

English 132-001 | Short Story and Novel | Spring 2014

- Instructor: Valerie Ann Surrett
- E-mail: vsurrett@mix.wvu.edu
- Phone: 293-3107—For messages only
- Class Time and Location:
 - Clark Hall 104; MWF 9:30-10:20
- Office: Colson G23
- Office hours: MWF 10:30-11:20 and by appointment

Required Textbooks and Materials

- George Orwell, *1984* (1949): 9780141187761
- Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451* (1953): 9781451673319
- Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (1986): ISBN 9780385490818
- Alan Moore, *V for Vendetta* (1982-5; Collection 1988): ISBN 9781401208417
- Lois Lowry, *The Giver* (1993): ISBN 9780385732550
- Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (2006): ISBN 9780307387899

- You will need daily access to our class website: <https://sites.google.com/site/darknessforetold/>. All required short stories and supplemental reading materials, as well as our class schedule, will be available on the site.
- You will need to follow Twitter handle @SurrettValerie
- You will need to bring writing utensils, assigned reading materials, and paper to class each day.

Course Description & Goals

English 132 is designed to be an introduction to critically reading fictional literature, specifically short stories and novels. Reading critically involves analyzing the structures and contexts of a work of fiction in order to identify and understand a text's possible meanings. Analyzing fiction requires knowledge of literary conventions and techniques, such as narrative voice, tone, character, figurative language, and plot structure.

In addition to introducing basic literary structures, techniques, and styles, this course will focus on the relationship between fiction and real life. We will operate under the assumption that literature both reflects and influences society, as this assumption will encourage us to read the selected texts as commentary on contemporary real-life cultures and societies (i.e., establish context).

In order to best highlight the relationship between literature and culture, I have chosen a dystopian theme for this class. Dystopian literature, a subgenre of speculative fiction, depicts imaginary societies with social, economic, governmental, and/or religious structures that are understood to be worse than the author's own. Authors of dystopian fiction thus use the genre to comment on their own society and culture. Sometimes dystopian writers use their stories to support their own societies by warning against changes to current systems; however, the majority of dystopian texts critique trends in the author's own society by speculating on their potential negative outcomes. For example, *1984* reflects George Orwell's fears of fascism following WWII. Similarly, Suzanne Collins derived the idea for *Hunger Games* from channel surfing. As she flipped channels, she noticed most networks were either airing a reality show or relaying coverage of the war in Iraq. Her trilogy imagines a world where the two are combined, turning war into entertainment. In both cases, the authors use a fictional world to critique their own real worlds and warn against continuing down a dangerous path.

Our course theme is particularly apropos as dystopian texts are prevalent in our current culture. NBC's *Revolution*; AMC's *The Walking Dead*, *The Hunger Games Trilogy*, *Ender's Game*, *In Time*, *The Divergent Trilogy*, and *World War Z* all depict future dystopias. We will read six novels and seven short stories that imagine dark futures. Our texts will span the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and will feature British, Canadian, and American authors.

Classroom Policies

- **Come Prepared:** Bring your assigned reading materials, paper, and pencil or pen to class each day.
- **Respect:** Being a respectful student includes: coming to class on time; actively listening to lectures and peer comments; coming to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings; thoughtfully contributing to class discussions; bringing class materials with you (asking the guy next to you for a piece of paper, a pen, and/or to look on with him because you didn't bring your book is not respectful); proper use of electronic devices.
- **Plagiarism/Cheating:** The English 102 community assumes your honesty. WVU's Academic Integrity Policy states: "Faculty, students, and administrators share the responsibility to maintain the University's academic integrity. It is essential that grades measure the achievement of the individual student. Academic dishonesty includes the following: plagiarism; cheating and dishonest practices in connection with examinations, papers, and projects; and forgery, misrepresentation, and fraud. Cheating and plagiarism are condemned at all levels of University life. Refer to the official University policy on cheating and plagiarism available in the University's catalogs, and the Academic Integrity/Dishonesty Policy."

Students are expected to be familiar with the section on Academic Honesty in the University Student Conduct Code, which is online at http://studentlife.wvu.edu/office_of_student_conduct/student_conduct_code.

