

Department of English & Writing Studies

Mystery and Detective Fiction

English 2074F (001)

Fall 2018

Instructor: Prof. Manina Jones

Course Date/Time: Mondays 11:30 am -

12:30 pm, Wednesdays 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Course Location: University College 3110

Course Description

Mystery stories explore matters of life and death. They engage problems involving the law, justice, and morality. They address fundamental questions of identity and agency. This course introduces students to the critical study of popular mystery and detective fiction from a range of historical periods and national contexts. It will examine fiction, film, television and radio.

3 hours, 0.5 course

Objectives:

This course has several **general learning objectives**:

- To help you identify and define a popular literary **genre** (detective fiction), see how it has developed over time, and understand how and why this highly entertaining genre should be taken seriously in its **historical, cultural, political, social, and psychological dimensions**;
- To explain a variety of **theoretical and rhetorical approaches** to popular literature;
- To help you a facility with the **tools and language of literary analysis** and thus realize a heightened appreciation of how **literary effects** are achieved and why they are important. This will include the ability to identify, understand and analyse such elements as genre, style, plot, character, point of view, imagery, theme, setting, irony, tone, symbols.
- To support you in developing your **written communication skills** in the clear and organized presentation of ideas, especially in the construction of an argument with an effective thesis and a logical development supported by adequate evidence from the text(s) under discussion.

Course Materials

Short Stories

Edgar Allan Poe, "Murders in the Rue Morgue"

Arthur Conan Doyle, "A Scandal in Bohemia" and "The Adventure of the Speckled Band"

Susan Glaspell, "A Jury of Her Peers"

Ed McBain, "Sadie When She Died"

Tony Hillerman, "Chee's Witch"

(all available on OWL)

Films

The Maltese Falcon (1941)

Television

Sherlock 2.1 "A Scandal in Belgravia" (2012)

CSI 10.1 "Family Affair" (2009)

The Bridge/Broen Pilot 1.1 (2014)

Radio Drama

Dragnet, "The Brick Bat Slayer" (1949)

Novels

Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*. (1939)

Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. (1926)

Mosley, Walter. *Devil in a Blue Dress*. (1990)

Paretsky, Sara. *Bad Medicine*. (1987)

Reichs, Kathy. *Déjà Dead*. (1998)

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Assignment	Value
Writing exercise	5%
Passage analysis	15%
Test	15%
Writing exercise	5%
Essay assignment	25%
Final Examination	35%

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

Additional Information

Expectations:

1. **Attendance:** You are expected to attend class and take notes for yourself. Tests, exams, and essays will assess your analytical skills, your understanding and recall of literary texts and on specific material covered in lecture and class discussion. While PowerPoint lecture slides may be posted on OWL, *they do not by any means fully represent the content of the class*. Lecture notes will not be distributed to students.
2. **Reading:** Prior to each class, you should complete the assigned reading. Whenever possible, bring the text with you, so that you may refer to it in class. The reading for this course is very pleasant, but the pace can be a challenge for some: be sure to *read ahead* when the load is lighter.
3. **Respect:** You are expected to treat other students in the class and members of the teaching team with respect, and you should expect them to do likewise. Please let the course instructor or TA know if you have any concerns.
4. **Electronic Devices Policy:** Laptops and other electronic devices in class must be used appropriately. *Respectful use of electronic devices means that the material you have on screen at any time must relate directly to the course material*. Laptops and phones should not be used for web surfing, email, social networking or any other non-course related activity; cell phones should be turned off and ear buds and earphones removed during class. Students who are found to be using electronic devices in inappropriate ways will be asked to leave the class.

5. **OWL:** Important information about the course will be posted on OWL, including information on resources, weekly expectations, lectures, assignments, tests, and the exam. You are expected to check in regularly.
6. **Office hours:** Your professor and TAs have scheduled office hours when we wait eagerly for students to drop by (seriously!), but that doesn't mean we are unwilling to meet with you at other times or communicate in other ways as well. If you want to make sure we make contact, it's best to make an appointment in advance. Occasionally, an office hour must be cancelled. If at all possible, we will let you know in advance, and put an announcement on OWL; a note will be posted on the office door.
7. **E-mail:** We are happy to communicate with students via e-mail. There are some provisos. (1) We will respond as quickly as possible; please allow 24 hours for a response and remember that we may not check e-mail in the evenings or on weekends. (2) If you want to have a discussion about lecture material, essay or exam expectations, course readings, or anything that requires an extended conversation, that's best done in person. (3) Do not use email to submit essays.
8. **Submit your papers on time.** Papers submitted after the due date without prior permission will be deducted 2% per day late, *including* weekends. Papers submitted after the assignment has been returned to other students will not normally be accepted.

Timetable

TBA

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical 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 cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or 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 academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

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>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

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.