

English 4317: Heroes and Villains
M/W 1:00-2:15
Spring 2018
Texas A&M University - Central Texas

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Kirchoff

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Office Hours: M/W 2:30-4:00; other times may be available by appointment

UNILERT (The Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University–Central Texas)
UNILERT is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in UNILERT through their myCT email account. Connect at www.TAMUCT.edu/UNILERT to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in UNILERT, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

COURSE OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION

Official Catalog Description

An in-depth study of one major theme in literary history. Topics vary and the course can be repeated for credit if taken under a different emphasis.

A Note from Dr. Kirchoff

This reading-intensive class is an exercise in thinking about the role characters play in (and outside of) a text, paying particular attention to the rather flexible notions of heroism and villainy. Scholars have been fascinated by the notion of heroes and villains as far back as Aristotle (as he writes about this in his *Poetics*), and scholarly journals, conferences, and books remain devoted to the subject today; in fact, the notion of heroism has become particularly in vogue with the rebirth the superhero, thanks to a seemingly endless parade of superhero blockbuster films.

Our class is interested in four main ideas:

- What are some different hero and villain archetypes, and how do they help us interpret a work of literature?
- How have literary heroes and villains changed over the years?
- How do superheroes take up classic heroic archetypes to shape their fictional universe?
- Why do we value literary characters who we identify with as a hero?

To answer these questions, we will be reading popular works of literature—many of which you (probably) are already familiar with—and a number articles and chapters focused on heroism in literature.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students should:

- Learn about different heroic archetypes, including the Epic Hero, the Tragic Hero, the Machiavellian Hero, the Anti-Hero and the Byronic Hero.
- Apply the archetypes to various works of literature to better understand the role of the hero (and villain) in literature.
- Analyze how the notion of hero and villainy has changed over time, paying particular attention to how specific heroic characters have (d)evolved over the years.
- Deconstruct the binary opposition of hero/villain.

Communicating with Dr. Kirchoff

Email is the best way to reach me. I typically check my email at least once a day, and will make a good faith effort to respond to email within 24 hours of my receipt of your message. If you would like to meet in person, I am available during office hours, and am often amenable to appointments outside my regular office hours.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Shakespeare's *Othello* (ISBN 9780393264227)

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (ISBN 9780393927931)

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (ISBN 9780393264869)

Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' *Watchmen* (ISBN 9781401245252)

Other readings are required throughout the semester, but will be provided by Kirchoff either in print, via email, or via Canvas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Graded Work

Paper One: 20%

Paper Two: 25%

Reading Responses and Discussion Questions: 20%

Small Group Presentations: 15%

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Note: Assignment sheets will be distributed for projects throughout the semester.

Grading Scale

90-100 = A

80-89 = B

70-79 = C

60-69 = D

59 and below = F

Note About Resources and Time Management

Please note that you have a bevy of resources at your disposal to help you with your work this semester. First and foremost, please know that I am here to help and answer questions. Utilizing my office hours to chat about course readings and course material is a great way to informally see how you're doing with the material. Emailing questions about your work and how you are understanding it is perfectly acceptable. Secondly, please be aware that the Writing Center is an excellent resource made available to all TAMUCT students. Whether you're struggling to come up with an idea, battling over how to wrap up your essay, or simply want an extra set of critical eyes to peruse your work, the Writing Center is there to help. I encourage each and every one of you to visit the Writing Center at least once during the semester.

Additionally, this class demands a lot of reading, and some of it may consist of ideas you are unfamiliar with. While you can bring any/all questions you have to class, you are still expected to complete all the assigned reading. Please budget your time accordingly.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not urge all of you to be very mindful of deadlines. Please do not wait until the last minute to (a) do course reading or (b) complete course writing. Studies have shown time and time again that the more time you allot yourself to complete projects, the more successful you will be.

