

ENG 250: Introduction to Literature

Monstrous Characters and Texts

Instructor: Dr. Lisa Hager

Section : P001

Meeting Times: Tues/Thurs 2:25-3:40 pm

Location: Field House 008

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Office: Westview 129

Office Hours: Tues noon - 2pm;

Wed 10:30am - 12:30pm; by appointment

Course Description

The goal of English 250 is to continue developing the thinking, reading, writing, and research skills that you developed in English 101. The course will entail intensive analysis of literature, including poetry, drama, and fiction.

The goals of the course include the following:

- To answer the question “What is literature and why study it?”
- To develop an understanding of the nature of literary genre
- To develop an understanding of the major elements of poetry, drama, and fiction
- To develop an appreciation of literature and the ability to interpret it

This course meets a “HU” or humanities requirement toward your degree. The humanities include fields that explore human cultures, ideas, and values, and the study of literature is just such an enterprise. To this end, not only we will be reading literature from a variety of genres throughout the semester, we will also focus on interpretive practices of literary studies as well as how to construct effective arguments to convey those interpretations. These practices will include everything from reader response criticism to feminist literary criticism. Our goal here is to understand and inhabit a variety of viewpoints to understand their relevance to how we look at literature today.

As the idea of Literature (with a capital L) is itself socially determined, I have chosen to a group of readings that address the theme of monstrosity. This theme is meant to be broadly interpreted, including both the obvious monsters like Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* to seemingly “normal” characters like the narrator in Robert Browning’s “To My Last Duchess.” Moreover, we will also look at texts that refuse to conform to definitions of genre and are thus monstrous in their messiness. Throughout the term, we will consider what makes a character or literary work monstrous and what we mean by that definition.

Course Schedule

The schedule of assignments for this course is available online through Desire2Learn (D2L) - <http://d2l.uwc.edu/> Though the assignments for the next few weeks are pretty much set, be aware that I will revise the rest of the schedule extensively throughout the semester in order to respond to how the class is progressing. Thus, the schedule, as it currently stands, is more a guide than a “written stone” guarantee of what will be happening when in this class. I will always notify you when I make changes.

Required Texts

For all online texts, you should bring in a printed copy of the text on the day it is being discussed in class.

- W. F. Garrett-Petts’ *Writing About Literature: A Guide for the Student Critic*. Broadview Press, 2000. ISBN: 9781551112541 / 155111254X
- Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. Eds. D.L. Macdonald & Kathleen Scherf. Broadview Press, 1999. ISBN: 9781551113081 / 1551113082
- Shelley Jackson’s *Patchwork Girl*. Eastgate Publishing. <http://www.eastgate.com/catalog/PatchworkGirl.html>
- Alan Moore’s *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, Vol. 1 (Paperback). ISBN-10: 1563898586
- Susan Gaspell’s *Trifles*. <http://itech.fgcu.edu/faculty/wohlpart/alra/glaspell.htm>
- Poetry selections will be available online via D2L

Grade Breakdown

You are also responsible for keeping track of your grades in the Desire2Learn gradebook. I will not respond to emails asking for “progress reports” or if you can make a certain grade. It is your responsibility to check your grades periodically to make sure that they are correct.

While I am more than willing to meet with you to answer any questions you may have about my grading so as to improve your performance on future assignments, I will not change your grade after the fact. Do not come to me to ask for more points. Be aware that I will **not** discuss your grades or respond to emails regarding your grades after the second-to-last week of class.

Category	Percentage	Point Value
Literature Research Paper	40	200
School of Criticism Roundtable	20	100
Participation	15	75
Daily Grades (reading quizzes and other short assignments)	15	75
Blog Posts (5 original; 5 comments on others' posts)	10	50
Total	100	500

Point Values	Percentages	Letter Grade
500 – 450	100 – 90	A
449 – 400	89 – 80	B
399 – 350	79 – 70	C
349 – 300	69 – 60	D
299 – 000	59 – 00	F

Explanation of Letter Grades

Below is the general meaning behind the grades I assign to your papers. You should use the statements to determine how you might work toward a higher grade):

- A** You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, and your work shows originality and creativity. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a B, but it also demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors.

