Where To Reach Me:
• E-mail: mcdermotc@sfasu.edu; cmcdsfaclass@gmail.com (this is the easiest & best way to communicate with me)
• Phone: 2059; leave a message.
• Office: Liberal Arts North 227 / Office Hours: M-F 11-12 & by appointment

Official Course Description:
Advanced study and research in British literature, which may focus on particular periods, genres, and/or authors. Prerequisite: twelve semester hours of English

This course is an examination of the non-domestic literature from 1840-1899. The course examines texts aesthetically, culturally, and historically, discussing how they address the tensions & innovations of the age.

Required Materials:
❖ Emily Bronte, Wuthering Heights (1847)
❖ Lewis Carroll, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865)
❖ J. Sheridan LeFanu, Carmilla (1871-2)
❖ Wilkie Collins, Poor Miss Finch (1872)
❖ Robert Louis Stevenson, The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde (1886)
❖ Oscar Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray (1890)

Additional short stories of the period, provided by instructor

Additional items: Various handouts provided to you, ability to use MLA format, enthusiasm, ability to talk in class discussion, ability to keep up with reading.
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

As this course may be taken to fulfill a requirement within the English major, the following Program Learning Outcomes will be achieved:

1. **The student will demonstrate the ability to read complex texts, closely and accurately:** We will read several novels of the period, and discuss these at length. Through class discussion, quiz answers, an abstract, and final paper, you will demonstrate engagement with the texts.

2. **The student will demonstrate the ability to comprehend both traditional and contemporary schools/methods of critical theory and apply them to literary texts to generate relevant interpretations:** You will write annotated bibliography which will evaluate secondary sources on one of the texts in the course. You will use these sources to help support a persuasive thesis in a final paper.

3. **The student will demonstrate knowledge of literary history in regard to a particular period of literature—in this case the “strange” literature of the Victorian period:** I will give you the background of the period through lecture notes. Social and cultural contexts (the growth in technology and industry, urban growth, religious questioning, the changes in gender roles) are key to understanding the literature of this time period. In papers and exams, you should be able to articulate these historical/social/cultural influences.

4. **The student will demonstrate the ability to write clear, grammatically correct prose for a variety of purposes in regards to literary analysis:** The course is writing intensive and will require the ability to analyze primary texts, secondary and (perhaps) tertiary sources.

MY GOALS FOR YOU:

- Familiarize you with a sample of British literature as it transitions from 19th Century literature into Edwardianism.
- Familiarize you with how “Victorian/19th Century literature” is different from the literature that came before it.
- Familiarize you with the aesthetic and historical shifts of the period as well as some of the most important figures of the period and their influence.
- To make you more confident in reading and responding to Victorian literature.
- To help you articulate your own ideas about this period in literature.
Grading

SCALE: 100-90=A; 89-70=B; 79-60=C; 69-60=D; 59 or below=F

Attendance 5%
Class Discussion 10%
Quizzes 10%
2 Key Paper Response (2-4 pages) 20%
Midterm 10%
Abstract 10%
Critical Paper (8-10 pages) 25%
Final 10%

Important Note: Failure of any two major assignments (key papers, midterm, abstract, critical paper, final) will result in failure for the course despite technical numerics.

I grade on both content (logic, reasonable tone, use of examples) and form (spelling, verb tense agreements, and sentence structure). Although there will be several, none of my comments are meant to suggest you are a hopeless or stupid writer/student. Rather they are intended to help you improve your ability to articulate your thoughts on paper. Please feel free to ask me to explain any comments I have given you, especially if they do not make sense to you.

A best written, grammatically correct, insightful
B well written, grammatically above average, above average argumentation but not exceptional.
C average, grammatical errors present, simplistic but not incorrect
D written in fragments or run-ons, limited or with errors in terms of writing
or in terms of meeting assignment requirements
F plagiarized, grammatically unreadable, incomplete, does not fulfill assignment, not handed in by deadline.

All students start off as “C” students and are such until they prove they are “above average” or “below average.”

All papers should be written in MLA format and turned in at the beginning of class.

