ENGL 2334.001 – Themes and Genres in English Literatures - Summer (II) 2014  
Dr. Josh Epstein (joshua.epstein@tamucc.edu)  
Office: Faculty Center 287  
Office Hours: MTW 8-9 a.m., or by appointment  
Office Phone: 361.825.2395 – I rarely use this phone. Email is much more efficient.  
Class Sessions: MTWR 10:00-11:55, O'Connor 116

Topic: Human Desires, Human Bodies, Human Technologies

This class will explore the ways in which desires, bodies, and technologies are represented in literature from Britain and its colonies. These are three complex terms—the relationships among them even more so. We will ask how the desires that drive works of fiction—to fall in love, to have sex, to make money, to acquire knowledge—change and are changed by the bodies that experience those desires. We will analyze how these bodies are affected by the technologies that they use to harness and fulfill those desires. We will reflect on how these technologies catalyze social change, and to what degree they are seen to enhance or to threaten the traits that make us human. Finally, we will examine how literary form is used to grapple with these questions.

Required Texts: PLEASE USE THESE EDITIONS, IN HARD COPY.
Mary Shelley, Frankenstein (ISBN 9780143105039)  
Shani Mootoo, Cereus Blooms at Night (ISBN 9780802144621)  
Jim Crace, The Pesthouse (9780307278951)

Student Learning Objectives. Students who successfully complete ENGL 2334 will be able to:
• Recognize connections between literary works and their social and cultural contexts.  
• Respond critically to literary works.

Course Objectives: This course aims to help students to:
• Gain familiarity with the categories, concepts, and vocabulary used to analyze literature.  
• Use writing as a tool for learning, and to develop effective strategies for argumentative writing and revision.  
• Develop confidence, facility, and endurance in reading literature closely and analytically.

Electronic Devices: I do not allow the use of laptops, cell phones, iPads, etc. during class. They distract and disengage students from the discussion. Please keep them silent and invisible.

Email: Feel free to email with questions. Before emailing, please consider the following:
• Emails should be treated as professional communications (see www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor). Include a subject line, a salutation (“Hi Dr. Epstein”), and a closing (“Thanks, [Ricky]”); say “please”/”thank you”; write in grammatical sentences and a respectful tone.  
• Email is not an appropriate medium for discussing grades, asking me to review drafts, or asking "What did/will I miss?" Grades and drafts should be handled during office hours; if you miss class, contact a classmate to get notes, schedule changes, assignments, etc.  
• It may take me 48 hours to respond. Please don't treat email as 24/7 customer service.  
• Please do not email to explain why you weren't in class, unless you have an ongoing circumstance that will make you absent frequently.  
• If your question is already answered on the syllabus, I will respond, "Read the syllabus." It's not to be rude; it's so that I have time to respond to inquiries that haven't already been answered.
Required Coursework:

Syllabus/Plagiarism Quizzes (5%): Each student must take two short quizzes on Blackboard. The two quizzes are considered together as one assignment; credit will be given on an all-or-nothing basis—100% or 0%. To receive credit, you must complete both quizzes on time (no later than July 11 by 11:59 p.m.), and must earn 100% on both. (You may retake them as often as necessary, but if you go through them slowly and patiently, it shouldn't take you more than one or two tries.) Clarifying these policies now will save us time and confusion later on.

Reading Quizzes (10%): You should expect a quiz or in-class writing for every reading assignment. The point of quizzes is to see that you have done the reading closely and carefully. Though I won't try to "trick" you, I am not here to make things easy; rather, my job is to give you incentive to read carefully and in depth. If you would like to discuss methods for reading and retention, feel free to speak with me during office hours, or to visit the CASA reading tutors.

Quizzes will be graded on a 4-point scale (4 = A, 3 = B, 2 = C, etc.). You will be able to drop your three lowest quizzes, including any that you have missed due to absence or tardiness. I will average your quizzes (no rounding up) and convert them to a 100-point scale, as follows:

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*** NOTE: I do not give "make-up quizzes" under any circumstances. The three dropped quizzes are designed to leave "wiggle room" for emergencies in which you cannot attend.

Participation (15%): This is a discussion-based class. You are to come to class each day, having done the reading and prepared to discuss it, ask and answer questions about it, and refer to it as support for your claims. To earn an A for participation, you may miss no more than two classes and must make meaningful contributions to the discussion on a regular basis.

