

Summer 2017
English 110-70: Critical Reading and Writing II

July 4-August 17 / MTWR 1:00-2:15
 AH 321
 Office Hours: AH 366, Monday/Wednesday 2:30-3:30

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Course Description

This course examines the idea of the monster in literature and digital media. What function do monsters serve, and how do they impact our literary lives? We will track this question across a variety of texts, including fiction, critical writing, poetry, and video games. We will consider the popularity of horror/fantasy as a culture, as well as its relationship with colonialism, indigenous studies, sexuality, gender equality, and eco-criticism.

Course Outcomes

Students will discuss the interrelationship between a variety of genres, both textual and visual. They will analyze the representation of horror/fantasy in prose fiction and poetry. They will demonstrate an understanding of prosody, close reading, and passage identification. Through composition readings and class discussion, they will learn how to write a scholarly research paper that incorporates primary and secondary sources.

Textbooks

Gaiman, Neil. *Coraline*.
 Robinson, Eden. *Son of a Trickster*.
 Stevenson, Robert Louis. *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Supplementary Readings Posted to UR Courses

Course Schedule

Week 1

T July 4
 Introductions; Course Outcomes

W July 5
 Discussion of Close Reading Essay
 Close Reading Sample Essay (MLA)

R July 6

TBR: Andersen, "The Little Mermaid"

Clip: *The Little Mermaid*

Summary Report Due

Week 2

M July 10

TBR: Gaiman, *Coraline*

Generating a Thesis

T July 11

Coraline continued

MLA Bibliography Review

Summary Report Due

W July 12

Wrapping up *Coraline*

R July 13

Excerpt from *Monster Theory*, J.J. Cohen

Week 3

M July 17

TBR: Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll*

Summary Report Due

T July 18

Dr. Jekyll continued

W July 19

Wrapping up *Dr. Jekyll*

R July 20

TBR: Gaiman, "Troll Bridge"

Close Reading Essay Due

Week 4

M July 24

TBR: Richard Van Camp, "On the Wings of This Prayer"

Clip from *Game of Thrones*

T July 25

Library Tutorial: Research

W July 26

TBR: Gaiman, *American Gods* excerpt [Djinn chapter]

Discussion of Research Question

Summary Report Due

R July 27

TBR: *Beowulf* excerpt [Grendel]

Week 5

M July 31

TBR: Robinson, *Son of a Trickster*

Discussion of Research Essay Proposal

T Aug 1

TBR: *Son of a Trickster* continued

Summary Report Due

W Aug 2

TBR: *Son of a Trickster* continued

Research Essay Proposal Due

R Aug 3

Wrapping up *Son of a Trickster*

Week 6

M Aug 7

Holiday

T Aug 8

TBR: Marie de France, "Bisclavret"

Clip from *Teen Wolf*

W Aug 9

Research Essay Due

Horror/Fantasy TV II

Clip from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*

R Aug 10

Horror Cinema I

Discussion of *The Babadook*

Week 7

M Aug 14
 Horror Cinema II
 Discussion of *The Babadook* continued

T Aug 15
No Class: Extended Office Hours

W Aug 16
 Class Review
 Discussion of Final Exam

R Aug 17
 Concluding Class
Narrative Essay

Assignments/Evaluation

Close Reading Essay: 15%
 Research Essay Proposal: 5%
 Participation: 5%
 Summary Reports: 5%
 Research Essay: 30%
 Final Exam: 30%
 Narrative Essay: 10%

English Marking Symbols

General

✓ = good point
 phrasing
 ✗ = error/delete
 ↑ = capitalize

Word Choice

ww = wrong word
 nsw = no such word
 sp = spelling error
 / = separate as two words

Phrasing

awk = incorrect/awkward
 rep = repetitive
 wo = faulty word order

Sentence Construction

mm = misplaced modifier
 dm = dangling modifier
 sf = sentence fragment
 cs = comma splice
 ro = run-on sentence
 ts = topic sentence weak/missing

Content/Style

exp = expand; insufficient examples
 trans = weak/missing transition
 → = indent line
 ¶ = new paragraph
 ds = double space

Grammar

Documentation

agr = agreement error
 art = missing article (an, a, the, those)
 vt = verb tense error
 sing = singular
 pl = plural

q = quotation error; not integrated
 ms = missing source
 doc = does not follow citation
 it = use italics

Course Policies and Classroom Conduct

Attendance: Attending class is mandatory and will facilitate your understanding of the material under discussion. If you miss class or show up late, you will be marked as absent, which will affect your overall participation grade. You will need to make arrangements for obtaining notes from a classmate for any class time that you miss.

