

Professor Jodi Yemini

Fall 2021

Contemporary American Literature—Stephen King: Master Storyteller 21:352:212:62

Wednesday: 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Hill Hall, Room 107

Office Hours: Wednesday 2:30 p.m. – 4 p.m., or by appointment (Conklin Hall, Room 152)

ym207@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

“Writers remember everything, especially the hurts. Strip a writer to the buff, point to the scars, and he'll tell you the story of each small one. From the big ones you get novels—a uniquely portable magic. A short story is a different thing altogether, like a quick kiss in the dark from a stranger.”

– Stephen King

Course Description

This course seeks to examine the complex dynamics of narrative by focusing on the literary contributions of well-renowned author Stephen King. Students will study King's work through the lenses of three genres: drama, horror, and science fiction. Eight short stories, two novellas, one comic strip, and three of King's novels serve as the infrastructural basis for study; film adaptations provide supplementary opportunities for exploration. Students will also engage with King's memoir, *On Writing*, to place texts and films in context.

Emphasis is placed on the development of close-reading strategies and critical analysis, as well as the composition of nuanced, convincing, and precise arguments based in textual evidence. In particular, students will practice placing texts in conversation with one another. Evaluation will be based on participation and attendance, response papers, in-class group presentations, and midterm and final exams. Ultimately, as students familiarize themselves with a broad array of King's work—and as they explore the narrative strategies within each text—they will simultaneously identify the artistic and sociocultural components of storytelling.

Learning Objectives

Students will explore and interpret specific elements within three major genres present in King's work—drama, horror, and science fiction. Accordingly, students will:

- ❖ engage with twelve stories by Stephen King in order to:
 - practice close reading.
 - examine narrative strategies such as interiority, atmosphere, action, and form; compose analytical responses that make convincing, arguable claims about textual elements.
 - consider the role of stories in sociocultural contexts.
 - participate in class discourse: make active and nuanced contributions during class discussions.
- ❖ view corresponding films to consider how literature translates to the screen.
- ❖ practice public speaking, research methods, and synergy through weekly in-class group presentations; synthesize knowledge on a particular assigned unit, deepening student understanding in regard to the impact of Stephen King's writing on American literature.
- ❖ complete two comprehensive exams, a midterm and a final, that assess student capacity for close reading, analytical thinking, and secondary source implementation.

Readings

Different Seasons, by Stephen King.

Misery, by Stephen King.

Carrie, by Stephen King.

The Running Man, by Richard Bachman **OR** Stephen King.

(I highly suggest that you purchase these books as used paperbacks from Amazon, eBay, or any other place/website where they are available for a very low price.)

All other short stories—including one comic strip—are available to download on Canvas, under **Course Readings**.

Please be sure to **print out** the stories and **bring them to class** with your comments, questions, insights, etc. Be sure to arrive to class having read the texts, as our classroom discussions largely depend on each and every student's unique and individual perspective.

Once again, I require printed out **hardcopies** of the stories in class; you may have your laptop with you, but the stories must still be **printed out**. I will also provide the class with handouts on the three genres on which we will be focusing (drama, horror, and science fiction), as well as pertinent excerpts from Stephen King's 2000 memoir, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*, which we will discuss in class, and which you will be required to implement in your midterm and final exams.

Attendance

In addition to benefiting you as a student and writer, **attendance is mandatory**.

You are permitted **THREE** excused absences during the semester; we only meet **once a week**, thus it is imperative that you make it to each and every class, and **arrive on time**.

- Attendance will be taken at the **BEGINNING** of each class.
- If you are going to be late, please do your best to **email me**.
- **TWO** late arrivals (within **15 minutes** of the start of class) are considered an **absence**.
- If there is a medical/family emergency, please be sure to speak with me **as soon as possible**.

Classroom Etiquette

- ❖ Your contributions to class should be informed and demonstrate an understanding of the readings.
- ❖ Collegiality is key—you must show respect for other students at all times, even when you disagree. You are also expected to actively work to make sure that everyone in the class has an opportunity to be heard. Statements or jokes that are racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, misogynistic, Islamophobic, anti-Semitic, ableist, or otherwise likely to cause upset or offense to others in the class will not be tolerated.
- ❖ A majority of the material we will be reading and viewing in class explores and includes violence, abuse, gore, sex and sexuality, nudity, and coarse language. If you feel you might be triggered, and therefore unable to read the assigned texts or watch the accompanying films, please reconsider taking this course.
- ❖ Use of cell phones is **NOT** permitted without my approval **prior to class**.
- ❖ You may use a laptop or tablet, but only if what you're viewing pertains to class (i.e., the assigned readings, your feedback and comments or questions about the readings, in-class group PowerPoint presentations, etc.).