Attendance (5%)

0-1 absences = A (5% of grade)
2 absences = B (5% of grade)
3 absences = C (5% of grade)
4 absences = D (5% of grade)
5 absences = F (5% of grade)
6 absences = fail the course (100%)
sleeping in class = 1 absence
coming in late/leaving early = 1/2 absence
There are no excused absences. If you aren’t here—for whatever reason—I count you as absent. Please plan your absences wisely.

Being absent is not an excuse for missed information or assignments. You should either e-mail a classmate (or me) to find out what went on in class if you are not able to attend. You should pick up any missed packets or material. You must be responsible for all the material discussed in class on the days you were absent—and for the material for the next class period.

**CELL PHONE POLICY:**
Phones should be kept in pockets, purses, or backpacks—unless you are waiting for a notification during a family emergency (please tell me before class begins). If I catch you texting in class, I will count you as absent and you will receive 0s on your participation/quiz grades. Clearly this would affect your overall grade. Repeat offenders will be dropped a letter grade.

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**Class Discussion (10%)**

I expect you to talk in class. In a college course, particularly on the advanced level, I believe it is essential to share your opinions. Let me stress, however, that I’m not looking for “right” answers, just tell me what you think. The exception is historical inaccuracy, I will clarify time period/social context/author background if necessary. I like the classroom to be lively, so don’t hold back! If you do not wish to talk in class, know your discussion grade (as long as you appear attentive) will be no higher than a C and your grade in the course will be no higher than a B. I look for the following:

- Ability to ask intelligent, thoughtful questions. If you do not understand the work of fiction, feel free to ask questions about what it means. Feel free to guess as well (oftentimes you won’t be as off base as you might think).
- Engagement with material (have you read? This includes all portions of the material.)
- Engagement with other students, particularly when they offer ideas (active listening)
- Respect for yourself, me, other students. Remember that, although we are talking about fictional plots and characters, they will often touch on a variety of issues that are part of the human character—we get attached to them & what they mean. Tread gently but don’t shy away from your opinion either. There is always a chance that you will think that the person talking is a complete idiot, but then again, someone else may think the same of you, so you’re better off not showing it. Even if you don’t agree with someone, treat them well.
Quizzes (10%)

- Quizzes are always given at the beginning of class, before class discussion. Assume they will be daily—I do give them 90% of the time.
- Quizzes relate to the reading on the syllabus. If I have assigned an introduction or article or other supplemental material, you are responsible for that material as well.
- The purpose is mainly to help you learn to read stories/critical material for detail. They also give me a good idea of how well you’re doing with the reading.
- They will either be structured as an individual quiz (true-false, fill in the blank, multiple choice or one word or short phrase answers or as one question on the reading material which requires a short paragraph response) or as a group quiz (I put you into a group of peers, you answer the question and present it to the class, and write down the answer).
- Ten question quizzes are graded like this: 10-9=A; 8=B; 7=C; 6=D; 5 or less=F. Paragraph answers are graded with A, B, C, D, F.
- If you do poorly on a quiz, I will assume you have not read the assignment on that day. This obviously also affects your participation grade.
- There are several quizzes, so if you miss or do poorly on one or two, this will not dramatically your grade.
- If you are continually receiving poor grades on quizzes, but reading the material, please see me for help.
- **There are NO make-up quizzes.**

Midterm (10%)

There will be an in-class midterm which will test your knowledge on the first part of the course. It will cover all material assigned as well as any lecture notes. You will need to be able to put the texts in context of the Victorian age or the contemporary world. This exam may consist of identification of important passages, short answer, and/or essay questions (there will be a choice of questions in each section to answer).

Final (10%)

There will be an in-class final during finals week which will test your knowledge on the materials studied in the course. It will cover the texts, with concentration on texts post-midterm. You should be able to apply important ideas and concepts. This exam may consist of identification of important passages, short answer, and/or essay questions (there will be a choice of questions in each section to answer).
2 Key Papers (10% a piece)

You need to write papers on any two of the longer works in our course:

- Wuthering Heights (due 2/13)
- Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (due 2/20)
- Carmilla (due 3/1),
- Poor Miss Finch (due 4/5; abstracts also due)
- The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (due 4/12)
- The Picture of Dorian Gray (due 5/1).

Pick the due dates that work for you. Papers aren’t accepted late. Sometimes, there are other assignments due on the days these papers are due, so choose what your schedule best allows.

