

USCDornsife

Department of
English

Engl 261 32604 Spring 2018
TTH 9:30-10:50am
THH 203

Instructor: Professor T. Tomaini
Office: THH 425 W 12-2pm; TH 2-4pm

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The Monstrous in Medieval and Early Modern English Literature

English 261 follows the development of English poetry and drama during the centuries between the First Millennium and the English Civil War. Specifically, this course will focus on the Supernatural Other in these works of literature. Students will learn the basics of Monster Theory by reading work by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and others, and will then discuss how the various types of monstrosity reflect the major social, political, and religious issues of the time. There will be ghosts, faeries, witches, dragons, hybrid creatures, and demons; but we will also discuss how preternatural belief of the medieval and early modern periods became persecutory and included women, immigrants, the disabled, Christian sectarians, and non-Christians. Major authors and works of poetry and drama will include Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, Shakespeare's *King Lear*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Course texts include the Norton Anthology of English Literature, plus handouts TBA. We will also look at important source texts and backgrounds that influenced these authors and their major works. There will be three papers, all 8-10 pages in length.

TEXT: Norton Anthology of English Literature, 9th Ed., Vol. A. Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Canterbury Tales*. W.W. Norton & Co, ISBN: 9780393341782. Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*. Other texts available on Blackboard as noted below.

ASSIGNMENTS: The reading assignments are due on the first date in which they appear on the syllabus. Class participation is expected. There will be three papers, 8-10 pages in length. Papers must be presented in Times New Roman (12 pt.), double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and numbered pages. Please include a cover sheet containing your name, course number, date, and a title for your paper. Students will be given prompts, and will use course material in their papers, so no outside research is necessary.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Paper 1		27
Paper 2		27
Paper 3		27
Attendance		9
Participation		10
TOTAL	0	100

Students will be graded on both grammar and style elements. Spelling and grammatical errors are unacceptable and papers will be penalized for them. No paper containing spelling and/or grammatical errors can receive an A. An A paper at the university level demonstrates critical thinking, an analysis of the issues of the prompt, and a mature style. A Style Sheet including refresher tips can be found on Blackboard for your convenience.

I only give paper extensions in case of demonstrated and documented illness or emergency. I do not give paper extensions because of extracurricular activities, sports, Greek Life, work, assignments, exams in or papers due for another class, or the failure to manage one's time properly.

Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade for each day late.

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend diligently. After three unexcused absences a student's grade will be penalized. An excused absence implies that I have advanced notice and that I have given permission. If you become ill or injured, let me know as soon as possible so I can make sure you don't fall behind. Keep a copy record of your doctors' notes as well. If you are on a sports team, in the band, etc., please let me know in advance of dates you will be absent. Any student who gets up in the middle of class and leaves for any reason that does not involve an emergency will be counted absent. If you need to leave early because of an important appointment or family issue just speak to me in advance. The same thing goes if you need to come late because of something important. In the case of an important phone call (such as a family issue, job, or emergency) just let me know in advance and you can step out to make/receive your call. Lateness disrupts the course and disturbs your fellow students, and so it will not be tolerated. If you are late by 10 minutes or more you will be counted absent. If you are consistently late within those ten minutes your grade will be penalized.

ELECTRONICS POLICY:

I expect a student's undivided attention for a mere 80 minutes twice a week. Due to a lack of cooperation in this regard in recent years, **phones, laptops, and tablets must be turned**

off and put away. Manual notetaking (i.e., the traditional way) helps students process more material and retain it for a longer period of time than electronic notetaking (or browsing Amazon bargains on Buzzfeed during lecture). Moreover, transcribing notes into a Word program from handwritten notes helps processing and retention. Also, the Golden Age of social media is over. It was fun until it wasn't, so let's move on.

Note: Some students desire letters of recommendation for future programs, scholarships and other awards, or other schools. I only write letters of recommendation for my own students who have completed at least one course with me (students taking a course with me for the first time must wait until the end of the semester). I only write letters for students who receive an A or A- in the course. No exceptions.

WEEK 1: 1/9-1/11 Monster Theory

T: Introduction to the course. What is a monster? Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture—Seven Theses."

TH: Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "Monster Culture—Seven Theses."

WEEK 2: 1/16-1/18 Beowulf: Monsters, Mothers, and Dragons

T: *Beowulf*

TH: *Beowulf*

WEEK 3: 1/23-1/25 Anglo-Norman Romances: Faerie Lore of Britain

T: Marie de France, *Bisclavret*; Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, "The Werewolf's Indifference."

TH: Marie de France, *Lanval*

WEEK 4: 1/30-2/1 Anglo-Norman Romances: Faerie Lore of Britain

T: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

TH: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*

WEEK 5: 2/6-2/8 Chaucer: Faerie Lore of Britain

T: Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Tale*

TH: Chaucer, *The Wife of Bath's Tale*

WEEK 6: 2/13-2/15 Chaucer: Ghosts and Magic

T: Chaucer, *The Nun's Priest's Tale*

TH: Chaucer, *The Franklin's Tale*

WEEK 7: 2/20-2/22 Marlowe: Demonology and Necromancy

T: Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus* **PAPER 1 DUE.**

TH: Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus*

WEEK 8: 2/27-3/1 Spenser: Appropriating Older Traditions

T: Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Book I, Cantos I-III

TH: *FQ*, Cantos IV-VI (with summaries)

WEEK 9: 3/6-3/8 Spenser: Appropriating Older Traditions

T: *FQ*, Cantos VII-IX (with summaries)

TH: *FQ*, Cantos X-XII (with summaries)

SPRING BREAK. NO CLASSES.

WEEK 10: 3/20-3/22 Shakespeare: The Subtlety of Monstrosity

T: *King Lear*

TH: *King Lear*

WEEK 11: 3/27-3/29 Milton: Cosmology and Alterity

T: *Paradise Lost*, Book I **PAPER 2 DUE.**

TH: *PL*, Book II

WEEK 12: 4/3-4/5 Milton: Cosmology and Alterity

T: *PL*, Book II

TH: *PL*, Books III-V (with summaries)

WEEK 13: 4/10-4/12 Milton: Cosmology and Alterity

T: *PL*, Books VI-VIII (with summaries)

TH: *PL*, Book IX

WEEK 14: 4/17-4/19 Milton: Cosmology and Alterity

T: *PL*, Book IX

TH: Book X

WEEK 15: 4/24-4/26 Milton: Cosmology and Alterity

T: *PL*, Book X

TH: Books XI-XII (with summaries)

PAPER #3 IS DUE IN MY BOX AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT MAIN OFFICE BY 12 PM ON MONDAY MAY 7, 2018.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards*<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.