

Course Syllabus
LIT 3312: Detective Fiction
Spring 2013
JO 4.614, Thursday 7-9:45pm
Professor Jessica C. Murphy

Professor Contact Information

Jessica C. Murphy

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1-2 and by appointment

Google Calendar for Appointments During Office Hours: <http://bit.ly/qFm6w5>

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Pre-requisite: HUMA 1301 or equivalent

Course Description

What makes a good detective story? In this course, students will investigate the structure of the detective story and assess the influence of historical events on this popular genre. Over the course of the class, we will also consider the contribution of “marginal” writers to the development of the genre. The class will conclude with an examination of a number of films that adapt and trace the development of the genre. Students will use their greater understanding of the detective story to write either an analytical essay about one or two of the texts in the course or a detective story of their own.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should demonstrate:

- a detailed knowledge of the texts we read;
 - the ability to think critically about the texts; and
 - an understanding of the tradition of detective fiction.
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Required Textbooks and Materials

1. Raymond Chandler, *The Long Goodbye*, Vintage 0394757688
2. Patricia Cornwell, *Blowfly*, Berkley 9780425198735
3. Walter Mosley, *Devil in a Blue Dress*, Wash. Sq., 0743451791
4. Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Signet 9780451523938
5. Sara Paretsky, *Hardball*, Putnam 9780451412935
6. Agatha Christie, *Murder on the Orient Express*, Berkley 9780425200452

7. Agatha Christie, *The Thirteen Problems* 9780451200204 (We will read only 3 of these stories, so you do not need to buy the text)
8. Course Pack available through University Readers (www.universityreaders.com and click “Students Buy Here”). These readings are also available on eReserves through the library, *but you must bring printed copies to class.*

Suggested Course Materials

A style guide that include MLA formatting style (Hacker, Penguin, MLA are all good for this)

Batman: The Long Halloween ISBN 978-1-56389-469-5 (we will be looking only at the first chapter of this text; you’re not required to purchase it)

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Please read all assigned reading by the time we meet. Films and television shows will be viewed in class unless we discuss other plans.

Date	Assignment
1/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Poe, “Murders in the Rue Morgue,” “The Purloined Letter,” “The Mystery of Marie Roget” (Reader or ERes) • Discuss Short Writing Requirements
1/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doyle, “A Scandal in Bohemia” (Reader or ERes) • Doyle, <i>A Study in Scarlet</i> (Reader, ERes, or through UVA’s etexts: http://etext.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/DoyScar.html) • Short Writing 1
1/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doyle continued • “Sherlock” season 1 episode 1: “A Study in Pink” (viewing in class)
2/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tzvetan Todorov, “The Typology of Detective Fiction” (Reader or ERes) • <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>
2/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christie, “The Bloodstained Pavement,” “The Tuesday Night Club,” and “Motive v. Opportunity” (Reader or ERes) • Christie, <i>Murder on the Orient Express</i> • Short Writing 2
2/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raymond Chandler, “The Simple Art of Murder” • Raymond Chandler, <i>The Long Goodbye</i> • Short Writing 3
2/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raymond Chandler, <i>The Long Goodbye</i> • Altman’s <i>The Long Goodbye</i> (viewing in class)
3/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm
3/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Break
3/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Paretsky, <i>Hardball</i>
3/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patricia Cornwell, <i>Blowfly</i> • Short Writing 4

Date	Assignment
4/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walter Mosley, <i>Devil in a Blue Dress</i> • <i>Batman: The Long Halloween</i> Chapter 1
4/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawks's <i>The Big Sleep</i> (viewing in class) • Reading TBA • Film Worksheet
4/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polanski's <i>Chinatown</i> (viewing in class) • Reading TBA • Film Worksheet
4/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coen Brothers' <i>The Big Lebowski</i> (viewing in class) • Reading TBA • Film Worksheet
5/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CSI</i> (viewing in class) • Episode Worksheet • Final Exam Review • Paper Due
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL EXAM DATE TBA

Assignments & Grading Policy

Below are the required assignments for this course. I will provide more detailed information as the due dates approach. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about assignments.

Completion of all of the assignments in this course is a condition for earning a passing grade. The instructor reserves the right to amend any policies or assignments at her discretion.

Participation 10%

Participation includes attending class, participating in discussions and in-class activities, completing assignments (on time—no late work will be accepted), and performing well on reading quizzes and in-class writing assignments.

Short Writings 15%

The short writing assignments include four *1-page* response papers (reactions to the text grounded in close reading), three film worksheets to be completed in class during a film screening, and one episode worksheet to be completed in class during an episode screening. See schedule for dates.

Midterm 20%

This in-class exam will cover the work from approximately the first half of the semester.

Final Paper 30%

1,750-2,500-word piece of writing. You will have a choice to write either an analytical paper or a detective story and an analysis of your story. More information will be available later in the semester. *Due: May 2nd*

Final Exam 25%

The final will cover the reading we have done since the midterm, and will include essay questions that we develop as a class.

Course & Instructor Policies

In this class, students will examine the genre of detective fiction through reading assignments, writing assignments, and class. To that end, the policies below are meant to create the best possible learning environment for the students. Please contact the instructor if you have any questions about these policies. I will consider your continued enrollment in this class as evidence that you accept these policies.

Attendance

Participation in class activities is necessary to pass this class. Promptness and regular attendance are essential and will affect your grade. You must arrive, prepared, to class on time and stay for the class period. Attendance is included in your participation grade for the course. However, if you miss more than 2 classes, you will lose points from your final grade for each additional missed class. In cases of proven emergencies, the instructor may reconsider this policy at her discretion. Participation points cannot be made up.

Community

It is expected that we will respect one another and one another's ideas. When we are in class, we are present: **no laptops, no cell phones, or other forms of electronic communication.** Please keep your laptop closed and your cell phone on vibrate. If your phone rings, a classmate or I will answer it (if my phone rings, you may answer it). If you need special accommodation and can provide documentation from the Office of AccessAbility, the instructor will work with you. Please bring any readings from electronic reserves on paper.

Student AccessAbility Services

If you are a student with a disability and would like to see me to discuss special academic accommodations, please contact me after class or during my office hours. For more information about AccessAbility Services, visit the website: <http://www.utdallas.edu/studentaccess/> or call 972-883-2098. (see full syllabus for more detailed information)

Office Hours

You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of my office hours to talk about class materials, your papers, and anything else that might help you.

Avoid Plagiarizing by Accident!

Using another's ideas or language without acknowledging the source or passing off another's ideas or language as your own is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. Students often plagiarize without intending to because they are unsure about how to cite sources. Plagiarism by accident is still plagiarism (and will be punished as such), so please feel free to come see me if you are unsure about how to cite sources. (see full syllabus for policy on Academic Integrity)

The policies that comprise the rest of the syllabus may be accessed online:
<http://coursebook.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>