



ENGL 2321: British Literature

Gods & Monsters

Dr. Monica Smith Hart

Fall 2010

Office: Classroom Center 319J
Email: Please use WTClass course mail
Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
CST or by appointment

Course Description

In this course, we will investigate some of the most famous villains ever created—Grendel and his mother; Macbeth; Satan; Frankenstein's Creature; Mr. Hyde; Dracula—focusing on the intersections between creation and destruction, inspiration and desolation, divinity and monstrosity.

A few key questions will shape our inquiries this term:

- How do we decide that someone or something is a "monster"? What makes someone's actions "monstrous"?
- How has divinity been conceptualized at various points in British literature? To what can we attribute these concepts?
- Why do monsters appear so frequently in literature? What do monsters represent for the culture that created them? What do monsters represent for us today?
- Who created monsters: God or man? Are monsters figments of human imagination, a way we have of explaining to ourselves why terrible things happen? A way of understanding what is sometimes beyond understanding? Or are they a kind of punishment, our sins manifest?
- Can monsters be controlled by gods? By God? By humans? Why or why not?
- Are humans destined to battle monsters? Is it destiny or just coincidence when we encounter such beings?
- Why do some literary monsters continue to haunt us, even centuries after their creation?

To answer these questions, we will read masterpieces from the multiple genres and subgenres: epic poetry, the novel, lyric verse, tragedy, drama, Gothic, science fiction, humor.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Discuss and write critically about different literary genres and themes;
- Develop an understanding of literary culture and its relationship to social and historical contexts;
- Demonstrate the ability to write an analysis of a literary work;
- Employ the following literary terms in their writing: *simile, metaphor, image, symbol, speaker, persona, meter, rhyme, stanza, line break, caesura, iambic pentameter, setting, tone, character, narrative, narrator; drama; dramatis personae; Romantic; Renaissance; intertextuality; epic poetry; novel; lyric verse; tragedy; drama; Gothic; science fiction; humor.*

Required Texts and Materials

Buy the editions specified. If you choose to use an edition other than the one listed below, you will have different pagination, and you will not be able to keep up in class.

- Baldick, Chris. *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- *Beowulf: A Verse Translation*. Trans. Seamus Heaney. Ed. Daniel Donoghue. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001. ISBN: 0393975800.
- Pratchett, Terry and Neil Gaiman. *Good Omens*. ISBN: 9780060853976.
- Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Washington, D.C.: Washington Square Press, 2004. ISBN 9780743477109.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Ed. J. Paul Hunter. New York: W. W. Norton, 1995. ISBN: 0393964582.
- Stevenson, Robert Louis. *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Ed. Martin Danahay. 2nd ed. Broadview, 2005. ISBN: 1551116553.
- Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. Oxford University Press, 2008. ISBN: 9780199535934

Other required materials:

- Readings available via WTClass
- Course materials available via WTClass.

Assignments and Requirements

Assigned Readings are demanding, and some texts will demand multiple readings. Do not come to class without your books or without having read the assigned material carefully and completely.

Quizzes (15% of final course grade): Expect at least one quiz each class period, sometimes more.

Quizzes cannot be taken early or made up. At the end of term, I will drop your lowest grade from this category.

Short Essay (15% of final course grade): One short essay in response to an assigned prompt. Details and prompts available on WTClass.

Commonplace Book (20% of final course grade): Five entries of 200-400 words into our course Commonplace Book on WTClass along with a 500-800 word epilogue at the end of the semester. Due dates listed on Weekly Schedule below. Entries must be completed by 11:55 p.m. on the day they are due. Details available on WTClass.

Exams (3 exams totaling 50% of final course grade): Each exam may consist of identifications, objective questions, and short answers. Alternate testing times/accommodations are not available. Make-ups will only be allowed under the most extreme circumstances. If a student cannot provide the appropriate documentation within five business days of the missed exam, s/he will receive a zero.

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential; ***flawless attendance is expected***. All absences will be treated the same, i.e. no differentiation between “excused” or “unexcused” absences. Attendance will be taken every day at the beginning of class. Failure to attend regularly will impact the final course grade significantly. Two tardies will equal one absence. I reserve the right to fail any student who misses more than four class periods.

Submitting Assignments

Late assignments will lose ONE LETTER GRADE (the equivalent of 10 points) per **business day, NOT per class day**. Thus, if an assignment that was due on Monday is submitted on Wednesday, the final grade will lose 20 points for lateness.

Assignments that are not submitted in the assigned format or in the proper place (e.g. hard copy in class, via WTClass, etc.) will not be graded.

Each student is held responsible for all assignments. If a previously scheduled event coincides with an exam or due date, a written request for an extension or make-up date will be considered. All such requests must be submitted prior to the date in question.

Any requests for extensions based on illness or family emergency must be accompanied by written documentation verified by the Office of Student Services. All make-ups and extensions are at the instructor’s discretion.

Computer Access

It is the student’s responsibility to secure reliable, up-to-date, working computer equipment. Computer stations are available for student use at the HELC (bottom floor of Cornette Library).

Students are expected to check WTClass coursemail daily. Students are expected to check the course webpage before EVERY class or as indicated on the daily schedule.

IMPORTANT: Please note that since “The printer wouldn’t work,” “Something’s wrong with my disk,” and “I don’t know what happened—I saved it but now it’s not there” have become the 21st century versions of “The dog ate my homework,” **computer hardware, software, or printer malfunction/failure of any kind will not excuse missed, late, or incomplete work.**

Remember: save early, save often—and in multiple formats: e.g. hard drive and flash drive or hard drive and email to yourself. Print early, print often.

