Course Description. Sigmund Freud’s 1919 essay describes the uncanny as “that species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar.” In fact, he traces the English word to its German cognate, unheimlich, which means “unhomely.” In this course, we will read fiction and view films that depict uncanny American homes. Some have ghosts, some hide monsters, and some, perhaps, reflect the monstrous or eerie within narrators, characters, and readers. By turns welcoming, terrifying, familiar, and utterly unknowable, the American homes we visit in imagination will help us to explore histories of gender, race, class, and literary production from the antebellum to the contemporary period.

Course Objectives. This course will support the following learning goals:

- Introduce students to literary and cultural histories in the United States.
- Introduce students to theories of genre, perception, and aesthetics in literary study.
- Support the development of student libraries and vocabularies for the further study of literature and American culture.
- Introduce space-based and perception-based frameworks for analysis.
- Encourage students to make connections between imaginative texts and theoretical frameworks, and to articulate those connections with textual analysis and argumentation.

Required Texts

Films All available through MediaSite on Bb.
The Innocents (1961)
The Others (2001)
The Shining (1980)
Room 237 (2013)

Assignments
Film Commentary: 15%
Theoretical Overview: 15%
Blueprint Project (SketchUp optional): 20%
Argumentative Essay: 20%
Short Reading Responses. 3 @ 10% = 30%

**Argumentative Paper.** Students will develop a sustained, original argument in the service of an argumentative thesis. The purpose of this assignment is twofold: (1) students identify a cultural, historical, or literary “conversation” in which they will take part and (2) students develop and present an argument (including supporting examples, outside sources, and original analysis) that advances a particular intervention or perspective within what they identify as their conversation of interest. Additionally, this assignment includes two separate graded units: the proposal/working draft AND the final draft.

**Reading Responses.** Reading responses allow students to experiment with an argument in a short form, low risk format. In two reading responses, students should formulate a short thesis statement and work through an example or two from the chosen text(s). In practical terms, the reading response is a practice for the final paper: a place to try out daring ideas, experiment with counter-intuitive arguments, organize observations around an unexpected or innovative question.

**Blueprint Project.** As a creative and interpretive project, each student will develop a map or blueprint of a space from the texts we read in class. This project might use the SketchUp program (available online), or it could draw, model, digitally render, or otherwise visually represent the space in another way. More details will follow in class.

**Specific Course Policies.**

**Class Participation.** Success in literary and cultural criticism requires good communication and productive interaction, so attending class and contributing usefully to discussion are important parts of the final grade in this class. It will be difficult, if not utterly impossible, to retain the important aspects of class discussion without some textual marking and active reading practices, so bring the appropriate text to class every day and be ready to write in it. Students who are routinely without hard copies (either bound books or, when appropriate, printouts) will lose participation points. While you need not contribute to class discussion on every single day we meet, every student should arrive to class prepared by having done the reading and considered a question or two about the text. Asking informed and productive question is as important as answering them!

During the course of the semester, I will give unannounced reading quizzes and require assorted extra activities, such as mini-presentations on passages of text or work with secondary critical material. All such activities will count toward the class participation grade.

If you cannot afford the texts in this course, please see me and we can address questions of textbook access together.

If you anticipate participation being for you a source of anxiety, please speak with me about some strategies we can employ together.

**Course Readings.** Studying American literature in a serious way means getting to enjoy the pleasures of beautiful writing and the insights of sophisticated minds. It also means confronting violent histories, especially histories of race, sex, and labor. Our readings include accounts of physical abuses, rapes, and other harms, as well as literally dozens of instances of racist epithets. We will talk openly about how hard it can be to read this work, but all assigned
readings are required. Also important is your willingness to engage thoughtfully, generously, and sympathetically with your peers in this learning community. Please see Professor Salter to discuss any questions or concerns you may have about your own participation in this course.

Class Attendance. Students are allowed a maximum of three (3) absences. All absences count equally, irrespective of the cause, and students who exceed 3 absences will be penalized .05 points on their final grade for every absence over the limit. Additionally:

- Students who participate in university-sanctioned activities should meet with me during the first week of classes.
- If you are unable to attend class, you do not need to email me to explain the circumstances. You should contact another student in class and copy his/her notes.

For more detail, consult TAMU-CC’s “General Academic Policies and Regulations.” http://catalog.tamucc.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=177

Communication. As members of a learning community, everyone is expected to be up-to-date and responsible for any changes or additions to the course schedule. I will be using your TAMU-CC email, through Blackboard, to send messages about readings, assignments, and assorted matters to the class throughout the semester. It is imperative to check email regularly and stay aware of what is happening in and outside of the classroom. I will also take my communication responsibility to you seriously; if I have not responded to an email within 24 hours, do not hesitate to follow up. Be advised that emails sent after 10pm will not be read until the following day.

Technology. There will often be required supplementary readings posted to Blackboard; these should be printed out on hard copy, or students can bring a digital reading device, such as a Kindle, to class.

The use of laptops in class has been found to lower course grades for the students who use them (see this article, one of several: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/05/16/why-smart-kids-shouldnt-use-laptops-in-class/)

Thus, laptops and tablets will not be considered appropriate digital reading device for class; students using laptops, tablets, or cell phones during class will be considered absent for the day.

