

**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK  
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY  
CANTON, NEW YORK**



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**ENGL 349 – Classic Detective Fiction**

**Prepared By: Emily Hamilton-Honey**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES  
NOVEMBER 2015**

- A. **TITLE:** Classic Detective Fiction
- B. **COURSE NUMBER:** ENGL 349
- C. **CREDIT HOURS:** 3
- D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** Determined By Semester
- E. **COURSE LENGTH:** 15 weeks
- F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Spring
- G. **HOURS OF LECTURE, LABORATORY, RECITATION, TUTORIAL, ACTIVITY:**  
3 lecture hours per week
- H. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** This course explores the genre of detective fiction from its origins in the nineteenth century to the present day. Course content and time periods may vary by semester. Students learn literary elements of detective fiction, examine the development of the detective as a literary figure and detective fiction as a genre, and analyze depictions of the law and legal system. Course may include, but is not limited to, British and American detective fiction by Poe, Collins, Conan Doyle, Chesterton, Sayers, Hammett, Christie, Chandler, MacDonald, James, Rendell, Cross, Elizabeth Peters, Ellis Peters, Perry, George, and King.
- I. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:**  
 a. Pre-requisite(s): ENGL 101: Expository Writing AND one lower-level literature course AND 45 credit hours earned.  
 b. Co-requisite(s): none
- J. **GOALS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES):**  
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

<b><u>Course Objective</u></b>	<b><u>Institutional SLO</u></b>
a. <i>Apply</i> terms common to the humanities.	<b>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</b>
b. <i>Analyze</i> the stylistic differences employed by the course authors.	<b>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</b>
c. <i>Argue</i> for specific interpretations of course materials.	<b>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</b>
d. <i>Evaluate</i> historical and sociological events as they are reflected in and impact the development of detective fiction.	<b>1. Communication 2. Crit. Thinking</b>

K. **TEXTS:**

(Representative texts; texts chosen by instructor)

- Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*. 1939. New York: Vintage, 1988.
- Chesterton, G. K. *Father Brown: The Essential Tales*. Ed. P. D. James. New York: Modern Library-Random House, 2005.
- Christie, Agatha. *Murder on the Orient Express*. 1934. New York: HarperCollins, 2011.
- . *Murder at the Vicarage*. 1930. New York: HarperCollins, 2011.
- Collins, Wilkie. *The Woman in White*. 1860. New York: Penguin, 2003.
- Cross, Amanda. *In the Last Analysis*. 1964. New York: Fawcett-Ballantine, 2011.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *Sherlock Holmes: The Major Stories With Contemporary Critical Essays*. Ed. John A. Hodgson. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1993.
- Forrest, Katherine V. *Amateur City*. 1984. Tallahassee, FL: Bella Books, 2011.
- George, Elizabeth. *A Great Deliverance*. 1988. New York: Bantam Dell-Random House, 2007.

- Hammett, Dashiell. *The Maltese Falcon*. 1930. New York: Vintage, 1992.
- . *The Thin Man*. 1934. New York: Vintage, 1989.
- Highsmith, Patricia. *Strangers on a Train*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001.
- James, P. D. *Cover Her Face*. 1962. New York: Scribner-Simon & Schuster, 2001.
- King, Laurie R. *A Grave Talent*. 1993. New York: Picador, 2014.
- . *The Beekeeper's Apprentice*. 1994. New York: Picador, 2014.
- Macdonald, Ross. *The Moving Target*. 1949. New York: Vintage, 1998.
- Panek, LeRoy Lad and Mary M. Bendel Simso, eds. *Early American Detective Stories: An Anthology*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008.
- Perry, Anne. *The Cater Street Hangman*. 1979. New York: Ballantine Books-Random House, 2008.
- Peters, Elizabeth. *Crocodile on the Sandbank*. 1975. New York: Grand Central Publishing-Hachette Book Group, 2013.
- Peters, Ellis. *A Morbid Taste for Bones*. 1977. New York: Grand Central Publishing-Hachette Book Group, 1994.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. *The First Detective: The Complete Auguste Dupin Stories*. Leonaur, 2009.
- Rendell, Ruth. *From Doon With Death*. 1964. New York: Ballantine Books-Random House, 2007.
- Sayers, Dorothy L. *Whose Body?* 1923. Mineola, NY: Dover Books, 2009.
- . *Clouds of Witness*. 1926. New York: Bourbon Street Books-HarperCollins, 2014.

