WORLD LITERATURE: HORROR & GHOST NARRATIVES (3 credits) (CRN 51232)

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

What is a horror narrative? Why do we willingly subject ourselves to narratives designed to frighten or disgust us? Why do horror and ghost narratives scare us when we know the events being presented are not real? Do audiences, authors and critics produce, interpret, evaluate or consume horror differently? How do horror narratives explore difference (cultural, sexual, ethnic, racial, gender, etc.)? Does there have to be a monster, and if so, how do we define monsters in horror and ghost narratives? What do our monsters tell us about a culture? Do monsters change from culture to culture? How are monsters impacted when cultural values change? Do literary and cinematic narratives represent monsters differently?

In this course we will be looking at a variety of horror and ghost narratives including folk tales, short fiction, novels and films from different cultures throughout the world to explore these and other questions. We will alternate between closely analyzing specific texts, discussing literary/cinematic themes and conventions, and exploring complex philosophical ideas. We will also look at how modern critical theory (especially feminist, psychoanalytic and Marxist) provides us with additional insights. The course will be divided roughly into 3 sections: 1) created beings, 2) vampires, and 3) ghosts and doubles. Texts will range from old “classics” such as Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley’s Frankenstein to the recent The Orphanage and A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night.

Classes will consist of a combination of lecture and class discussion.

PREREQUISITES: ENGL 111X or placement in ENGL F211X/ENGL F213X; sophomore standing; or permission of instructor.

IMPORTANT: SOME OF THE FILMS IN THIS COURSE WILL SHOW EXPLICIT SEX AND GRAPHIC VIOLENCE. CONTINUED ENROLLMENT MEANS YOU ACCEPT THE NATURE OF THE COURSE CONTENT.

REQUIRED TEXTS


• Lafcadio Hearn. *Kwaidan*. Tuttle, 2005

**Please buy these editions as they contain required supplemental material.** Additional material will be found on Blackboard.

Students may also consider ordering Darryl Jones, *Horror: A Thematic History in Fiction and Film*. It’s a useful overview of many of the themes explored by horror narratives and can be found used on Amazon starting at $.01.

Also, we will be reading a number of stories from Leonard Wolf’s *Doubles, Dummies and Dolls: 21 Terror Tales of Replication*. This book can also be found used or new on Amazon for well under $5.00.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students will write a 3-4 page essay and keep a reading journal that will be submitted twice during the semester.

Other requirements include

• Passing a mid-term examination

• Passing a final examination

• Completing all assigned readings

• Vigorously participating in class discussions.

All work must be completed to receive credit for the course.

**READING JOURNAL**

Students will keep a reading journal throughout the semester in which they write daily entries on one of the texts being discussed that day. These entries should be between 3/4 and 1 page long (typed, double spaced, 1” margin); written in full sentences; and include correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Your journal allows you to respond to literary/cinematic texts and issues less formally than in your essays and to consider ideas brought up in class in more detail. You can ask (then try to answer) questions, discuss the significance of a particular scene or character; apply an idea being discussed in class to a specific text; discuss gender, race or class; analyze style; discuss themes; etc. You can definitely use your journal to disagree with ideas addressed in class or to expand upon them. I will periodically make suggestions as to issues you could consider, but the subject you choose is up to you (assuming it has something to do with
horror/ghost narratives and world literature) as long as it is analytical, not evaluative, in nature. (In other words, do not focus on whether or not you liked a particular text.) **All entries should include some close textual analysis and should not predominantly repeat class discussion (write after class to avoid latter). If you are discussing a literary text, you must include (and analyze) quoted material somewhere in each entry. Moreover, all ideas should be backed up with textual evidence.** Journal entries that do not quote and analyze textual material will not receive credit.

Journals will be turned in twice during the semester on the dates noted on the syllabus. While entries will primarily be evaluated based upon the well thought out nature of their content, entries that are not adequately written (contain grammar and punctuation mistakes, typos, etc.) will be downgraded accordingly. Entries may be submitted electronically, as long as you transmit them as an attachment in one file. Students will receive 1 point for each entry that meets the assigned criteria for a total of 10 points (10%) of your final grade. **As a general rule, you should plan on spending at least 20 minutes per entry.**

**MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

Examinations will be a combination of passage identifications/significance and essay questions. The first half of the final examination will focus on material from the last section of the course, and the second half will be cumulative. Students will be required to write on all texts covered in that section of the course on each exam. More information will follow prior to the mid-term.  

**IMPORTANT MATTERS**

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Regular attendance is crucial. Every absence over 2 will cause your final grade to be lowered by 5 points. Your non-penalized absences should be used for personal illness, family illness, travel, automobile problems, etc. Please do not use all your absences early in the semester, as I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.

If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to contact someone in the class to find out what you missed and to get the assignment for the next class meeting.

Students are expected to be in class on time. Tardiness of 10 minutes or more will be counted as half an absence. Please allow extra time for road delays and/or parking problems.

