

## Department of English &amp; Writing Studies

**Mystery and Detective Fiction**  
**English 2074F (001)**  
Fall 2016**Instructor:** Manina Jones**Date/Time:** Monday 11:30 am-12:30 pm,  
Wednesday 10:30 am-12:30 pm**Location:** Arts & Humanities Building 2B04Course Description

Mystery stories may be light reading, but they are serious business. They explore matters of life and death. They engage problems involving the law, justice, and morality. They address fundamental questions of identity and agency. And they have, since their inception, topped the best-seller lists, so they're also serious *business*. This course introduces students to the critical study of popular mystery and detective fiction from a range of historical periods and national contexts. 3 hours, 0.5 course

**Objectives:**

The **general learning objectives** of this course are to:

- Help you identify and define a popular literary genre (detective fiction), see how it has developed over time, and understand how and why this highly entertaining genre should be taken seriously in its historical, cultural, political, social, and psychological dimensions;
- Explain a variety of theoretical and rhetorical approaches to popular literature;
- Take your immediate personal reactions to literary texts and submit them to the tools of a discipline, in the process developing and refining your critical reading and analytical skills;
- Help you realize a heightened appreciation of how literary effects are achieved and why they are important. This will include the ability to identify, understand and analyse such elements as genre, style, plot, character, point of view, imagery, theme, setting, irony, tone, symbols.
- Support you in developing your written communication skills in the clear and organized presentation of ideas, especially in the construction of an argument with an effective thesis and a logical development supported by adequate evidence from the text(s) under discussion.

Course Materials**Short Stories**

A selection of stories and essays available on OWL:

Poe, Edgar Allan. "Murders in the Rue Morgue"

Doyle, Arthur Conan. "A Scandal in Bohemia" and "The Adventure of the Speckled Band"

Glaspell, Susan. "A Jury of Her Peers"

Auden, W.H. "Murder at the Vicarage"

Christie, Agatha. "The Tuesday Night Club"

Chandler, Raymond. "The Red Wind" and "The Simple Art of Murder"

Himes, Chester. "His Last Day"

McBain, Ed. "Sadie When She Died"

Sjöwall, Maj and Per Wahlöö, "The Multi-Millionaire"

Hillerman, "Chee's Witch"

### Novels

Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.  
Hammett, Dashiell. *The Maltese Falcon*.  
Mosley, Walter. *Devil in a Blue Dress*.  
Paretsky, Sara. *Bitter Medicine*.  
Rankin, Ian. *Fleshmarket Close*.  
Reichs, Kathy. *Déjà Dead*.

### Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Assignment	Value	Date	Length
Attendance/participation	5%		
Tests and quizzes	2 x 5%=10%	Oct. 17, Nov. 16	
Passage analysis	20%	Oct. 5	1000 words
Essay	30%	Dec. 7	1500 words
Final Examination	35%	TBA	3 hours

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. **Please note:** The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

### Expectations

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend class and take notes for yourself. Tests, exams, and essays will assess your analytical skills, your understanding and recall of literary texts and on specific material covered in lecture and class discussion. While PowerPoint lecture slides may be posted on OWL, *they don't by any means fully represent the content of the class*. Lecture notes will not be distributed to students.

**Reading:** Prior to each class, you should complete the assigned reading. Whenever possible, bring the text with you, so that you may refer to it in class. The reading for this course is very pleasant, but the pace can be a challenge for some: be sure to *read ahead* when the load is lighter.

**Respect:** You are expected to treat other students in the class and members of the teaching team with respect, and you should expect them to do likewise. Please let the course instructor or TA know if you have any concerns.

**Electronic Devices Policy:** Laptops and other electronic devices in class must be used appropriately. *Respectful use of electronic devices means that the material you have on screen at any time must relate directly to the course material*. Laptops and phones should not be used for web surfing, email, social networking or any other non-course related activity; cell phones should be turned off and ear buds and earphones removed during class. Students who are found to be using electronic devices in inappropriate ways will be asked to leave the class.

**OWL:** Important information about the course will be posted on OWL, including information on resources, weekly expectations, lectures, assignments, tests, and the exam. You are expected to check in regularly.

Office Hours and E-mail Policy

**Office hours:** Your professor and TAs have scheduled office hours when we wait eagerly for students to drop by (please visit!), but that doesn't mean we are unwilling to meet with you at other times or communicate in other ways as well. If you want to make sure we make contact, it's best to make an appointment in advance. Occasionally, an office hour must be cancelled. If at all possible, we will let you know in advance, and put an announcement on OWL.

**E-mail:** We are happy to communicate with students via e-mail. There are some provisos. (1) We will respond as quickly as possible; please allow 24 hours for a response, and remember that we may not check e-mail in the evenings or on weekends. (2) If you want to have a discussion about lecture material, essay or exam expectations, course readings, or anything that requires an extended conversation, that's best done in person. (3) Do not use email to submit essays.

**Feedback:** Teaching is very important to me. I work hard at it, and I try to take student needs into account at all times, even as I pose challenges for you. If you have feedback on the course (constructive criticism or affirming praise), I would value your contribution. It will enrich the course and help me be a better instructor.

**Timetable:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading or Topic</b>
Mon. Sept. 12 Wed. Sept. 14	Getting a Clue: Course Preliminaries <b>Reading Popular Fiction: Introduction</b>
Mon. Sept. 19 Wed. Sept. 21	<b>Early Writers</b> Poe, "Murders in the Rue Morgue;" Doyle, "A Scandal in Bohemia"
Mon. Sept. 26 Wed. Sept. 28	Doyle, "Adventure of the Speckled Band" Glaspell, "A Jury of Her Peers"
Mon. Oct. 3 Wed. Oct. 5	<b>The Golden Age of Detection</b> Christie, <i>The Murder of Roger Ackroyd</i> <b>passage analysis</b>
Mon. Oct. 10 Wed. Oct. 12	<b>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY</b> Auden, "Murder at the Vicarage;" Christie, "The Tuesday Night Club"
Mon. Oct. 17 Wed. Oct. 19	<b>Hard-Boiled Writers</b> <b>quiz</b> Hammett, <i>The Maltese Falcon</i>
Mon. Oct. 24 Wed. Oct. 26	Chandler, "The Red Wind," "The Simple Art of Murder" Himes, "His Last Day"
Mon. Oct. 31 Wed. Nov. 2	Paretsky, <i>Bitter Medicine</i>
Mon. Nov. 7 Wed. Nov. 9	Mosley, <i>Devil in a Blue Dress</i>
Mon. Nov. 14 Wed. Nov. 16	<b>The Police Procedural</b> McBain, "Sadie When She Died;" Sjöwall and Wahlöö, "The Multi-Millionaire;" Hillerman, "Chee's Witch" <b>quiz</b>
Mon. Nov. 21 Wed. Nov. 23	Rankin, <i>Fleshmarket Close</i>
Mon. Nov. 28 Wed. Nov. 30	<b>The CSI Phenomenon*</b> Reichs, <i>Déjà Dead</i>
Mon. Dec. 5 Wed. Dec. 7	Solutions? Exam Review <b>essay</b>

\* for this class, students will -- on their own time, before class -- watch an installment in any of the *CSI* franchises.

### Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at [http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

### **Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):**

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf)

### Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

### **Plagiarism Checking:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

### Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.