



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo
Department of English
ENGL 108P
Popular Potter
Spring 2021

Instructor Information

Instructor: Jesse Hutchison, Non-Mandatory Live Stream: Thursdays, 1PM

Office Hours: On Zoom, by appointment

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Course Description

Wands at the ready! In this course, we will be thoroughly examining all seven books in the Harry Potter series. Given the title of course, we will analyze the texts in order to consider just why these books were so popular in their time, continue to be popular today, and seem as if they will continue to be popular for quite some time. In order to answer these questions, we will look into issues of genre, narrative structure, and consider how Rowling presents topics, themes, and issues in a way that might appeal to a wide audience. Consequently, we will discuss not only how the texts themselves can be very entertaining and well-crafted but also how they reflect dominant ideas, beliefs, and ideologies. Thus, we will also be engaging with various critical theories that might illuminate our reading of the texts (knowing the luminous hex may be helpful here). The course also focuses on how to develop, research, and write an English essay (known to some as the Looming-Assignment-That-Must-Not-Be-Named) and to strengthen your critical thinking skills and your research skills. Those in first year, please avoid the Forbidden Forest.

Course Goals and Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Critically analyze popular literary works
- B. Write a revised and polished thesis-driven essay
- C. Interpret and analyze scholarly articles
- D. Carry out research for peer-reviewed secondary sources

Course Texts Available Through the Bookstore

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Small Writing Assignment (300-400 words)	May 31-June 6	5%
First Essay (900-1200 words)	June 21-June 27	20%
Article Discussion/Analysis (600-700 words)	July 5-July 11	10%
Final Essay (1800-2000 words)	July 26-August 1	30%
Take-Home Exam (1500-1700 words)	August 9-August 15	25%
Contributions to LEARN Discussion Board		10%

Small Writing Assignment (5%)

For this assignment, you are asked to look beyond the texts of the course and write a short 300-400 word evaluation of a Harry Potter-related text. You can write a review of one of the eight Harry Potter movies, focusing on adaptation of the book (perhaps the best option if you were relatively unfamiliar with the material before coming to class). You can write a review of one of the plays, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* or *Potted Potter*. You can evaluate one of the *Fantastic Beasts* films in terms of its relation to the Potter series. You can examine something from Pottermore (maybe even evaluate what you think about the website as a whole). Or, you can provide a discussion of a piece of Harry Potter fan fiction. I am happy to hear other proposals but please let me know in advance. While this assignment is only worth 5% and only asks for 300-400 words, you will want to engage with the material critically, meaning that it should still be driven by an argument that you are making. Avoid summarizing (though you will probably need *some* of that) and focus instead on engaging with what these texts are doing. See the videos on thesis statements for a larger discussion on this. Due between May 31 and June 6.

First Essay (20%)

For this essay, you will be asked to write a 900-1200 word (not counting Works Cited) critical analysis of Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone OR Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (but not both). Some topics to consider may be the hero's journey, heroism, genre (choose one, such as fantasy, boarding school children's literature, detective fiction, etc.), representation of family, etc. These are just suggestions and you may also choose your own topics. Papers should be typed and double-spaced using 12 pt Times New Roman font. Use proper MLA citation methods. Please consult the most recent edition of the MLA handbook for details or see the Owl at Purdue: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html Due between June 21 and June 27.

Article Discussion/Analysis (10%)

I have posted a scholarly article, Holly Batty's "Harry Potter and the (Post)human Animal Body" to LEARN. This assignment asks you to devote 600-700 words to summarizing the central argument and main points of the article as well as to provide your own argument which can agree with the position articulated in the article, disagree with the position, or provide an alternate position on the topic being discussed. Provide your own reasoning in order to distinguish your own point of view from the author writing the article. In order to prepare you for this analysis, we will be discussing another scholarly article (also up on LEARN) in class on June 22nd. Due between July 5 and July 11.