Assignments

- ❖ You will be required to write **SIX response papers** during the course; each paper will be based on an assigned short story or novella that we have not yet discussed in class.
 - Response papers **must** be **one** double-spaced page long, and should **not** exceed two pages.
 - Response papers that are submitted one day late, will lose half a letter grade, and the same applies for each additional day your paper is late.
 - Response papers that are one week late, or more, will receive a failing grade.
- ❖ **All response papers** should be typed (double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman. Please be sure to paginate your papers with your last name at the upper right corner of the page) and proofread for grammar and spelling errors; all response papers must be **stapled**.
 - I encourage all students to see a tutor at the **Writing Center** (Conklin Hall, Room 126).
 - At the end of the semester, I will drop the response paper with the lowest grade.
- ❖ Students will be assigned to groups on the first day of class (four students per-group); each week one group will create and run a **ten-minute long PowerPoint presentation for the class**. The subject of each presentation is predetermined, and groups and presentation topics will be assigned randomly.
- ❖ You will be required to complete **TWO exams**:
 1. A **midterm exam** (Wednesday, November 10, 2021).
 2. A **final exam** (Wednesday, December 22, 2021).
 - You **must** incorporate Stephen King's *On Writing* in the essay portion of **both** your midterm *and* final exams.
- ❖ Please refer to the course schedule for due dates on readings, writings, and other assignments.
- ❖ All work that is submitted one class late will be lowered **one full letter grade**; all work that is submitted over one class late, will receive a **failing grade**.
ALL work must be submitted, however, in order to pass this course.

Grading

5 Response Papers – 35%

- Response Paper #1 7%
- Response Paper #2 7%
- Response Paper #3 7%
- Response Paper #4 7%
- Response Paper #5 7%

Midterm Exam – 25%

Final Exam – 25%

Group Presentation – 10%

Participation – 5%

Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community.

The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

The Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit.” Intentionally committing plagiarism is a serious offense that results in severe consequences. Instructors are required to report students who intentionally violate this policy to the Chair of the Department of English and to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.

The most common academic integrity violations by writing students are:

- “Copying word for word (i.e., quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source.”
without proper attribution.”
- “Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.”
- “Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.”

If you are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism or are concerned that you are misappropriating someone's words or ideas, speak immediately with your instructor.

For more information, you can also consult the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

Academic Integrity Honor Pledge

All students are required to include the following academic integrity honor pledge and their signature on all work that they submit:

On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.

Note to Students

Your health and well-being matter, and Rutgers has put in place a number of resources that are intended to help students through the challenges that might emerge during these times. Information on many of these resources appears below. Please let me know immediately if you are experiencing circumstances that are negatively impacting your academic performance. I also strongly encourage you to contact your academic advisor.

Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

Absences: All students are responsible for timely notification of their instructor regarding any expected absences. The Division of Student Affairs can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to the University's Course Attendance policy (10.2.7), for complete expectations and responsibilities.

The office can be contacted at: (973) 353-5063, or deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu

Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and follow up with a discussion. This should be completed as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive.

More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu

Contact ODS: (973) 353-5375, or ods@newark.rutgers.edu

Temporary Conditions/Injuries: The Division of Student Affairs can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition of injury (broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>

Pregnancy: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy:

Students may contact the office at: (973) 353-1906, or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu

Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking.

Students can report an incident to the office at: (973) 353-1906, or TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu

Incidents may also be reported by using the following link:

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RutgersUniv&layout_id=7

For more information, students should refer to the University's Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at:

<http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/>

Interpersonal Violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a **confidential resource** and does **not** have a reporting obligation to report information to the University's Title IX Coordinator.

Students can contact the office at: (973) 353-1918, or run.vpva@rutgers.edu

There is also a confidential, text-based line students can text for support: (973) 339-0734.

Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact academic performance.

Students may contact the CARE Team at:

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RutgersUniv&layout_id=11 or careteam@rutgers.edu

Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-Being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students.

To schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805.

If a student is not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but is interested in self-help, check out *TAO at Rutgers-Newark* for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support:

<https://thepath.taoconnect.org/local/login/home.php>.

Emergencies: Call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) at (973) 353-5111.

Learning Resources

Rutgers Learning Center (STEM tutoring services)

Bradley Hall, Room 140

(973) 353-5608

<https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/learning-center>

Rutgers Writing Center (tutoring services and writing workshops)

Conklin Hall, Room 126

(973) 353-5849

nwc@rutgers.edu

<https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>

Technology LaunchPad:

<https://runit.rutgers.edu/technology-launch-pad/>

Canvas

We will be using the web-based Canvas course software: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu>

I will post the syllabus and all course documents there, as well as all course announcements.

