

AML 2070: Survey of American Literature
The Literature of American Monsters
Spring 2017 Course Syllabus

Instructor: Chesya Burke
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Class meets: MAT 0112: M W F, Periods 7

Office location: TBA
Office hours: TBA
and by appointment



Course Description

This survey course will interrogate the construction of “the other” as American monsters. The fear of malicious witches, monstrous savages, and dark hoards of zombies have long dominated the imagination of the U.S., sparking public panic and the creation of laws which seek to control minority bodies. These constructions are part of oppressive ideologies that have shaped the emergence of American history, social relations, literature and culture through puritanical and religious philosophies. As such, this course offers a foray into key discussions that surround the creation of “the other” as a monster, paying particular attention to the monstrous minority and its influence on American policies of fear. We will examine the concept of “the other,” attempting to define it within black feminist theory. This course seeks to answer the questions: How does the fear of “the other” form early American views about people of color, women and children? How are monsters racialized and sexualized? Text will include *The Scarlet Letter*, *Dracula*, and the writings of H.P. Lovecraft.

This course fulfills the 6000-word University Writing Requirement. Assignments will include short response papers, in-class writing, literary analysis papers. Writing assignments will be designed to engage students in close reading and developing critical analysis skills.

Course Goals and Objectives

By the end of AML 2070, students will be able to:

- Read, write, and think critically about American literature and culture, as well as texts beyond the scope of the course
- Discuss the historical and critical context of texts

- Communicate their ideas and analyses of texts
- Develop well-supported, persuasive, polished academic essays
- Establish and support significant historical, literary, and critical or theoretical claims
- Conduct formal research on literature and use secondary sources to support their arguments

General Education Objectives

- This course confers General Education credit for either Composition (C) or Humanities (H). This course also fulfills 6,000 of the university’s 24,000-word writing requirement (WR).
- Course content should include multiple forms of effective writing, different writing styles, approaches and formats, and methods to adapt writing to different audiences, purposes and contexts. Students should learn to organize complex arguments in writing using thesis statements, claims and evidence, and to analyze writing for errors in logic.
- The University *Writing Requirement (WR)* ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. To receive Writing Requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course. This means that written assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

General Education Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the following learning outcomes in content, communication and critical thinking:

- **Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the academic discipline.
- **Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Students will participate in class discussions throughout the semester to reflect on assigned readings.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Required Texts

Deloria, Vine Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*
 Lauro, Sarah, *The Transatlantic Zombie: Slavery, Rebellion, and Living Death*
 Mather, Cotton, *Wonders of the Invisible World*
 Miller, Authur, *The Crucible*
 Morrison, Toni, *Playing in the Dark*
Naym, Nina, The Norton Anthology of American Literature 8th Edition (BA)
 Rice, Anne, *Interview With A Vampire*
 Seabrook, W.B., *The Magic Island*
 Stoker, Bram, *Dracula*

*See schedule for full list of additional readings, which will be available on Canvas

Course Requirements

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments	Length	Points
Close Reading Conduct a close reading analysis of a passage or stanza from one of the texts we have read. In a close reading, you focus on a small	500 words	50 points

<p>section of the text to identify literary facets such as language, vocabulary, point of view, characterization, symbolism, tropes, etc. While you are focusing on a small section of the text, you may begin to see larger patterns in the text. A close reading is a building block of a literary analysis.</p> <p>Due: 08 September</p>		
<p>Historical Annotations For this assignment, you will historically contextualize one of the texts we have read in class. Literary texts yield richer understanding when read in light of their historical and social conditions of production. After you have read your chosen text, identify <u>two historical documents</u> related to an event, law, person, text, or other aspect mentioned in that text. Your write-up should briefly explain the historical documents and then show how they enrich our understanding of the text.</p> <p>Due: 29 September</p>	700 words	100 points
<p>Analysis & Class Presentation Once in the course of the term, every student will present a short paper on one of the texts (10-15 minutes). Your presentation should address one or two key themes in the text, and may include relevant historical or biographical details. After your presentation, you will lead a short class discussion on that text (10-15 minutes).</p> <p>Due: Variable, students will sign up in the second week of classes</p>	1000 words	150 points
<p>Mid Term Paper Conduct an analysis of an idea, concept, or theme by putting <u>two</u> of the texts we have read in conversation with each other. For instance, you might write about how African Americans and women struggles are similar or any similar themes you discover within the text or differing groups of “Americans.” Your paper should focus on developing one main thesis statement with textual evidence.</p> <p>Due: 20 October (Proposals due 09 October)</p>	1500 words	200 points
<p>Final Paper For this essay, you will develop an original, strong, and clear argument about a topic or text we have encountered in class. Draw on at least 4 scholarly and peer reviewed sources in your argument. The final paper should demonstrate the ability of the writer to do a critical close reading, historicize the text or topic, and synthesize scholarly sources. Students should discuss potential paper topics with the instructor a few weeks in advance of the due date.</p> <p>Due: 06 December (Proposals due 20 November)</p>	2500 words	300 points

