

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

<https://ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2020-2021 MLCS 399 A2: Special Topics: Crime Fiction
(Fall Term)

Note: Remote Delivery

Instructor: Irene Sywenky

Time: MWF 13:00-13:50

Office: Remote

Place: Remote

E-mail: isywenky@ualberta.ca

Office Hours: Remote, MW 14:00-15:00

Course Website: eClass

or by appointment

Bachelor of Arts / Major in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies/undergraduate-program-information/prospective-undergraduate-students>

Course Prerequisite: None

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate prerequisites for the course.

Technology requirements (minimum): This course requires that you have access to a computer with a camera and microphone, the internet with adequate speed, and that you can use Zoom and eClass. Please consult the following page to ensure you have the minimum technology specifications recommended by the University:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/information-services-and-technology/services/software-hardware-vendors/technology-requirements.html>.

It is your responsibility as a student to ensure that you have the appropriate technology for the course.

Experiential Learning Component

- this course has a significant experiential learning component (15% or more of the course grade)

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

- Yes No, not needed

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class

- Other (please specify)
- NA

Course Description, Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

This course is a survey of crime fiction from a historical, cross-cultural, and comparative perspective as one of the most popular and distinctive genres of contemporary literature. Students will explore the evolution of crime fiction since its beginnings in the nineteenth century and the development of its many subgenres (e.g., classic, Golden Age, hardboiled, police procedural). Students will analyze a wide range of representative texts from a variety of cultural contexts (Europe, Asia, North and South Americas) and examine the ideologies that shaped these narratives. Particular attention will be paid to issues of gender, class, race, law and justice in respective historical and socio-political contexts. Some of the authors discussed in this course will be Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, Raymond Chandler, Georges Simenon, Kathy Reichs, Keigo Higashino, and Ragnar Jónasson. Readings will include short stories and novels, and will be complemented by examples from other media (film and TV series).

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- discuss the history of crime fiction and its subgenres;
- critically engage with the concept of popular fiction and its role in modern culture;
- identify and discuss representative characteristics and themes of crime fiction as a global literary form;
- develop a theoretical vocabulary for discussing the genre;
- recognize the diverse audiences and ideological functions of this literary form;
- and present an analysis of the text(s) of their choice in a specific cultural and socio-political context.

Course Format: The course will use a combination of asynchronous and synchronous learning, and will take place on eClass and Zoom. Short 15-minute lectures will be posted to eClass by the instructor; these will be supplemented by assigned home readings, live/synchronous class discussions (approximately once a week; see the detailed schedule on eClass) and presentations (live on Zoom or pre-recorded), and contributions to eClass forums.

Required Texts:

All required texts (literary and theoretical) will be available online free of charge or posted by the instructor on eClass.

Other required texts to be purchased (any edition or format):

Kathy Reichs, *Bones Are Forever*, 2013.

Keigo Higashino, *The Devotion of Suspect X*, trans. Alexander O. Smith, [2005] 2012.

Ragnar Jónasson, *Rupture*, trans. Quentin Bates, [2012] 2016.

Additional Course Fees

Yes No

Important Dates: [See Academic Schedule in current Calendar](#)

First Day of Class: September 1, 2020

Add/Delete Date: September 15, 2020

50% Withdrawal Date: October 2, 2020

Fall Term Reading Week: November 9-13, 2020

Withdrawal Date: November 30, 2020

Last Day of Class: December 7, 2020

Components of Course Grade (see “Explanatory Notes”):

2 short critical response papers (flexible submission)	20% (2 x 10%)
Presentation	15%
Midterm examination (October 19)	25%
Participation	10%
<u>Final essay</u> (December 7)	30%

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Critical Response Paper: Each of the two papers is expected to be approximately 500-600 words long and show your critical engagement with the text in question (literary, visual, or critical). Because this is a short assignment, the paper is expected to offer a narrowly focused critical discussion/analysis of a specific aspect of the text of your choice from the class reading list.

Presentation is expected to be about 10-12 min. long and can be prepared in an individual or group format (live on Zoom or pre-recorded). It is a focused discussion of a specific topic related to one of the texts from the class reading list. Students will sign up for topics throughout the term. All presentation topics must be approved by the instructor.

Midterm Examination will be a series of short focused answers based on the texts covered in class. The examination assignment will provide a selection of questions to choose from.

In *Final Essay* (about 2500 words) you are expected to present a critical, contextualized analysis of the primary source(s) of your choice (literary or visual). This research essay will allow you to develop a more complex argument (compared to a critical response paper) and engage with the current scholarship on the subject.

Participation mark includes your regular attendance of live classes, preparedness with readings, informed participation in class discussions, and weekly contributions to eClass forums.

More detailed assignment instructions and guidelines will be available on eClass.

Required Notes:

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.

Student Responsibilities:

Academic Integrity:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the [Code of Student Behaviour](#) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

All students should consult [the Academic Integrity website](#). If you have any questions, ask your instructor.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students, faculty and staff are able to work and study in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Sexual Violence Policy:

It is the policy of the University of Alberta that sexual violence committed by any member of the University community is prohibited and constitutes

misconduct. Resources and more information can be found at <https://www.ualberta.ca/campus-life/sexual-violence>

Territorial Statement:

“The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.” (*from the beginning of the Calendar*).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

Deferral of term work is a privilege and not a right; there is no guarantee that a deferral will be granted. Misrepresentation of facts to gain a deferral is a serious breach of the Code of Student Behaviour.

In this course, attendance, preparedness with readings, and participation (which includes contributions to live class discussions and regular forum posts) are required.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult in advance with the instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension. Otherwise, assignments may be handed in with a 5%-per-day penalty assessed for each day of lateness.

Disclaimer:

Any typographical errors in this syllabus are subject to change and will be announced in class and posted on eClass. The date of the final examination is set by the Registrar and takes precedence over the final examination date reported in this syllabus.

Student Resources:

The best all-purpose website for student services is: <https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students>.

Accessibility Resources: (1 – 80 SUB)

The University of Alberta is committed to creating work and learning communities that inspire and enable all people to reach their full potential. Accessibility Resources promotes an accessible, inclusive, and universally designed environment. For general information to register for services visit the [Accessibility Resources](#) webpage.

The Academic Success Centre: (1-80 SUB)

[The Academic Success Centre](#) offers a variety of workshops on effective study and exam strategies. There are in-person and online sessions available for a modest fee.

The Centre for Writers: (1-42 Assiniboia Hall)

The [Centre for Writers](#) offers free one-on-one writing support to students, faculty, and staff. Students can request consultation for a writing project at any stage of development. Instructors can request class visits and presentations.

Health and Wellness Support: There are many health and community services available to current students. For more information visit the [Health and Wellness Support](#) webpage.

Office of the Student Ombuds:

The [Office of the Student Ombuds](#) offers confidential interviews, advice and support to students facing academic, discipline, interpersonal and financial difficulties.

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%

<p>Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.</p>	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
<p>Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.</p>	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
<p>Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.</p>	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
<p>Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.</p>	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
<p>Failure.</p>	F	0.0	0-59

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