

Department of English & Writing Studies

Special Topics in Popular Literature - Winter is Coming: *A Game of Thrones*

English 2096G (001)

Winter 2019

Instructor: Professor John Leonard**Course Date/Time:** Tue 1.30-2.30 pm,
Thursday 1.30-3.30 pm**Course Location:** Spencer Engineering
Building 2099

Prerequisites: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Develop an appreciation of George R. R. Martin's fantasy fiction. Emphasis will be placed on close reading and interpretative issues and to some extent also on historical sources. To hone analytical and critical skills in both oral and written work.
- Develop confidence and competence in research practice.
- Make coherent arguments pertinent to the following two questions (one arguably trivial, the other not): 1) Who (if anyone) will sit on George R. R. Martin's fictional Iron Throne? 2) Must one be wicked to flourish in an evil world?

Course Materials

Texts (all required): George R. R. Martin, *A Game of Thrones*, *A Clash of Kings*, *A Storm of Swords* (first THREE volumes). Buy the large editions in the bookstore since lectures will make frequent reference to page numbers. The exam will be an open book exam and you will bring your own copies with your own notes, so it is in your interest to have the large books.

Methods of Evaluation

This class meets twice a week. Students should come to lecture prepared to participate in group discussion: read the assigned portions of the text in advance of class, and always bring the right text(s) to class.

ASSIGNMENTS

5 in-class multi-choice quizzes (one 5 February, the others unannounced):		10%
Online comments on OWL discussion topics:		10%
Short Essay	DUE 12 Feb	15%
Long Essay	DUE 28 March	25%
Class participation		10%
Final Exam	30%	

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>.

Attendance:

Regular attendance at class is expected and required (unless you are sick of course). There are no grades for attendance, but there are grades for participation, and if you do not attend you will inevitably forfeit participation grades. Late essays will be penalized one mark per day. I do not read email on weekends. Laptops may be used in class, but for class purposes only (no social media).

Timetable

Tuesday 8 Jan. Introduction. Fantasy Fiction.

Thursday 10 Jan. *ASOIF* as Medieval History (war, religion and a crash course on the history of Westeros).

Tuesday 15 Jan. Some real life Medieval Murder Mysteries.

Thursday 17 Jan. *A Game of Thrones* as Medieval Noir Murder Mystery.

Tuesday 22 Jan. Childhood and Innocence in a cruel world (Dany, Bran, Sansa, Arya, the Hound).

Thursday 24 Jan. Macchiavelli and the Game of Thrones I. Eddard vs Cersei.

Tuesday 29 Jan. Macchiavelli and the Game of Thrones II. Varys, Illyrio, Littlefinger.

Thursday 31 Jan. R + L = J.

Tuesday 5 February. In Class Quiz followed by class discussion on *A Game of Thrones*.

Thursday 7 February. "The Chosen One" I: Daenerys Targaryen.

Tuesday 12 February. "Passive" Women (Catelyn, Sansa, Lysa). **SHORT ESSAY DUE**

Thursday 14 February. "The Chosen One" II: Bran.

READING WEEK

Tuesday 26 February. Fathers and Sons I (Balon and Theon).

Thursday 28 February. Machiavelli and the Game of Thrones III. Tyrion as Hand.

Tuesday 5 March. Warfare (especially Battle of Blackwater).

Thursday 7 March. Arya and the Brotherhood Without Banners (and Robin Hood).

Tuesday 12 March. "You know nothing, Jon Snow." Jon, the Night's Watch and the Free Folk.

Thursday 12 March. Jaime. "There are no men like me. There's only me".

Tuesday 19 March. The Red Wedding.

Thursday 21 March. Daenerys and the East. Orientalism in fantasy.

Tuesday 26 March. The Purple Wedding.

Thursday 28 March. Disability and heroism. **LONG ESSAY DUE**

Tuesday 2 April. Fathers and Sons II (Tywin and Tyrion). A + J = T?

Tuesday 4 April. Who will sit on the Iron Throne?

Thursday 9 April. Who will sit on the Iron Throne? (continued) Conclusions

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.