Bring the books with you to class. If you don't know what to say, look back through the book and figure it out! If you don't have your book with you, you will be marked absent.

Two Papers, with Revisions: You will write two essays, each of which will be returned with commentary. Based on that feedback, you will then revise and resubmit these essays. The overall grade for each paper will be the average of the first version and the revision grade. So you should not treat the first version as a "rough draft" or an outline. It should be a complete, polished, well-written essay that represents your best efforts.

With each revision, you must submit a Writer's Memo (see p.8 of this syllabus). The specific paper tasks follow on the next page.
Paper 1: Passage Annotation and Analysis (30%): (a) **Annotation**: Make a photocopy of a page from *Frankenstein*, and mark it up. Circle important words; mark notes in the margins; draw arrows between ideas/words that seem connected; identify specific techniques and devices in use. We will practice doing this in class, and you will be given a list of terms to apply (though you are not limited to these terms). (b) Based on your annotation of the passage, write an essay, of at least 1200 words, with a thesis statement, in which you **present an interpretation of this passage**, and in which you **make an argument about its role in the novel as a whole**. In other words, use your annotation as a springboard to developing your own interpretation about how the passage's themes, forms, and techniques contribute to the larger ideas of *Frankenstein*. **Staple your annotated photocopy at the back of the hard copy of your essay.**

Paper 2: Compare/Contrast Essay (40%): A comparison/contrast essay, of at least 1600 words, synthesizing and making an argument two course texts that speak to a shared thematic issue. Suggested prompts will be distributed. Further details TBA.

**Format**: Essays must be completed in correct MLA format. Please see the following:
- Manuscript format ([https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/))
- Citations ([https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/))
- Quotations ([https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/03/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/03/))
- Works Cited ([https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/))

Failure to follow these directions will result in a grade penalty.

**Essay Submission**: Each essay will be submitted both online and as a hard copy. The hard copy is due at the beginning of class on the date assigned; the online copy is due within 48 hours of that. To submit the online copy, log on to Blackboard, go to the folder marked "SafeAssignments" (linked in the menu at left), click the appropriate assignment, and upload your file. SafeAssign serves as a thorough plagiarism checker; this is not the only reason I use it, but be advised. (See the Academic Misconduct policy below.)

**Late Work**: Late essays will be penalized 5% per day late (including weekends). Please note that technology problems (computer crashes, Internet connection issues, printers running out of ink, etc.) do not excuse late work. You are responsible for having your work completed, submitted, and backed up. **If you are late to class on the day that a paper is due, your paper is considered late.**

**Course Policies and Campus Resources**:

**Office Hours**: I am happy to meet with you to discuss any course-related issues. You don't need an appointment to meet during office hours; if those hours don't work for you, please set up an appointment via email. **I cannot reverse time**: don't ask me to reverse something that's already happened. Once a deadline has passed, it's passed; once an assignment is done, it's done. Be in touch early, rather than later, if a problem arises.
**Attendance:** I will take attendance daily, usually by means of collecting quizzes/in-class writings. I realize that it's summer and we'd rather be playing outside, but (as in a job) you're expected to show up every day—with one or two sick days for minor illnesses and personal situations. Thus you have two free absences with no penalty. *Each absence after the second will result in the deduction of 1% apiece from your final grade.* For example, if you have an 80 in the class and miss four classes, your final total will be a 78.

Please do not use these two absences casually—*once they're gone, they're gone.* *I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences*; as in the workforce, either you're here or you're not. Exceptions are made only for major medical or family emergencies, documented with the Division of Student Engagement and Success (a doctor's note isn't enough). Other than that, excuses for absence are not necessary, nor will they erase the absence.

If you miss class, please **contact a classmate** to find out what you missed, prior to emailing me.

**Be on time.** Late arrival to class (> 5 minutes) will count as an absence, as will early departure. Because our classes run long, we will often take a break. A "break" is not an invitation to leave. I may re-check attendance after break, or use in-class writing to take us back into discussion.

**Equal Opportunity:** All students will be treated fairly and equally regardless of race, sex, religion, nationality, age, disability, sexual/affectional orientation, or socioeconomic status. Hate speech or harassment, on these or any other grounds, is not acceptable in this class.