Final Essay (30%)

For this essay, you will be asked to write an 1800-2000 word (not counting Works Cited) critical analysis of two of the texts that we looked at during the term. The two texts must be different than the one you wrote on for the first essay. Some topics to consider are how the texts reinforce and/or challenge the status quo, how they represent the time period in which they were written, how they represent good vs. evil, individualism, celebrity, authoritarianism/fascism, feminism, race, etc. As in the previous essay, these are only suggestions and you may also choose your own topics. For this essay, you are asked to do some research and incorporate at least two peer-reviewed secondary sources. Papers should be typed and double-spaced using 12 pt Times New Roman font. The paper should be argumentative and thesis-driven. Use proper MLA citation methods. Please consult the most recent edition of the MLA handbook for details or see the Owl at Purdue:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html

Due between July 26 and August 1.

Take-Home Exam (25%)

Rather than write an exam, I want you to write a 1500-1700 word paper where you look at a single issue that we discussed in the course (and one that you did not discuss in the final essay) and draw from all seven texts in order to explain how Rowling engages with this issue. Issues to consider are genre, race, gender, rebellion, heroism, individualism, surveillance, authority, fascism, punishment, etc. One potential avenue is to trace recurring ideologies or themes; another approach might be to consider how the values and beliefs shift from one text to another. Also, consider the question of how Rowling's engagement with this topic contributed to the book's popularity. There is no research required for this paper. Instead, I will mostly be assessing how well you have synthesized and engaged with information from the lecture videos. Papers should be typed and double-spaced using 12 pt Times New Roman font. The paper should be argumentative and thesis-driven. Due between August 9-August 15.

Contributions to LEARN Discussion Board (10%)

When I taught this course previously, there were always lively discussions in class. Not surprisingly, students want to talk about Potter. I have endeavoured to create several avenues for you to express your thoughts about the texts. One of them is the LEARN forums. Each week (not including the introductory week), you will have the opportunity to discuss that week's lectures (both the lecture on the book itself and the Professor Binns lectures that I discuss below) with your fellow classmates. You are asked to contribute to eight of the threads that will appear throughout the term. Write a paragraph

or two (paragraphs should be between 100-250 words) where you address something that came up in one of the videos or something someone else said in the forum. Keep in mind that your contributions to a thread will only be marked if you contribute during the specific week that those videos were uploaded. For example, if you wish to discuss the videos on *The Chamber of Secrets*, you will need to respond between May 25 and May 31st. Just remember to be kind, courteous, respectful and friendly even if disagreeing. You will therefore be graded in terms of fulfilling the 8-post requirement, level of insight (within reason for an online discussion), and the tone of your writing. I may hop into the discussion at times to build and guide discussions and clarify information. That being said, this is not the space to direct questions or comments to me as I will be available for that over email, during the live stream, or during potential office hours.

Lectures and Professor Binns' Live Streams

Every Tuesday, I will be uploading pre-recorded videos where I discuss that week's text in some detail (see the schedule below). Please make sure you have read the text before watching the video. While I do know that many of you are already Harry Potter die-hards, this class ultimately endeavours to teach how we can construct the best critical analyses on even our most beloved texts. Consequently, the videos will be crucial in terms of how to consider some key critical questions in your assignments. In addition to these lectures, I will be holding a live stream every Thursday at 1PM called Professor Binns' Live Stream. There, I will begin the live stream with an extraordinarily exciting workshop on essay writing. After this, I will happily take questions from the students who attend the live stream. If you wish, you can either engage by camera, microphone, or simply a chat box that is available. Please keep in mind that these live streams will be recorded and kept on our LEARN site in case you have any privacy concerns. You do not have to share your webcam or your mic if this is something that makes you uncomfortable. There is also the possibility of using a pseudonym if you wish. Here is more information on privacy for the livestream:

<https://wiki.uwaterloo.ca/display/ISTKB/Bongo%3A+Privacy+during+live+event+participants>

These live streams are **not** mandatory, and you will **not** get marks for attending them (nor would you lose marks for not attending); however, as I suggested above, my Harry Potter lectures before the pandemic were always very fun because of how much the students wanted to participate. This is another opportunity (albeit ungraded) to participate in that discussion and it is also an opportunity to perhaps learn more about the books, the topics we discuss, and also about any element of the course and its assignments that may be confusing. In that case, I urge you to attend but if you can't make it then I certainly urge you to watch the video of the livestream at some point because it will contain information that will be crucial for your essays.