GRADING

Grade Breakdown

Close Reading (500 words, 50 points)

Historical Annotations (700 words, 100 points)

Analysis & Presentation (1000 words, 150 points)

Mid Term Paper (1500 words, 200 points)

Final Paper (2500 words, 300 points)

Pop Quizzes (50 points)

In Class Activities (50 points)

Participation (100 points)

TOTAL: 1000 points

Grading Scale

A	4.0	93-100	930-1000	C	2.00	73-76	730-769
A-	3.67	90-92	900-929	C-	1.67	70-72	700-729
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899	D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	83-86	830-869	D	1.00	63-66	630-669
B-	2.67	80-82	800-829	D-	0.67	60-62	600-629
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799	E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Grading Rubric

Assignment specific grading rubrics will be distributed before that assignment is due. A general overview of how I arrive at the grades for all major assignments is below.

In each written assignment, I will be looking at:

- 1) Content: How strong is your argument, development, and support? Does your multimedia content (when used) seem well-constructed and relevant to your assignment?
- 2) Organization: How well-structured are your paragraphs? Do your overall ideas flow well?
- 3) Mechanics: How frequently do you make errors in grammar, style, and spelling?

You should strive to excel in all three areas.

An A level assignment is complete in content, is organized well, and has few to no mechanical errors. An assignment of this level also demonstrates originality and creativity, showing that the student took extra steps beyond what was required.

A B level assignment is solid overall in terms of content, organization, and mechanics, but may need some minor revision to one of these three areas. An assignment that receives this grade fulfills assignment expectations, but is also complete in content and relatively free of grammatical or mechanical errors.

A C level assignment has promise in some areas, but lacks the command, organization, persuasiveness or clarity of the A or B assignments. An assignment that receives this grade may be overlooking an important component of the assignment, or need significant revision.

A D level assignment does not yet demonstrate the basic lower division writing expectations. The paper has major issues in content, organization and / or mechanics. Assignments that receive this grade will often be incomplete, or have major issues with organization.

An "E" is usually reserved for students who do not do the assignment or fail to attend class. However, an "E" may also be given if an essay blatantly ignores instructions or has major problems in all three areas of evaluation.

Course Policies

Assignments: You must complete *all* assignments to receive credit for this course.

Absence and Tardiness

Because of the participatory nature of this course, attendance is crucial. You have **up to 2 absences** that you can take without penalty (aside from missing potential quizzes). Students who miss more than six

class periods **will fail** the course (although the twelve-day rule, laid out below, is the one case for exceptions). It is your responsibility to keep track of your absences.

Prolonged absences will affect your quiz average, since in most cases (aside from the exceptions below) missed in-class assignments cannot be made up. In addition, prolonged absences will affect your grade as follows:

- 3 absences: 10% off final course grade
- 4 absences: 15% off final course grade
- 5 absences: 20% off final course grade
- 6 absences: Automatic failure of the overall course

If you are absent, please make yourself aware of all due dates and turn in assignments on time. Please check with your classmates to obtain notes for the day you missed.

All members of the class are expected to adhere to official UF time. For this reason, if you are late to class, this will count as ½ **an absence**. If you are more than **10 minutes late**, I will mark you as absent. If you are frequently late to class or absent, this will also negatively affect your participation grade in the course.

