

VCC 205 H5F / Monsters! / Winter 2015
Professor Meghan Sutherland

Lectures: M 3:00-5:00, IB 150

Mandatory Screenings: W 6:00-9:00, CC 1140

Tutorials: M 5:00-6:00 & M 6:00-7:00 (IB 340 & IB 320—Consult Your Schedule for Section & Room Number)

E-mail: meghan.sutherland@utoronto.ca

Office Hours: M 12:00-1:00 & By Appointment (CC 3022)

Teaching Assistants

Lisa Peden (lisa.peden@utoronto.ca)

Heather White (heather.e.white@gmail.com)

TA Office Hours

L. Peden: W 5:00-6:00 & By Appointment (CC 3010)

H. White: M 9:30-10:30 & By Appointment (CC 3015)

Course Description

This course examines monster movies and television shows alongside readings from monster literature, comics, and critical essays. It considers the social significance of the monster in order to learn something about how the threat of the monster relates to historical anxieties concerning mass-media technologies, social deviance, and the hybrid forms of visual media culture that we typically associate with the era of 21st-century convergence culture but have actually defined the genre of monster media from its ancient beginnings.

Required Books (Available at UTM Bookstore)

Zora Neale Hurston, *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009).

Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis and Other Stories*, trans. Michael Hoffman (New York: Penguin Classics, 2008).

All other readings will be available on the Blackboard course website.

Blackboard: In addition to supplementary readings, important course announcements and assignments, including changes in reading assignments, among other things, will appear on Blackboard, the online Learning Management System of UTM <https://portal.utoronto.ca/>. In order to access the portal, log in using your UTOR id and password. Use of Blackboard requires a U of T email address. If you have not activated your university email account, please do so immediately so that you will not miss any important messages or information. *It is a requirement of the course that you regularly check your U of T email as well as the Blackboard site for information relevant to the course.*

Course Workload/Grading Scheme

1. **Short Paper** (1000-1300 words / approx. 4-5 pages in 12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced and with standard margins, not including footnotes and bibliography): For this assignment you will write an essay responding to a prompt that will be posted in advance on the Announcements page of the course. Further details on assignment provided in class. **Due on Monday, 2 February (Week 5). Submit a hard copy at the beginning of lecture & post an electronic copy on turnitin.com by 2:00 PM that day. (20%)**
2. **Final Paper** (1500-2300 words / approx. 6-8 pages in 12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced and with standard margins, not including footnotes and bibliography): This essay will address a topic selected from a list of prompts that includes the option to write on a topic of your choice (with permission from your TA or professor). Further details about the assignment will be given in class. **Due on Friday, 3 April (Week 13). Submit an electronic copy on turnitin.com by 12:00 PM; no hard copy required. (40%)**
3. **Quizzes:** Three short quizzes will assess your comprehension of the material covered in corresponding periods of course readings, lectures, and screenings. Quizzes will be multiple-choice and/or short answer and will be held in tutorials on assigned dates (26 January, 2 March, 30 March). **(20%)**

4. **Attendance and Participation** in lecture, screening, and tutorials are mandatory. **More than two unexcused absences (in all sections of the course) will automatically result in the lowering of your final attendance and participation grade.** Students that earn full credit in this area will arrive at each meeting on time and ready to discuss the assigned readings and screenings in detail. One other thing: please be aware that texting, use of computers or phones for unrelated activities, and other rude or disruptive behavior in class will seriously affect your participation grade. See attendance policy and policies on late and missed work for further information on general course procedures. (20%)

Note: Students must complete all components of the course workload in order to earn a passing grade.

Screenings: All screenings are subject to change. They are also mandatory and covered by the attendance policy. Some of what we screen will be rare material that cannot be found online or in video stores. Students are thus required to enroll in the practicum and a tutorial without exception, and must attend both sessions for the entire time they meet.

Course Schedule

***Note: Reading assignments may be adjusted as the term continues; any changes will be announced in lecture and on Blackboard.**

Course Schedule:

ONE. 5 JANUARY. INTRODUCTION: MONSTERS & MONSTRATION

No readings.

