

**The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies**

**PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS THAT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE
WITHOUT NOTICE**

GSWS 3363G: Queer Horror

The department would like to recognize that we are located on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lenape, and Attawandaron peoples.

Course Information

Course Time and Place: Online (asynchronous)

Instructor: Jacob Evoy (they/he)
Office Hours:
Office:

Course Prerequisites:

GSWS 2220E Feminist Theory and Practice for Change, OR GSWS 2253E, OR GSWS 2273E Sexual Subjects, OR permission of the Department.



Course Description

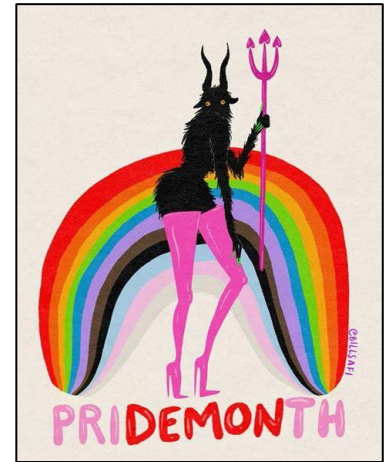
"Villains, monsters, and witches. Oh my!" Fantastically terrifying creatures, and horrific tales have long captivated audiences. Examining literature, television, and film, students will examine how queerness is at the heart of the horror genre. Students will analyze how queerness is represented on screen, how we can queer horror narratives, and how the consuming of horror can be a queer act. From witches to vampires and beyond, this course will examine how to queerly approach that which goes bump in the night.

Generalized Content Warning

Please note that this course comes with a general content warning. Horror is a genre that deals with some of the darkest and possibly triggering content. The course content (whether readings, lectures, or media materials) will examine, discuss, and/or show topics such as murder, violence, sexual violence, rape, abuse, homophobia, transphobia, racism, and more. Please be sure to provide yourself with the time and space necessary to engage with the course materials. If you are struggling with the course material content and need support, please contact Western Mental Health Support ([found by clicking here](#)).

Technical Requirements

	Stable internet connection		Laptop or computer
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Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Possess introductory knowledge of the history of queer representation and of the horror genre
- Understand the foundations of queer theory and queer analysis
- Understand and be able to analyze the social construction of monstrosity

Learning Outcomes and Transferable Skills

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Engage with and possess an introductory knowledge of queer theory
- Deconstruct and analyze narratives
- Critique and analyze the politics of queer representation
- Apply queer theory to analyze and deconstruct contemporary media and literature
- Improve critical thinking, writing, research and analysis skills

Required Texts/Purchases

Students will be required to purchase a copy of **ONE** of the novels below. Students may purchase from any bookstore and purchase the book from any publisher. Students are encouraged to check their **local bookstores** and **used bookstores** for a copy.

- Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Available in
 - o [Paperback](#) at Chapters for \$16.20 + tax,
 - o Kobo [eBook](#) for \$3.99 + tax, and on
 - o Kobo [audiobook](#) for \$7.99 + tax (available for free with Kobo Plus).
 - o The book is also available **FOR FREE** at Western Library. There are several different physical copies as well as online versions. For one online version available for free through Western Libraries [click here](#).

OR

- Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein: Or the Modern Prometheus*. Available in
 - o [Paperback](#) at Chapters for \$10.50 + tax,
 - o Kobo [ebook](#) for \$11.99 + tax,
 - o Kobo [audiobook](#) for \$0.99 + tax
 - o The book is also available **FOR FREE** at Western Library. For one online version available for free through Western Libraries ([click here](#))

Students will also need to find access to the films and TV shows discussed in class. Every Module has multiple viewing options. Every Module has at least one viewing option that is available for free. Others may require students to subscribe to a subscription streaming service.

Every module has different film and tv options for students to view. Students are welcomed and encouraged to choose based on what is the most cost effective.

Asynchronous Learning

This course will be taught asynchronously. Asynchronous learning is self-directed and independent. All course materials will be provided via OWL Brightspace. Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and

updates. Completing the course requirements, lectures, readings, etc. are the responsibility of the students. Please plan your schedule accordingly.

All course materials will be made available to students at the beginning of the term to allow you to work at your pace and plan your schedule. While you can work at your pace, you are still required to meet course deadlines.

