

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
Department of English and Writing Studies
English 2092G (001) 2015
Tuesdays 7:00-10:00 SEB 2200

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Tues./Thurs.
2:30-3:30

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The Many Faces of Harry Potter

The wildly successful *Harry Potter* series has been noted for its capacity to cross traditional boundaries. Conventional wisdom claims that young girls won't read a book with a male protagonist and young boys won't read a book by a female author, yet *Harry Potter* has found an enthusiastic readership among children of both sexes. Age boundaries have proven to be equally elastic; the popularity of the series among adults has even prompted the creation of an adult-friendly edition of the series with dark cover art suitable for reading on public transportation. The flexibility of the series may relate to its roots in a wide variety of genres including the gothic novel, detective fiction, fantasy, adventure, and even the dystopian novel. This course will examine the *Harry Potter* series in relation to all these genres. We will read all seven books alongside other novels and short stories that illustrate the generic conventions Rowling is using.

Required Texts

J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, Bloomsbury
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Bloomsbury
Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, Bloomsbury
Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Bloomsbury
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Bloomsbury
Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Bloomsbury
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, Bloomsbury
The Tales of Beedle the Bard, Bloomsbury

Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*, Knopf

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty Four*, Penguin

Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay*, Scholastic

Schedule of Classes

Jan. 6: Introduction

The Actively Detecting Reader

Jan. 13: Edgar Allan Poe, "The Purloined Letter" (on OWL)
Arthur Conan Doyle, "A Scandal in Bohemia" (on OWL)
"The Wizard and the Hopping Pot" (from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*)
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone

Uncovering the Past: The Gothic

Jan. 20: Elizabeth Gaskell, "The Old Nurse's Story" (on OWL)
Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets

Jan. 27: *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

Nazis and Death Eaters

Feb. 3: Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*

Feb. 10: *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*

Dystopia

Feb. 24: George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty Four*

Mar. 3: *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*

Mar. 10: **Test**
Suzanne Collins, *Mockingjay*

Film

Mar. 17: *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*

Mar. 24: film screening (*Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*)

Fairy Tale and Allegory

Mar. 31: Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Pardoner's Tale" (on OWL)
"The Tale of the Three Brothers" (from *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*)
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

Apr. 7: *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (cont'd.) / Review

Marking

Introductory Paragraph (250 words, due Feb. 10)	5%
Test (Mar. 10)	10%
Essay (2500 words, due Mar. 24)	30%
Film Discussion (300 words, due Mar. 31)	10%
Attendance and Participation	10%
Final Exam	35%

NOTE: As in all courses in the Department of English, students must pass BOTH the term work and the final examination in order to pass the course.

General Information

1. Regular attendance at lectures is essential. Absenteeism can result in debarment from writing the final examination, which in the Department of English results in failure of the course.
2. All essays should be double-spaced and printed in a standard font such as 12-pt Times Roman. Please follow MLA format (see attached guidelines). Essays should be handed in during class or dropped off in the Department of English Essay Drop-Off

Boxes located across from the English department office (AHB 2G02). Do not leave essays under office doors. Two percent per day (including weekends) will be deducted from late essays. Extensions will be approved only with a recommendation for accommodation from an academic counsellor. No paper will be accepted after the last day of classes (Apr. 7).

3. Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar). Any student who commits this or any other act of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of zero and a note will be placed on his or her academic record.
4. Plagiarism Checking: The University of Western Ontario uses software for plagiarism checking. Students may be required to submit their written work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.
5. The Attendance and Participation Grade will reflect not only your presence in class but also your engagement in the course, which may take the form of vocal participation in class discussions and/or participation in the Forums board on the OWL. The Forums board is a place where students can post questions about the course material as well as answer questions posted by other students. These questions can involve seeking clarification of lecture material, or they may explore the meaning of particular features of the texts, especially those not discussed in lecture. Those who participate every week, either vocally or online, will achieve the highest results in this portion of the course.
6. All grades, once assigned and/or posted, are final. While formal appeal processes do exist in the Department of English and Writing Studies, grades will not be changed after the fact in response to emailed requests and/or GPA requirements, nor will the weighting of assignments be altered for individual students.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to

- recognize how the *Harry Potter* series employs conventions from a variety of genres
- identify and analyze the basic elements of literature such as plot, character, point of view, theme, setting, imagery, and diction
- understand the political, religious, moral, and philosophical underpinnings of the texts on the course
- write an essay about a work of literature containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text
- offer independent insights, beyond those outlined in class
- organize and present ideas clearly and effectively
- document essays using MLA format

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.”

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

“All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).”