- B** You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range needs revision; however, it is complete in content, is organized well, and shows special attention to style.

- C** You did what the assignment asked of you. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

- D** You did what the assignment asked of you at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.

- F** An E is usually reserved for people who do not do the work or do not come to class. However, if your work is shoddy and shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, you will receive a failing grade.

Assignments and Other Requirements

Blogs Posts

5 original; 5 comments on others' posts

10% (50 points)

Each student must post at least 5 original responses to an upcoming reading assignment and 5 follow-up responses to others' responses. While these posts need not be polished pieces of writing, I do expect a certain amount critical thought. The idea here is raise issues about a particular reading or group of readings for the class to think about before we discuss the texts in class. Responses will be graded out of ten, with a ten being equivalent to a check for completion. Each post will be no less than 200 words. All posts must be completed at least twelve hours in advance of the discussion of a particular reading assignment. You can do a maximum of two posts per class meeting.

Quizzes

10 points each

Part of Daily Grades Category

To ensure that everyone is keeping up the reading assignments, I will give quizzes at the beginning of class on a fairly regular basis. If you are reading the texts as we progress through the semester, you should do fine. The quizzes will be pop-quizzes and will hence occur without warning. Also, if you absent (non-excused) or more than five minutes late to class meeting which there was a quiz, you will receive a zero for that quiz.

School of Criticism Roundtable (with many thanks to Nancy Chick and John Pruitt for the idea)

1 class period

20% (100 points)

A roundtable is a discussion technique that puts your voice at the center of everything—of the room and of an entire period's activity. In our roundtables, six or seven students sit in a circle in the center of the room discussing a specific school of literary criticism while the rest of the class sits in a larger circle around the inner circle. The outer circle must remain quiet and attentive to the conversation, take notes, and be prepared to enter the conversation.

Literature Research Project (LRP)

40% (200 points)

The literature research project is the culminating assignment of this class. You will choose a literary text that interests you (either one we have read or an outside text) and then construct an interpretative argument about how that text mobilizes the themes of monstrosity and/or outsider-ness. In your final draft, you will use the work of other scholars to back up your arguments. The goal of this assignment is for you to participate in a scholarly conversation about a particular text. As part of this project you will submit a proposal, outline and thesis statement, annotated bibliography, and final draft. All of these components will contribute to your overall grade for the project.

University and Class Policies

Attendance

Students have four absences to use for any reason. I do not require any permission note. After the given four absences, a student's final course grade begins to be reduced 1/3 grade (A- to B+, for instance) for each additional absence. After four absences, there are no excused absences. So use your four absences wisely. You are responsible for information and materials you miss. You should obtain notes from classmates. While I will not repeat an entire class time for a student who misses, I will, however, discuss generally what we did in class and important points we covered.

If you are surfing the web, emailing, or talking on the phone during class time, you will be marked absent; cell phones must be turned off during class. Although sometimes unavoidable, arriving to class late is rude. Students habitually arriving to class late (more than four late arrivals) will begin to accrue absences, one absence for every two lates. In the same context, students are to remain for the entire class. Therefore, leaving the class early will count as a late arrival.

Regular attendance is required, and you should plan to be here for every session. More than three absences during the term will lower your final grade in the course one to three full letter grades. I will take attendance every day.

UW-Waukesha English Department guidelines state that students cannot miss more than **nine classes** and still expect to pass the course. This policy includes all "excused" absences as well, which means you should save your absences for true emergencies—illness, a funeral, a religious holiday, sick children, unavailable childcare, etc.

Student-Teacher Conferences

I strongly encourage you to see me during office hours (or through appointment) to discuss specific questions about any paper (preferably after peer workshop). While I will read sections of any paper before the final due date, I will only give feedback as directed by a specific question from the concerned student (i.e. "Is my thesis clear enough?" "Does this paragraph do a good job of supporting my thesis?" etc).

Additional Help with Assignments

You are strongly encouraged to make use of the writing tutors in the Study Center, who will gladly read a draft of your essay and give you helpful feedback. You can also work with a writing tutor via e-mail with the UW-Waukesha Online Writing Lab; instructions are located at <http://waukesha.uwc.edu/academics/owl/>.

