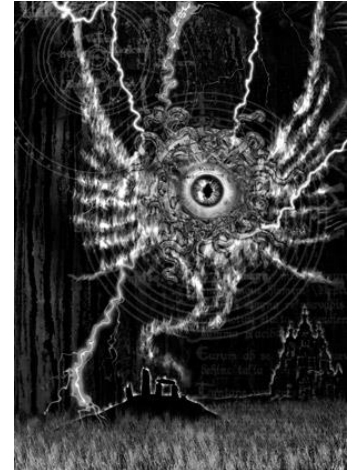


Course Syllabus

Instructor: Kenneth W. Lai
 Faculty Mentor: Dr. James Steintrager
 Office hours: TBA and by appointment
 E-mail: laikw@uci.edu



Hours: M 4:00 – 4:50p
 Course Code: 87633
 Location: HH 142
 Webpage: <http://www.eee.uci.edu/13s/87633>

What is the grotesque, the Old, or the eldritch? What is the Weird? What horror or arcane knowledge calls forth the hideous and unspeakable forms of Cthulhu and Nyralothotep or the catacombs of Nephren-Ka or the Miskatonic University in the urban Arkham of Massachusetts? This course hopes to explore these questions in a way that calls popular context and identity to question. What, for instance, distinguishes Horror from Weird, American from English, Earth from World? These questions problematize the texts but provide precisely the sort of critical approach necessary to begin exploring and understanding H.P. Lovecraft (1890 - 1937), whose contributions to modern American horror and even modern popular culture have been immense, from the Cthulhu Mythos (a whole tradition of extraterrestrial gods, known as the Old Ones) to Arkham Asylum (a psychiatric hospital in the *Batman* comics). Today, Lovecraft is an essential part of any reading list that hopes to capture the range, depth, and capacity for outright terror in the horror genre.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Course Objectives

After this course, you will have accomplished the following:

- Explore the Weird and the New Weird as essential sub-genres in the American Gothic tradition
- Closely read a text, whether a short story, a film, or even a museum program
- Appreciate H.P. Lovecraft on a deeper level, including the popular engagements of his text, from Japanese anime to online forums
- Approach a deeper and more critical understanding of nation and identity

Course Requirements

You are required to come to all classes, to read the text before each class, and to have at least one question or observation prepared for discussion. You will also be *required* to print out the text for each class; failure to do so more than once will put your grade in jeopardy. Finally, there will be a paper (2 pages minimum; either as an expository essay or a creative short story).

Classroom Policies

Respect and mature conduct will be the primary expectations for this class. Participation by engagement with course material and partaking in the classroom dialogue are both required and expected.

GRADING POLICY

Attendance

You will be required to attend all sections held during the quarter. Failure to attend two sections will result in a No Pass. Students adding after Week 1 will have the option to make up for respective sections by answering a 2 or 3 short response questions (roughly 300 words each).

Participation

This class relies heavily on discussion in order to work. Some classes will depend largely on what you have to contribute to the conversation. Please come to class with the text prepared and ready to discuss!

Texts

All texts will be provided through EEE for free. They will be re-formatted to maximize page length from <http://www.hplovecraft.com>. I ask that other sources not be used, as this will create confusion during discussion, since pagination will prove invaluable to our engagement with the text. You will **be required to print out the texts** prior to each class.

Final Paper

There will be no midterm or final exam given in this class, though an essay or short story (your choice) will be required, for which I will offer to meet with you to discuss, edit, and critique starting Week 5. If you cannot decide a topic by then, we can meet and discuss paper options. The final paper will be due Week 9, after which I will hand out and discuss the papers Week 10.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Electronics Policy

No computer, cell phones, or electronics of any kind are necessary nor will they be allowed unless otherwise specified. This policy pertains mainly to a matter of respect than to a mode of policy.

Policy on Academic Honesty

Engaging in Academic Dishonesty is a serious offense. Disciplinary action will be based on the UCI Academic Senate policies on Academic Honesty, which is automatically assumed you will have read. Please refer to the 2012-2013 UCI General Catalogue or the section website for a detailed description of the policy in the US 1 Reader.

Add/Drop Policy

The Add/Drop Policy for this course is that Adds and Drops must be submitted prior to the end of the second week of classes. All Add/Drops should be completed electronically during the 1st week. No drops will be accepted after Week 2.

Disability Accommodation

Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Center at (949) 824-7494 as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. It will also be helpful to discuss privately with me any specific needs that may prove helpful.

Reading Schedule

Reading assignments below are to be printed and read *before* each class. As noted, May 27 is a holiday, so we will probably have to make this up on the Saturday before, May 25. Additionally, there will be an optional screening of Stuart Gordon's *Re-Animator*.

4/1: Introducing... H.P. Lovecraft!

- Google/Wikipedia “necronomicon” and “Cthulhu Mythos”

4/8: Talking the Literary Talk

- “Herbert West I: From the Dark”

4/15: 20,000 Leagues above R’lyeh

- “Call of Cthulhu”
- “Herbert West II: The Plague-Daemon”

4/22: R’lyeh’s Labyrinth

- Browse [reddit.com/r/lovecraft](https://www.reddit.com/r/lovecraft)
- “Herbert West III: Six Shots by Moonlight”

4/29: A Man Named The Other

- “The Outsider”
- “Herbert West IV: The Scream of the Dead”

5/6: The Other and I

- “Herbert West V: The Horror from the Shadows”
- **Begin writing essay or creative work**

5/13: Re-animating Horror in Cinema: The Modern Prometheus

- “Herbert West VI: The Tomb-Legions”
- (optional) Screen *Re-Animator*

5/20: Great Trash

- (re-read) “Herbert West: Re-Animator”
- “Fungi from Yuggoth”

5/27: (Memorial Day) Careless Whispers in the Darkness

- Class will probably be held, optionally, on Saturday, May 25
- “Whisperer in the Darkness”
- **Essay or short story DUE**

6/3: Dancing with Mi-Go

- (re-read) “Whisperer in the Darkness”