

Carleton University
Winter 2024 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English

ENGL [2202A]: *Weird Fiction*

Prerequisites: Second-year standing or permission of the department

Day(s) of the week / Time(s) of lectures
Mondays and Wednesdays / 10:05AM-11:25

Format: Online (Asynchronous)

Instructor: Grant Williams
Email: *grant_williams@carleton.ca*

*****This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.*****

Course description:

Weird fiction is a type of literature caught somewhere between horror and the supernatural, at times bordering upon science fiction and the gothic. In this online asynchronous course, students will read short stories representative of the genre. Lectures and activities build upon students' knowledge of the weekly readings by charting the development of weird fiction's generic conventions, by analyzing writers' implementation of narrative techniques, and by leveraging philosophical concepts and theoretical tools for making sense of the strange and the bizarre. This is a fairly intensive reading course. If you do not keep up with the schedule of readings, you will not be able to follow the lectures closely enough and will be ill-equipped to handle the assignments.

Learning Outcomes:

The overarching goal of the course is to understand weird fiction, its stories, its history, and its big ideas, so that you can transfer your understanding to your own critical and creative project—or exam—by the course's end. By the end of the course students will thus be able:

1. to identify, explain, and analyze the major tropes and generic conventions of weird fiction and understand how they evolve from the nineteenth century to the present
2. to identify, define, and analyze the narrative techniques used by weird fiction writers
3. to identify, define, and analyze the philosophical and theoretical concepts for making sense of this fiction.

Texts:

The main textbook that you will need to purchase is the following:

The Weird: A Compendium of Strange and Dark Stories edited by Jeff VanderMeer and Ann VanderMeer (Tor, 2012). Purchase it online at Perusall, nowhere else, unless you want to pay for two copies.

Other readings at no extra cost will be made available through Perusall and ARES, which you can access in Carleton's Learning Management System: Brightspace.

Evaluation	% of Grade
Tell Us about Yourself	Bonus Mark
Participation (Perusall Annotation Activity x 10)	20
4 Short Written Assignments	25
Multiple Choice Tests	
Mastery Test	10
Midterm	15
Final Assignment (One of the Following Two)	
Final Exam	30
Customizable Capstone Project	30
TOTAL	100