



Missouri Western State University  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism

## ENG 210-06 Approaches to Literature: Monster Flicks!

3:30-6:20, Weds, Hearnes Center 102  
Spring 2009

"You can't create a monster, then whine when it stomps on a few buildings." --Lisa Simpson

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Office Hours: 8:30-9:30 TR, 2:00-3:30 W, 12:30-2:00 R

### Course Description and Philosophy:

In this course we will develop the skills necessary to reading both the visual "texts" of films and more traditional texts. We will also explore the relationships between print, electronic, and visual forms of literature generally. As a part of MWSU's General Studies program, this course is designed to fulfill the Category IV General Studies Requirement. Students in 210 will learn to recognize the major characteristics of literary genres, discuss literature orally and in writing with assurance, appreciate literary works which are encountered, and understand the different ways in which a literary theme may be treated in literature.

"Is it better to out-monster the monster or to be quietly devoured?" --Friedrich Nietzsche

### Required Materials:

- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein*. New York: Dover, 1994.
- [Monster Bibliography](#)
- Access to numerous electronic texts.
- An up-to-date unabridged college dictionary.
- Stamina and good humor.

### Instructor's Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is an essential part of the student's educational experience and a requirement for an adequate evaluation of student academic progress. For this and other reasons, listed below, attendance is mandatory. While certain absences may be necessary or unavoidable in the case of genuine illness, emergency, or when acting as a representative of MWSU, excessive absences will result in failure of the course. As this is a one day a week class, if you miss more than one class during the semester your final grade will be seriously affected. Chronic lateness and/or leaving early will count toward absences. You are responsible for material covered or assignments given which you missed because of absence, so ask another student to inform you of what happened while you were gone. As a matter of policy, I do not loan out my private copies of the films we will study. If I should be unable to meet class, you will be notified by the secretary, a fellow instructor, or by an officially stamped and dated note on the classroom door.

### Institutional Attendance Policy:

In order to improve student learning as well as to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level and 200-level courses. You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided you give prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event. All other absences will be deemed unexcused.

The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed for this class before the midterm report is three. Thus, when you have four unexcused absences you will be reported to the Registrar's Office, who will automatically withdraw you from this class. The Financial Aid Office will reduce financial aid as appropriate.

"I have never seen a greater monster or miracle in the world than myself." --Michel de Montaigne

### **Preparation and Participation:**

You are required to make significant contributions to class in the form of preparation and participation. Preparation includes completing the readings and daily assignments, as well as bringing your assignments, textbook, and other materials with you on the appropriate days. If you come unprepared, you will receive a zero for any work due that day.

Participation includes the help you give to fellow writers and the contributions you make to class discussion. Active and insightful contributions to class discussion are therefore not "extra credit." Like the written assignments, your tactful and substantive comments are part of the minimal requirements for successful completion of the course. If you are a naturally quiet person, force yourself to be more vocal; do not assume that if I do not call on you that you need not participate, as it is your responsibility to voice your observations at appropriate and relevant times. Conversely, if you are a naturally talkative person, you may have to restrain yourself so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute. Since you obviously cannot make up for discussions from which you were absent, attendance is again critical.

Why is discussion so important? Because live classroom discussion:

- gives me an additional indication of how closely and thoughtfully you have read, enabling me to evaluate your knowledge and abilities more fairly and accurately.
- helps you think in terms of the subject matter by giving you practice in thinking.
- helps you learn to evaluate the logic of and evidence for your own and others' positions.
- helps you learn what counts as evidence and how to evaluate knowledge claims.
- helps you understand how knowledge is arrived at in the discipline.
- gives you practice arguing with others respectfully and professionally.
- gives you opportunities to formulate applications of principles.
- helps you construct knowledge you can recall and apply when needed.
- gives you prompt feedback on difficult or confusing issues and material.
- increases your retention of material through explaining, summarizing, and questioning.
- stimulates new ideas, approaches, questions, reading and research.

"I think you have to know who you are. Get to know the monster that lives in your soul, dive deep into your soul and explore it." --Tori Amos

### **Student Conduct:**

As a condition to remaining at MWSU, the college expects all students to conduct themselves so as to maintain an effective environment for learning, to act responsibly in accordance with good taste, and to respect fully the rights of others. Passionate and forceful language is sometimes appropriate; intolerance and dogmatism are not. Behavior that disrupts the classroom environment or interferes with other students' learning will result in dismissal from the classroom.

More specifically, the following behavior will be noted and result in an absence for the day and/or a deduction in the course grade: sleeping, distracting conversation during films and lectures, and failure to turn off cell phones before entering the classroom.