Be sure that you have created a Net ID; you will need it to access the site.

It is **YOUR** responsibility to check in **DAILY** for class announcements on Canvas.

***** The syllabus is subject to change *****

***** STUDENTS MUST WEAR MASKS
AT ALL TIMES DURING CLASS *****

DAY	DATE	ASSIGNMENT
Wednesday THE DRAMA GENRE	09/01	<p align="center">“The Last Rung on the Ladder”</p> <p align="center"><i>“Hearts can break. Sometimes I think it would be better if we died when they did, but we don’t.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Review of Syllabus and Course Schedule. ❖ Introduction to Stephen King. ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “The Last Rung on the Ladder.” ❖ HOMEWORK for WEDNESDAY, September 22: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read <i>Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption</i> (from <i>Different Seasons</i>). 2. Write a RESPONSE PAPER on <i>Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption</i>. 3. Read section “I: ANNIE” of <i>Misery</i>.
Wednesday	09/08	<p>*** NO CLASS ***</p> <p>*** MONDAY SCHEDULE ***</p> <p>*** LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES WITHOUT A “W” GRADE ***</p>
Wednesday	09/15	*** NO CLASS ***
Wednesday	09/22	<p align="center"><i>Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption</i></p> <p align="center"><i>“Fear can hold you prisoner. Hope can set you free.”</i></p> <p align="center">*** Response Paper #1 Due ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of <i>Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption</i>. ❖ Group Presentation #1 (“Film Adaptations of Stephen King’s Work”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>The Shawshank Redemption</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read <i>The Body</i> (from <i>Different Seasons</i>). 2. Read section “II: MISERY” of <i>Misery</i>.

<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>09/29</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Body</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Writing is a wonderful and terrible thing. It opens deep wells of memory that were previously capped.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of <i>The Body</i>. ❖ Group Presentation #2 (“Stephen King and Loss of Innocence”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Stand by Me</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: Be sure to FINISH <i>Misery</i>.
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>10/06</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Misery</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“When a long book succeeds, the writer and reader are not just having an affair; they are married.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of <i>Misery</i>. ❖ Group Presentation #3 (“The Writer as Protagonist”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Misery</i> (PART ONE). ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read “Quitters, Inc.” (under Course Readings on Canvas). 2. Write a RESPONSE PAPER on “Quitters, Inc.” 3. Read the first half of “PART ONE: BLOOD SPORT” in <i>Carrie</i>.
<p>Wednesday</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THE HORROR GENRE</p>	<p>10/13</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“Quitters, Inc.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“People who try hard to do the right thing always seem mad.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*** Response Paper #2 Due ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Misery</i> (PART TWO). ❖ Group Presentation #4 (“Institutional Horror”). ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “Quitters, Inc.” ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Cat’s Eye</i> segment from “Quitters, Inc.” ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read “The Crate” (under Course Readings on Canvas). 2. Read the second half of “PART ONE: BLOOD SPORT” in <i>Carrie</i>.

Wednesday	10/20	<p style="text-align: center;">“The Crate” <i>“Some things it don’t pay to be curious about.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Introduction to Literary Horror. ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “The Crate.” ❖ Group Presentation #5 (“Man Versus Nature in Literary Horror”). ❖ In-class viewing of “The Crate” segment from <i>Creepshow</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read Excerpts #1 AND #2 from <i>On Writing</i> (under Course Readings on Canvas). 2. Read “Children of the Corn” (under Course Readings on Canvas). 3. Write a RESPONSE PAPER on “Children of the Corn.” 4. Read the first half of “PART TWO: PROM NIGHT” in <i>Carrie</i>.
Wednesday	10/27	<p style="text-align: center;">“Children of the Corn” <i>“A cowardly leader is the most dangerous of men.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*** Response Paper #3 Due ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “Children of the Corn.” ❖ Group Presentation #6 (“Children in Literary Horror”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Children of the Corn</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: Be sure to FINISH <i>Carrie</i>.
MONDAY	10/25	*** LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES (“W” GRADE) ***
Wednesday	11/03	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Carrie</i> <i>“If you liked being a teenager, there’s something really wrong with you.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of <i>Carrie</i>. ❖ Group Presentation #7 (“Stephen King’s Female Protagonists”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Carrie</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: Prepare for the MIDTERM EXAM next week (Wednesday, November 10).