Work Policies. All late work will lose 1/3 of a letter grade each day for as long as the assignment continues to be overdue. Students must complete all major assignments (as listed in the syllabus) in order to pass the course.

General Educational Policies.

Basic Needs Statement. Insufficient basic needs--food, a safe living space--can affect your performance in classes and make your university experience more challenging. If you have difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food, or you lack a safe and stable place to live, you might consider several resources on campus.

- Contact the Division of Student Engagement and Success for support. Specifically, the office of Student Assistance provides consultations, resource management, and institutional support for “extenuating circumstances.” Their website is here: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentAssistance.html. The Student Assistance Coordinator is Kristeen Gonzalez. UC318, M-F 8AM-5PM. 361-825-2612
- If you do not have access to or cannot afford sufficient food, be aware that “Izzy’s Food Pantry” provides on-campus access to food. Find more information here: http://seas.tamucc.edu/FoodPantry/
- If you feel comfortable doing so, please talk with me and / or your other professors. We may be able to assist.

Salter/ENGL4362/SP2020
Classroom / Professional Behavior. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Disabilities Accommodations. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 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 at (361) 825-5816.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct. TAMU-CC identifies “Academic Misconduct” as “engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.” Specifically, academic misconduct includes plagiarism, the act of using someone else’s words and ideas without attribution. The TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct defines Plagiarism as “Intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgement of the source, with the exception of information that is generally accepted as common knowledge.
Examples:
- Using another’s work from print, web or other sources without acknowledging the source.
- Quoting from a source without citation.
- Using facts, figures, graphs, charts or information without acknowledgement of the source.
- Using a past assignment the student has completed as a portion of a new assignments, without providing citation. Please note that without instructor permission, this is also considered a multiple submission violation.

We will discuss MLA citation style and the appropriate use of academic sources and conventions throughout the semester. Please do not hesitate to ask me any questions about academic misconduct and academic integrity at anytime. If you are discovered plagiarizing you will automatically receive an “F” for the paper, or depending on the severity, for the class, and will be reported to the appropriate officials for further disciplinary action. See the TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct for more detail. http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html

Dropping a Class: Although I hope we will learn together for the course of this semester, sometimes a student must drop a course. Please see me if you are considering doing so. You must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 10 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Grade Appeals. Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.
**Statement of Academic Continuity.** In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**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

Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center.

For more information, go to: http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

**Campus Carry.** Beginning August 1, 2016, it is legal in the State of Texas for “a handgun license holder to carry a concealed handgun on the campus of an institution of higher education.” As a state institution of higher learning, Texas A&M–Corpus Christi must recognize and abide by the Campus Carry law, which limits concealed carry to those over the age of 21 who hold the appropriate permit. By law, employees of TAMUCC cannot restrict permit holders, under the appropriate circumstances, from carrying a firearm on campus (with the exception of university restricted zones, which are clearly marked). I hope that you will consider participating in our learning community’s safe-space mentality in the classroom and my office. If you have concerns about this law and its effect on your learning experience, you can speak to your professor, a representative of the office of Student Engagement and Success, an employee of Campus Security, or a member of the ICARE community. For more information about this policy, please consult the TAMUCC website at http://campuscarry.tamucc.edu/ and http://www.tamus.edu/campus-carry-rules/

**Proposed Schedule.**

NB: Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule as necessary

**Week 1**
T 1/21 Introductory
Th. 1/23 Freud, “The Uncanny” (1919); Thacker, from *In The Dust of This Planet* (2010)

**Week 2**
Th. 1/28 Jacobs. *Incidents* (1861) “Intro”–XV
T 1/30 Jacobs. *Incidents* XVI–XXVII
Week 3
T 2/4 Jacobs. *Incidents. XVIII–XLI*
Th. 2/6 Theoretical Reading TBD

Week 4
T 2/11 James. *Turn of the Screw* (1898) Preface—Ch. V
Th. 2/13 James. *Turn of the Screw* Ch. VI–XVII
RR I due: Thursday by midnight

Week 5
T 2/18 James. *Turn of the Screw* Ch. XVIII–end
Th. 2/20 Theoretical Reading TBD

Week 6
T 2/25 *The Innocents* (1961) FILM
Th. 2/27 *The Others* (2001) FILM
Theoretical Overview due: Friday by midnight

Week 7
Th. 3/5 Perkins Gilman. *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892)

~SPRING BREAK. March 9-13~

Week 9
T 3/17 Morrison, from *Playing in the Dark* (1992)
Th. 3/19 Online Activity

Week 10
T 3/24 Morrison. *Beloved* pp. 1-100
Th. 3/26 Morrison. *Beloved* pp. 101-195
RR II due: Thursday by midnight

Week 11
T 3/31 Morrison. *Beloved* pp. 200-end
Th. 4/2 De Certeau, from *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984)

Week 12
T 4/7 King. *The Shining* (1977) Ch. 1–12

Week 13
T 4/14 King. *The Shining* (1977) Ch. 23–40
Th. 4/16 King. *The Shining* (1977) Ch. 41—end
Blueprint Project due: Friday by midnight

Week 14
Th 4/23 Room 237 (2012)

Week 15
T 4/28 Louise Erdrich. Short Stories
Th. 4/30 Course Conclusion
Essay II due: Friday by midnight