
ENGL 2202: Weird Fiction

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Office	1905 DT	Email	cuLearn email client
Office Hours	By appointment	Email Turn Around	6-24 hours
Days	Wednesdays and Fridays	Class Times	10:00 AM – 11:25 AM

Prerequisites Second-year standing or permission of the department

Trigger Warning This course examines graphic and potentially disturbing material. If you are triggered by anything you experience during this course and require assistance, please see me.

Course Description

This course introduces students to weird fiction through charting its history as a genre—a type of literature caught somewhere between horror and science fiction. Although weird fiction also takes the literary forms of the novel and poetry, its primary form is the short story. The reading list will thus consist of short stories and a few novellas—a novella being longer than a short story but shorter than a novel. Lectures as well as activities will not only provide interpretations of individual tales but also situate them within their cultural and philosophical contexts, since writing belongs to an age, not just an author's personal expression.

Textbooks and Readings

The main textbooks that you will need to purchase are the following:

1. *The Weird: A Compendium of Strange and Dark Stories* edited by Jeff VanderMeer and Ann VanderMeer (Tor, 2012).
2. *Songs of a Dead Dreamer and Grimscribe* by Thomas Ligotti (Penguin, 2015).

Please buy these texts right away. They are available online at Amazon.ca in both paper and e-book format. Other readings will be made available through the website and ARES, which you can access in Carleton's Learning Management System: cuLearn. This is a fairly intensive reading course. If you do not keep up with the readings, you will not be able to follow the lectures closely enough.

Attendance and Engagement

I expect you to attend every lecture in the schedule and if you miss a class you will be automatically penalized. I know, however, that personal disruptions occur all the time. You thus

have a margin of 25%. Please save this grace percentage for unforeseen circumstances, such as health emergencies. If you have not attended 75% of the classes by the end of the year, you will fail the course. I take attendance through Poll Everywhere and only through Poll Everywhere. It is your responsibility to bring to class the tech (cell phone, tablet, or laptop) necessary for signaling your attendance.

Evaluation	Due date	% of Grade
Online Quiz (cuLearn)	Jan. 17	3
Tell Us about Yourself	Jan. 17	2
Attendance	Thru Term	10
Test (in-class)	Feb. 15	10
Minor Assessments		
Personal Reflection on the Weird	Jan. 18	5
Exercise on a Weird Trope	Feb. 6 (8)	5
Exercise on a Weird Concept	March 8	5
Composition of a Weird Fable	April 3 (5)	5
Major Assessments		
Midterm (in-class)	March 22	30
Capstone Project	April TBA	25
	TOTAL	100

Assignments

This course has no final exam. It makes use of both minor and major assessments. The minor assessments help students prepare for the major ones. You must complete all of the term work (4 exercises and midterm); otherwise, you will fail the course before completing the capstone. This means that failure to complete the term work, let alone your grade on the assignments, will result in a final grade of "F."

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

- 1) Online Quiz (cuLearn): this quiz will be open before the course begins and will close 2 weeks later. It will deal exclusively with the syllabus and the cuLearn course website.
- 2) Test: the multiple-choice test has 20 questions and gives you a trial run for the midterm in March.
- 3) Minor Assignments: the 4 assignments will be submitted in cuLearn. Two of them will be peer-graded in class, and so you will need to bring paper copies to class. Each assignment

assesses your critical and creative engagement with course material. The capstone project's activities and questions will build upon the work of these assignments.

- 4) Midterm: 60 multiple choice questions based on lecture material and minor assignments. It is really challenging and requires a firm knowledge of course materials including lectures.
- 5) Capstone Project: this final assignment involves both critical and creative thinking and offers students several different media options, one of which includes writing a weird short story. Students who want to write a weird short story for the capstone must earn at least a 75% on the midterm.

Class Schedule

Jan. 9: Introduction	Feb. 27: The Everyday Strange
Jan. 11: American Gothic	March 1: Weird Families
Jan. 16: The Supernatural Tale	March 6: Dark Rituals and Strange Cults
Jan. 18: Lovecraft	March 8: Clowns?
Jan. 23: Cthulhu Mythos	March 13: Undead Pets
Jan. 25: Lovecraft Circle	March 15: Dolls, Puppets, and Mannequins
Jan. 30: Cthulhu Mythos Today	March 20: Insects
Feb. 1: Eastern European Weird	March 22: <u>Midterm</u>
Feb. 6: Eastern European Weird	March 27: Sinister Gods
Feb. 8: Kafkaesque Fables	March 29: The Alien within Us
Feb. 13: Latin American Weird	April 3: The Call
Feb. 15: Latin American Weird	April 5: Conclusion
Feb. 20: WINTER BREAK	
Feb. 22: WINTER BREAK	

Late Assignment Policy

The ability to submit a particular assignment will be available until the due date and then it will be cut off. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** A late assignment under normal circumstances will still be accepted after the due date so that the student doesn't fail the course. But the assignment will receive a zero.

The only exception will be granted to students who experience serious illness or bereavement during the duration of the course; in each case, official documentation is required. For medical conditions, please email me a signed Doctor's certificate, which needs to spell out how long the serious illness lasted or is expected to last. Where the death of a close relative is concerned, please email me an obituary notice in which your name appears, establishing your kinship. If you wish, you may, instead, email me a copy of the Death Certificate. Once I have the documentation, you will receive a new submission-deadline that cannot be missed.

Plagiarism and Instructional Offences

Carleton University has a clear policy on academic integrity, including procedures to address academic misconduct. More information on the Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

It is important that students understand and meet academic integrity standards, and are sure they do not violate these standards through 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:

1. 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;
2. submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
3. using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
4. using another’s data or research findings;
5. failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
6. 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.

Intellectual Property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations, posted notes, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the

author(s). Occasionally I may use brief anonymous student examples to address writing issues. Longer samples will require the student's consent.

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: <carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf>.

Religious obligation: Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca/pmc.

Survivors of Sexual Violence: As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support.

Accommodation for Student Activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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: <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>.