

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**  
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

**2017-2018 C LIT 228: A1 Literature, Popular Culture and the Visual Arts**  
(Fall Term)

Instructor: Irene Sywenky  
Office: 217A Arts / Convocation Hall  
Fax: 780-492-9106  
E-mail: isywenky@ualberta.ca

Time: MWF 11:00-11:50  
Place: T 1 96  
Office Hours: M 13:30-14:30, W 12:00-13:00,  
or by appointment  
Course Website: eClass

---

**Course Prerequisite:** N/A

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

Yes       No, not needed, no such projects approved.

**Community Service Learning** component

Required     Optional     None

**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

**Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)**

Yes       No

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This course is designed to introduce students to a selection of genres of popular fiction and culture (Detective, Horror, Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Romance). Some of the critical issues examined in the course are the definitions of popular fiction and popular culture; popular culture in a historical and cross-cultural perspective; the appeal of popular genres; popular genre formulas; audiences and reception. In addition to representative texts from the English-speaking world, students will explore examples from French, German, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Chinese, and Japanese traditions. Analysis of literary texts will be complemented by examination of other

media such as film, TV, and photography. Class format will combine lectures and discussions. By the end of this course successful students will be able to identify representative characteristics of these genres; recognize the diverse audiences and ideological functions of these genres during different historical periods; and present an analysis of the text(s) of their choice in a specific socio-historical context.

**Required Texts:**

Arthur Conan Doyle, *A Study in Scarlet* (Penguin), available at the U of A Bookstore |  
Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (Vintage), available at the U of A Bookstore  
Stephenie Meyer, *Twilight* (Little, Brown and Company), available at the U of A Bookstore

In addition to the above texts, a selection of other required literary and critical resources will be available to students on eClass.

**Recommended Texts:**

John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture*  
John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*

**Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):**

Term work:

2 critical response papers (500-600 words, flexible submission)	10% x 2
Take-home essay (2000 words, due December 1)	20%
Midterm examination (October 16, 50 minutes)	25%
Attendance and participation	5%
<u>Final examination</u> (December 18, 9am, 2 hours)	30%

*Fall / Winter Exam Planner for the 2017-2018 academic year can be found at the following site: <https://www.registraroffice.ualberta.ca/en/Examinations/Fall-2017-Winter-2018-Exam-Planner.aspx>*

**Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable):**

January 15, 2018 **OR** mutually agreeable arrangements prior to January 15 will be made with student(s) eligible for deferred exam.

**Explanatory Notes on Assignments:**

*Critical Response Paper:* The paper is expected to be approximately 500-600 words long and show your critical engagement with the text in question. 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.

*Take-home essay* is a research essay (about 2000 words excl. bibliography) where you are expected to present a critical, contextualized analysis of the primary source(s) of your choice. A 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.

Both *midterm and final examinations* consist of short essays where students are expected to address questions of their choice from the list offered by the instructor, and present a critical and informed discussion of one or more literary or visual texts covered in class.

More detailed assignment 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.”

***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 (online at [www.governance.ualberta.ca](http://www.governance.ualberta.ca)) 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.”

***Learning and Working Environment:***

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work 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](#).

***Academic Honesty:***

**All students** should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate](#)

[Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

**Students involved in language courses and translation courses** should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.”

**Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

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](#).

***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.

**In this course**, participation mark includes attendance and informed participation in class discussions and group activities.

***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.

**Student Accessibility Services:**

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-800 SUB; Email [sasrec@ualberta.ca](mailto:sasrec@ualberta.ca); Email; phone 780-492-3381).

**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	%
<b>Excellent.</b> 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.	A+	4.0	<b>97-100</b>
	A	4.0	<b>93-96</b>
	A-	3.7	<b>90-92</b>
<b>Good.</b> 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.	B+	3.3	<b>87-89</b>
	B	3.0	<b>83-86</b>
	B-	2.7	<b>80-82</b>
<b>Satisfactory.</b> 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.	C+	2.3	<b>77-79</b>
	C	2.0	<b>73-76</b>
	C-	1.7	<b>70-72</b>
<b>Poor/Minimal Pass.</b> 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.	D+	1.3	<b>65-69</b>
	D	1.0	<b>60-64</b>
<b>Failure.</b>	F	0.0	<b>0-59</b>