Prerequisites

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

“Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded and that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite course(s) that they have taken. If the student does not have the requisites for a course, the University reserves the right to remove the student from the course and to delete it from the student’s record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to his or her fees in the event that he or she is dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

Medical Accommodation Policy

For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

(downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading)

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical or other grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional

Communication, and the Program requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Grading Rubric:

Thesis	Excellent	Forceful, fresh and challenging
	Good	Clear development of a specific thesis
	Satisfactory	Reasonably clear thesis
	Poor Inadequate	Unclear, overgeneral
Argument (ideas)	Excellent	Original, analytical, persuasive, depth of insight
	Good	Analytical, persuasive, with some originality and depth
	Satisfactory	More descriptive than analytical, not fully persuasive
	Poor Inadequate	Plot summary or lengthy paraphrase, general observations
Organization	Excellent	Paragraphs focus on clearly articulated, meaningful topics
	Good	Paragraphs support thesis adequately
	Satisfactory	Most paragraphs support thesis; some problems with coherent paragraphing
	Poor Inadequate	Significant problems with paragraphing
Use of Sources (quotations)	Excellent	Detailed engagement with text, seamless integration, proper documentation
	Good	Adequately detailed reference to text, proper documentation
	Satisfactory	Effort to support points with reference to text and proper documentation
	Poor Inadequate	Overgeneralization with inadequate support, little effort at documentation
Style	Excellent	Graceful, rhetorically impressive, few if any errors
	Good	Clear writing style, errors relatively few and minor
	Satisfactory	Some problems with clarity, grammar, punctuation, or wordiness
	Poor Inadequate	Errors serious enough to interfere with understanding

A+ Outstanding 90+
 A Excellent 80-89
 B Good 70-79

MLA Format

C Satisfactory 60-69
 D Poor 50-59
 F Inadequate across several areas

Your Name

Name of T.A./House

English 2092G

February 11, 2014

Wit and Wizardry

The Armchair Detective in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Purloined Letter" and
J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

If you have a snappy, attention-grabbing title, follow it with an informative subtitle that indicates your topic as well as the works you will be discussing. Titles of books should be *italicized*. Titles of articles and short stories should be put in "Quotation Marks." Introduce quotations in your own words, identifying the speaker and context: EXAMPLE: As Hermione points out, "A lot of the greatest wizards haven't got an ounce of logic" (207). Use ellipses to indicate where you have omitted words from the quotation, and put any changes in brackets: EXAMPLE: Draco opposes the admission of Muggle-borns to Hogwarts: "I really don't think they should let [Muggle-borns] in, do you? ... I think they should keep it in the old wizarding families" (61).

If the quotation is longer than four lines, do not use quotations marks; instead, indent the passage ten spaces from the left and continue to double space.

EXAMPLE: Harry sees his family for the first time in the Mirror of Erised:

They just looked at him, smiling. And slowly, Harry looked into the faces of the other people in the mirror and saw other pairs of green eyes like his, other noses like his, even a little old man who looked as though he had Harry's knobbly knees – Harry was looking at his family, for the first time in his life. (153)

At the end of the essay, list all the works you have discussed or used in the preparation of your paper. Staple the top left hand corner.

Works Cited

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 1997. Print.

Essay Topics – English 2092G

Introductory Paragraph (250 words) – Due Feb. 10, 2015

Complete Essay (2500 words) – Due Mar. 24, 2015

For this essay, you are required to compare ONE *Harry Potter* book to ONE of the other novels or short stories on the course. You are expected to develop a specific thesis, along with several supporting arguments. Because this is a comparative essay, you should use these supporting arguments as opportunities to compare the texts you've chosen in relation to a series of ideas related to your thesis. Do not treat this as two separate mini-essays with each book discussed in turn; instead develop a thesis based on the relationship between the two texts and include both texts in each of your supporting arguments. Your purpose is not to describe how similar or different the texts are in terms of plot or character; instead it is to identify some area of agreement or disagreement as you explore what the texts have to say about an issue.

The introductory paragraph, due on February 10, should be submitted in MLA format (see guide in syllabus), including a proper title, thesis statement, and indication of your supporting arguments. You will have the opportunity to revise these elements as needed before submitting the final essay (including changing your topic and/or swapping out texts if necessary).

You should focus your analysis on ONE of the following topics:

(a) **PRIVACY**: Examine the notion of privacy in two texts from the course. You may wish to consider the political and/or psychological effects that occur when privacy is eroded, the balance between personal privacy and interpersonal intimacy, or the way privacy is influenced by factors such as technology, architecture, etc.

(b) **GAMES**: Many of the texts on this course feature children (and sometimes adults) who engage in a variety of forms of play, including games, sports, puzzles, etc. Examine the significance of play in two texts from the course. You may wish to consider the political or psychological value of humour, creativity, competition, and/or teamwork.

(c) **GRIEF**: The texts on this course feature several characters who are coping with grief over losses that have, in many cases, occurred prior to the main action of the story. Examine two texts in terms of what they say about the issue of grief, its emotional and psychological effects, and the way it can best be handled.

With all three of these topics, the key is to move beyond the obvious. Do not simply describe characters' behaviour in a factual way; your purpose is not to examine plot development or entertainment value. Instead, use these topics to develop an interpretation of what the texts have to say about a social, political, or ethical issue related to the topic you have chosen.