Participation: Your participation mark [5%] is based on overall attendance, group work, and role in class discussion. Be prepared to interact in groups, share ideas, and read passages aloud. You must complete the weekly readings for each class and be prepared to discuss them in depth.

Electronics: Cell phones are not to be used during class. Please turn off your ringers before class and do not check messages during class time. If you text or check your messages during class, you will be asked to leave. Laptops are only permitted if the student has been officially approved by the instructor and administration for special learning needs.

Email: Email should be used for quick yes/no questions. Email will not be answered during weekends or after 7:00pm on weekdays. All substantial questions about assignments or course requirements should be discussed during office hours. Expect a 24-48 hour response time.

Late Policy: Assignments must be submitted at beginning of class in hard copy. Assignments will not be accepted via email, unless accompanied by a doctor's note. Late assignments will receive a penalty of 10% per day, for up to 3 days, after which they will not be accepted.

Extensions: No extensions will be given, except in the case of a medical emergency, accompanied by a doctor's note.

Assignment Descriptions

Summary-Synthesis Report Guidelines

1 page, double-spaced

Include name, course section #, and title (e.g., Summary-Synthesis Report 1)

Over the course of the semester, you will submit **5** of these **1-page** reports, which correspond to 5 of the readings. Each report is worth **1%** of your overall grade.

Submit each report to UR Courses by the due date.

The purpose of each report is to **summarize** a main point from the reading, and then **synthesize** (analyze/discuss further), using your summary as a starting point. This will lead you to include **3 questions** about the reading as well, after your synthesis. The report also insures that you are keeping up with the reading, and allows you to practice the critical thinking and academic writing skills which you will apply to essays.

- 1.) Briefly (in 1-2 sentences) summarize a point made in the reading that you find significant. Use **complete sentences**--not point form.
- 2.) Write a paragraph in which you explore this point further. What makes it significant? How does it relate to the reading as a whole? How might you apply it to the real world?
- 3.) Write down a question that you have about the reading.

Research Essay Proposal (5%)

Submit to UR Courses

The research essay proposal is designed to introduce your argument, identify both your primary and secondary sources, and lay out the main points of your discussion. The proposal should be 1-2 pages (double-spaced) + a properly cited bibliography. It should include the title of your essay, as well as your name and the section #.

This proposal is submitted as-is, so start working on it as soon as possible to ensure that it's focused, and free of grammatical problems. This proposal should do the following:

1. Identify the title/author of your primary text, as well as the **genre** of the text (is it an academic essay, a memoir, a piece of fiction?)
2. Identify broader social issue that the text addresses.
3. Describe the **2 secondary sources** that you'll be connecting to the primary text.
4. Describe the **textual evidence** that you'll be discussing from **both primary secondary texts** in order to support your discussion.
5. Include a properly-formatted bibliography.

Short Hand-In Essay: Compare/Contrast

Length: 2 pages double-spaced + bibliography

Submit to UR Courses

This essay will focus on textual analysis by asking you to identify two key passages or scenes in a work from the syllabus that we've discussed in class. Choose a text that you find interesting, and locate two textual "moments" which relate to each other. This might be two related scenes from *Coraline*, two poetic stanzas from *Bisclavret*, or two descriptive passages from "The Little Mermaid." Begin by noting what connects these two moments. 1) How do they comment on the larger work as a whole? 2) What similarities and differences do they share? 3) Why are they significant, and how do they represent the message or values of the text?

Once you've isolated the scenes that most interest you, place them in dialogue with each other by addressing the questions listed above. Include **quoted material** from these scenes in order to frame and support your discussion. Before you begin writing, you may find it helpful to draft a chart which compares the similarities/differences between your chosen passages, so that you can build your discussion around these connections and contrasts. This is the essence of the **compare/contrast essay**: to locate connections and transformations between two moments within a text, and then to discuss the **significance** of those connections and changes by analyzing quoted material which supports your point.