If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800

Student Evaluation

Assessment	Due Date	Weight
Monster Analysis (5-6pp)	First Draft/Notes End of Week 5, first week of Module 3 Final Submission End of Week 8, first week of Module 4	20%
Queering Classics Book Report (5-6pp)	Sunday March 29 by 11:59pm End of Week 12, first week of Module 6	20%
Forum Discussion	End of each Module	10% * 6 = 60%

GSWS and Western University's Grading Criteria

Grade	Percentage	Criteria
A+	90 – 100%	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level.
A	80 – 89%	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70 – 79%	Good work, meeting the requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60 – 69%	Competent work, meeting the requirements
D	50 – 59%	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	< 50%	Assignment is not relevant to course; basic requirements not met; plagiarism

****After an assessment is returned, students must wait 24 hours or insert alternative wait time to digest feedback before contacting the person who evaluated the assignment. Please use this time to read feedback as well as re-read your work.****

Assignment Descriptions

*****PLEASE NOTE***** There are additional written instructions and rubrics for all assignments posted to the course Brightspace page under Content → Assignment Instructions. Be sure to consult these instructions as what is written below are summary descriptions of the assignment. Only reading the below information will result in students not completing the assignments properly.

Forum Discussions (6 * 10% = 60%)

During the second week of each Module, students will participate in online forum discussions. Students are required to make a minimum of 2 posts for each module. In total for each individual module, students' posts will total at least 600 words (600 * 6 = 3,600 words minimum total across all modules). The forum discussions are an opportunity for students to demonstrate their critical thinking and engagement with the course materials. The purpose of this assignment is not to summarize the readings, but to engage with the varied arguments, ideas, key concepts, and content. As the purpose of this assignment is to simulate in-class discussions, students are permitted to have only one post per module that introduces their thoughts/ideas/critical questions/etc. (referred to as the Primary Post). whereas all other posts made for the module must be in response to your classmates' posts (referred to as Response Posts).

See Brightspace page for additional information, instructions, and grading rubric.

Due Date: Ongoing. End of Each Module (Weeks 2, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13)

Monster Analysis (20%)

Students will select any monster, creature, villain, etc. from any horror text (film, television, graphic novel, comic, folklore, myth, etc.) and present a 5-6 page (double-spaced) queer intersectional analysis of the social construction of the chosen monster. Students cannot choose Dracula (or a similar vampire) or Frankenstein as we will be analyzing these in Module 6. This is your opportunity to explore a monster from any horror genre text that you wish to unpack the formation, creation, signifiers, and narrative use of monsters and monstrosity. See course Brightspace page for additional instructions under Course Content → Assignment Instructions.

Due Dates:

First Draft/Notes: Sunday February 8 by 11:59pm (End of Week 5, first week of Module 3).

Final Submission: Sunday March 1st by 11:59pm (End of Week 8, first week of Module 4).

Queering Classics Book Report (20%)

Students will write a 5-6 double-spaced page book report on one of the following classic horror texts: Bram Stoker's *Dracula* or Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Students are expected to present analysis of the text utilizing queer and/or trans theories presented throughout the course as well as based upon additional outside research. The method of interpretation is open to you. You can situate the text within the historical moment it was written, present your own modern interpretations of the text read today, or a combination of both. Along with examining how the monsters within both texts offer themselves to queer and trans interpretations, students may also examine the construction of normativity with the texts and how these are disrupted by the monsters. There are many ways to interpret both texts as scholars have been writing about each since their publication. You will present an argumentative and analytical essay on the chosen text. See course Brightspace page for additional instructions under Course Content → Assignment Instructions.

Due Date: End of FIRST WEEK of Module 6 (Sunday April 5 by 11:59pm) This is to allow you to bring in your work into the forum discussions in the second week of Module 6.

Course Schedule

Module 1 Introductions: What is Queer? What is Horror?	Week 1	Jan 5 – 11
	Week 2	Jan 12 – 18
Module 2 Queer(ing) Characters and Narratives: Representation Then and Now	Week 3	Jan 19 – 25
	Week 4	Jan 26 – Feb 1
Module 3 Queer(ing) Monsters and Monstrosity	Week 5	Feb 2 – 8
	Week 6	Feb 9 - 15
READING WEEK	Week 7	Feb 16-22
Module 4 Women of Horror and Horrifying Women	Week 8	Feb 23 – Mar 1
	Week 9	Mar 2 – 8
Module 5 Camp Horror and Horrifically Camp	Week 10	Mar 9 - 15
	Week 11	Mar 16 – 22
Module 6 Queer(ing) Classics: Then and Now	Week 12	Mar 23 – 29
	Week 13	Mar 30 – Apr 5
Catch Up Week	Week 14	Apr 6-9