Analyze one line of description, one statement, one motif/symbol, OR one line of dialogue as the “key” to understanding overall theme/meaning (as you see it) of the book assigned. I may give you a list of possible keys to choose from.

Please discuss “the key” precisely in 2-3 pages.

This is an analytical paper, not a personal one. I am NOT interested in how the story relates to you, your family, your religion, or your life (although it might be fascinating).

Please try to be objective and analytical and if at all possible, limit your use of “I,” “me,” or “mine.” Again, see the student example for the type of formal tone I’m looking for.

- Your paper must use a scene, an object or a quote from the story as its “key” in the first paragraph.
- You should indicate where this passage (and supporting passages), using parenthetical citation.
- Your paper must be typed on clean white paper, in Times 12 (preferably).
- Your paper must be no less than 2 pages but no more than 3 complete pages (although 2-3 lines on page 3 would be okay).
- Your paper must persuade me your reading of the “key” is possible.

Abstract (10%)

When scholars send out their papers, often they are asked to send an abstract first. An abstract is a one to two paragraph condensation of their entire essay. It outlines an original idea/reading of a text(s) and is addressed to scholarly peers. Sometimes, scholars write an abstract first, then expand it into an essay. The tone of the abstract should be accessible to an audience ranging from experts to other undergraduates. It should show off your knowledge of the text, but still be comprehensible to those who have not read the book or story. By reading your abstract, I (or anyone else) should be able to understand what persuasive argument you are making. Please see the prompt
for the final paper on how to formulate your idea. Sample abstracts will be available electronically.

**Your abstract must:**

- Be typed in MLA format (heading left hand corner, double spaced text)
- Not exceed 500 words
- Have a specific and detailed title.
- Include a brief introduction to the topic, providing context.
- Have a persuasive tone.
- Have a clear argument/thesis.
- Explain briefly how your argument can be supported (brief references to important textual passages as well as the nature of secondary sources).
- Some discussion of the relevance (why this might be an interesting way to read the text).
- Have no excess or irrelevant information.
- Be edited for concise language. Avoid jargon.
- Be clear, readable, well organized.

**Critical Paper (25%)**

You must write an 8-10 page critical interpretation about how a work of art (your choice—a story, a film, another novel from a different time period, a song, a visual piece) responds to the text of one of the works we’re studying.

There are different options to this assignment. Your paper could:

a) Discuss how faithful a representation the work of art is to the original piece—how is it commenting on the original work? Is its faithfulness or lack thereof important? (Example: How are Tim Burton’s Alice films both commenting on Carroll’s text and challenging our own audience? Do they function as social commentary as well?)

b) How could a modern work be a “re-telling” of, or influenced by, one of our texts. Example: Alice Hoffman’s *Here on Earth* is a reworking of *Wuthering Heights*. How does she modernize it? Is it effective?

c) How does something portrayed in one of our texts pave the way for another text, or archetype, or character, or type of social commentary? (Example: How did *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* pave the way for later psychological explorations like Alfred Hitchcock’s movie *Psycho* or Chuck Palahniuk’s *Fight Club*)

The following are just examples of the type of paper you could write. You will run this idea by me in the abstract, so I will be able to help you with the paper’s final stages. The important thing is to be persuasive.
Use MLA, try to be objective and analytical, and limit your use of “I,” “me,” or “mine.” Again, see the student example for the type of formal tone I’m looking for.

Your final paper will need to:

• Have a logical and original thesis which attempts to prove the book(s) could be looked at in a specific way.
• Be written in a sophisticated, academic tone.
• Will use the primary text to back up points, especially close reading of passages.
• Use at least 5 sophisticated secondary sources.
• Must include a Works Cited page.

There is no mystery to doing well on papers and assignments: be professional in your approach, precise in your word choice, neat in your presentation, and follow the guidelines and examples. I am interested in different approaches, but make sure they can be supported by logical reasoning and examples from the story. I will give a poor grade to any paper which ignores aspects of the text which are necessary to understanding it as a whole.

I would urge you to be sensible in your approach to writing. We will probably joke a lot in class (I tend to be fairly irreverent) but when it comes to the paper, be as serious as possible. You don’t want to use any kind of slang (chicks for women, for example), and you probably don’t want to say offensive things. In other words, remember your audience. It is academic.