"Man as an individual is a genius. But men in the mass form the headless monster, a great, brutish idiot that goes

where prodded." --Charlie Chaplin

### **Assignment Requirements:**

All out of class written assignments for this course must be word processed unless otherwise specified. Non-word processed submissions will be returned with no credit. Assignments should follow MLA format, using no larger than twelve point font and one inch margins. Pages should be stapled together before you come to class (do not use folders or paper clips and do not fold down the corners of papers). Do not throw away any work you do for this class, from notes to drafts to final papers, and keep back-up copies of all papers you turn in to me.

All assignments are due at the beginning of the hour on the due date. Learning is a cumulative process, and each assignment is designed to build on the previous one. As late work disrupts this important aspect of the learning process, no late work will be accepted without prior notification and approval.

"It is conventional to call 'monster' any blending of dissonant elements. I call 'monster' every original inexhaustible beauty." --Alfred Jarry

### **Grading:**

The standards for college English classes are higher than those used in high schools. All the guidelines and standards for classes at MWSU are similar to those used by other colleges and universities throughout the country. You, as a serious student, will appreciate the fact that we hold high standards for your work. Your grade will be determined by the quality of your daily work, short writings, and exams, as well as by your preparation and participation. Assignments will be evaluated according to how well they meet the requirements outlined in the assignment description and the following general scale.

A = Superior

B = Above Average

C = Average

D = Minimum = passing below average

F = Failing

Short Writings and Daily Assignments = 60%

Final Exam = 20%

Critical Paper = 20%

"By heaven, he echoes me, / As if there were some monster in his thought / Too hideous to be shown." --Shakespeare's Othello

### **Instructor's Policy on Academic Honesty:**

Plagiarism is a most serious offense and, therefore, will incur harsh punishment. Don't think you won't get caught; writing style is distinctive and verifiable. It is the student's responsibility to prove that all work is their own. Work with evidence of plagiarism or academic dishonesty of any kind, intentional or not, will receive a zero. Plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty will also likely result in failure of the course.

### **Institutional Policy on Academic Honesty and Due Process:**

Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records, or any other fraudulent activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report forms. Please see the *Student Handbook* and calendar for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure.

### **Disabilities:**

Any student who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact me immediately so that we can discuss class requirements.

**General:**

This syllabus is of a contractual nature, and by remaining in the course you acknowledge your acceptance of its stipulations in their entirety. If the goals, policies, procedures, standards, expectations, or obligations are unclear, then you should speak with me immediately. If they are clear but unacceptable to you, then you should drop the course.

If you choose to remain in the course, be sure to keep a copy of this syllabus with you and to refer to it regularly. Policies are enforced without exception to ensure uniformity and predictability, to avoid confusion and anxiety, and to facilitate fairness and objectivity for all students. In the interest of efficiency, however, I reserve the right to make necessary alterations to this syllabus and to make announced changes in daily plans. Any announcements made in class automatically supersede this syllabus. It is your responsibility to find out about announced changes.

"The monster was the best friend I ever had." --Boris Karloff

**Final Thoughts:**

For further explanations, comments, and advice, I am available during office hours. For additional help outside of class, I strongly recommend the Center for Academic Support.

I genuinely want you to succeed in this class and at MWSU generally. I therefore urge you to keep in mind that what you gain from this course, and from your education generally, is proportional to the amount of productive time and careful attention you devote to it. In the words of Abigail Adams (1744-1818), "Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."

"pity this busy monster, manunkind, / not." --e. e. cummings

**Course Outline:**

The schedule below shows major readings and assignments, but additional readings and assignments may be given in class throughout the semester.

**Course Schedule:**

January

Weds 14 *King Kong*

Weds 21 *Gojira*

Weds 28 *Bram Stoker's Dracula*; [Polidori's \*The Vampyre\*](#) (web)

February

Weds 4 *Night of the Living Dead*; King's "Home Delivery" (on WebCT)

Weds 11 *The Mummy*; [Doyle's "Lot No. 249"](#) (web)

Weds 18 *Freaks*

Weds 25 *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*

March

Weds 4 *The Company of Wolves*; Angela Carter's wolf trilogy (WebCT), and [Little Red Riding Hood folktale](#) (web)

Weds 11 Spring Break

Weds 18 *Beauty and the Beast*

Weds 25 *Frankenstein*; discuss novel

April

Weds 1 *The Bride of Frankenstein*; discuss novel cont.

Weds 8 No Class; work on papers

Weds 15 *Island of Lost Souls*; [Rossetti's \*Goblin Market\*](#) (web)

Weds 22 *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; Final Papers Due

May

Final Exam: Friday, May 1, 2:00-3:50 (Room TBA)