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## ENG 1099G-099: Stories Matter Health & Medicine Honors

Charles Wharram

*Eastern Illinois University*

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**ENG 1099G-099: STORIES MATTER — HEALTH & MEDICINE (95566)**  
**FALL 2021**  
**3 CREDIT HOURS**

**Professor:** Dr. C.C. Wharram  
**Email:** ccwharram@eiu.edu  
**Office:** 3010 Coleman; 1222 Booth Library  
**Office Hours:** MWF 12:00-13:30; and by appointment  
**Mailbox:** 3155 Coleman

**Course Information:**  
11:00-12:00 MWF  
Section: 099  
Room: CH 3150

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- *Journal of the Plague Year* by Daniel Defoe
- *Werther* by J.W. von Goethe
- *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande
- *Selected Essays* by David Hume

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course investigates the relationships between health, medicine and literature. These fields of study—methods of examining health and medicine on the one hand, and approaches to literary texts on the other—can complement and enhance each other when considered in an interdisciplinary way. In this course, we will discover *how*, and *why* such approaches are beneficial.

We will, for example, delve into the genre “science fiction.” Why? *Science fiction* is a logical place to start thinking about the advantages of an interdisciplinary bridging between the arts & humanities on one side, and health & medicine on the other, since the term itself brings together the two approaches in its name, “science” - “fiction.” We will be reading science fiction from 1818 to 2018.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

In this course, we will aim (1) to *acquire techniques of reading gleaned from literary texts that can be applied to the worlds of health and medicine*. Or, in other words, we will *expand our understanding of the various approaches across disciplines that can be used in addressing issues in health and medicine*. As we examine texts, we will also look (2) to *enhance our critical consciousness that the insights of health and medicine can make us better and more attentive readers*. Through our various assignments and class discussions, we will (3) *develop skills in critical thinking, research, and written presentation*.

**ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION:**

**MIDTERMS AND FINAL: 20%**

**QUIZZES: 0%**

**COURSE PARTICIPATION: WRITTEN RESPONSES 35%**

**PARTICIPATION: 10%**

**HONORS FINAL PROJECT: 35%**



**GRADING SCALE:**

A = 90-100    B = 80-89.9    C = 70-79.9    D = 60-69.9    F = 0-59.9

**OTHER VALUABLE OBJECTS AND/OR ABSTRACT QUALITIES:**

1) Paper for writing down notes and ideas; 2) a sense of humour; 3) an abiding curiosity; 4) a desire to succeed.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSESSMENT****PARTICIPATION: 10%**

In this class, I want us to think of learning as a community enterprise. The time we spend together is our opportunity to exchange ideas and create a community. At the end of the semester when I reflect on your participation (and the grade I will give you for “participation”), I will consider not only how often you contributed to class discussions, but the *quality* of those comments. **Also, I expect a high level of commitment in class, so checking your notifications, surfing, sleeping, etc., will greatly reduce your participation grade.**

In order to facilitate greater engagement in the course material (and, quite frankly, each other), I encourage you to consider leaving your devices in your place of residence or your vehicle. If you must keep it with you, it should never be seen in the classroom.



Because I am convinced, based on clear research evidence and my own experience, that screen technologies distract not only the users themselves, but also other students, resulting in poorer learning outcomes, I also do not allow the use of laptops in this classroom.

**COURSE PARTICIPATION: WRITTEN RESPONSES 35%**

Because of all of the above, I will be asking you to write out “responses” to our class discussions during 7 of the 15 weeks of the semester. You must write a response to the first week’s discussion, just to get you started. These responses should be written well (that is, you should think about them deeply and revise them after completing a first draft), and they must include reference—*by name*—to at least two other students’ ideas expressed in class. You will submit these responses at the end of the week (any time from the end of class on Friday to the end of the weekend) to a folder in our class D2L page. I would like to spend my Monday mornings reading (and assessing) your responses, so if you get them done Sunday-night-slash-wee-hours-of-Monday, that’s fine. Included in these 7 responses will be one or two responses to our readings for which I will provide you with a specific “response question.” Responses should be a minimum of 200 words, but you may write as much as you like. If you find yourself engaged in a particular topic, and you write a lot, please do tell me that you got carried away because the topic was so interesting for you, and ask me if maybe it could count as two responses. That seems fair, doesn’t it?

**QUIZZES: 0%**

I may give you quizzes throughout the semester to track your reading, and your retention of important facts and content. If your reading practice is such that you often forget the things you read days or even hours after you read them, then I suggest two things: 1) change your reading practice, and 2) complete your readings at least twice—once for basic comprehension, and twice for retention of the main ideas and facts. If I had a magic elixir to give you that would help you

remember everything you read, I would give it to you. We will, however, discuss in class some of the ways you can improve *how* you read.