**Academic Misconduct:** Everything that you submit in this course must comply with the Student Code of Conduct ([tinyurl.com/tamucc-code](http://tinyurl.com/tamucc-code)). All forms of misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, multiple submission, forgery, complicity) are considered equally serious. Any incident of academic misconduct will result in a zero on the assignment, and will be reported to Judicial Affairs. *A second incident, no matter how "minor," will result in an F for the course, and will be reported to Judicial Affairs with a recommendation for formal disciplinary action,* which may include suspension or expulsion from the University. The policy applies to all assignments, regardless of format or level of formality. To avoid plagiarism, you must cite the source of any ideas, paraphrased or quoted, that are not your own. When using someone else's language (even a short "catchy" phrase), put the quoted language in quotation marks and cite the page number. If in doubt about what you are doing, consult with me before submitting the assignment. *Uncertainty about the rules is not an excuse for violating them.*

**Veterans/Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at 361.825.5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom, or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance. **All necessary accommodations must be documented in advance of when they are needed.**
**Academic Advising:** It is imperative that all students visit regularly with an academic adviser. Each college within the university has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisers to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. To find out how to contact the right adviser, go to [http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php](http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/advising.php). Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center [http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac](http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac).

**Tutors:** The Center for Academic Student Achievement (Glasscock 107; 361.825.5933) provides trained tutors and consultants during the summer sessions. You are encouraged to consult with the CASA **reading tutors** and to use the **Writing Center** ([casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php](http://casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php)) for help with specific writing assignments and general writing skills.

**Grading:**

Using a 100-point scale and the grade weights indicated above, your grade will be calculated as follows: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; 0-59 = F. I round up at .5 (e.g. an average of 89.5 will be rounded up to 90). I stick to these numbers firmly in all cases.

*A grading rubric for the essays is attached to this syllabus.* Please keep in mind that grades are something you *work up to*. In other words, you don't start with an A and lose points for doing something wrong; rather, you start at zero, and your grade represents the level of accomplishment to which your paper has risen. My grading standards are as follows:

- Grades of F represent work that fails to satisfy the assignment adequately, that does not demonstrate passable college-level writing, or that contains any instance of plagiarism.
- Grades of D represent **passing** work that **fulfills the minimum expectations** for college-level work, but with major deficiencies in its argument, analytical depth, and logical rigor, or in its organizational and expressive clarity.
- Grades of C represent **adequate** work that **meets expectations** in the above categories at a satisfactory college level.
- Grades of B represents **good** work that **meets expectations with merit** in the above categories. In other words, it is more than merely ok; it represents strong college-level work.
- Grades of A represent work that **exceeds expectations** for intellectual originality, analytical depth, logical rigor, and organizational and expressive clarity. The work may have minor flaws, but it stands out as **excellent**.

If you wish to discuss graded work, please take at least 48 hours to review my comments; then feel free to speak with me during office hours. Again, I do not discuss grades via email.

**Grade Appeals:** As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that s/he has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is on the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a grade complaint is encouraged first to discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible
through the University Rules website (www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the College of Liberal Arts, or the Office of the Provost.

Please take down the contact info of 2-3 classmates whom you can contact if you miss class.

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**Schedule:**
Readings are to be completed *before class* on the days indicated.

- **M July 7**  
  Introductions.

- **T July 8**  
  *Frankenstein*, through end of Vol. 1. Discuss Paper 1 assignment.

- **W July 9**  
  *Frankenstein*, through end of Vol. 2.

- **R July 10**  
  *Frankenstein*, finish the novel.

- **F July 11**  
  Syllabus and Plagiarism Quizzes due by 11:59 p.m. No late quizzes accepted.

- **M July 14**  
  **Paper 1 due in class.** Discuss papers.

- **T July 15**  
  *Infernal Desire Machines*, chs. 1-3.

- **W July 16**  
  *Infernal Desire Machines*, chs. 4-6.

- **R July 17**  
  *Infernal Desire Machines*, finish the novel.

- **M July 21**  

- **T July 22**  
  *Cereus Blooms*, chs. 10-15.

- **W July 23**  
  *Cereus Blooms*, finish the novel.

- **R July 24**  
  **Paper 1 Revision due.** *Cereus Blooms*, cont.

- **M July 28**  
  *The Pesthouse*, chs. 1-10. Discuss Paper 2 assignment.

- **T July 29**  
  *The Pesthouse*, chs. 11-14.

- **W July 30**  
  *The Pesthouse*, finish.

- **R July 31**  
  Workshop Paper 2.

- **F Aug 1**  
  **Paper 2 first version due, to my office, by 5 p.m.**

- **M August 4**  
  *Her* screened in class.

