Catalog Description:

Prerequisite: acceptance to the University Honors Program, or consent of instructor. Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will investigate and interpret the stories we construct about ourselves and “the Other” by exploring works from east/west involving the vampire, the specter, the witch. We will particularly focus on cultural, literary and political representations from various periods and locations. (Offered as needed.) 3 credits.

Course Objectives:

1. Gain knowledge of historical, cultural, and literary contexts (related to colonial and postcolonial periods) as well as diverse experiences, expressions, and definitions of culture and identity.
2. Strengthen critical thinking and writing and gain knowledge of various theoretical approaches to the study of literature and culture, including Psychoanalytic, Feminist, and Postcolonial approaches.
3. Explore the power of storytelling and storytellers in the creation of notions of Self/individual/Other, community, and nation.

Content:

1. History: overview of the study of the monstrous and how this fits into definitions of culture/notions of self and other. Overview of European Empires and colonial rhetoric.
2. The vampire as threat from the East. Literary works included focus on various Gothicisms - British, Irish, American – and their relationship with/to the colonial period. Examples of authors used: Le Fanu, Stoker, Poe, Maupassant, Turgenev.
3. The specter as Empire/imperialism along with a focus on the Postcolonial Gothic as the Empire “striking/writing back.” Example of authors used: Soyinkia and Okri.
4. The witch and sexual/colonial politics. Example of authors used: Okri and Conde.
**Current Required Texts:**
- Maryse Conde, *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*
- Ben Okri, *The Famished Road*
- Anne Williams (editor), *Three Vampire Tales*
- Various Literary, Historical, and Theoretical Handouts (to be distributed in class and/or BlackBoard)

**Instructional Strategies:**
1. **Writing Assignments**
   Writing assignments will be required, in both shorter response (to readings) form as well as formal essays.

2. **Seminar: engagement with texts and each other**
   Students will be required to lead discussions and ask questions of one another.

3. **Final presentation**
   Students will be required to give a formal presentation on their final essay topic.

4. **Final Exam**
   Students will complete a comprehensive exam that includes exercises that allow for connections between texts and topics as well as a written component.

**Methods of Evaluation:**

- **Writing Assignments** 40%
- **Seminars (led discussions/participation)** 15%
- **Final Presentation** 15%
- **Final Exam** 30%

**Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy:**
The course syllabus should include the following statement:
Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university.

**Students with Disabilities Policy:**
The course syllabus should include the following statement:
In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. The University, through the Center for Academic Success, will work with the appropriate faculty member who is asked to
provide the accommodations for a student in determining what accommodations are suitable based on the documentation and the individual student needs. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Prepared by:
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Last revised:
Justine K. Van Meter, Spring 2010