Course Policies

Attendance: Because so much of the learning process takes place in the classroom, attendance is an integral part of this class. Additionally, I value all voices in the classroom and enjoy the dynamic a full class offers. That said, I understand emergencies do occur and that individuals have a life beyond academia. Thus, students are afforded four "free" absences (the equivalent of two weeks of class); please note I do not need to know about the nature of your absence—just let me know ahead of time if you will miss class (a 24-hour notice is appreciated). For each absence after the fourth, the offending student's "Attendance and Participation" grade will go down a full letter grade (e.g., five absences will mean the best possible "Attendance and Participation" grade will be a "B"). If a student has missed eight or more classes, a passing mark cannot be achieved for the course.

Students who fall asleep or spend an entire class period on their phone will be counted absent.

Late Assignments are not accepted unless prior arrangements have been made. This is a non-negotiable policy; however, if you have questions or are worried about completing an assignment on time, talk to me well before the due date and we can come up with a plan of action. Note: "well before the due date" does not mean 24 hours before the assignment is due. I generally like to hold these sorts of conferences a week ahead of the due date. If someone contacts me 24 hours before a project is due, my response may not be very favorable. This policy extends to daily/weekly work as well.

Plagiarism occurs when one person presents another person's words or ideas as her/his own; this can occur intentionally and unintentionally. An example of plagiarism might be a paper that does not have any in-text citations when outside research is being used or an essay that is

missing a works cited page. Regardless of intentionality, it is a serious offense; should any plagiarism surface in any project, you will receive an F on that specific project. Should it happen again, it will result in an automatic F for the semester. Please see me if you have any questions concerning plagiarism.

Email is a great tool for communication. However, I ask that when you send me an email to use a proper salutation (e.g. Hi Dr. Kirchoff), complete sentences, and identifying information. This is a matter of common courtesy. As I mention above, I will make a good faith effort in responding to email queries within 24 hours.

Classroom Etiquette

- When others are talking—including peers or the instructor—do not engage in side-conversations or otherwise distract from the conversation taking place.
- Avoid tangential or inappropriate threads of conversation. For example, discussing a random “hook-up” is not appropriate conversation for the college classroom.
- I try to give space for all students to share their ideas; thus, please be courteous of others and make sure everyone has the opportunity to talk.
- Please arrive to class on time. If you do arrive late, please quietly take the closest open seat to the door. This means that students should not start talking to peers, slam down books, throw a back-pack on the table, and so forth. Additionally, if you will be more than five minutes late to class, please extend the courtesy of taking an absence that day.
- Please wait to gather and put away course materials until I have dismissed class.
- Respect for people’s ideas, thoughts, and questions are paramount to your success in this class. My goal is for everyone to feel welcome and comfortable in this class, so please treat everyone in a courteous manner. This should be a friendly, positive environment open to discussion and feedback. Bear in mind that disrespect—towards peers or to the instructor—will not be tolerated in any form. Thus, interruptions of others, ridiculing of ideas, raised voices, derogatory language, name-calling, and intimidating behavior will not be allowed in any form. Should I see such behavior occurring, you will be asked to leave the class and you will be counted absent for that day.

PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT

To ensure the learning outcomes are met in the English Department, there is a program-wide artifact collection process. To that end, some of the projects you complete for ENGL 4317 this semester may be used for programmatic assessment. Please note that all efforts will be made to keep your identity anonymous; as such, all identifying markers will be removed from your work if used for programmatic assessment. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Kirchoff.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

--Schedule is tentative and subject to change. To that end, some class periods may shift to “online”; however, fair notice will be given to each student.

1.17: Syllabus Overview

- Reading for 1.22: (1) Overview of Campbell (2) “What is an Epic Hero?” and (3) Bond (on Canvas)
 - Bring any questions you may have about these pieces.

1.22: Discussion of Readings

- Reading for 1.24: Assortment of Robin Hood Ballads

1.24: Robin Hood Ballads

- Reading for 1.29:
 - Watch *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938); the movie is on Reserve at TAMUCT Library
 - Begin reading *Othello*. It needs to be finished by 2.7.

1.29: Robin Hood Ballads and Film; Small Group Work

- Reading: Continue reading *Othello*. It needs to be finished by 2.7.