### **MIDTERMS AND FINAL: 20%**

There will be one midterm exam in this class, worth 10%, and a final, also worth 10% of your grade. The midterm will be short (50 minutes maximum) and will involve your close reading of an important passage (or passages) from one or more of the literary texts we are reading in this class. We will practise this exercise before I ask you to write the midterm. The final will be similar.

### **(FOR HONORS STUDENTS) HONORS FINAL PROJECT: 35%**

If you are taking this course as an honors student, you are required to write a sustained research paper on a topic you will arrange with me during the course of the semester. Part of the assessment for this paper will include a project proposal, and a brief presentation of your work (venue to be determined). I will encourage you to present your work in the spring at venues such as the Honors Fair, and furthermore at regional and national Honors conferences, if you have interest.

As we all know, success in learning is more about one's attitude than one's skills. To succeed in this course, your biggest assets will be an abiding curiosity about ideas unfamiliar or new to you and the desire to succeed. Meeting all deadlines, working hard, and having a positive attitude when facing challenges are key drivers for successful learning. If a reading feels "boring" or "too hard," I encourage you to embrace that feeling, and recognize it as a spur to better yourself. Always focus on finding something you want to say in your responses—something that the world needs to hear.

### **ON BOREDOM:**

Boredom is underrated. It really is. If you feel bored occasionally during your first semester at university, or any other, you should count yourself lucky.

**A Note about Readings:** Assigned texts should be read by the date on the reading schedule (or changes made to the schedule).

I would like to comment on how you should read in this course. **I encourage you to read everything at least twice for this class.** When you are not using textbooks from TRS, mark in the text while you read, underlining what seems like important sentences and noting where you have questions. Some students feel that this sort of marking is disrespectful to the text, but it is common practice in college and aids you in comprehension. Granted, if you are using a rental book, you can't mark in them. You can, however, use post-it notes to highlight key points, and take notes in a separate notebook. Please *come prepared with a comment or question regarding each of our readings* so that you are fully engaged in the class discussion. Finally, you must always have the reading in front of you. If you arrive without your reading in print, you are not fully participating in class.

***THE CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:*** ENG 1009G. *Stories Matter 5. (3-0-3) On Demand. A study of literary texts that engage some of the most vital topics in our world today (5: Health and Medicine). Prerequisite: "C" or better in ENG 1000 (may be taken concurrently) or ENG 1001G (may be taken concurrently). A limit of 3 hours may be applied to a major or minor. WI*

### **READING SCHEDULE**

You will receive a reading schedule for this class before the second week of the semester.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance, punctuality, and meeting deadlines** are all part of academic life. Coming to class is part of your obligation to your academic career and to your community, just as it is when you have an “official job.” In other words, please do come to class. Students who miss class usually have great difficulty passing this or any other university course, or, in your case, maintaining “honors” status. If you find yourself in a situation that is causing you to miss classes, please discuss the situation with me as soon as possible, and we will work on finding ways for you to remain in the course, if we can. **All major writing assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.**

### COLLEGE CONDUCT

EIU’s composition director Timothy Taylor wrote following guidelines. They offer solid advice, but I have edited his suggestions slightly, in order to reflect my own voice and enhance a few points.

#### Guidelines for Any College Course:

1. Come to class on time and stay the entire period.
2. Bring texts, paper, and writing utensils.
3. When we discuss a reading or writing assignment, have the materials in front of you.
4. When we are engaged in course discussions, be prepared to contribute, revise your opinions, and compose your ideas articulately. You don’t always have to talk, but listening is a must. Your .
5. Respect others’ opinions and be open to them, even if you disagree. And it is okay to disagree, with your peers and with me.
6. Even though it is sometimes very tempting, do not carry on side conversations with other students when the instructor or a student has the floor during class.
7. General rudeness and disrespect, to each other or to me, will not and should not be tolerated by any of us.
8. No profanity (with obvious exceptions). We will speak more about this in class.
9. If you are sleeping, you are giving everyone else in the class an impression that you probably don’t want them to have.
10. Unless it’s an emergency, use the restroom before or after class. It’s only 50 minutes!
11. Phones. Screens of any kind. Different instructors will have various policies, but you have the right to make **the best decision that will help you succeed at university**, and that decision is this: **you should leave your phone in your room.** If you can’t do that, you should promise yourself that for every class, you will put your phone in a place where it will be inaccessible to you and inaudible for the entire class. We will speak more about this in class.
12. Listen to the little voice in your head that tells you that it’s important to get enough sleep, to avoid addictive behaviors and actions of all kinds, to eat healthy foods even when more tempting options are available, and to take the time to ask the people around you questions about their lives.

### ESSAY FORMAT

Your paper should be paper-clipped. It must include page numbers. Format: 12-point Garamond font (or similar), double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Always submit your papers using a consistent documentation format.

### EMAIL POLICY

I welcome emails if you have questions or concerns about your work in this class. Emailing provides you with an opportunity to show yourself off in the best light, and I want to help you do just that.