Late Work

All assignments are to be handed in on LEARN within the submission window listed above. If you are handing the assignments in on the last day of the window, you will have until 11:59PM that day. Microsoft Word documents are preferred over PDF and Pages (the latter I am unable to open on my computer). Marks will be returned on Learn. While the due dates are flexible this term, late papers though will be subject to a late penalty of 2% per day.

A doctor's note is required to avoid a late penalty, and it should document serious illness on and for the period directly preceding the due date for assignments.

In cases of personal matters such as mental health concerns, I am very sympathetic but I am also unable to properly evaluate these cases. If you need an extension on work for such issues, it is crucial to connect with AccessAbility Services, who are still available by phone or online during this period and have them evaluate your case. They can then contact me if they believe you require alternate accommodations for assignments. At that point, I am always happy to help the student in any way that I can.

Office Hours: I will be available most week day's for office hours from 10AM-3:00PM, with the exception of Thursday from 1:00PM onward when I will be doing the live stream. Please feel free to email me if you wish to speak "in-person" via a Zoom call and I will send you a link so that we can have a chat.

Email

I respond to my emails every weekday morning. I may not be able to respond right away, or I may be looking into the matter on your behalf, but I will get back to you as soon as possible. Remember though that if you send an email regarding an assignment the day that assignment is due, that I may not see it until the following morning. If you have not received a response after 24 hours, or roughly 48 hours on a weekend, please email me again. Please note that mail from some external email servers, such as Hotmail or Yahoo, may be bounced by the university server.

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the St. Jerome's University Policy on [Student Petitions and Grievances](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on [Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check the [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an

appeal should refer to the St. Jerome's University Policy on [Student Appeals](#).

Note for students with disabilities: [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Mental Health Support: All of us need a support system. The SJU faculty and staff encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

On Campus:

- SJU Wellness Coordinator: Lindsay Thompson (lindsay.thompson@uwaterloo.ca)
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 x32655
- **MATES:** one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7:

- **Good2Talk:** Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 x6880
- **Here 24/7:** Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME:** set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 x213

Course Outline / Class Schedule

May 10: Introduction

May 18: *Philosopher's Stone*

May 20: Professor Binns' Live Stream (Thesis Statements)

May 25: *Chamber of Secrets*

May 27: Professor Binns' Live Stream (Academic Integrity)

June 1: *Prisoner of Azkaban*, **Small Writing Assignment Due (May 31-June 6)**

June 3: Professor Binns' Live Stream (Structure, Intros and Style)

June 8: *Goblet of Fire*

June 10: Professor Binns' Live Stream (Integrating Quotes, Citing)

June 15: *Goblet of Fire*

June 17: Professor Binns' Live Stream (Common Errors)

June 22: Noel-Smith, "Harry Potter's Oedipal Issues," **Essay #1 Due (June 21-June 27)**

June 24: Professor Binns' Live Stream (Legitimate Sources)

June 29: *Order of the Phoenix*

July 6: *Order of the Phoenix*, **Response to Article Due (July 5-July 11)**

July 8: Professor Binn's Live Stream (Research Tips – Where To Find and How To Incorporate)

July 13: *Half-Blood Prince*

July 15: Professor Binn's Live Stream (Engaging With Multiple Texts and Secondary Sources)

July 20: *Deathly Hallows*

July 22: Professor Binn's Live Stream (Final Concerns/Works Cited)

July 27: *Deathly Hallows*, **Final Essay Due (July 26-August 1)**

August 4: Professor Binns' Live Stream: Wrap-Up

Take Home: (August 9-August 15)