1.31: Small Group Presentations

- Reading for 2.5:
 - (1) Forrester (2) Belliotti and (3) Machiavelli (on Canvas)
 - Bring any questions you may have about these pieces.
 - Continue reading *Othello* for 2.7

2.5: Machiavellian Characters

- Reading for 2.7: Finish reading *Othello*

2.7: *Othello* and Machiavelli

- Reading for 2.12: (1) Adade-Yeboah & Amankwaah and (2) Reeves (on Canvas)
 - Bring any questions you may have about these pieces.

2.12: Tragic Heroism

- Reading: Begin reading *Frankenstein*. It needs to be completed by 2.28.

2.14: *Othello* and Tragic Heroism

- Reading: Continue reading *Frankenstein*. It needs to be completed by 2.28.

2.19: *Othello*

- Reading: Continue reading *Frankenstein*. It needs to be completed by 2.28.

2.21: *Othello*

- Reading:
 - Continue reading *Frankenstein*. It needs to be completed by 2.28.
 - (1) Furst (2) Oana Brindas and (3) Selection of Byron for 2.26 (on Canvas)
 - Bring any questions you may have about these pieces.

2.26: Byronic Heroes and Anti-Heroes

- Finish *Frankenstein* for 2.28

2.28: *Frankenstein* and Byronic/Anti-Heroes

3.5: *Frankenstein*

3.7: *Frankenstein*

3.12 SPRING BREAK

3.14 SPRING BREAK

- Over break, please watch *Young Frankenstein* (1974). There are several viewing options:
 - Harker Heights, TX Library
 - Copperas Cove, TX Library
 - Purchase your own copy
- You may also wish to begin reading *Heart of Darkness*, which needs to be read by 3.26

3.19: *Young Frankenstein*, *Frankenstein*, and Heroism

- Reading: Continue reading *Heart of Darkness*, which needs to be read by 3.26

3.21: Small Group Presentations

- Reading: Finish *Heart of Darkness*
- Writing: Paper One is due 3.26

3.26: *Heart of Darkness*

3.28: *Heart of Darkness*

4.2: *Heart of Darkness*

- Reading: Begin reading *Watchmen*, which needs to be completed by 4.16

4.4: *Apocalypse Now*

- Reading: Continue reading *Watchmen*, which needs to be completed by 4.16

4.9: *Apocalypse Now*

- Reading: Continue reading *Watchmen*, which needs to be completed by 4.16

4.11: Small Group Presentations

- Reading:
 - Finish reading *Watchmen*
 - Selections from *What is a superhero?* (available on Canvas) for 4.16
 - Bring any questions you may have about these pieces.

4.16: *Watchmen* and superheroes

- Reading:
 - Hughes' "'Who Watches the *Watchmen*?': Ideology and 'Real World' Superheroes."
 - Thomson's "Deconstructing the Hero"
 - Both are on Canvas

- Bring any questions you may have about these pieces.

4.18: *Watchmen* and ideology

4.23: *Watchmen*

4.25: *Watchmen*

4.30: No Class: Work on Papers. Optional Conferences.

5.2: No Class: Work on Papers: Optional Conferences.

5.7 FINALS WEEK

- Writing: Paper two is due 5.9

5.9 FINALS WEEK

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

- Students are encouraged to save work to multiple locations (e.g. computer hard-drive and thumb drive); papers lost due to technological issues will not be a sufficient excuse for failing to turn in work.

Technology Support

For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central.

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Drop Policy

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must go to the Registrar's Office and complete a drop request form.

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be

completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled.

If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

Academic Integrity

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Access & Inclusion

At Texas A&M-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier free education. The Department of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Department of Access and Inclusion at (254) 501-5831. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit <http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/access-inclusion>.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. On-campus subjects tutored include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by emailing Kim Wood at k.wood@tamuct.edu.

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over forty subject areas. To access Tutor.com, go to the 'My Courses' tab in Blackboard.

University Writing Center

Located in 416 Warrior Hall, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10am-5pm Monday-Thursday. Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available). Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process.

While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding proper citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the University Writing Center is here to help!

If you have any questions about the University Writing Center, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu.

University Library

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private

study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit <https://tamuct.libguides.com/>