Screening: *Freaks* / *American Horror Story: Freakshow*

TWO. 12 JANUARY. FREAKS & THE NATURAL ORDER

Reading: George Bataille, "The Deviations of Nature," in *Visions of Excess* / Goodall, "Out of the Natural Order, from *Performance and Evolution in the Age of Darwin* / Foucault, Excerpt from *Abnormal*

Screening: *Frankenstein* / *The Munsters*

THREE. 19 JANUARY. FRANKENSTEIN & THE ANGRY MOB

Reading: James A. Heffernan, "Looking at the Monster," from *Critical Inquiry* / Jean-Pierre Oudart, "Cinema and Suture," in *Screen* / Gustave Le Bon, Excerpt from *The Crowd*

Screening: *Nosferatu*

FOUR. 26 JANUARY. VAMPIRES

Reading: Freud, Excerpt from *The Uncanny* / Lloyd Michaels, "Nosferatu, or the Phantom of Cinema," in *Play It Again, Sam*
QUIZ #1

Screening: *Dracula* / *The Munsters*

FIVE. 2 FEBRUARY. VAMPIRE REPRODUCTION

Reading: Franco Moretti, "The Dialectic of Fear," in *New Left Review* / Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism and Consumer Society"

SHORT PAPER DUE

Screening: *Trouble Every Day*

SIX. 9 FEBRUARY. REPRODUCING VAMPIRES

Reading: Jean-Luc Nancy, "Icon of Fury," from *Film-Philosophy* / Julia Kristeva, Excerpt from *Powers of Horror* / Barbara Creed, Excerpt from *The Monstrous-Feminine*

Screening: *I Walked with a Zombie*

SEVEN. 16 FEBRUARY. NO MEETING.

EIGHT. 23 FEBRUARY. ZOMBIES

Reading: Zora Neale Hurston, Excerpt from *Tell My Horse* / Kobena Mercer, “Monster Metaphors,” from *Screen*

Screening: *Dawn of the Dead*

NINE. 2 MARCH. ZOMBIE RULE

Reading: Linda Williams, “Film Bodies,” from *Gender, Genre, and Excess* / Meghan Sutherland, “Rigor/Mortis,” from *Framework*

QUIZ # 2

Screening: *The Fly*

TEN. 9 MARCH. MUTATIONS & MASSES

Reading: Franz Kafka, “The Metamorphosis” / Lynn Spigel, Excerpt of “The Home Theater,” in *Make Room for TV*

Screening: *Godzilla*

ELEVEN. 16 MARCH. MASSES & MUTATIONS

Reading: Moench et al., Selections from *Essential Godzilla* / Bradford W. Wright, “Youth in Crisis,” in *Comic Book Nation*

Screening: *Zombieland* / *World War Z*

TWELVE. 23 MARCH. SOVEREIGN MONSTERS & THE SOCIAL CORPUS

Reading: Thomas Hobbes, Excerpt from *Leviathan* / Carl Schmitt, Excerpt from *The Concept of the Political* / Steven Pokornowski, “Insecure Lives,” from *Literature and Medicine*

Screening: No screening.

THIRTEEN. 30 MARCH. COURSE CONCLUSION & PAPER PREPARATION

Reading: No new reading.

QUIZ #3

Final Paper Due on Friday, April 3 at 12:00 PM. Submit electronic copy to Turnitin.com; no hard copy required. See assignment sheet for confirmation of further submission details.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Policy on Late Work: Term work must be submitted by the assigned date. A penalty of 5% per day of lateness up to and including work submitted on the last day of the term will be applied by the Instructor. Work will not be accepted beyond one week after the due date (unless granted an extension due to special considerations).

Missed Term Work, Tests and Extensions: Extensions or deferred tests (including quizzes) can only be granted because of dire circumstances (severe illness, death of a loved one, etc.). We cannot make allowances because of work schedules, pre-arranged holidays, and so on. **Students must complete all components of the course in order to earn a passing grade.**

Student absences must be declared on ROSI. Supporting documentation is required (e.g. U of T medical certificate, death certificate, etc.).

Students who miss a test due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. illness, or an accident) can request that the Department grant them special consideration.

