

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



MASTER SYLLABUS

ENGL 349 – Classic Detective Fiction

CIP Code: 230101

**Prepared By: Emily Hamilton-Honey
September 2016**

**Revised By: Emily Hamilton-Honey
July 2019**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND LIBERAL ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND HUMANITIES
FALL 2019**

A. **TITLE:** Classic Detective Fiction

B. **COURSE NUMBER:** ENGL 349

C. **CREDIT HOURS:**

3 Credit Hours

3 Lecture Hours: 3 per week

Course Length: 15 Weeks

D. **WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE:** No

E. **GER CATEGORY:** None

F. **SEMESTER(S) OFFERED:** Spring

G. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** In this course students become familiar with 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.

H. **PRE-REQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES:**

a. Pre-requisite(s): ENGL 101: Expository Writing AND one lower-level literature course AND 45 credit hours earned with a cumulative GPA of 2.0.

b. Co-requisite(s): none

I. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

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

<u>Course Student Learning Outcome [SLO]</u>	<u>PSLO</u>	<u>GER</u>	<u>ISLO</u>
a. <i>Apply</i> terms common to the humanities.			1. Communication Skills (O or W)
b. <i>Analyze</i> the stylistic differences employed by the course authors.			2. Critical Thinking (CA)
c. <i>Argue</i> for specific interpretations of course materials.			2. Critical Thinking (CA)
d. <i>Evaluate</i> historical and sociological events as they are reflected in and impact the development of detective fiction.			2. Critical Thinking (IA)

KEY	<u>Institutional Student Learning Outcomes [ISLO 1 – 5]</u>
ISLO #	ISLO & Subsets
1	Communication Skills Oral [O], Written [W]
2	Critical Thinking <i>Critical Analysis [CA] , Inquiry & Analysis [IA] , Problem Solving [PS]</i>
3	Foundational Skills <i>Information Management [IM], Quantitative Lit./Reasoning [QTR]</i>
4	Social Responsibility <i>Ethical Reasoning [ER], Global Learning [GL], Intercultural Knowledge [IK], Teamwork [T]</i>
5	Industry, Professional, Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

J. **APPLIED LEARNING COMPONENT:** Yes X No

- Creative Works/Senior Project
- Research

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 [Barbara Mertz]. *Crocodile on the Sandbank*. 1975. New York: Grand Central Publishing-Hachette Book Group, 2013.

- Peters, Ellis [Edith Pargeter]. *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*. 2nd 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. SUGGESTED 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.