Developing a professional manner in your emails will help you with other professors and also give you practice in effective communication.

Here are some ideas for writing effective messages through email:

- Use the subject line. Leaving it blank is almost unpardonable!
- The subject should be clear, such “Absent This Friday” or “Question about Revision” or “Availability for a Meeting?” If your subject is “Hello,” your professor might think that your email is spam.
- Use an address, such as “Dr. Wharram,” or “Dear Dr. Wharram”. At the university level, it’s safest to use “Dr.” or “Prof.” Instructors who do not have doctorates and want you to write “Mr.” or “Ms.” will let you know. Better to err on the “up side.”
- Be concise yet clear in your question or request.
- Use paragraph breaks for reading ease and strong organization.
- Proofread.
- Refrain from using abbreviations or “txting-prose.”
- Close with a short statement followed by a comma and your name, such as “Thanks for your time,” or “Sincerely,” or “Have a good weekend”.

Following these guidelines should help you make good impressions on your current and future professors.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade on the assignment, if not for the course. I follow the departmental policy on plagiarism:

“Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—‘The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s own original work’ (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

### **UNIVERSITY-WIDE POLICIES**

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#### **Academic integrity**

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as de-fined in EIU’s Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). Violations are reported to the Office of Student Standards.

#### **Students with disabilities**

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS). All accommodations must be approved through SDS. Please stop by McAfee Gym, Room 1210, or call 217-581-6583 to make an appointment.

### **The Student Success Center**

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center ([www.eiu.edu/~success](http://www.eiu.edu/~success)) for assistance with time management, text taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

### **Using the Writing Center**

I encourage you to use our wonderful Writing Center located at 3110 Coleman Hall. This free resource provides one-to-one conferences with writing consultants who can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support, documenting, and revising your papers.

To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the center (3110 Coleman Hall) or you can call 581-5929.

### **Eastern Illinois University Learning Goals (<http://www.eiu.edu/learninggoals/revisedgoals.php>)**

EIU graduates reason and communicate clearly as responsible citizens and leaders in diverse personal, professional, and civic contexts.

#### **Critical Thinking**

EIU graduates question, examine, evaluate, and respond to problems or arguments by:

1. Asking essential questions and engaging diverse perspectives.
2. Seeking and gathering data, information, and knowledge from experience, texts, graphics, and media.
3. Understanding, interpreting, and critiquing relevant data, information, and knowledge.
4. Synthesizing and integrating data, information, and knowledge to infer and create new insights
5. Anticipating, reflecting upon, and evaluating implications of assumptions, arguments, hypotheses, and conclusions.
6. Creating and presenting defensible expressions, arguments, positions, hypotheses, and proposals.

#### **Writing and Critical Reading**

EIU graduates write critically and evaluate varied sources by:

1. Creating documents appropriate for specific audiences, purposes, genres, disciplines, and professions.
2. Crafting cogent and defensible applications, analyses, evaluations, and arguments about problems, ideas, and issues.
3. Producing documents that are well-organized, focused, and cohesive.
4. Using appropriate vocabulary, mechanics, grammar, diction, and sentence structure.
5. Understanding, questioning, analyzing, and synthesizing complex textual, numeric, and graphical sources.

6. Evaluating evidence, issues, ideas, and problems from multiple perspectives.
7. Collecting and employing source materials ethically and understanding their strengths and limitations.

### **Speaking and Listening**

EIU graduates prepare, deliver, and critically evaluate presentations and other formal speaking activities by:

1. Collecting, comprehending, analyzing, synthesizing and ethically incorporating source material.
2. Adapting formal and impromptu presentations, debates, and discussions to their audience and purpose.
3. Developing and organizing ideas and supporting them with appropriate details and evidence.
4. Using effective language skills adapted for oral delivery, including appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure.
5. Using effective vocal delivery skills, including volume, pitch, rate of speech, articulation, pronunciation, and fluency.
6. Employing effective physical delivery skills, including eye contact, gestures, and movement.
7. Using active and critical listening skills to understand and evaluate oral communication.

### **Quantitative Reasoning**

EIU graduates produce, analyze, interpret, and evaluate quantitative material by:

1. Performing basic calculations and measurements.
2. Applying quantitative methods and using the resulting evidence to solve problems.
3. Reading, interpreting, and constructing tables, graphs, charts, and other representations of quantitative material.
4. Critically evaluating quantitative methodologies and data.
5. Constructing cogent arguments utilizing quantitative material.
6. Using appropriate technology to collect, analyze, and produce quantitative materials.

### **Responsible Citizenship**

EIU graduates make informed decisions based on knowledge of the physical and natural world and human history and culture by:

1. Engaging with diverse ideas, individuals, groups, and cultures.
2. Applying ethical reasoning and standards in personal, professional, disciplinary, and civic contexts.
3. Participating formally and informally in civic life to better the public good.
4. Applying knowledge and skills to new and changing contexts within and beyond the classroom.