All requests for make-up tests and for extended time to submit term work beyond the last day of classes must be submitted **within 48 hours from the date of the missed test or assignment**. Requests must be submitted on a special form obtained from the DVS Office or www.utm.utoronto.ca/dvs and submitted to the Undergraduate Counsellor (CC3051). If you submit medical documentation make sure it contains the statement “*This student was unable to write the test (or submit term work by the last day of classes, if applicable) on (date) for medical reasons.*” You **MUST** see your physician **on the day of the missed test or the day later** or your request will be denied. A statement merely acknowledging a report of illness made by the student to the physician is NOT acceptable. For further information on this procedure visit www.utm.utoronto.ca/dvs.

Should an illness prevent you from submitting your form to the office in person within 48 hours, emailing your documents will be accepted. This is on the understanding that the original copy will be submitted within one week from the date of the missed test or assignment. Late submissions will NOT be considered.

In case of emergencies (medical or other) contact the Undergraduate Counsellor at 905-828-3899 or email s.sullivan@utoronto.ca within 24hrs of the due date of an assignment or test.

No penalty will be assigned if your request for special consideration, described above, was successful.

Attendance Policy: If you wish to successfully complete this course, you must attend lectures, screenings, and tutorials. Failure to do so will most likely result in an inability to fulfill the course requirements and pass the course. **Allowable absences include:** observance of a religious holy day, illness documented by a doctor’s note, and participating in an officially approved off-campus trip. You must inform me no later than week 2 of the course of any anticipated absences this semester. If your absence is declared on ROSI and is deemed legitimate, verified, and approved, you will have an opportunity to make up missed work. Absences that are not accepted include those involving personal travel, extended vacation time, unverified medical reasons, and purported conflicts with a work/employment schedule, etc.

You are supposed to be familiar with the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/regcal/WEBGEN124.html>) and Code of Student Conduct (see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/regcal/WEBGEN125.html>), which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offenses at the University of Toronto.

DVS Grammar and Spelling Standard for Written Assignments: We expect students enrolled in university courses to have mastered basic writing skills. All papers must exhibit proper spelling (including proper names, places, and words in foreign languages) and grammar. Refined grammatical points over which there is disagreement even amongst experts are not at issue. **The DVS Grammar (Fall 2011) Blackboard site (under “My Organizations” on your Blackboard page)** offers workshops and quizzes targeting specific errors. Please make use of this excellent resource to improve your writing skills. The DVS and the Academic Skills Centre also highly recommend that you purchase: Lynn Troyka and Douglass Hesse, *Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers*, Fifth Canadian Edition (Toronto: Pearson, 2009), with its accompanying Workbook for Writers and/or online exercises.

Turnitin.com: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. Students are permitted to opt out of using Turnitin, but will need to notify me well in advance so that we can make alternative arrangements to check the work as rigorously. For instructions on using turnitin.com, see: <http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/Assets/CTSI+Digital+Assets/PDFs/turnitin-guide-students.pdf>.

University Statement on Academic Honesty: Honesty and fairness are considered fundamental to the University’s mission, and, as a result, all those who violate those principles are dealt with as if they were damaging the integrity of the University itself. When students are suspected of cheating or a similar academic offence, they are typically surprised at how formal and seriously the matter is dealt with—and how severe the consequences can be if it is determined that cheating did occur. The University of Toronto treats academic offences very seriously. Students should note that copying, plagiarizing, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be subject to academic

discipline ranging from a mark of zero on the assignment, test or examination to dismissal from the university as outlined in the UTM calendar. Any student abating or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties.

University Statement on Plagiarism: Students are assumed to be informed about plagiarism and the university-wide policies related to it, and are also expected to familiarize themselves with the handout titled “How Not to Plagiarize” see:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>.

AccessAbility: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Resource Centre as soon as possible. The UTM AccessAbility Resource Centre staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The Centre is located in Room 2047, Davis Building. Telephone: (905) 569-4699, Email: access.utm@utoronto.ca, URL: <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/access/>. The sooner you let me know your needs the quicker I can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Academic Skills Centre: The Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre (housed in the UTM Library) offers both individual appointments and workshops for students having difficulty with reading and writing skills. The RGASC offers a full range of workshops, seminars, and individual consultations to help students identify and develop the skills they need for success in their studies. Phone: 905-828-3858, Email: academicskills.utm@utoronto.ca