What separates human from monster? From Dr. Frankenstein’s nineteenth-century creature to twenty-first century clones, depictions of monsters in literature have raised troubling questions about the boundaries between creation and destruction, self and other, life and death, realism and the unreal, humanity and horror. In this course, we will explore these questions in fiction devoted to depicting monstrosity in all of its terror and fascination. We will learn about the history of horror in the nineteenth century and consider the ways the period’s early monstrosities have morphed into the monsters of today. In the process, we will also examine how terrible creatures of many kinds have embodied changing concerns about class, gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. Above all, we will consider a question that has plagued writers from the publication of Frankenstein onwards: what if there is no difference between monster and human at all?

Course Objectives

1. To consider how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience by examining the connections between literary works and their social, historical, and cultural contexts.
2. To use literature to explore ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures and nationalities.
3. To recognize the distinctive characteristics of relevant literary periods, genres, and writers.
4. To understand and use basic literary terms and concepts.
5. To develop analytic skills by close reading, class discussion, and writing.
6. To use writing as a tool for learning.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students who successfully complete ENGL 2333 will be able to demonstrate knowledge and skills in
four Core Objectives defined by the Higher Education Coordinating Board of the State of Texas:
CT1. Critical Thinking
Generate and communicate ideas by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information.
CS1. Communication Skills
Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication.
SR1. Social Responsibility
Demonstrate intercultural competence.
PR1. Personal Responsibility
Connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision making.

Required Technologies

Access to a computer with reliable Internet access and a reliable office software suite. You can access a free download of Office365 (which includes Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) using your TAMUCC student ID here: https://iol.tamucc.edu/office365.html

Access to Blackboard, TAMUCC’s Learning Management System: https://bb9.tamucc.edu/
Please visit https://iol.tamucc.edu/techreq.html to learn more about computing requirements to use Blackboard.

Access to WebEx, a videoconferencing tool: https://iol.tamucc.edu/webex.html

Access to hypothes.is, an online text annotation platform: https://web.hypothes.is/

Basic emailing, web browsing, and word processing skills.

Required Texts

Required texts will be available for purchase at the Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi Bookstore in University Center.

Victor LaValle, *Destroyer* (BOOM! Studios, ISBN 9781684150557)

Readings marked with an (*) will be available on Blackboard.

Course Content Warning

Due to the nature of the course’s topic, “monstrosities,” the readings and films assigned for this course will frequently deal with material that may be disturbing or graphic from time to time. Generally speaking, a number of texts on our syllabus will depict and confront a range of challenging issues, such as racial stereotyping and racism and the history of oppression on the basis of gender and sexuality. In addition, the major texts on the syllabus depict acts of violence and some will do so graphically. I will at times provide more specific content warnings in class. However, I also invite you to approach me at any point in the semester if you have concerns about course content, particularly if you are concerned about impacts to your learning.
Course Requirements

Discussion and Participation Posts: 200 points
Collaborative Close Reading Assignment 1: 100 points
Collaborative Close Reading Assignment 2: 100 points
Independent Close Reading Assignment: 100 points
Making a Monster Story: 200 points
Midterm Exam: 100 points
Final Exam: 200 points

Total: 1000 points

Discussion and Participation Posts: Each week, you will contribute to our class by posting to discussion forums or completing other forms of participation that Dr. Sheehan will outline in each week of the course. In these posts, you will be asked to demonstrate your attention to that week’s reading and course material and to read and respond thoughtfully to your classmates as well as to the prompts that Dr. Sheehan provides.

Close Reading Assignments: In these assignments, you will closely read, annotate, analyze, and develop an argument about a passage of text from our assigned readings. In the first two of these assignments, you will practice close reading collaboratively with members of the class and then write up your findings individually in a short written analysis. In the third, you will practice close reading, annotation, and analysis independently.

Making a Monster Assignment: In this assignment, you will explore an example of “monstrosity” you find in the contemporary world by developing a monster story of your own. In addition to your story, you will write a brief introduction to and analysis of your monster story. Finally, you will contribute your monster story in a format of your choosing to an online gallery of monster stories, where other members of the class will be able to learn more about your work.