**CLASS RULES (please take seriously!)**

Students should not leave class except in the case of an emergency. We will take a 10-minute break approximately halfway through class.
Computers should only be used for taking notes or for electronic texts. Anyone found using a computer for any other purpose will be prohibited from using their computer for the remainder of the semester.

Any student engaging in disruptive behavior (such as whispering, texting(!), or passing notes during class) will be warned once and then dropped from the class.

Cell phones should be turned off and put away before class begins. (I’m really strict about not texting during class.)

**GRADING:**

3-4 page essay 20%
Mid-term examination 25%
Final examination 30%
Reading journal 10%
Class participation 15%

**GRADING SCALE**

100-98 A+ 97-93 A 92-90 A- 89-88 B+ 87-83 B 82-80 B- 79-78 C+ 77-73 C 72-70 C- 69-68 D+ 67-63 D 62-60 D- 59 and lower F

**GRADING CRITERIA**

Grading for this class will follow UAF guidelines:

“A” (including A+ and A-) indicates a thorough mastery of course content and outstanding performance in completion of course requirements.
“B” (including B+ and B-) indicates a high level of acquired knowledge and performance in completion of course requirements.
“C” (including C+ and C-) indicates a satisfactory level of acquired knowledge and performance in completion of course requirements.
“D” (including D+ and D-) indicates a minimal level of acquired knowledge and minimal performance in completion of course requirements.
“F” indicates failure to meet a minimal level of understanding of course content and/or performance in completion of course requirements.

C- is the lowest minimum grade required for all GER classes. Per UAF regulations, students who receive a D+ or lower will be required to retake the class to receive GER credit.

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism means using someone else's words or ideas and attempting to pass them off as your own—this includes material taken from the Internet. Students should not utilize secondary sources in written assignments unless specifically instructed; moreover, not completely
documenting secondary sources constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense, and any student caught plagiarizing will automatically and irrevocably receive a failing grade in the course. Academic dishonesty is easily detected and easy to avoid. If you have any questions or doubts, see me before turning in the paper in question, as misunderstanding does not constitute a valid excuse.

LATE PAPERS & EXAM MAKE-UPS
Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date designated on the course schedule. Late papers are only allowed with 48 hours notice and under extraordinary circumstances. Because of the condensed nature of this course, papers will only be granted a 24-hour extension. Exam make-ups are not allowed. Note date of mid-term and final examination and plan your travel accordingly.

STUDY GUIDES AND EXTRA-CREDIT
I do not give study guides nor offer extra-credit assignments.

DISABILITY SERVICES
If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require reasonable accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to Disability Services in room 208 of the Whitaker Building and request a letter of accommodation.
COURSE SCHEDULE
(subject to revision as needed)

Note: Readings indicated are to be completed prior to that day’s class. Be sure to always bring your text to class (if we’re behind, bring both the text we are working on as well as the text noted on the syllabus unless instructed otherwise).

WEEK ONE

Wed. July 5  Introduction to the course; theoretical approaches to horror and monsters; and introduction to film studies. Screen selections from James Whale’s *Frankenstein* (1931) time permitting.


WEEK TWO


Wed. July 12  Screen selections from Carl Boese (dir.), *The Golem: How He Came into the World* (1920)

Yudl Rosenberg, “The Golem or The Miraculous Deeds of Rabbi Leyb,” (on Blackboard)


WEEK THREE


Wed. July 19  Screen and discuss Georges Franju (dir.) *Les Yeux sans visage (Eyes without a Face)* (1960)

Thurs. July 20  Screen selections from F.W. Murnau (dir.), *Nosferatu* (1922)


- **Reading journal due** (5 entries)

WEEK FOUR
Tues. July 25  
*Dracula*, 2nd third

Wed. July 26  
Complete *Dracula*

Thurs. July 27  
Screen and discuss Tomas Alfredson (dir.), *Let the Right One In* (2008)

**WEEK FIVE**

Tues. Aug. 1  
Finish discussing *Let the Right One In*,  
Screen Ana Lily Amirpour (dir.), *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night* (2014)

Wed. August 2  
Discuss *A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night*  
- *Midterm*

Thurs. Aug. 3  
The following can all be found on Blackboard:  

E.T.A. Hoffmann “The Sand-man”  
Anton Chekhov “The Crooked Mirror” (A Christmas Story”)  
Carlos Fuentes “The Doll Queen”  
Susan Sontag, “The Dummy”  
Alaskan Native narratives  
- **Reading journal due** (5 entries)

**WEEK SIX**

Tues. Aug. 8  
Lafcadio Hearn, *Kwaidan*, pp. 3-118  
Screen selections from Masaki Kobayashi (dir.), *Kwaidan*, (1964)

Wed. Aug. 9  
Complete discussing *Kwaidan*, pp. 121-178  
Screen View J.A. Bayona (dir.), *The Orphanage* (2007)  
- **3-4 page essay due**

Thurs. Aug. 10  
Discuss *The Orphanage*  
- **Final Examination**