Conferences, Email Access, and Contact Information

Conferences: Office hours are posted above, and I encourage you to take advantage of these times.

Email: I will check course email during regular business hours only (Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.). Thus, if you email me at midnight, do not expect a response before the next morning during business hours. I do not check email or hold office hours on weekends. Therefore, if you email me at 9:00 p.m. on Friday evening, do not expect to hear back from me until Monday morning.

Voicemails: Please note that voicemails left for me at my office number will be returned via email.

Academic Honesty:

All students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers.

- WTAMU is committed to maintaining the integrity of the university academic mission as defined in the Academic Integrity Code (<http://www.wtamu.edu/administrative/ss/code/appendix1.htm>).
- The instructor may exercise the integrity process by submitting student work to Turnitin, a commercial plagiarism detection software device that assists in preventing plagiarism. All documents submitted to Turnitin will remain in the restricted Turnitin.com database for the purpose of comparison and detection of plagiarism of future submissions. Use of Turnitin (<http://www.turnitin.com>) is subject to the licensing agreement between Turnitin and WTAMU.
- Any instance of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported to the Head of the Department of English, Philosophy, and Modern Languages and to the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. Students are responsible for informing themselves of all university regulations concerning academic honesty. For more information, please see the Code of Student Life, Appendix III (<http://www.wtamu.edu/administrative/ss/code/index.htm>)

ACCESS STATEMENT:

If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability (i.e., physical, mental, psychological, learning) or have emergency medical information to share with me, please let me know as soon as possible. West Texas A&M University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws,

regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) and to contact faculty members in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations. The SDS Office phone number is 806-651-2335.

Grading Percentages		Grading Scale	Converting Letter Grade to Numerical Equivalent	
Quizzes	15%	Excellent work will earn an A (90-100).	A+ = 98	C+ = 78
Short Essay	15%	Good work will earn a B (80-89.99).	A = 95	C = 75
Commonplace Book	20%	Average work will earn a C (70-79.99).	A- = 90	C- = 70
Exams (3)	50%	Fair work will earn a D (60-69.99).	B+ = 88	D = 65
		Poor work will earn an F (0-59.99).	B = 85	D- = 60
			B- = 80	F = (as marked; work not submitted entered as 0)

A note about grade reporting: I will record your grades on WTClass. It is your responsibility to check that I have recorded your grade accurately; therefore, you should keep copies of all graded work until the end of the semester. If I enter something incorrectly, I will correct it—as long as you have the original graded work for me to verify. Without that original graded copy, the grade stands as entered.

Schedule

Subject to change. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The most update version of the syllabus will be available on WTClass.

Tuesday	Thursday
August 31: Introduction to the class	September 2: <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 1-660). Read the following in <i>Oxford Literary Terms</i> : epic, kenning, synecdoche, alliterative metre, accentual verse, <i>in medias res</i>
September 7: <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 661-1650). Read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : commonplace book. Read the Commonplace Book project description on WTClass	September 9: <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 1650-2200).

September 14: <i>Beowulf</i> (lines 2200-end); read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : lai, lyric CPB 1 over <i>Beowulf</i> DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.	September 16: William Shakespeare, <i>Macbeth</i> (Act 1.1 - Act 2.1). Read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : dramatis personae, folio, act, scene, drama, Renaissance, tragedy; Jacobean; monologue; soliloquy
September 21: <i>Macbeth</i> (Act 2.2-3.2)	September 23: <i>Macbeth</i> (Act 3.4 – Act 4.3)
September 28: <i>Macbeth</i> (Act 5) CPB 2 over <i>Macbeth</i> DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.	September 30: Exam One
October 5: John Milton, excerpts from <i>Paradise Lost</i> (reading available on WTClass). Read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : blank verse; invocation; hero.	October 7: Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i> (pages 7-17); read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : frame narrative; narrative; novel; narrator; Romanticism; Gothic novel.
October 12: <i>Frankenstein</i> (rest of Volume I); read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : intertextuality	October 14: <i>Frankenstein</i> (Volume II)
October 19: <i>Frankenstein</i> (Volume III) CPB 3 over <i>Paradise Lost</i> , “Christabel,” OR <i>Frankenstein</i> DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.	October 21: Exam Two
October 26: Robert Louis Stevenson, <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde</i> (“Introduction,” pages 11-25)	October 28: Stevenson, <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde</i> (pages 25-end). CPB 4 over <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde</i> DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.
November 2: Bram Stoker, <i>Dracula</i> (pages 1-98); read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : epistolary novel	November 4: <i>Dracula</i> (pages 99-202)
November 9: <i>Dracula</i> (pages 203-300)	November 11: <i>Dracula</i> (pages 301-end) CPB 5 over <i>Dracula</i> DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.
November 16: Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, <i>Good Omens</i> (pages 1-172); read the following in <i>Oxford Literary</i> : satire; parody, irony	November 18: <i>Good Omens</i> (pages 175-end) CPB 6 over <i>Good Omens</i> DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.
November 23: Short Paper Workshop	November 25: No class. Thanksgiving Holidays
November 30: Film CPB Epilogue DUE tonight by 11:55 p.m.	December 2: Film
December 7: Exam Three	

Final Exam: The Short Paper is DUE to the appropriate WTClass dropbox no later than NOON (12:00 p.m.) on Monday, December 13.

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