ALL PAPERS MUST:

• Be in essay form (intro, body of evidence, conclusion).
• Be typed, double-spaced in MLA format in Times or Times New Roman 12.
• Have a standard heading in the top LEFT corner of the page (your name, date, my name, class title).
• Have an original title (DO NOT use the title of the author’s work as your title).
• Include your last name and the page number on each subsequent page (in RIGHT hand corner).
• Be printed in clear ink on good quality paper (mimeo, copy paper, printer paper).
• Be stapled—this lowers the risk of pages of your paper being misplaced.
• Use passages/examples from the novel/story as support.
• Use parenthetical citation—i.e. (Baum 22).
• Use block quoting if quote is longer than 4 typed lines of text.

Always keep copies of what you write for your own protection. Do not give me the original of anything. In the event that your work should be lost, or misplaced, you want to make sure you have a back-up copy on a computer or flash drive.
Be aware I will FAIL the following:

- Late papers & assignments (Papers must be turned in at the beginning of class)
- Incomplete papers
- Papers not typed in standard format as listed above
- Papers with an abundance of spelling/grammatical errors
- Plagiarized papers will result in failure of the assignment and the course—as well as notification to the Chair & Dean (see plagiarism policy later in this syllabus).

**Pet Peeves**

Here’s some things that drive me crazy. Don’t do them and we’ll all have a happy semester! 😊

- People coming in late. It is disruptive and rude. It affects both your attendance grade and your participation grade.
- Talking when others are talking. If someone “has the floor,” he/she is usually trying to make a worthwhile point. It will be in your interest to listen to them because it is polite and because it may help you on your projects.
- I try to be upfront about expectations and due dates. I write them down on the board, tell you in class and usually on the assignment sheet/syllabus. You shouldn’t have to ask me when the due date for something is. If you choose not to do something, you will be graded accordingly.
- Okay, here’s the weird one—a lot of you already know it—I can’t stand it when people pack up early. I will try to never hold class over the allotted time, but if I am talking or someone else is, don’t move. Sit and listen—when I say “that’s it for today” you can start closing your book, putting stuff away, or zipping/unzipping your backpacks.
- Meanness, prejudicial comments, etc. Don’t treat anyone in a way you wouldn’t like to be treated yourself. Arrogance, rudeness, general nastiness doesn’t fly here.

**Email Etiquette**

When you write to a professor, an email is like a business letter. It is a good idea to put your best foot forward. Here are some tips.

- Make sure you have a subject line; I know I tend to ignore things that don’t have one. So, “English 353” in the subject line is helpful, or “Ryan Gosling from English 412”
- Salutations are nice: “Hi, Dr. M. (or Christine)” is fine. “Dear Dr. McDermott” is nice, too. “Hey, Girl,” is only acceptable if you are Ryan Gosling.
- Be succinct and to the point about what you need: “Could we set up an appointment to talk about why I keep failing quizzes?”
- Make sure you have checked your email for spelling errors/typos
• Don’t use abbreviations (“U r annoying,” for example).
• End with a signature: “Thanks, Ryan”
• Try to avoid writing last minute. If you write an email at 3 am, I won’t answer it before late morning. I usually don’t check or respond to non-personal email between the hours of 8 p.m.-9 a.m. Expect an answer in 12 hours. Do not expect an answer on Saturday.

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**University Policies You Need to Know:**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (A-9.1)**
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**WITHHELD GRADES SEMESTER GRADES POLICY (A-54)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)
ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

Last Words

College (and life!) can be very demanding. So, while keeping your goals in mind, also take the time to take care of yourself. You won’t succeed if you spread yourself too thin. So be good to you, and when things get bleak, remember to relax, talk to me if you need to, and have fun! 😊

Calendar

(subject to change)

Important Note: Many of the introductions to the books give away major plot points; read them AFTER you’ve read the novel. (Also here’s a tip—introductions and supplemental material, can be used in your final paper)

Week One

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 1/16</td>
<td>Introduction to course</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 1/18</td>
<td>Lecture. For next time: Read handout of reading material. Maybe get a head start on “Schalken the Painter” due next Thursday</td>
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Week Two