Midterm Exam: In this exam, you will be asked to demonstrate your careful reading of and thoughtful engagement with the assigned course texts up to the midpoint in the semester. This exam will take place online.

Final Exam: In this exam, you will be asked to reflect on and synthesize major concepts, key terms, and themes from the course. We will discuss the format of the final exam further in the weeks leading up to the exam. This exam will take place online.

Course Policies

Grading: Your final grade in the course will be calculated based on your final points percentage out of 1000 total points. The following percent scale will be used:

A: 90%-100% (900-1000 points)
B: 80%-89% (800-899 points)
C: 70%-79% (700-799 points)
D: 60%-69% (600-699 points)
F: 59% or below (599 points or below)

Office Hours: Office hours are times that instructors set aside to meet with students outside of scheduled class times. During my office hours, I will be available and you are encouraged to dial in to speak with me. You do not need an appointment to meet with me during office hours. You also do not need to have a specific concern or question; you are welcome to talk with me about how the class is going for you so far, your interests, other books you are reading, your academic progress and future plans, etc. Office hours are my preferred time to speak with you about your work in my course; however, if you need to speak with me and cannot do so during office hours, you may email me (lucy.sheehan@tamucc.edu) to schedule an appointment.

Email: I respond to emails within 48 hours. I generally do not respond to emails on weekends or after 5pm, though if you make a note that your concern is an urgent one I will respond as soon as I can. If you would like to speak with me sooner, I strongly encourage you to visit my office hours.

Communication: All members of our learning community are expected to regularly check university email accounts and Blackboard messages. It is advised that you check university email as often as you can. If you do not have access to or regularly check your Islander email account, now is the time to make sure you can receive emails there daily by contacting IT for assistance.

Online Community: In this course, you will regularly be asked to participate in an online learning community. We will work together to establish class policies and norms that we will share for working together in this community. For now, here are a few of Dr. Sheehan’s guidelines to keep in mind as we begin the semester:

- Visit the Blackboard forum named “Clubhouse.” This is an open forum for you to talk with your classmates—think of it as an online version of our classroom space before and after class. Post when you are able to in order to let us know how you are doing. Feel free to post about things that are on your mind beyond the scope of this class or your studies, though remain aware that everyone in the class (including Dr. Sheehan) can read your posts.

- Consider the digital permanence of your communication in this course and in many online situations.

- Remember that discussion board posts and other communications inside this online course will be read by members of the classroom community; consider your audience as you develop your posts and other forms of participation.

- Keep in mind that sarcasm, irony, and other shades of meaning and intent can be hard to interpret in an online context.

- Don’t use discussion forums to ask or talk about grades. Grade discussions are private and should occur with your instructor only.

Writing Assignments
Submission: All writing assignments must be submitted electronically to Blackboard. I will use this submission to mark whether your assignment was turned in on time and to completion. Assignments submitted via email without a copy submitted via Blackboard will not be accepted.

Late Work: This course is designed to be completed chronologically, with close attention and feedback from your peers, from Dr. Sheehan, and with your own continual self-reflection. Work submitted substantially after the initial deadline will delay your progress in the course, prevent you from receiving timely feedback and incorporating that feedback into your work throughout the semester.

All work submitted within one week of the due date will be accepted without penalty and occasionally submitting work within a week of the deadline likely will not disrupt your progress in the course. All assignments beyond our weekly participation assignments (such as essays) will be accepted within three weeks of the due date without late penalties, but submitting work significantly after the due date will likely impede your progress in the course and may impact your grade on the work you submit. Participation assignments will be accepted for three weeks following the initial due date, but because late submission will prevent you from contributing to and benefiting from the work of the course as it is happening, late participation assignments will negatively impact your final participation grade in the course. Participation assignments submitted past the initial due date will not receive feedback.

Work submitted more than three weeks after the initial due date will be accepted but late penalties will apply: assignments will lose 10% of the total points for each week beyond three that they are late. (For example, an assignment that earns 80/100 points but submitted four weeks late would receive a final grade of 72/100, taking the assignment from a B to a C.) All work for this course must be submitted by Friday, December 4th at 11:59pm to receive credit.