If you have any questions about when and how to document sources, or any other question that will help you avoid unintentional plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), please talk to me. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offences. Clear cases will result in an F for the course and appropriate academic discipline.

Recycled assignments: I expect students to submit their own *original* work. When you recycle your own past work or submit essentially the same paper in more than one class, you are self-plagiarizing. For instance, if you are repeating the class, you must talk to me about whether you may use a previous assignment as the basis for further revisions. If you are using a similar assignment for more than one class, permission must be obtained from the instructors of both classes. Permission is neither automatic nor guaranteed. Failure to disclose recycled or dual-submission work may result in an automatic F.

- **Computers and Cell Phones:** You are welcome to bring laptop computers and other electronic devices that support your educational endeavors into the classroom. If, at any time, these devices become a distraction to me or other members of the class you will be asked to put them away.

All mobile phones should be turned off or set to a silent mode. If you must take a phone call due to an emergency please quietly excuse yourself from the room.

- **Email:** When you are emailing me or your fellow classmates I expect you to use proper formatting, including: salutation (Dear Mrs. Surret), body (written in complete sentences), and valediction (Sincerely/Thank You/etc., followed by your name). I am happy to receive questions via email. I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the week and will answer email queries sent during the weekend on the following Monday.
- **Social Justice:** English 102 supports WVU's commitment to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our university does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.
- **Students with Disabilities:** If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with the Office of Accessibility Services. Also, Accessibility Services has moved to Suite 250 at 1085 VanVoorhis Rd (beside Applebee's and across from the Mountaineer Station transportation center). The phone number is 304-293-6700, and email is access2@mail.wvu.edu. Access the website at <http://accessibilityservices.wvu.edu/>.
- **University Counseling Services:** The Carruth Center provides resources to help manage stress, improve relationships, make healthy lifestyle choices, and face new challenges and transitions. The center offers drop-in hours as well as scheduled programs and appointments. You'll find the Carruth Center on the third floor of the Student Services Building, right next door to the Mountainlair. The hours are Monday-Friday, 8:15 AM-4:45 PM. The center's phone number (answered 24 hours) is 304-293-4431. The center's website is <http://well.wvu.edu/ccpps>.

Overview of Required Work

- **Participation and Attendance:** You are expected to attend all classes. Failing to attend class will adversely affect your grade as all material covered in class is considered fair game for exam questions. I also expect you to participate in class discussions. This means I expect you to come to class having carefully read all of the assigned readings for the day. Finally, I expect you to be an active and respectful listener. This means taking lots of notes (again, all material covered in class has the potential of showing up on an exam), staying awake, being respectful of each other's comments, showing a willingness to engage with other students during class discussions, and practicing appropriate use of technology (in other words, not texting or tweeting or taking awkward selfies during class).

Daily Tweets (5%): Participation will be evaluated via daily Tweets. You will need to follow me on Twitter: @SurrettValerie. I will not follow you back unless your account is private and will not Twitter-stalk you, I promise; however, if you are uncomfortable with the possibility of me learning your handle, start a new handle specifically for this class. You will be expected to compose one Tweet before each class period. You may Tweet anything you wish related to the day's assigned readings. I will use these Tweets to guide our day's discussion of the readings. It will look a little something like this: you will Tweet prior to class. I may call on you to further elaborate on your Tweet in order to begin a class discussion about the subject of your Tweet. For example, if you Tweet "This is literally the most boring thing I have ever read" in response to a short story, I may call on you to elaborate on your reading experience. I will expect you to point to specific places within the text that you found to be particularly tedious and may ask you to compare the reading to others you've encountered in order to justify your Tweet's seemingly hyperbolic claim. Ideally, the nuggets of wisdom and reflection you offer will inspire your classmates to engage in a discussion about the dullness of the reading. Of course, the class is too large to have everyone explain their Tweets in every class period, but I will call on everyone multiple times throughout the semester. I will not distribute a schedule in advance, so you must come prepared to discuss your Tweet everyday. If you fail to Tweet, are absent on a day I happen to call on you, or are unable/unprepared to discuss your Tweet when I call on you, you will not receive credit for that day's participation/attendance grade.

