

UNIVERSIDAD DE COSTA RICA
Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado
Programa de Maestría en *Literatura Inglesa*
SP-7711: Lectura Dirigida I (Literatura Británica)
“Monsters of Britain”
(Lunes: 4:00 a 6:50 P.M.)
(II-2021)

Instructor: M.L. Silvia Morgan

Term: II/2021

Credits/Hours: 03

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I. Course Description

SP-7711—“*Monsters of Britain*” explores the figure of the monster in British literature, from the medieval period to the 20th century. In this course, we will study how the construction of monstrosity in literary texts reflects the historical moment in which they were created. Through the semester, we will analyze works of historical significance and popular texts with the intent of better understanding the sociocultural, political, and economic contexts that produced these creatures and the way they have been adapted to reflect more recent times. We will examine how the depiction of monsters changes and adjusts to the historical period and provides an insight into the fears and anxieties of their society. This course allows students to put into practice their new acquire knowledge and look at literature of monsters through different critical lenses.

II. Course Objectives

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

- Develop understanding of the relevant concepts studied in class, related to monstrosity.
- Apply these concepts and techniques to contemporary British literary texts;
- Relate literary works to the biographical, historical, and subjective elements from which they evolve;
- Do close textual analysis;
- Generate original responses to literary texts;
- Write and speak clearly and accurately about British literature;
- Improve and refine his/her ability to articulate and develop ideas in clear, cohesive, and well-structured English; and
- Demonstrate understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of British literature as well as the theory studied in class.

III. Course Materials

The **required** materials to buy for this class are:

- A **Course Packet** compiled by the instructor and selected books (available at *CopyMundo*)

IV. Methodology

Class time will be used to generate discussion and analyze the readings assigned for each week. The instructor will review and supplement the material and guide the students in the discussion, close reading, and analysis of the theoretical as well as literary works assigned; however, students will be encouraged to *produce* knowledge instead of just passively receiving it. Therefore, students' preparation and participation in discussions and class activities is *fundamental* because that facilitates assimilation of the course subject matter. Students will share their ideas individually and in groups, in both oral and written forms. Throughout the course, class participants will be given the means for and responsibility of developing literary, critical, and analytical competence. Before class, students have to read, study, and do the activities assigned by the instructor. Likewise, homework and other tasks have to be completed prior to each class. Daily preparation and participation are essential for successful completion of course objectives.

Resources will be posted to support pedagogical needs and students will have to upload their work on the virtual classroom. *Mediación Virtual* will be used as the official platform for online classes and evaluations. Thus, students are required to possess a UCR account and to participate in all the online activities of the course. All professor-student interaction will be carried out through *Mediación Virtual*. This is a 100% virtual course.

V. Evaluation

Evaluation is a continuous process in the sense that student preparation and participation are expected and observed during each class. The final grade for this course will be determined on the following basis:

Response Papers.....	20%
Presentations.....	15%
Project	20%
Research Paper.....	45%

VI. Additional Information

Response Papers: 600–900-word compositions. These exploratory writings will be written and turned in according to the syllabus. Students should discuss what caught their attention from the texts studied in class. Each response should include an original and creative component (a drawing, a picture, etc.) made by you that reflects your composition (you cannot use images taken from the internet).

Presentation: Students will look for a modern adaptation of literary monsters created before the 20th century in Britain. They must use their new acquired knowledge to analyze how these monsters have been adapted to a different period. Students will hand in a report and record a presentation of their analysis for the class.

Project: Students will create a monster that reflects modern anxieties. You must write a 2-to-4-page report in which you explain and justify your creation based on theory studied in class and create a story

behind the creature. You will create a physical representation of the creature (a collection of drawings, photographs, a doll, a sculpture, etc.). You will present and explain your monster to the class.

Research Paper: This is a 10 to 15 pages paper. This is a research paper with a sound theoretical framework and a critical and original analysis of the literary text. You are encouraged to use the theoretical and literary sources studied throughout the semester; however, students have to reference their essay with at least two additional critical articles / book chapters. These sources must be published in English, from a distinguished academic journal or a critical book. Students are required to submit an electronic version of their research paper before 4 p.m. on the due date. No late works will be accepted. Assignments must be submitted no later than 15 minutes after the beginning of the class. Only under very special circumstances, at the professor's discretion, will late assignments be accepted. In this case, from 10% to 50% may be taken off of the assignment's grade.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated as this constitutes a serious academic offense. Plagiarized work will be given a zero; an account of the student's fault will be kept in his/her records

VII. General Class Policies

- Students are responsible for all the material discussed in class and/or assigned (read and prepare yourself before coming to class, not after).
- No late assignments or papers will be accepted.
- Students will meet with the instructor when so required by either party.
- Participation and attendance are fundamental to pass the course. Attendance is strongly encouraged.
- This proposed course outline may be modified to adjust to the pace and needs of the group.