Your essay will be evaluated on clarity of expression, grammatical consistency, organization of ideas, proper integration of quoted material, and proper formatting of an MLA-style bibliography. You must also attach a title page which includes your name, section number, title of essay, and current date. The title should reflect the essay's content. **Be sure to proof-read for spelling errors and typos.**

Research Paper

Length: 4 pages, double-spaced + bibliography

Submit to UR Courses

You will identify a broader topic and/or social issue in **one of the assigned readings** and discuss its real-world significance. You will use your chosen text as a jumping-off point in order to discuss the larger implications of the author's discussion. This requires a balance between discussing your source material (**with evidence from your primary text**) and connecting it to a real-world issue. Your essay will incorporate a minimum of 2 outside sources which satisfy the scholarly criteria outlined below.

Your sources may be a combination of the following:

1. A scholarly article which you have retrieved from an online database, or which you have accessed from a physical journal housed in the library.
2. A chapter in a scholarly book of essays which focuses on your topic, and which you have taken out of the library.
3. Material excerpted from a scholarly monograph (a book by a single author with a consistent focus) which you have taken out of the library or accessed as an e-book.

Your completed essay will incorporate the following elements

- 2 outside sources **in addition** to the assigned reading
- An introductory paragraph which identifies the texts that you will be considering, and the broader topic that they address
- A brief paragraph which describes the genre (e.g., medieval romance, fairy tale, dystopia, epic fantasy, gothic) that your text belongs to, and where it fits within that tradition
- Quoted material from **both** your source-text and your outside sources which supports your own discussion of the topic
- A conclusion which restates the significance of the topic while also commenting on why/how the outside sources are effective
- A properly-formatted bibliography which follows MLA standards

Your discussion will begin with a specific text (one of the assigned readings) and move towards arguing something about a broader topic. If you choose to write on *Son of a Trickster*, you can isolate passages from the text, you might discuss the significance of monsters in the novel, the role of Indigenous traditional storytelling, or the main character's experience of the supernatural. You will then incorporate 2 critical sources which discuss the work of the author (Eden Robinson) and/or a social issue connected with Indigenous literature. Your goal will be to analyze the **broader social conversation** that the assigned reading participates in.

Potential Topics

Discuss the significance of the Djinn character in Neil Gaiman's story and connect his adaptation of the Djinn with other mythological versions.

Discuss the ways in which *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* updates/challenges the vampire.

Discuss Marie de France's portrayal of the werewolf in *Bisclavret* and compare this to the contemporary monsters in *Teen Wolf*.

Discuss how *The Babadook* connects childhood/motherhood with monstrosity.

Discuss the monster Grendel in *Beowulf*—what does he tell us about the early medieval conception of evil?

Narrative Essay Assignment: Telling a Story

In-class

Length: 500 words

Should contain: a thesis, descriptive language, engaging discussion of an event, a conclusion about the event

The basic task of this assignment is to tell a story. Choose a significant event that occurred **more** than a year ago (to ensure that you've had some time to think about it). The event could focus on transition, such as beginning/ending a social relationship. It could focus on travel, such as encountering a new (or familiar) place. It could focus on something that happened in the workplace, or embarking upon university studies. It could be about an important athletic event, or a visit to an art exhibition, poetry reading, or museum. The event need not be life-altering, but it should be something that you really want to talk about, and which can provide plenty of descriptive detail.

A good narrative essay combines analysis of **specific moments** with discussion of the event's **broader significance**, and autobiographical information that will allow the reader to understand how they should interpret this particular story. You will write this essay in the first-person, shifting clearly between past and present tense (e.g., "Looking back, I *remember* that day from high school in precise detail. I *walked* into the classroom and everything changed.") Your discussion will move from describing specific moments in detail, to considering the overall arc of your story and why you've chosen to write about it. Whatever opinion you've formed about this event will become your **thesis**: i.e., why the event is significant within your life, what you learned from it, and what the after-effects were. Your opening paragraph will introduce this thesis, and your concluding paragraph will reinforce it.

Through this technique, you are developing an **argument** about an event within your life. Your story is the text, and you will explain its significance.

While telling your story, use the following techniques:

- Use descriptive language to convey your setting, what you're feeling, how you physically experience the event, and what you perceive in the background (what are the other characters in your story doing?)
- Incorporate language that **shows** the reader something, rather than simply telling them (e.g., "My blood boiled" vs. "I was really angry.")
- Structure your paragraphs so that they move between experiencing the event *in the moment* and analyzing its significance

- Include signal phrases such as: "the point of it was"; "what I'm trying to say"; "what I realize now"; "this mattered because"; "in the end...."