

ENGLISH 4391: Victorian Weirdness The Supernatural

Dr. Erin Ashworth-King
erin.ashworth-king@angelo.edu

010 Academic Building
(325) 486-6139

Course Overview:

This independent study, which generally aims to allow students to practice the skills of literary analysis through exposure to important works of British literature, takes as its specific theme monstrosity and the supernatural, surveying diverse depictions of the “other” in a Victorian literature. This thematic approach is designed to open up to students the widely different portrayals of monstrosity and the supernatural in Europe and the British Isles that both reflect and shape the society in which they are born. This course will interrogate Victorian sensibilities of such difference with Rosetti’s “Goblin Market,” Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, Stevenson’s *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and Doyle’s *Hound of the Baskervilles*. Importantly, the works we cover are not designed to give students an exhaustive account of Victorian literature, but to present various attitudes and presentations of monstrosity and the supernatural within its cultural and historical contexts. All of these works are ambivalent in their expression of monstrosity, enabling students to interrogate their own ideas, to shape their reactions to texts and to support and develop their readings into literary arguments that contribute to the colloquy.

Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes:

This course has two primary goals: first, students will develop their close reading and analytical skills through careful work relating to the structural and thematic elements of a admittedly idiosyncratic and small sampling of the literature of Britain; second, students will develop their interpretive skills in being able to transition observations about texts into interpretive claims and arguments.

Upon completing sophomore literature, students should be able to

1. understand the role of literature as an expression of values and interpretation of human experience
2. understand and apply methods of responding to literature analytically
3. understand the form, function, scope and variety of literature, including specialized terminology
4. understand the interactive relationship between history, culture, and literature.

This course will help you 1) gain a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual and cultural activity 2) learn to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view; and 3) develop creative capacities.

Required Texts:

All texts are available through project Gutenberg and are widely available from various libraries and sellers.

Methods of Instruction:

This is an online course. It is not self-paced.

The course will consist of uploaded articles, presentations, and a Turnitin dropbox for papers. Blackboard is utilized for all course content delivery, and class assignments, including final examinations. Students must be able to access Blackboard on a regular basis and check their ASU email daily for communication from me and from ASU. Student will submit three papers, will met weekly with me via Webex, and will submit a final paper that revises one of the previous papers constructed.

Course Requirements:

1. It is the student’s responsibility to have a computer with access to the Internet with adequate speed to do classwork, tests, and exams, and to access Blackboard. You will also need a webcam and speakers for many of the projects and lectures in this class. If you cannot meet these requirements, you must drop this class immediately. The latest version of a browser is recommended, Firefox and Chrome work well with Blackboard – some others, like Safari, work less well. Internet connectivity problems and home computer problems are not considered adequate excuses for missing assigned learning activities. Technical support concerns should be submitted to the IT Service Center via phone at (325) 942-2911 or toll-free at (866) 942-2911.

2. All assignments need to be submitted through the posted Blackboard or TurnItIn link in the Blackboard course site. You should record the confirmation number received when you submit your work. **Assignments are not accepted via email.**

3. All files uploaded to Blackboard must be in either a .docx or pdf format. Any files I cannot open for ANY reason (technical incompatibility, corruption, etc.) will be counted as zeros. All written assignments must be typed.

4. All formatting and citations should conform to MLA standards. For more information and examples of formatting and citation, please consult [Purdue OWL](#).

Attendance Policies:

Due dates for all assignments are listed in each module. All assignments must be turned in completely and on time. Each module will open and close on specific dates. Once a module is closed, no additional assignments from that module will be accepted. It is important to use your time wisely and watch due dates. All students are to adhere to all ASU policies concerning attendance as contained in [OP 10.04](#) and [OP10.19](#). If you have a conflict for a deadline, you should submit your materials early. If you are sick, I still expect you to still get your work done. If you are catastrophically ill and under the prolonged care of a physician, you should contact me as soon as you can (prior to missing deadlines) and we can work something out.

Evaluation:

Your final grade is determined by your performance in the following areas:

Weekly Discussions via Webex	20%
Response Papers (3)	60 %
Revised Paper for Final	20 %

Response Papers:

At three times during the semester, students must submit a paper that responds to the assigned text. These papers must be approximately **500-750 words** and should represent the students' most polished and complex understanding of the text assigned. These papers will be due on the appointed Sundays by 11:59PM.

Revision of Response Paper

During the last week of the course, the student will select and revise a previous paper submitted for this course and will integrate feedback, make changes, expand or revise portions and submit the paper for an entirely new grade that will be marked down as a final exam grade.

Communication:

The course is designed to offer regular and substantive interaction between students and me, your professor. Both groups are responsible for effective, appropriate, and timely communications and interactions in the course.

Student Communication:

Students should initiate communications with instructors through in-person office hours, telephone, or the ASU email system. Students should check Blackboard and email frequently for announcements and reminders. If you would prefer to ask a peer a question, you should post to the Class Café for questions you have about the course. It is an expectation of this department that you use academic and professional writing skills and always treat your interlocutor with respect. Technical support concerns should be submitted to the IT Service Center via phone at (325) 042-2911 or toll-free at (866) 942-2911.

Professor Communication:

I will provide communications relevant to the course and subject matter through weekly emails, Blackboard announcements, interactions during learning activities such as moderating discussion boards, and feedback on submitted assignments. These course activities help build a sense of community among learners. I will typically respond to email within 24 hours. I leave Class Café discussions to the students in the class and will only check into those discussions periodically.

Blackboard®:

This course operates a Blackboard website, where you will find important announcements, assignment prompts and guidelines, and relevant handouts. You will turn in your short response papers through Blackboard via TurnItIn®, a plagiarism detection software. You will find information on the submission process and other information regarding the class at <<http://blackboard.angelo.edu>>. You should check Blackboard daily to stay abreast of new assignments, changes in the syllabus and announcements.

Statement on Academic Honesty:

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both the print and web versions of the Student Handbook. Your participation in English 2321 assumes your agreement to ASU’s honor code.

If you do not understand the rules regarding plagiarism as outlined in the Academic Honor Code, it is incumbent upon you to seek clarification from me *prior* to the first assignment. In addition to asking me, you may consult the [Center for Academic Integrity](#). I have no patience for plagiarism: any student who violates the Academic Honor Code will receive a failing grade for the semester.

Calendar of Readings and Assignments

This syllabus is subject to change.

It is the student’s responsibility to complete all assignments posted here and/or on Blackboard.

Wk #	Readings	Assignments Due
ONE 7/11- 7/17	Rossetti, “Goblin Market” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to “The Victorian Age” • Weblink to British Library “Introduction to Goblin Market” & “Pre-Raphaelites” 	
TWO 7/18- 7/24	Carroll, <i>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weblink to British Library “Understanding Alice,” & “Anthropomorphism in Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” 	Response Paper One Due: “Goblin Market”
THREE 7/25- 7/31	Stevenson, <i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations by EAK: “Analyzing Hyde,” “Dualism,” “Jekyll and Hyde,” & “Jekyll’s Narrative” 	Response Paper Two Due “Alice”
FOUR 8/1-8/7	Doyle <i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weblink to British Library “An Introduction to Hound of the Baskervilles” 	Response Paper Three Due: “Jekyll and Hyde”
FIVE 8/8- 8/12	n/a	Revision Due by 11:59pm on 8/12