

ENGLISH 618A

Professor Mark Brazaitis

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Office Hours: Tuesday (11:30-1), Thursday (11:30-12:30) and by
appointment

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Class Hours: TTh 10:00-11:15

Class Location: G10 Colson Hall

Objective: In this class, you will learn to become a better fiction writer. To become a better fiction writer, you must dedicate yourself to both writing and reading fiction, and this class will allow you to do both.

Requirements: Over the course of the semester, you will read two novels (Philip Roth's *Everyman* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*), one novella (Leo Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*), and selections from three collections of short stories (Jennine Capó Cruet's *How to Leave Hialeah*, Daniyal Mueenuddin's *In Other Rooms, Other Wonders*, and Sara Pritchard's *Lately*).

Grades: Grades will be based on the effort you put into all aspects of the class. I expect everyone to earn an 'A.' If you are doing less than 'A' work, I will let you know.

Submitting Work: Your stories (or novel chapters) are due a week before they are critiqued and will be handed out in class. You should make photocopies for everyone in the class and your instructor. If you fail to hand in your story on time, it's your responsibility to get your story to your instructor and your classmates well ahead of the next class. (Emailing your story is not acceptable). If you miss a class during which stories are handed out, please contact the author about getting the story. You may turn in a maximum of sixty pages per submission period (as long as it is a continuous work—i.e. a very long story or a series of novel chapters). You may turn in three short-shorts at a time.

Feedback on Your Peers' Work: You should provide a page or so of typed (12 point) comments on each piece you critique. In-text comments are helpful and appreciated. Your comments should be professional, courteous, and clear. Should workshop members fail to provide adequate feedback, or should the feedback fail to be professional, courteous, and clear, a system of undergraduate-style grading of feedback will be implemented. Let's not go there.

Workshop Method: Do not address the writer by name. Refer to the writer as "the writer" or "the author" or, if you're feeling Elizabethan, "the begetter of these words." When called on, be prepared to offer one positive comment (what you thought was effective

about the work) and one suggestion (what could be improved in the work and how). Do your best not to repeat the comments of your classmates.

Your Work: I would love to read everything you've ever written. Unfortunately, I have to restrict myself to what you submit to this class. Exception: if you've asked me to chair or be a part of your thesis committee.

Class Schedule and Day-to-Day Assignments

Tuesday, August 24 Get acquainted

Tuesday, August 31 Workshop. Read Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*.

Tuesday, September 7 Workshop. Read pages 1 to 101 in Philip Roth's *Everyman*.

Tuesday, September 14 Workshop. Read pages 102 to the end of Philip Roth's *Everyman*.

Special Event: Wednesday, September 15^h, at 7:30 p.m. in room 130 of Colson Hall, fiction and nonfiction writer Ethel Morgan Smith will be reading.

Tuesday, September 21 Workshop. Read "Nawabdin Electrician" and "Saleema" by Daniyal Mueenuddin.

Tuesday, September 28 Workshop. Read "Resurrection" and "And in the Morning, Work" by Jennine Capó Crucet.

Tuesday, October 5 Workshop. Read "The Wonders of the World" and "The Pink Motel" by Sara Pritchard.

Tuesday, October 12 Workshop. Read "In Other Rooms, Other Wonders" and "A Spoiled Man" by Daniyal Mueenuddin.

Tuesday, October 19 Workshop. Read "Drift" and "How to Leave Hialeah" by Jennine Capó Crucet.

Tuesday, October 26 Workshop Read "A Winter's Tale" and "The Lost Pilot" by Sara Prichard.

Tuesday, November 2 Workshop. Read first third (roughly) of *The Remains of the Day* (page 1 to Day Two, Afternoon).

Tuesday, November 9 Workshop. Read: second third (roughly) of *The Remains of the Day* (from Day Two, Afternoon to Day Four, Afternoon).

Tuesday, November 16 Workshop. Read last third (roughly) of *The Remains of the Day* (From Day Four, Afternoon to the end of the novel).

Thanksgiving Break --- Enjoy

Tuesday, November 30 Workshop. Conversation on publishing.

Tuesday, December 7 No class.

Core Values/Social Justice at West Virginia University

The following core values establish the foundation for Social Justice at West Virginia University.

Every person has intrinsic worth and dignity;

Respect for the law is fundamental;

Freedom from fear is universal;

A climate of opportunity, mutual respect, and understanding engenders a feeling that the future should be shared by all community members;

There is an absence of discrimination and harassment based on age, color, disability, ethnic origin, marital status, pregnancy, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, and veteran status; and

The rich diversity of people, their cultures, and the bonds that tie people together are appreciated and celebrated.