#### L. REFERENCES:

(Representative references; references chosen by instructor)

- Frank, Lawrence. *Victorian Detective Fiction and the Nature of Evidence: The Scientific Investigations of Poe, Dickens, and Doyle*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- Grossman, Jonathan H. *The Art of Alibi: English Law Courts and the Novel*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2002.
- Gruesser, John Cullen. *Race, Gender, and Empire in American Detective Fiction*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013.
- Hadley, Mary. *British Women Mystery Writers: Authors of Detective Fiction With Female Sleuths*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2002.
- James, P. D. *Talking About Detective Fiction*. London: Faber & Faber, 2010.
- Kim, Julie H., ed. *Murdering Miss Marple: Essays on Gender and Sexuality in the New Golden Age of Women's Crime Fiction*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012.
- . *Race and Religion in the Postcolonial British Detective Story*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2005.
- Knight, Stephen. *Crime Fiction Since 1800: Detection, Death, Diversity*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Kungi, Carla T. *Creating the Fictional Female Detective: The Sleuth Heroines of British Women Writers, 1890-1940*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006.
- Markowitz, Judith A. *The Gay Detective Novel: Lesbian and Gay Main Characters and Themes in Mystery Fiction*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2004.
- Panek, LeRoy Lad. *The Origins of the American Detective Story*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006.
- Priestman, Martin, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003.
- Scaggs, John. *Crime Fiction: The New Critical Idiom*. New York: Routledge, 2005.
- Shaw, Bruce. *Jolly Good Detecting: Humor in English Crime Fiction of the Golden Age*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014.
- Watson, Kate. *Women Writing Crime Fiction, 1860-1880: Fourteen American, British, and Australian Authors*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012.
- Worthington, Heather. *Key Concepts in Crime Fiction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Zembo, James. *The Detective Novels of Agatha Christie: A Reader's Guide*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008.

M. **EQUIPMENT:** Technology-enhanced classroom.

N. **GRADING METHOD:** A-F

O. **MEASUREMENT CRITERIA/METHODS**

- Quizzes
- Papers
- Participation
- Applied Learning Project

P. **DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE:** Which genres are covered depends on the time period and authors selected for an individual semester.

- I. Early detective fiction
  - A. Foundational elements of the mystery
  - B. Logic and reasoning
  - C. The nature of evidence and critique of police forces
  - D. Social order: class differences and detectives
  - E. Gentlemen detectives: Dupin, Holmes, Wimsey, Poirot
- II. Hard-boiled detective fiction
  - A. Cities and urban decay
  - B. Working-class private eyes
  - C. “Fallen” women
  - D. e. g., Sam Spade, Lew Archer, Phillip Marlowe
- III. The Police Procedural
  - A. New technologies and methods of crime solving
  - B. Emphasizes witness interviews, forensics, profiling
  - C. e. g., Inspector Lynley, Inspector Wexford, Kate Martinelli
- IV. Historical detective fiction
  - A. Mysteries set in a particular time period, but not written in that time period.
  - B. Mysteries in which a modern detective investigates a crime from the past.
  - C. e. g., Charlotte and Thomas Pitt, Brother Cadfael, Mary Russell
- V. Female detectives
  - A. How are female detectives portrayed differently (or are they?) than male?
  - B. Female detectives really emerge (not coincidentally) after the women’s movements of the ‘60s and ‘70s.
  - C. e. g., Kate Fansler, Amelia Peabody, Mary Russell, Kate Martinelli, Kate Delafield.

Q. **LABORATORY OUTLINE:** None.

## Methodology on Record

**NOTE:** Below is our methodology on record. We employed a different rubric this semester in our attempt to comply with the initial Task Stream directives we acquired mid semester. Those directives were rescinded after we made changes to our rubric, but we decided to stay the course with our updated rubric since assessment via Task Stream is inevitable.

### GER 7 Humanities

Students will demonstrate:

- knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities in addition to those encompassed by other knowledge areas required by the General Education program.

#### Method:

Classes will be chosen by the Director of Institutional Research BY THE FOURTH WEEK OF THE SEMESTER IN WHICH THE ASSESSMENT IS NEEDED. A minimum 50% sampling rate will be used. Classes approved for GER 7 that are being taught that are not encompassed in another knowledge area will be assessed.

Instructors will develop and assign one of the following:

1. An essay question which allows students to demonstrate their capabilities in all course objectives

OR

2. A short-answer exam with separate questions, each of which will be designed to gauge the students' capabilities in a single course objective

OR

3. a multiple choice exam with questions that address each course objective.

Students will submit their responses electronically via a designated digital drop box on ANGEL. To ensure the submissions remain anonymous, instructors must copy and paste student responses into a separate word document before submitting to their second reader. The instructor and another Humanities faculty member will individually assess students' answers using the Humanities Assessment Rubric. The first and second readers will provide their assessment to the Humanities assessment coordinator. The coordinator will be responsible to average the readers' results for each student. The Humanities assessment coordinator will then average the scores of all the students by section and as a whole for completion of the *Humanities Assessment Report Form*.

