

ENGL 280g: Introduction to Narrative Medicine Spring 2018

Dr. Erika Wright

Meeting Times: MWF 1:00-1:50

Class Location: THH 203

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Office Hr: W 10:00 & By Appt.

Office: THH 402A

Course Description

How a story gets told is as important as what gets told, and the practice of close reading teaches us to pay attention not just to a story's content and themes but also to its form. From literature we learn how metaphors contribute to complexity, how repetitions compete with silences, and how point of view and tone shape our reading expectations. From medicine we learn to appreciate what's at stake in telling and listening to stories, our responsibility to a given text, and the real-world social and political ramifications of the work we do in the humanities. The field of Narrative Medicine draws these disciplinary objectives together, demonstrating that the narrative competence and creativity expected of humanities students and artists is correlative with being an effective and humane healer, and exploring the oldest humanistic questions about the mind and the body.

In Narrative Medicine we will examine clinical case studies, fiction (novels, films, short stories), and memoirs of health, for a deeper understanding of the relationship between narrative and identity, self and other, literature and medicine. Each week we will coordinate a specific literary term or genre with a related medical concept or controversy:

- our focus on plot will challenge the ways that diagnostic certainty, treatment, and cure can shape our narrative expectations;
- our understanding of literary narrators and character development will inform our view of the power dynamics of the doctor-patient relationship;
- our emphasis on time and metaphor will teach us about the role that memory and imagination can play in defining and sustaining a meaningful life.

The interplay between literary studies and life studies provides us with tools for better understanding ourselves and our place in the world.

Learning Objectives – In this course you will:

- Gain an appreciation for the relations between representation and the human soul, for the relations between words and ideas, and for the social utility of a sophisticated understanding of discourse;
- Reflect on what it means to be human through close study of human experience across the centuries and across the diverse cultures of the English speaking world;
- Cultivate a critical appreciation for various forms of human expression, from literary expression to science writing, and develop an understanding of the contexts from which these forms emerge;
- Engage with lasting ideas and values that have animated humanity throughout the centuries for a more purposeful, more ethical, and intellectually richer life;
- Learn to read and interpret actively and analytically, to think critically and creatively, and to write and speak persuasively;

- Learn to evaluate ideas from multiple perspectives and to formulate informed opinions on complex issues of critical importance in today's global world;
- Learn to collaborate effectively through seminar discussions, class presentations, and modern modes of sharing knowledge.

Required Films/TV

Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Dir. George C. Wolfe (2017)

The Diving Bell and the Butterfly (original title: *Le scaphandre et le papillon*), Dir. Julian Schnabel (2007)

The Good Doctor, Creator David Shore

What About Bob?, Dir. Frank Oz

Required Books

Barker, Pat, *Regeneration* (1991)

Dominique-Baubly, Jean, *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (1997)

Edson, Margaret, *W;t* [=Wit], play text (1995)

Grealy, Lucy, *Autobiography of a Face* (1994)

Haddon, Mark, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003)

Ishiguro, Kazuo, *Never Let Me Go* (2003)

Sacks, Oliver, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (1985)

Vergheese, Abraham, *Cutting for Stone* (2009)

*Required handouts listed on syllabus will be distributed in class & posted on Blackboard.

Grading	150 pts.	Participation
	300 pts.	Weekly Responses Papers (1-2 pp., 10 papers aggregated)
	250 pts.	Close Reading Essay (5-7 pp.)
	300 pts.	Final Research Project (10-12 pp.)

Course Requirements

1. Participation. *Active* participation in discussions is essential, and you cannot participate if you are absent. Arrive on time with all the relevant course materials (i.e. readings and assignments for that meeting), ask questions, express opinions, and respond to the comments of your classmates with respect and curiosity. More than 3 unexcused absences will result in the loss of 50 points per missed class beyond three classes. After six unexcused absences, you will lose all 150 points.
2. Weekly Reader Responses. Your ten short responses (1-2 pages) are designed to help you organize your thoughts and engage more deeply with the work. You will respond to a question or prompt that I will hand out and post on Blackboard. These prompts will invite you to make connections between the week's text/concept and a current event, literary theory, another class, or your personal experiences. Prompts will begin Week 2 and end Week 15 (identified as **RR#** on the schedule below).
3. Close Reading Essay. Beginning Week 4, students will work in pairs to lead the class close reading of the core concept and text identified for the session. After your presentation, you will each write your own essay based on your presentation. You will have one week after your presentation to turn in a 5-7 page close-reading essay. Do not

use any outside sources. You must **meet with me** before your presentation. See Blackboard for more detailed instructions.

4. Final Project. This project will consist of two parts, one critical close reading and the other creative. These two parts will expand upon one or more of the concepts raised in class. See Blackboard for more detailed instructions.

Course Schedule

Adjustments may be made during the semester. Except for Day 1, all readings and assignments must be completed before we begin class on the day they are listed in the syllabus.