Submission of Work

Late work: All assignments are due in your class time (collected after roll is taken) on the given due dates. Work turned in late is docked ten percent for every calendar day it is late. Work turned in after class on the due date is considered one day late. If you will be absent on a day that written work is due, submit your work via a friend on the due date (by the beginning of class) or submit it earlier. See me if you believe you have truly extenuating circumstances.

Note: print your documents before the due date. Printers, computers, and computer disks are notorious for failing just before an assignment is due. Therefore, a broken printer, computer or disk that fails is not an extenuating circumstance; they do such things regularly.

Keep multiple copies of all work in multiple locations!

Participation

This is a class in communication, so your participation is essential. Get involved. Volunteer. Question. Probe. Expect also to engage regularly in a variety of in-class activities and exercises—oral, visual, electronic, and written; individual and collaborative. Bring in at least one "extra" to share during the semester. Share relevant ideas and observations. Bring in copies of relevant clippings and articles. Offer your own experiences. Make connections between what we're discussing in this class and what you hear elsewhere—for example, what's going on in other classes, what you hear at conferences, what you hear in our colloquia, what guest speakers say, and so on.

I will evaluate your participation throughout the term. You are to participate actively in review and editing workshops: whenever a workshop is scheduled, you are to have assigned materials ready for the workshop. These materials are due at the beginning of class; a student without materials for a workshop receives a mark against participation on that date.

Format of Essays

Drafts must be typed and double-spaced with one inch margins using 12 point Times New Roman font. Each paper should have in the upper left-hand corner of the first page your name, my name, the course number, and the date. Your last name should also appear next to the page number in the upper right corner of each page. Give each of your formal papers a descriptive title. Papers without adequate Works Cited Sheets and appropriate internal citations, or papers with excessive mechanical problems (more than three errors per page) will be given a grade of 'X' until the student has conferred with me and the problem has been solved. Students who do not meet with me to change the 'X' grade will receive a 0 for the paper. Papers must be turned in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Late papers will not be accepted. Students must also print out two copies of their final essays, one to be turned in, and one for their own records.

General Checklist for Final Submission of Papers

Turn in all hard-copy papers in a two pocket folder with the following:

- That paper's final draft. (Stapled)
- That paper's first draft. (Stapled)
- The notes taken and emails received during peer workshop. (Stapled)
- Any items specific to the assignment as detailed on the individual assignments' requirements sheets

**Any final draft submitted without rough drafts, peer workshop notes, or the research journal will be docked 10 points per missing item. In regards to stapled items, you will be docked 5 points per unstapled item. It is your responsibility to have all items stapled before class; I do not carry a stapler with me.

Discrimination and Harassment

No form of harassment or discrimination is allowed in this class including but not limited to gender, class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

If you require accommodation to compensate for a disability, please speak with me outside of class so that we can identify an appropriate course of action. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon, preferably in the first week of the semester.

Also, Judy Becker in Student services would like to talk to you to make sure that if you need special parking, or any other services, she can arrange them for you.

Academic Honesty

The Board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff, and students of the University of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin System. The University has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect for others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

Signed Student/Instructor Agreements

****PLEASE READ, SIGN, AND RETURN THESE STATEMENTS TO DR. HAGER****

I affirm that I have read the entire syllabus and policy sheet for Dr. Hager's ENG 250 class and understand the information and the responsibilities specified.

Print Name

Date

Signature

DIRECTIONS: Read carefully and check **all** that apply.

I give my instructor, Dr. Lisa Hager, permission to use copies of the work I do for this course, ENG 250:

- as examples in this and other courses
- as examples in presentations and in print and electronic publications

Please indicate how you want to be acknowledged:

- Please use my name both in the acknowledgements and with my actual document.
- Please use my name in the acknowledgements section but use an appropriate pseudonym with my actual document.
- Please use a pseudonym both in the acknowledgements and with my actual document.
- Please use my work, but do not acknowledge me in any way.
- I do not want my work used as examples in any situations.

Print Name

Date

Signature

Print Permanent Address