VIII. Main Bibliography

Arata, Stephen D. "The Occidental Tourist: 'Dracula' and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization." *Victorian Studies*, vol. 33, no. 4, 1990.

Cohen, Jeffrey J. "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)." *Monster Theory: Reading Culture*. University of Minnesota Press, 1996, pp. 3-25.

Coppola, Francis Ford, dir. *Dracula*. American Zoetrope, 1992.

Eco, Umberto, editor. "Monsters and Portents." *On Ugliness*. Rizzoli, 2007, pp. 107-124.

Fred, Botting. *Gothic Romance: Consumption, Gender and Technology in Contemporary Fictions*. Routledge, 2008.

Hurley, Kelly. "Abject and Grotesque." *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*, edited by Catherine Spooner, Routledge, 2007, pp. 137-146.

Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Translated by Leon S. Roudiez, Columbia University Press, 1982.

Lombroso, Cesare. *Criminal Man*. Translated by Gibson, and Mary and Nicole Hahn Rafter, Duke UP, 2006.

Nordau, Max. *Degeneration*. The Project Gutenberg Ebook, 2016.

Punter, David and Glennis Byron. *The Gothic*. Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Punter, David. "The Uncanny." *The Routledge Companion to Gothic*, edited by Catherine Spooner, Routledge, 2007, pp. 129-136.

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Oxford University Press, 1998.

Smith, Jonathan. "Darwin and the Evolution of Victorian Studies," *Victorian Studies*, vol. 51, no. 2, 2009, pp. 215-221.

Stocker, Bram. *Dracula*. Penguin, 1994.

Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. Penguin, 1994.

Tolkien, J.R.R. "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics." *Classic Readings on Monster Theory: Demonstrate*. Edited by Mittman and Hensel, Arc Humanities Press, 2018.

Vandermeer, Ann and Jeff Vandermeer., editors. *The New Weird*. Tachyon, 2008.

Wells, H.G. *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. Dover, 1996.

Whale, James. *The Bride of Frankenstein*. Universal Pictures, 1935.

*Any other texts deemed appropriate by the instructor.

IX. Timetable

Week	Date	Reading Material	Assignments and Evaluations
Week 1	9/8	Introduction to the Course "Monster Culture (Seven Theses)" Jeffrey J. Cohen	
Week 2	16/8	Background: Anglo Saxon period <i>Beowulf</i> "Monster" Punter and Byron "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" J.R.R. Tolkien	

Week 3	23/8	<i>Beowulf</i> “Monsters and Portents” Umberto Eco	
Week 4	30/8	Background: Medieval period <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>	Reaction Paper 1
Week 5	6/9	Background: Age of Reason <i>Gulliver’s Travels, Part I</i>	
Week 6	13/9	Background: Romantic period <i>Frankenstein</i>	Watch for next week: <i>Frankenstein</i>
Week 7	20/9	<i>Frankenstein</i> “Abject and Grotesque” Kelly Hurley	Reaction Paper 2
Week 8	27/9	Background: Victorian period <i>The Island of Dr. Moreau</i>	
Week 9	4/10	Background to the Victorian fin-de-siècle <i>Dracula</i> “Darwin and the Evolution of Victorian Studies” Smith	
Week 10	11/10	<i>Dracula</i> “The Occidental Tourist: ‘Dracula’ and the Anxiety of Reverse Colonization” Arata	Watch for next week: <i>Dracula</i>
Week 11	18/10	<i>Dracula</i>	Reaction Paper 3
Week 12	25/10	Research Project Presentations	
Week 13	1/11	Research Project Presentations	
Week 14	8/11	Background: 20th century Selection Weird and New Weird Stories “On Monsters” China Miéville	Hand in Essay
Week 15	15/11	Project Presentations (Monster)	
Week 16	22/11	Project Presentations (Monster)	