Ideas for Tweets: links to other readings, videos, songs, etc. that you think relate to the day's reading; short passages from the text you think are important and worth discussing in detail; ways the text relates to a previous text we've read; questions you have about the text or its historical context; comments about or reactions to the text's meaning, message, style, etc.

Fair Warning: If your Tweet is particularly vague, I will be tempted to call on you to see if you can elaborate (in other words, I'll be very curious to see if you actually read the text).

- **Reading Quizzes (15%):** Though I expect you to attend all classes, I will not take attendance daily. Instead, I will use reading quizzes to calculate attendance and verify whether or not everyone has read the assigned text. Reading quizzes will take place during the first 5 minutes of class. Quizzes cannot be made up. I will not give a quiz everyday, but I will not post a schedule of quizzes. I recommend coming to class each day prepared to take a quiz on the assigned reading. Please bring loose-leaf paper to each class for reading quizzes.
- **Exams (80%):** There will be four exams throughout the semester. Each exam represents 20% of the course grade. Exams will cover class readings as well as any literary terms we cover during the semester. Again, anything we cover and discuss in class is considered fair game for exam questions. Take notes!
 - **Makeup Exams:** If you are not able to come to class on the day of an exam, you must make arrangements to makeup the exam PRIOR to the exam date. This means I will only offer makeup exams for someone who knows in advance that s/he will not be in class. Makeup exams will be given during my office hours and must be taken within 72 hours of the original exam date. I will not offer makeup exams or alternative exam dates for the final exam.

Course Schedule*

*Course Schedule is subject to change. Check the schedule on our class website regularly.

	Readings and Assignments Due	In-Class Activities and Resources
Jan W: 8		Welcome to 132!
F: 10		Intro to dystopianism
M: 13		No Class

W: 15	Ursula K. Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"	
F: 17	Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery"	
M: 20		No Class MLK holiday
W: 22	E. M. Forster, "The Machine Stops"	
F: 24	Kurt Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergeron"	
M: 27	George Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Part One	
W: 29	George Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Part Two	
F: 31	George Orwell, <i>1984</i> , Part Three	
Feb M: 3		Exam I
W: 5	Ray Bradbury, <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , One: "The Hearth and the Salamander"	
F: 7	Ray Bradbury, <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , Two: "The Sieve and the Sand"	
M: 10	Ray Bradbury, <i>Fahrenheit 451</i> , Three: "Burning Bright"	
W: 12		
F: 14	Philip K. Dick, "The Minority Report"	
M: 17	Margaret Atwood, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> , Ch. I-IV	
W: 19	Margaret Atwood, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> , Ch. V-VIII	
F: 21	Margaret Atwood, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> , Ch. IX-XII	
M: 24	Margaret Atwood, <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> , C. XIII-XV	
W: 26		
F: 28		Exam II
March M: 3	Paolo Bacigalupi, "Pop Squad"	
W: 5	S. L. Giblow, "Red Card"	
F: 7		
M: 10	Spring Break!	
W: 12	Spring Break!	
F: 14	Spring Break!	
M: 17	Lois Lowry, <i>The Giver</i> , Ch. 1-8	
W: 19	Lois Lowry, <i>The Giver</i> , Ch. 9-16	
F: 21	Lois Lowry, <i>The Giver</i> , Ch. 17-23	
M: 24	Cormac McCarthy, <i>The Road</i> , read to page 72	
W: 26	Cormac McCarthy, <i>The Road</i> , pp 73-144	
F: 28	Cormac McCarthy, <i>The Road</i> , pp 145-204	
M: 31	Cormac McCarthy, <i>The Road</i> , pp 205-end	
April W: 2		Exam III
F: 4		
M: 7	Alan Moore, <i>V for Vendetta</i> , Book I	
W: 9	Alan Moore, <i>V for Vendetta</i> , Book II	
F: 11	Alan Moore, <i>V for Vendetta</i> , Book III	
M: 14		Adapting Dystopia
W: 16		YA Dystopias

F: 18	No Class	
M: 21		<i>Children of Men</i>
W: 23		<i>Children of Men</i>
F: 25	Last Day of Class	Review for Final Exam
May F: 2		Final Exam 8:00-10:00