## HUMANITIES ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

<b>COURSE OBJECTIVE</b> (input each course objective from course outline and syllabus in the spaces below)	<b>Exceeds Standards</b> (Score between 4.0—3.01)	<b>Meets Standards</b> (Score between 3.0—2.01)	<b>Approaches Standards</b> (Score between 2.0—1.01)	<b>Does Not Meet Standards</b> (Score between 1.0—0.0)
	Student performance exceeds requirements of course objectives	Student performance meets requirements of course objectives	Student performance approaches requirements of course objectives	Student performance does not meet requirements of course objectives
	Student performance exceeds requirements of course objectives	Student performance meets requirements of course objectives	Student performance approaches requirements of course objectives	Student performance does not meet requirements of course objectives
	Student performance exceeds requirements of course objectives	Student performance meets requirements of course objectives	Student performance approaches requirements of course objectives	Student performance does not meet requirements of course objectives
	Student performance exceeds requirements of course objectives	Student performance meets requirements of course objectives	Student performance approaches requirements of course objectives	Student performance does not meet requirements of course objectives
	Student performance exceeds requirements of course objectives	Student performance meets requirements of course objectives	Student performance approaches requirements of course objectives	Student performance does not meet requirements of course objectives
	Student performance exceeds requirements of course objectives	Student performance meets requirements of course objectives	Student performance approaches requirements of course objectives	Student performance does not meet requirements of course objectives

# GENERAL ASSESSMENT EXPLANATION

## INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTOR:

General Education Assessment is a method used by SUNY colleges throughout New York State to collect information on how well the students are learning what the faculty believes the students are being taught. The purpose of assessment is to provide faculty and students with information and insights needed to improve teaching effectiveness and learning quality.

Although the immediate focus of assessment is the improvement of teaching and learning, it also results in additional statistical information that can be used for multiple purposes. Therefore, assessment must be done conscientiously and the results reported as accurately as possible.

Knowing this, it may be helpful for you to read the following statement to your students before assessment:

**INFORMATION FOR THE STUDENTS:**

General Education Assessment is a method used by SUNY colleges throughout New York State to collect information on how well the students are learning what the faculty believes the students are being taught.

The purpose of assessment is to provide faculty and students with information and insights needed to improve teaching effectiveness and learning quality; they are not meant to measure individual student learning, but rather what the group, as a whole, has learned.

As a university, we take our assessment very seriously, and we would appreciate it if you would do the same. Assessment must be done conscientiously and the results reported as accurately as possible.

{Inform students of the 'how' and 'when' assessment will be completed for your individual courses.}



# Humanities Assessment

## DIRECTIONS

NOTE: NAME OF HUMANITIES ASSESSMENT PERSON IS: \_\_\_\_\_

### GENERAL DIRECTIONS:

Your course has been chosen as part of the General Education Assessment for Humanities. Within this packet of information you will find the necessary form for reporting assessment and other essential information.

**Please read through this document so that you are familiar with the process and are prepared to perform assessment for your selected section. There is a special note regarding assessment at the end of this packet.**

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**DIRECTIONS: HUMANITIES OBJECTIVE:** Students will demonstrate: knowledge of the conventions and methods of at least one of the humanities in addition to those encompassed by other knowledge areas required by the General Education program.

### **Instructors whose sections are being assessed:**

1. Be prepared to assign your essay question or short answer exam to your students, due by the last day of your class **[Date]**;
2. Student responses will be submitted electronically via a designated Angel drop box.
3. After collecting the completed assignment via digital drop box, copy and paste the responses into a single word document. **Number each paper (1—all)**;
4. Save the numbered student responses, without comments/markings/grading, for second reader;
5. Send the numbered student responses as an attachment via e-mail with CRN of the course section being evaluated to your assigned second reader. [list given below/see list below], no later than **[Date]**;
6. Instructors may also provide a list of the appropriate terminology taught during the semester, as well as a copy of any supplementary instructions given regarding his/her individual course for use with the assigned essay question;
7. Read original responses and assess based on given rubric, recording scores on the Humanities General Education Assessment form [below];
8. Turn in the completed Humanities General Education form to the Humanities Assessment person (Kirk Jones) no later than **[Date]**.

### **Second Readers (Assigned by Humanities Department Chair):**

Once you have received your manila folder with the photocopies of the student papers please follow steps 7 and 8 above. For Step 8, you should also give the Humanities Assessment person the attachment with student responses.

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**NOTE: If you do not understand any portion of this assessment plan, please see Humanities Assessment person [Kirk Jones] or the Humanities Chair [Nadine Jennings].**