

Department of English & Writing Studies

English 2074G (001)
Mystery and Detective Fiction
Winter 2024

SYLLABUS NAVIGATION

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Calendar Description

An introduction to the study of popular mystery and detective fiction through the reading of a selection of texts by writers from a variety of national literatures and historical periods, and using a variety of critical approaches.

Course Description

Mystery stories aren't just light entertainment. They explore matters of life and death. They investigate problems involving the law, justice, and morality. They address fundamental questions of security, 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 a selection of fiction, film, television, and radio narratives.

Learning Outcomes:

2000-level courses welcome students into the community of literary scholarship. Developing research skills and methods of investigation will allow students to begin to articulate their own questions and to situate their own analysis within the discourse of previous scholarship. Assignments will demand independent study in which students develop and explore their own areas of interest and grapple with the difficulties and challenges of the discipline.

For students in an English module, 2000-level courses provide the basic tools necessary for more advanced and independent study. For non-English students, 2000-level courses are an excellent way to complement other modules while indulging in some of the great literature available in the language.

Required Course Materials

Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*.

Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.

Boulley, Angeline. *Firekeeper's Daughter*.

Paretsky, Sarah. *Bitter Medicine*.

Reichs, Kathy. *Déjà Dead*.

Greusser, John Cullen ed. *A Century of Detection: Twenty Great Mystery Stories, 1841-1940*.

Other course materials will be available on OWL

Methods of Evaluation¹

ASSIGNMENT	VALUE	LENGTH/FORMAT	DUE DATE
Namedrop link	1%	(bonus mark)	10 Jan.
Syllabus scavenger hunt	1%	(bonus mark)	15 Jan.
CTL Academic Integrity module	Required	certificate	31 Jan.
Test	20%	50 mins in class	5 Feb.
Passage analysis	20%	1000 words	28 Feb.
Essay	25%	1500 words	20 Mar.
Final Exam	35%	3 hours	TBA

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to attend class and take notes for yourself. Tests, exams, exercises, and essays will assess your analytical skills, your understanding and recall of literary texts and specific material covered in lecture and class discussion. PowerPoint slides will be posted on OWL, but they do not fully represent the content of the class.

In cases of excessive absenteeism (e.g. more than 9 unexcused hours for a half course, 18 for a full course), which are not accounted for by either academic consideration or accommodation, students may be debarred from taking the final examination, and will receive an official warning to this effect by or before the course drop date (see Senate policy).

Late Policy

Assignments submitted late without prior arrangement will be deducted at a rate of 2% per day late.

A Word on Course Content and Language

The content of this course will engage with powerful and potentially upsetting representations of violence, race, and sex. I will do my best to alert you in advance to particularly difficult moments, and steer you through a discussion of these issues with sensitivity, respect, and care. While it may be employed or implied in the texts we discuss, the use of derogatory, racist, sexist language will not be tolerated in this class.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students' personal use within the course, and remain the instructor's intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

¹ Students are fully responsible for being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>

Accommodation & Accessibility Policies

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Accommodation for Students on Medical Grounds: Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth (either alone or in combination) 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 Student Medical Certificate (SMC) can be found at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

The full policy is set out here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Academic Integrity Tutorial

All students are required to enroll in and complete the Centre for Teaching and Learning's Academic Integrity Tutorial. See Assignments overview below.

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.

Use of LLMs: Plagiarism includes the use of any material generated by artificial intelligence programs or large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT, with the exception of those instances where they form part of the assignment instructions.

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.

Supports & Resources
[Registrarial Services](#)
[Student Support Services](#)
[Services provided by the USC](#)
[Academic Support & Engagement](#)

Students who are in [emotional/mental distress](#) should refer to [MentalHealth@Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western University is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past, you will find information about [support services for survivors](#), including emergency contacts.

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519-661-3568.

ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

Namedrop	Due 10 January	Value 1% (bonus)
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Using the link in the OWL assignments, set up a link with the pronunciation of your first name and paste your link in the OWL in-line submission box.

Scavenger Hunt	Due 15 January	Value 1% (bonus)
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Find the five clues in the following locations in the syllabus. Write a description of each image as a numbered list in the in-line OWL assignment.

1. Where the breakdown of grades is listed...
2. Resources if you find yourself in distress...
3. Policies on the use of ChatGPT...
4. Offensive language in texts vs. in class...

Academic Integrity Tutorial	Due 31 January	REQUIRED TO PASS
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All students are required to enroll in and complete the Centre for Teaching and Learning's Academic Integrity Tutorial. It takes about 90 minutes. To access the tutorial, please use the link provided in the Assignments in the course OWL site. Once the tutorial has been completed, you will receive a downloadable certificate. You must upload the certificate and submit it through the course Assignments tab in order to complete this assignment. This tutorial is mandatory in order for you to complete and pass the course. If you have completed the tutorial already for another course, you may upload the same certificate for this course; you do not need to repeat the tutorial.

Passage Analysis

Due 28 February

Value 20%

A Passage Analysis is an exercise in which students are assigned an excerpt from a longer work already studied in class and are asked to compose a brief but detailed analysis of it. In this exercise, you will test and develop your close reading and interpretive skills in preparation for the longer essay assignment and the exam at the end of the term. Length 1000-1200 words.

Essay

Due 20 March

Value 25%

This is a comparative essay that asks you to examine one of the key constituent elements of detective fiction (the body, the scene of the crime, the detective(s), criminality and the law, justice, or evidence) in two texts on the course. Length 1500 words.

Final Exam

Date TBA

Value 35%

The final exam will evaluate your knowledge of texts on the course and your understanding of key terms, concepts, and contextual information discussed in class. Length 3 hours.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The spaces where we teach and learn at Western are located on traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton Nations. The land continues to be enriched by the presence of diverse Indigenous peoples. Making this acknowledgement is meant to inspire action and commitment towards furthering relationships with Indigenous communities here and elsewhere.