Unit 1: Close Reading & Diagnostic (Un)Certainty

Week 1

M Jan 8—Introductions

Discussion: Health Humanities, Narrative Medicine, and You
Hippocrates, Ὁρκος*

W Jan 10—Rafael **Campo**, “Hippocratic Oath 2.0”*

F Jan 12—Jane **Gallop**, “The Ethics of Reading: Close Encounters”*
Share Close Reading Observations

Unit 2: Temporality & Narrative (Who am I? How do I know?)

Week 2

DUE: RR#1

M Jan 15—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day observed (No Class)

W Jan 17—Oliver **Sacks**, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (read through Part One)
Assign Sacks Reading Groups

F Jan 19—Sacks (Part One cont’d)

Week 3

DUE: RR#2 (required)

M Jan 22—Sacks (Part Two)

Theodore **Martin**, from “Temporality and Literary Theory: ‘Narrative Time’”*

W Jan 24—Sacks (Part Three)

F Jan 26—Sacks (Part Four)

Unit 3 Point of View, Narrator, Narratee (Power)

Week 4

DUE: RR#3

M Jan 29—Sayantani **DasGupta**, “Narrative Humility” TEDxSLC talk

W Jan 31—*What About Bob?* Dir. Frank Oz

F Feb 1—Charlotte **Perkins** (Gilman), “The Yellow Wallpaper”*

Unit 4: Setting/Space (Trauma)

Week 5

DUE: RR#4

M Feb 5—Margaret **Edson**, *W;t*

W Feb 7—Jean-Dominique **Baubo**, *Diving Bell and the Butterfly*

Sabine **Buchholz** and Manfred **Jahn**, "Space in Narrative"*
F Feb 9—cont'd

Unit 5: Metaphor & Character (Gender & Sexuality)

Week 6

DUE: RR#5

Feb 12—Pat **Barker**, *Regeneration* (read through Part 1)

Sigmund **Freud**, excerpt from *The Interpretation of Dreams**

Feb 14—Wilfred **Owen**, "Anthem for Doomed Youth," "Dolce Et Decorum Est," "Disabled"
Siegfried **Sassoon**, "They," "The Rear-Guard," "The General," "Glory of Women"*

Feb 16—*Regeneration* (Part 2)

Week 7

DUE: RR#6

Feb 19—Presidents' Day Observed (No Class)

Feb 2—*Regeneration* (Part 3)

Feb 23—*Regeneration* (Part 4)

Elliot **Mishler**, "Patient Stories, Narratives of Resistance and the Ethics of Humane Care"*

Unit 6: Plot

Week 8

DUE: RR#7

Feb 26—Mark **Haddon**, *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (CH 157, pg 115)
EM **Forster**, "Story and Plot"*

Feb 28—*Curious Incident* (CH 223, pg. 198)

Mar 2—*Curious Incident* (Finish)

Wooden, Shannon R., "Narrative Medicine in the Literature Classroom: Ethical Pedagogy and Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*"

Unit 7: Bodies

Week 9

DUE: RR#8

Mar 5—Alice Walker, *Beauty**

Mar 7—Lucy **Greal**, *Autobiography of a Face*

Mar 9—Greal cont'd

Rebecca **Garden**, "Telling Stories About Illness: The Limits and Lessons of Narrative"

Week 10

Mar 12-15 **SPRING BREAK**

Unit 8: Souls

Week 11

DUE: RR#9

Mar 19—Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go* (Part I)

Mar 21—NLMG (Part II)

Mar 23—NLMG (Part III)

Unit 9: Religion

Week 12

DUE: RR#10

Mar 26—*Never Let Me Go* (film ending)

Mar 28—Abraham **Verghese**, *Cutting for Stone* (Prologue & Part I)

Mar 30—*Cutting for Stone* (Part II)

Week 13

NO RR due this week

Apr 2—*Cutting for Stone* (Part III)

Apr 4—*Cutting for Stone* cont'd

Apr 6—Discussion Board Post*

Unit 10: Medical/Health Humanities & Popular Culture

Week 14

DUE: RR#11

Apr 9—*Cutting for Stone* (Finish)

Apr 11—*The Good Doctor* (Season 1)

Apr 13—cont'd

Week 15

DUE: RR#12 (Required)

Apr 16—Guest Speaker, David Renaud, MD & story editor/writer for *The Good Doctor*

Apr 18—*The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* Dir. Goerge C. Wolfe

Apr 20—cont'd

Week 16

M Apr 23—Jones, T. Blackie, M., Garden, R., Wear, D., "The Almost Right Word: The move from medical to health humanities"*

W Apr 25 & F 27—Presentations: Final Project

Final Project due at day and time listed in USC Schedule of Examinations

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the Department of Public Safety <http://capsnet.usc.edu/departments/departments-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Student Behavior

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students’ ability to learn and an instructor’s ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action. These strictures may extend to behaviors outside the classroom that are related to the course.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.