<p>Wednesday</p> <p>MIDTERM EXAM FROM HOME</p>	<p>11/10</p>	<p>*** Midterm Exam TODAY ***</p> <p><i>“If you don’t have the time to read, you don’t have the time or the tools to write.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ You will be taking your midterm exam from home: do not forget ALL the readings, as well as the <i>On Writing</i> excerpts, as you will need to incorporate quotes in the exam’s essay portion. ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read “Word Processor of the Gods” (under Course Readings on Canvas). 2. Write a RESPONSE PAPER on “Word Processor of the Gods.” 3. Read chapters ‘Minus 100’ to ‘Minus 078’ of <i>The Running Man</i>.
<p>Wednesday</p> <p>THE SCIENCE FICTION GENRE</p>	<p>11/17</p>	<p>“Word Processor of the Gods”</p> <p><i>“We never cease wanting what we want, whether it’s good for us or not.”</i></p> <p>*** Response Paper #4 Due ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Introduction to Literary Science Fiction. ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “Word Processor of the Gods.” ❖ In-class viewing of <i>The Word Processor of the Gods</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK for MONDAY, November 29: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read “Trucks” (under Course Readings on Canvas). 2. Read chapters ‘Minus 077’ to ‘Minus 055’ of <i>The Running Man</i>.
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>11/24</p>	<p>*** NO CLASS ***</p> <p>*** HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!! ***</p>

<p>Monday</p> <p>Wednesday Schedule</p>	<p>11/29</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“Trucks”</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“This machine just called me an asshole.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “Trucks.” ❖ Group Presentation #8 (“Stephen King on Technology”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>Maximum Overdrive</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read “The Mangler” (under Course Readings on Canvas). 2. Write a RESPONSE PAPER on “The Mangler.” 3. Read chapters ‘Minus 054’ to ‘Minus 033’ of <i>The Running Man</i>.
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>12/01</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">“The Mangler”</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“That wasn’t any act of God. That was an act of pure human fuckery.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*** Response Paper #5 Due ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of “The Mangler.” ❖ Group Presentation #9 (“Stephen King on Possession”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>The Mangler</i>. ❖ HOMEWORK: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be sure to FINISH <i>The Running Man</i>. 2. Write a RESPONSE PAPER on a reading of your choosing (excluding stories for which you have already written and submitted response papers).
<p>Wednesday</p>	<p>12/08</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Running Man</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Sooner or later even the fastest runners have to stand and fight.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*** Response Paper #6 Due ***</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Class discussion and analysis of <i>The Running Man</i>. ❖ Group Presentation #10 (“Richard Bachman and the Future of Entertainment”). ❖ In-class viewing of <i>The Running Man</i>. ❖ Homework: Prepare for the FINAL EXAM in TWO WEEKS (Wednesday, December 22).

Wednesday	12/22	<p style="text-align: center;">*** Final Exam TODAY ***</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Memory is the basis of every journey.”</i></p> <p>❖ <u>You will be taking your final exam from home:</u> do not forget <u>ALL the readings</u>, as well as the <u>On Writing excerpts</u>, as you will need to incorporate quotes in the exam’s <u>essay portion</u>.</p>
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The Rutgers-Newark Writing Center
Writing Center Director: Marne Benson
marneb@rutgers.edu

What is the Writing Center?

The Writing Center offers both individual tutorial support as well as workshops in reading, writing, and grammar instruction. Tutors work with students to assist them in developing as independent readers and writers capable of responding effectively to the demands of academic writing. Tutors work with students on all aspects of writing: analyzing an assignment, generating ideas, reviewing and revising drafts, improving grammar and usage, and strengthening reading and editing skills. This is a free service intended to strengthen students' academic performance.

Who do we serve?

The Writing Center serves undergraduate students enrolled in classes on the Rutgers-Newark campus. Writing Center tutors are trained to provide support to students enrolled in English Composition courses, Writing Intensive courses, and all courses in which writing is required.

Who are the Writing Center tutors?

Writing Program faculty, as well as undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of disciplines, comprise the Writing Center staff. Student tutors maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better and are recommended by faculty. All tutors participate in on-going training and are certified through the College Reading and Language Association International Certification Program.

Where are we located?

Conklin Hall, Room 126
175 University Avenue (corner of University and Bleeker)

How can students use the Writing Center?

- ❖ Register for a weekly tutorial
- ❖ Sign-up for drop-in tutoring
- ❖ Attend any of the Writing Center's workshops
- ❖ Use the Writing Center's library and computers

When are we available?

- ❖ Mondays: 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- ❖ Tuesdays: 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- ❖ Wednesdays: 10:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- ❖ Thursdays: 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- ❖ Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

How can students make an appointment?

- ❖ Telephone us: (973) 353-5847
- ❖ Come see us: Conklin 126