

Carleton University
Department of English Language and Literature

English 2906A Culture and Society: Detective Fiction

Fall 2016



Preliminary Outline – subject to change

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 credit in ENGL at the 1000 level or permission of the department

Tues. and Thurs. 4:05 – 5:25 ME (Mackenzie) 4499. (*Please confirm location on Carleton Central*)

Instructor: Dr. David Stymeist

Office: 1819 DT

Office Phone: TBA

Email: dstymeist@yahoo.ca

Office Hours: Weds. 12-1, or by appointment.

Course Description

Why is detective fiction one of the most popular of literary genres? Why do we find crime, violence, lies, suspicion, and the search for truth so fascinating? What

exactly is detective fiction? How and why does it work? What are the roots of the form, its conventions and expectations? How do we navigate the ethics of finding pleasure in portrayals of crime?

In parallel with the figure of the detective, we will doggedly investigate answers for these questions. Perhaps, we will find out, as Dashiell Hammett dryly comments, that “the problem with putting two and two together is that sometimes you get four, and sometimes you get twenty-two.”

Classes will consist of a combination of lectures and discussion. I expect students to attend lectures and come prepared to engage in a lively discussion of the works in question. This is a second year course and classes will emphasize active learning. The more you are willing to put into the class, the more you will get out of it!

Book/Text List:

Agatha Christie, *Murder on the Orient Express*.
 Arthur Conan Doyle. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.
 Dashiell Hammett, *Red Harvest*.
 Kathy Reichs, *Bones to Ashes*.
 John Le Carre, *The Constant Gardener*.

Raymond Chandler, selection from article, “The Simple Art of Murder”. (e-text)
 “The Three Apples” from *One Thousand and One Nights*.
 Edgar Allan Poe. “The Murders in the Rue Morgue.” (available at
www.poestories.com)
Blade Runner, Ridley Scot.

[The novels will be available at Haven Books, 43 Seneca Street (613-730-9888)]

Required Assignments

Short Essay	25%
Research Essay	40%
Participation & Attendance	10%
Final Exam (2 hr.)	25%

Course Regulations

The mark distribution for the year will be Term Grade: 100%. Class participation marks will include participation in class discussion, response to written comments on graded assignments, consistent attendance, and full reading preparation for each assigned text. Consistent attendance is required in this class; students failing to attend an absolute **minimum of 20%** of the classes will not receive grades for their assignments.

All assignments must be handed in on the date specified unless cleared previously with the professor. Papers must be handed to me in person or to the drop box in the English department office (1812 Dunton Tower) on the due date. If you choose to use the drop box, you must be prepared to incur any late penalties that may accumulate due to the unlikely occurrence of the paper's loss or misfiling.

Late papers and projects will be penalized 2% per day that the assignment is overdue. Papers without medical extension will not be accepted after two weeks of the due date. No faxes or emails of essays will be accepted. Please keep a copy of your assignment in case of loss by any cause. Students can expect to receive graded feedback in a timely manner; the instructor reserves the right to limit commentary on late essays. Students are required to submit all major assignments (review, essay or digital project, tests) in order to pass the course as a whole.

Class etiquette: All digital activity in the class with personal devices should be directly connected to class activity; in other words, you shouldn't be checking your Facebook page, playing solitaire, or texting friends.

Grading System:

Assignments in this course will be graded using the letter grading system: A-, A, A+ (Excellent); B-, B, B+ (Good); C-, C, C+ (Satisfactory); D, D+ (Minimal pass); F (Failure). Percentage conversion: A+ (90-100%), A (85-89), A- (80-84), B+ (77-79), B (73-76), B- (70-72), C+ (67-69), C (63-66), C- (60-62), D+ (57-59), D (53-56), D (50-52), F (0-49).

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.*"

This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).