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 1/23</td>
<td>Lecture. For next time: Read “Schalken the Painter” (Le Fanu 29-46).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1/25</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss Le Fanu’s “Schalken the Painter.” For next time: Read Emily Brontë’s Wuthering Heights, Chapters 1-5.</td>
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Week Three

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 1/30</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss Wuthering Heights. For next time: Read Chapters 6-10.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 2/1</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Wuthering Heights</em>. For next time: Read Chapters 11-17.</td>
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**Week Four**

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 2/6</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Wuthering Heights</em>. For next time: Read Chapters 18-25.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 2/8</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Wuthering Heights</em>. For next time: Read Chapters 26 to end.</td>
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**Week Five**

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<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>T 2/13</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Wuthering Heights</em>. <strong>KEY PAPERS DUE (if you choose this book).</strong> For next time: Read Lewis Carroll’s <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em>, Chapters 1-6.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 2/15</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em>. For next time: Read Lewis Carroll’s <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em>, Chapters 7-12.</td>
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**Week Six**

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<tr>
<td>T 2/20</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland</em> <strong>KEY PAPERS DUE (if you choose this book).</strong> For next time: Read story assigned (handout).</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 2/22</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss story. For next time: Read J. Sheridan Le Fanu’s <em>Carmilla</em>, Prologue to Chapter 7.</td>
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**Week Seven**

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<tr>
<td>T 2/27</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Carmilla</em>. For next time: Read J. Sheridan Le Fanu’s <em>Carmilla</em>, Chapter 8-16.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 3/1</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Carmilla</em>/ <strong>KEY PAPERS DUE (if you choose this book).</strong> For next time: Read story assigned (handout).</td>
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**Week Eight**

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<tr>
<td>T 3/6</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss story For next time: Study for Midterm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 3/8</td>
<td><strong>MIDTERM.</strong> For next time: Read Wilkie Collins’ <em>Poor Miss Finch</em>, Chapters 1-12.</td>
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**Week Nine: Spring Break (3/12-3/16)**

**Week Ten:**

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<tr>
<td>T 3/20</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Poor Miss Finch</em>. For next time: Read Wilkie Collins’ <em>Poor Miss Finch</em>, Chapters 13-23.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 3/22</td>
<td>Quiz, Discuss <em>Poor Miss Finch</em>. For next time: Read Wilkie Collins’ <em>Poor Miss Finch</em>, Chapters 24-33 (end of part one).</td>
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### Week Eleven

| T 3/27 | Quiz, Discuss *Poor Miss Finch*. For next time: Read Wilkie Collins’ *Poor Miss Finch*, Chapters 34-46. |
| R 3/29 | EASTER |

### Week Twelve

| T 4/3 | Quiz, Discuss *Poor Miss Finch*. For next time: Read Wilkie Collins’ *Poor Miss Finch*, Chapters 47-end. |
| R 4/5 | Quiz, Discuss *Poor Miss Finch* / **ABSTRACTS DUE** for everyone / **KEY PAPERS DUE** (if you choose this book). For next time: Read Robert Louis Stevenson’s *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Chapters 1-6 (“Story of the Door” through “Incident with Dr. Lanyon”). |

### Week Thirteen

| T 4/10 | Quiz, Discuss Stevenson Chapters 1-6. For next time: Read *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Chapters 7 to end (“Incident at the Window” through “Henry Jekyll’s Full Statement of the Case”). |
| R 4/12 | Quiz, Discuss Stevenson to end. **KEY PAPERS DUE** (if you choose this book). |

### Week Fourteen

| T 4/17 | Catch-up day. For next time: Polish final paper |
| R 4/19 | **CRITICAL PAPER DUE**. For next time: Read Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Preface to Chapter 5. |

### Week Fifteen

| T 4/24 | Quiz, Discuss Wilde. For next time: Read Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapters 6-11. |
| R 4/26 | Quiz, Discuss Wilde. For next time: Read Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Chapters 12-20. |

### Week Sixteen

| T 5/1 | Quiz, Discuss Wilde. **KEY PAPERS DUE** (if you choose this book). Read: Assigned story. |
| R 5/3 | Quiz, Discuss story. Discuss Final exam. |

**FINAL EXAM: Thursday May 10, 8-10 am**