detail. But as its name suggests, all is not as it seems. Middle class protagonist Francis Weed exploits a working class

girl and assaults his wife. How is this critique of American society resolved (or not) in the enigmatic last sentence: 'Then it is dark; it is a night where kings in golden suits ride elephants over the mountains'.

1. Jean Baudrillard describes postmodernism as 'playing with the pieces'; J.F. Lyotard speaks of 'incredulity towards meta-narratives'. How are these theories exemplified in Barthelme's 'At the end of the mechanical age'? Develop an argument focusing on the tone of the narrative and the characters' use of language.

Week 12

1. Explore the implications of Borges' blurring of first and third person narrative modes in 'Borges and I' in terms of Barthes' concept of "the death of the author". Also consider 'Everything and Nothing' as a debate between essentialist and constructivist notions of identity. Consider the implications of the short, plot-less and essay-like form of both stories in relation to the idea that reality is a linguistic construct.
2. 'Axolotl' plays with the idea that identity is not fixed, that we can think ourselves into another state of being. Imagine this radical scenario were true (virtual reality suggests that it may soon be possible). What would we learn from the experience of becoming "other", and what would it mean for society and the world? Consider too how easily readers can be tricked into suspending disbelief by good writing.

Assessment Due Date

Week 8 Friday (8 Sept 2017) 11:45 pm AEST

Forum Papers should be posted in the week from which the question has been chosen (i.e. if you choose to answer one of the questions from week 4, you should have posted your paper by the Friday of Week 4). Responses are due no later than the Friday of Week 8. More instructions will be made available on Moodle in the first weeks of the course.

Return Date to Students

Forum Papers will be marked and returned as soon as practicable after posting.

Weighting

40%

Assessment Criteria

The seminar/online presentation will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. The depth of understanding of the selected stories in the context of the chosen question;
2. The level of demonstrated and appropriate (short story) analytical skills;
3. The careful editing for presentation (expression, spelling and grammar);
4. The sustained use of recommended theoretical concepts in supporting argument;
5. The proper acknowledgement of all sources using the [Harvard \(author-date\) referencing style](#)

Referencing Style

- [Harvard \(author-date\)](#)

Submission

Online

Submission Instructions

See instructions above.

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- interpret, analyse and evaluate selected short stories from the nineteenth and twentieth century using a variety of advanced text-based interpretative and analytical techniques;
- analyse and compare selected short stories within a framework of issues such as ideology, gender, race and the politics of literature;

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Information Literacy
- Information Technology Competence

3 Essay

Assessment Type

Written Assessment

Task Description

Answer one of the the following questions (N.B. you must not choose a story that you have already written on for other pieces of assessment, although you can refer to it in passing):

Word length: no less than 1500 words

- Rohrberger argues that 'The short story writer makes symbols of objects, characters, events, settings, plots in an effort to move beyond surface levels and to suggest complex meanings' (*Story to Anti-Story* 1979, p. 14). Evaluate this statement using close readings of at least two short stories to support your case?
- By analyzing several texts from various periods develop an argument about how changes in the form of the short story reflect changes in social, ideological and aesthetic contexts.
- Trace the evolution of of contemporary views on identity (considering aspects such as class, gender, race, and sexuality) through analysis of a selection of short stories from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Assessment Due Date

Week 12 Friday (6 Oct 2017) 11:45 pm AEST

Return Date to Students

Essays will be returned as soon as practicable after the end of term.

Weighting

40%

Assessment Criteria

This essay will be evaluated on the following criteria:

1. The depth of understanding of the selected stories in the context of the chosen question;
2. The level of demonstrated and appropriate (short story) analytical skills;
3. The sustained use of recommended theoretical concepts in developing an argument;
4. The careful editing for presentation (expression, spelling and grammar);
5. The proper acknowledgement of **all** sources using the [Harvard \(author-date\) referencing style](#)

Referencing Style

- [Harvard \(author-date\)](#)

Submission

Online

Learning Outcomes Assessed

- interpret, analyse and evaluate selected short stories from the nineteenth and twentieth century using a variety of advanced text-based interpretative and analytical techniques;
- analyse and compare selected short stories within a framework of issues such as ideology, gender, race and the politics of literature;

Graduate Attributes

- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Cross Cultural Competence
- Ethical practice

Academic Integrity Statement

As a CQUniversity student you are expected to act honestly in all aspects of your academic work.

Any assessable work undertaken or submitted for review or assessment must be your own work. Assessable work is any type of work you do to meet the assessment requirements in the unit, including draft work submitted for review and feedback and final work to be assessed.

When you use the ideas, words or data of others in your assessment, you must thoroughly and clearly acknowledge the source of this information by using the correct referencing style for your unit. Using others' work without proper acknowledgement may be considered a form of intellectual dishonesty.

Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in your university study ensures the CQUniversity qualification you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

As a student, you are responsible for reading and following CQUniversity's policies, including the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#). This policy sets out CQUniversity's expectations of you to act with integrity, examples of academic integrity breaches to avoid, the processes used to address alleged breaches of academic integrity, and potential penalties.

What is a breach of academic integrity?

A breach of academic integrity includes but is not limited to plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, cheating, contract cheating, and academic misconduct. The Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure defines what these terms mean and gives examples.

Why is academic integrity important?

A breach of academic integrity may result in one or more penalties, including suspension or even expulsion from the University. It can also have negative implications for student visas and future enrolment at CQUniversity or elsewhere. Students who engage in contract cheating also risk being blackmailed by contract cheating services.

Where can I get assistance?

For academic advice and guidance, the [Academic Learning Centre \(ALC\)](#) can support you in becoming confident in completing assessments with integrity and of high standard.

What can you do to act with integrity?



Be Honest

If your assessment task is done by someone else, it would be dishonest of you to claim it as your own



Seek Help

If you are not sure about how to cite or reference in essays, reports etc, then seek help from your lecturer, the library or the Academic Learning Centre (ALC)



Produce Original Work

Originality comes from your ability to read widely, think critically, and apply your gained knowledge to address a question or problem