Format: For written assignments, please use a standard 12-point font (such as Times New Roman), 1-inch margins, double spacing, and page numbers. You should include a single-spaced heading with your name, the assignment number (e.g. Essay 1), and the date at the top of the page.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one's own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test may result in failure of the assignment and may result in failure of the course, at the instructor's discretion.

In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. Plagiarism is a violation of academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:

- Using the work of another as your own,
• Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
• Using resource materials without correct documentation,
• Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
• Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

University Policies

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.

Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. 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 CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, 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. November 5th, 2020 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*, a student who believes that he or she 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 upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**Statement of Civility**

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.

**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.

**Additional Information: Basic Needs**

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](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.

**Course Calendar**

Note: dates and readings subject to change, with advanced notice.

**Week 1: August 19-21**
Course Syllabus
Margaret Atwood, “Lusus Naturae”*

**Week 2: August 24-28**
Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Monster Culture (Seven Theses)”**
Margaret Atwood, “Lusus Naturae”* (reread)

**Collaborative Close Reading Assignment 1 due**

**Week 3: August 31-September 4**
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, “Author’s Introduction,” Volume 1, letters I, II, III, IV, and chapters 1-6

**Week 4: September 7-September 11**
*Frankenstein*, Volume 1, chapter 7 - Volume 2, chapter 7
*Frankenstein* Historical Context Excerpts (Wollstonecraft and Equiano)*

**Week 5: September 14-18**
*Frankenstein*, Volume 2, chapter 8 - Volume 3, chapter 7

**Collaborative Close Reading Assignment 2 due**

**Week 6: September 21-September 25**
Victor LaValle, *Destroyer*

**Week 7: September 28-October 2**
Steven Spielberg, *Jurassic Park* watch party

**Midterm Exam**

**Week 8: October 5-October 9**
Sheridan LeFanu, *Carmilla*

**Week 9: October 12-October 16**
Carmen Maria Machado, “The Husband Stitch” (*Her Body and Other Parties*)

**Week 10: October 19-23**
Carmen Maria Machado, “Real Women Have Bodies,” “Inventory” (*Her Body and Other Parties*)

**Week 11: October 26-30**
Making a Monster Story and Virtual Presentations
Week 12: November 2-6
Kazuo Ishiguro, *Never Let Me Go*, chapters 1-8

Week 13: November 9-13
*Never Let Me Go*, chapters 9-16

Week 14: November 16-20
*Never Let Me Go*, chapters 17-22
Independent Close Reading Assignment due

Week 15: November 23
Conclusion and Final Review

Final Examinations: December 1-5, 7
Online Final Exam, date to be announced
Campus Safety Measures

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the coronavirus pandemic, Texas A&M University has adopted policies and practices for the Fall 2020 academic term to limit virus transmission. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses and course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.):

- **Self-monitoring**—Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. **Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.**

- **Face Coverings**—**Face coverings** (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain. Description of face coverings and additional guidance are provided in the [Face Covering policy](https://www.tamucc.edu/fall-2020/face-coverings-faq/) and [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)](https://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/34.99.99.c0.02_use_of_face_coverings.pdf) available on the [Provost website](https://www.tamucc.edu/fall-2020/face-coverings-faq/).

- **Physical Distancing**—Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities.

- **Classroom Ingress/Egress**—Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded. Do not congregate in hallways and maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.

- **To attend a face-to-face class, students must wear a face covering (or a face shield if they have an exemption letter).** If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the [Student Conduct office](https://www.tamucc.edu/fall-2020/face-coverings-faq/) for sanctions. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day’s class remotely for all students.

TAMU-CC Face Coverings
TAMUCC Face Coverings Policy and FAQs:
[https://www.tamucc.edu/fall-2020/face-coverings-faq/](https://www.tamucc.edu/fall-2020/face-coverings-faq/)

Rule and Procedure:
[https://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/34.99.99.c0.02_use_of_face_coverings.pdf](https://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/34.99.99.c0.02_use_of_face_coverings.pdf)