Students are expected to bring the required reading for the day to class with them. If a student recurrently fails to bring the reading (in print or electronic format), you may be marked as absent.

Paper Format and Submission: You will submit your first paper—Response #1—both online on Canvas and in printed paper format. The rest of your assignments you will submit online through Canvas. All written work should follow MLA format, 7th or 8th edition.

Late work and extensions: I will consider a request for an extension if you approach me at least three days before the assignment is due. A late paper or other assignment will lose half a letter grade for each day it is late. I advise completing all assignments early to ensure that you can print or submit them without problems.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities: Keep duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course. Save all returned, graded work until the semester is over.

Academic Honesty and Definition of Plagiarism. Plagiarism includes copying the ideas or writings of someone else and claiming it as your own work, collaborating with someone else on an assignment, and/or resubmitting work that you have done for another class. **DON'T DO IT.** Plagiarism violates the Student Honor Code and requires reporting to the Dean of Students. All students must abide by the Student Honor Code: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>.

Pro Tip: You should never copy and paste something from the internet without providing the exact location from which it came.

All acts of plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the entire course. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to understand and employ proper documentation techniques. When in doubt, ask for help!

Students with Disabilities: The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability

Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/), which will provide appropriate documentation to give the instructor.

UF Grading Policies: For information on UF Grading policies, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Grade Appeals: In 1000- and 2000-level courses, students may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, in the Department office (4008 TUR). Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

Course Evaluations: Towards the end of the semester, you will receive email messages asking you to go online and evaluate this course: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/evals/Default.aspx>

Canvas: I will regularly post announcements, assignments, readings, and supplemental class material on Canvas. You should check it frequently.

Email: I will try to answer emails quickly, but I may take longer to respond on nights and weekends. Please do not email me with questions about details you can find in the syllabus (due dates, etc.) or for a summary of a class you missed. You are responsible for finding out what you missed by checking with a peer.

Respect: The best classroom experience comes from students respecting each other and the instructor. This includes everything from coming to class on time, to refraining from private conversations during class, to not texting during a lecture. You are encouraged to join in class discussions, and varying views are welcomed, but please refrain from using obscene or offensive language and interrupting others.

Electronics: Your active participation is required in this course, and electronics can be distracting. As such, all forms of electronics, including but not limited to laptops, cell phones, iPods, and iPads, **are not allowed for use in this class unless approved by the instructor**. Of course, many of your readings are available online, in which case I will allow electronics to access the texts. Calling, texting, surfing the web, or listening to music in class is not acceptable and is simply disrespectful. Be forewarned that I reserve the right to confiscate any devices should they prove to be a distraction to the class, or to your classmates, in any way.

Office Hours: I welcome all students to attend office hours with questions about literature, reading, writing, or the course in general. If you are coming to talk about an assignment, please bring the prompt and whatever writing you have begun with you. It will assist me in answering any questions you may have.

Writing Studio: The University Writing Studio is located in Tigert 302 and is available to all UF students. It's an excellent resource for getting feedback and guidance on your written work. Visit their site at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-center/> for more information.

Course Schedule

Please note that the following schedule is approximate, as dates and topics may shift as the semester continues. Please note that secondary readings will occasionally be assigned and will be posted on Canvas.

All readings are to be completed outside of class by the discussion date.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 Introduction/U.S. Ideology

- Aug 21: “What is the other?”
“What are monsters?”
“Who are our classic American monsters?”
- Aug 23: “Ben Franklin, Letter to the London Packet”
(http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/amendI_religions14.html)
- Aug 25: Thomas Jefferson:
Draft of Declaration of Independence, Notes on the State of Virginia,
(<https://jeffersonpapers.princeton.edu/selected-documents/jefferson%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9COriginal-rough-draught%E2%80%9D-declaration-independence-0>)

Week 2 Witchcraft and the fear of women:

- Aug 28: "Wonders of the Invisible World" (pg 1-50)
- Aug 30: "Wonders of the Invisible World" (pg 51-92)
- Sep 01: The Long and Short of Salem Witchcraft: Chronology and Collective Violence in 1692
(Jstor/Canvas)

Week 3 Witches continued:

- Sep 04: The Crucible (pg 1-50)
- Sep 06: The Crucible (pg 51-100)
- Sep 08: The Crucible (pg 101-152)
Close Reading

Week 4 Monstrous Minority:

- Sep 11: Bartolome De Las Casas (NA, vol B 38-42)
- Sep 13: Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America, Franklin, Benjamin.
(NA, vol B 476-480)
- Sep 15: Supernatural Horror in Literature by H. P. Lovecraft. (Canvas)

Week 5 Monstrous Minority:

- Sep 18: Custer Died for Your Sins
- Sep 20: Custer Died for Your Sins

Sep 22: Custer Died for Your Sins

Week 6 Monstrous Minority:

Sep 25: Confessions of Nat Turner
(<http://www.melanet.com/nat/nat.html>)

Sep 27: TBA

Sep 29: Noel Ignatiev, How the Irish Became White (chapter 1 and 2)
(<http://jroan.com/HtIBWhite.pdf>)
Historical Annotations Due

Week 7 Fear of the Dark Hoard/Zombies

Oct 02: Playing in the Dark

Oct 04: Playing in the Dark

Oct 06: HOMECOMING

Week 8 Anti-Blackness and Zombies:

Oct 09: Coleman, Horror Noire
“In the Beginning there was White Zombie” (pg 49-56)
Midterm Proposals Due

Oct 11: Lauro, Sarah, The Transatlantic Zombie: Slavery, Rebellion, and Living Death (TBA)

Oct 13: Lauro, Sarah, The Transatlantic Zombie: Slavery, Rebellion, and Living Death (TBA)

Week 9 Zombies continued:

Oct 16: Coleman, Horror Noire
“Here We Go Again: Voodoo and Comic-Negroes (102-110)

Oct 18: Olney, Black Mask, White Zombie (Jstor)

Oct 20: TBA
Midterm Due

Week 10 Zombies cont.:

Oct 23: Seabrook, W.B., The Magic Island

Oct 25: Seabrook, W.B., The Magic Island

Oct 27: Seabrook, W.B., The Magic Island

Week 11 Finding Humanity in “The Other”:

- Oct 30: Brooks, "Finding the Humanity in Horror"
(<http://ir.uiowa.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1098&context=poroi>)
- Nov 01: Burke, QUE: Change (Canvas)
- Nov 03: Newsome, "Wake" (in class film)
- Week 12 Purity of Whiteness: the Vampire:**
Nov 06: *Der Vampir* (Canvas)
- Nov 08: Dracula (excerpts TBA)
Introduce Final Paper Assignment
- Nov 10: Holiday
- Week 13 Cont.:**
Nov 13: Nosferatu (in class film: excerpts)
- Nov 15: **No class (conference)**
- Nov 17: **No class (conference)**
- Week 14 Cont.:**
Nov 20: Civilized Vampires v/s Savage Wolves
(https://biblio.csusm.edu/sites/default/files/reserves/ch_13_civilized_vampires_versus_savage_werewolves.pdf)
Final Paper Proposals Due
- Nov 22: Holiday
- Nov 24: Holiday
- Week 15 Comics Cont.:**
Nov 27: Interview With a Vampire
- Nov 29: Interview With a Vampire
- Dec 01: Interview With a Vampire
- Week 16 Finals**
Dec 04: Paper Topic Review
- Dec 06: Paper Topic Review
Final Papers Due

Grading

Grading for this course will be rigorous. If an assignment illustrates disregard for spelling, grammar, citation guidelines, or a general carelessness in the writing, the assignment will not receive a passing grade.

The writing assignments for this course are designed to meet the requirements of the University Writing Requirement credit. To satisfy this requirement, **every** assignment's word count must be fulfilled.

As your instructor, I will evaluate and provide feedback on your written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. You can find the University Writing Program's rubric on the last page of the syllabus. I will also deliver more specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments during the course of the semester.

Grade Issues

University policy prohibits discussions of grades via email. If you have a question about a grade, you may schedule an appointment to meet with me to discuss it.

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

	SATISFACTORY (Y)	UNSATISFACTORY (N)
CONTENT	Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.	Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.
ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE	Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.	Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.
ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT	Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.	Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.
STYLE	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.	Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.

MECHANICS

Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.

Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.