- **T August 5**  
  *Her* discussed in class.

- **W August 6**  
  Revision Workshops

- **R August 7**  
  **Paper 2 Revision Due. Tearful Goodbyes! :’(**
Grading Rubric for Essays – ENGL 2334


**Thesis:** The paper addresses a complex and challenging topic by developing a convincing and interesting argument. It presents a focused and nuanced interpretation of the text(s) that is grounded in close reading and in-depth reflection, and that shows advanced critical insight and independence. Almost always, the thesis of an excellent paper is effectively framed in the introduction; this score, however, reflects the thesis as developed and nurtured throughout the essay.

Score (out of 20 points): ______/20

**Persuasion and Analysis:** Claims are supported with textual evidence, which is closely analyzed in a way that develops the thesis and sheds new light on the material. Terms are clearly defined, avoiding vague language or sweeping generalizations. Claims are argued, not just asserted. The argument is developed logically, avoiding forced evidence, misreadings, or obfuscations of the text. Quotations are used judiciously and analyzed for details of language. Indeed, the difference between an "A" and a "B" in this category often lies in the close attention to literary language and technique. The paper may convincingly anticipate counter-arguments and recognize their strengths.

Score (out of 30 points): ______/30

**Organization and Continuity:** The argument convincingly develops the thesis and nurtures its progress, "signposting" the argument and making it easy to follow. Paragraphs are shaped and ordered in a logical and intuitive way, avoiding unnecessary repetition or back-and-forth. Body paragraphs have clear claims, evidence, and analysis (C-E-A). Transitions are fluid and graceful; the paper effectively synthesizes and balances ideas, beyond merely listing them. The introduction and conclusion persuasively frame the argument and explain its implications.

Score (out of 25 points): ______/25

**Style and Mechanics:** The writer speaks in a lively, intelligent, and appropriately formal voice. The writing is fluid, vigorous, and elegant, without wasting words and with a minimum of clichés or "filler." It shows excellent control of syntax (sentence structure) and diction (word choice). Active voice predominates. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors are few or non-existent and do not obstruct clarity. Quotations are integrated gracefully and correctly.

Score (out of 20 points): ______/20

**Following the assignment.** All aspects of the assignments are followed correctly. The paper format is correct, including MLA citations, font, margins, spacing, etc. The assignment follows the prompt; if it "stretches" the prompt, it does so for effective intellectual reasons.*

Score (out of 5 points): ______/5

*Note: An essay that fails to satisfy the assignment (FSA) may receive an F regardless of the above point values.

Total Score: ______/100

Feedback on the essay can be found on the back of this sheet.
Guidelines for Writer's Memos – ENGL 2334

The revision of each essay must be accompanied by a writer's memo—a letter, from you to me, which addresses the following in at least 300 words:

• What have you worked hardest to accomplish in this paper? What was your goal?

• What do you think is working best in your paper (what are you proudest of)? What do you think is the best and biggest change between this revision and the previous version?

• Outline, in some detail, what your overall process was in revising the essay. What steps did you go through to reconsider the argument, restructure the essay, edit the prose, etc.? What was the most important thing you accomplished in these steps? Were there any particular struggles you had along the way? Be specific.

• Of course there's always limited time to make these essays turn out perfectly. If you had one more chance to revise, or if you'd had more time, what do you think you would do differently? What would you add, subtract, reconsider, etc.?

• Ask at least one, preferably a couple, questions that you have about writing. These may range from "big" questions about the writing process ("What are good strategies for picking a topic?") to "small" or nitpicky questions ("How do I punctuate a quotation?"), to questions about this specific paper.

• Writer's memos should not discuss grades. Focus on the piece of writing itself, and the process you went through to develop it. The point of the memo isn't to "sell me" on how great your paper is, but to reflect honestly about your development as a writer.

Here are the nitty-gritty details about writer's memos:

• At least 300 words. (Not included in the required word count of the essay.)

• Stapled at the back of the paper (and included as part of the file you upload to SafeAssign).

• Writer's memos are not given a separate grade; however, I may consider their quality when assigning a grade to the essay. Don't slack on them.

• Revisions submitted without memos are counted late until you have submitted the memo as well. I.e., if you submit the paper on time, but the memo three days late, the paper is three days late.

• This is a letter, not a paper. You may write it informally, so long as that doesn't lead you to take it less seriously. You should still write in good, clear English, check for grammar and spelling, express yourself clearly, etc.