



**ENGL 2341.101&691 H1**  
**Forms of Literature**  
**Spring 2025**  
**12:30-1:50 MW**  
**LRC 257**

**Instructor:** Dr. Bernie Smiley, bsmiley@com.edu 409 933-8256

**Student hours and location:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Library M 003- Monday/Wed 11:00-12:30 & 2-3  
**Available online by request.**

**Required Textbooks:** All reading materials are online for free. Semester topic focus -- Literature of the Undead, exploring boundaries between life and death, the uncanny and its importance in modern culture and film.

**Course Description:** The study of one or more literary genres including, but not limited to, poetry, fiction, drama, and film. (Texas ACGM). Prerequisite: ENGL 1301 with a grade of “C” or better.

**Major Course Requirements:**

**Book/Film Reviews (minimum 2 pages, no secondary research):** Must be done outside of class. Review of each film/book will include a discussion of current events as they relate to the film or book and how or if the film/book reinterprets, changes, or shifts the norms of the genre.

**Essays:** For the major research-based essay assignment, you will pick a work outside of class assignments and research the historical and cultural norms of the work. Include a minimum of three secondary sources and build a critical argument based on your observations and close reading. Instructions for additional shorter essays will be distributed separately.

**Midterm/Final/Class Participation** You will have a midterm and a final exam as well as 3-5 shorter essays as written assignments. You will be required to watch one film and read one book outside of class and to write a review on each.

You will also be required to participate in class discussions and give an oral presentation. It is mandatory and necessary that you do so.

**Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula (methods of evaluation to be employed to include a variety of means to evaluate student performance):**

Essays 15%  
Reviews of book/film 15%

Midterm	30%
Final	30%
Participation	10%

**Grading Scale:**

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 70-79
- D = 60-69
- F = 59 or less

**Make-Up Policy:** There are no make-ups for missed tests. A student is responsible for any work missed in class. Some assignments such as peer reviews and group work may not be made-up. Students missing such assignments will receive zeros for those assignments. A student has 2 class periods to turn in missed in-class writing assignments. Failure to turn in missed in-class writing assignments within 2 class periods will be penalized. *It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor regarding any missed assignments or the need for make-up work.*

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance is expected for every class meeting. All students are required to attend every class promptly. If a student misses more than 4 (4) classes, he/she places the successful completion of this course in serious jeopardy. I reserve the right to drop you after two (4) missed classes.

**Tardiness Policy:** Any student tardy after attendance is absent for the day.

**Communicating with your instructor:** ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via Blackboard or other LMS)

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this
-------------------------	------------------------	-------------------

1. Identify key ideas, representative authors and works, significant historical or cultural events, and characteristic perspectives or attitudes expressed in the literature of different periods or regions.	Teamwork (TW)	<b>Assignment</b> Essay Style Midterm Oral Presentation
2. Analyze literary works as expressions of individual or communal values within the social, political, cultural, or religious contexts of different literary periods.		Essay Style Midterm
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of characteristic forms or styles of expression during different historical periods or in different regions.	Communication Skills (COM)	Essay Style Midterm
4 . Articulate the aesthetic principles that guide the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.	Critical Thinking Skills (CT)	Essay Style Midterm
5. Write the research based critical papers about the assigned readings in clear and grammatically correct prose, using various critical approaches to literature.		Research Assignment Oral Presentation

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams is an extremely serious offense and will result in a **grade of zero** on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

**Concerns/Questions Statement:** If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing

your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Brian Anderson-Department Chair of Humanities at (409) 933-8186 or BAnderson@com.edu.

## Course Outline:

Tentative Syllabus

Dates Subject to Change

Deadlines for shorter assignments, presentations, and essays to be announced.

### Week 1

Class Introduction and background on the novel *Dracula* and its importance in literature and beyond; why study of the “undead” matters given today’s cultural climate.

(Jan. 22-Jan. 27)

Read *Dracula* to Chapter VIII. Discussion of early film *Nosferatu*. Folklore and Christian symbolism; Pre-World War II archetypes in German cinema. Inherent fear of the outsider and “invasion” literature as its effect on racial discourse in literature.

### Week 2

Read *Dracula* to XV. Viewing of clips from seminal *Dracula* film (1931). Victorian cultural norms. Cultural context of film interpretation and why that matters.

Read *Dracula* to XXII. Hammer and Coppola film clips; evolution of *Dracula* and changing stereotypes of vampire iconography and imagery. Love and lust symbolism and imagery; vampire as representation of class tension and culture.

### Week 3

Finish *Dracula*. Clips from *Interview with a Vampire* (Rice) and *Shadow of the Vampire*. The changing face of vampires and the genre’s reshaping in the age of postmodernism. Psychological realism within the vampire genre.

### Week 4

The new vampires, from *Buffy* to *Twilight*; exploring social relevance of the changing face of horror. Remaking of sexuality, female empowerment, and youth culture in vampire lore.

Relationship to renewed interest in witches in culture and film.

Remakes/reimagining and keeping up with changing ideas in the Vampire genre.

### Week 5

Introduction of zombies and related symbolism and imagery. From the Greeks to and Anglo-Saxons. The undead in history and religion. “Simulations” of the undead in earlier literature, including stories from American Romanticism.

Racism in early zombie films: *White Zombie* and William Seabrook’s *The Magic Island*. The zombie as historical and cultural icon; interest in Haitian culture and religion. Confluence of Christian and African theologies.

### Week 6

*Night of the Living Dead* movie. Ethnicity and race in the zombie genre; reshaping of American society, culture, and counterculture in the 1960s and its effect on this emerging horror genre.

Rise of independent film and its importance in counterculture and the horror genres specifically.

Begin Richard Matheson’s *I Am Legend*. Fear of disease and its manifestation in the undead.

Concept of global pandemics and effect on society and effect of increased interest in environmental and biological sciences. “Plague” literature and its importance.

## Week 7

Zora Neale Hurston handout (from *Tell My Horse*) and lecture. Discussion/view clips from *Dawn of the Dead* film and related sequels. Consumerism in American society; the modern zombie genre and its metamorphosis within different cultural contexts and under different societal pressures.

Discussion/view clips from additional films and TV series from the genre. Evolution of the zombie genre and its response to modern fears and societal problems, including the military-industrial complex, gated communities, and the rise of YouTube culture in America. Freud and the Uncanny. Begin discussing and reading *Frankenstein*.

Discussion and clips from *Zombieland* and *Shaun of the Dead*. Satire that becomes reality; purposes and cultural importance of satire; postmodern undead culture and how genres examine and respond to their own works. Undead in satirical literature and use in modern culture/literature. Final Exam and Final Paper due.

## Week 8: FINAL EXAM

Other film and reading materials will be included throughout the semester.

## Institutional Policies and Guidelines

**Grade Appeal Process:** Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook [https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student Handbook 2024-2025 v2.pdf](https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2024-2025_v2.pdf). *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

**Academic Success & Support Services:** College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

**ADA Statement:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact:

Kimberly Lachney, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator

Phone: 409-933-8919

Email: [AccessibilityServices@com.edu](mailto:AccessibilityServices@com.edu)

Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, Student Success Center

**Textbook Purchasing Statement:** A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

**Withdrawal Policy:** Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a "W" grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week session is February 26. The last date to

withdraw from the 16-week session is April 21. The last date to withdraw for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week session is April 30.

**FN Grading:** The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

**Early Alert Program:** The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

**Resources to Help with Stress:**

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at [deanofstudents@com.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@com.edu) or [communityresources@com.edu](mailto:communityresources@com.edu).

**Nondiscrimination Statement:**

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.