

Your Professor

Dr. Emily Clark

clarke2@gonzaga.edu

Humanities 335

Office Phone: 313-6781

Office Hours: M 1:00-2:00 pm
and Tues 11:00am-2:00 pm;
and by appointment

Inside this Syllabus

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Texts

How to Succeed

Course Policies

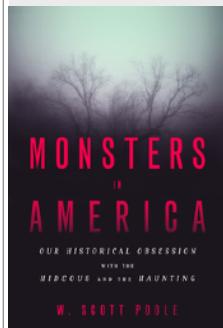
Assignments & Grading

Course Schedule

How This Course Helps You Graduate

This course is a first-year seminar and fulfills one of your [core curriculum requirements](#).

Course Texts



W. Scott Poole,
[Monsters in America: Our Historical Obsessions with the Hideous and the Haunting](#)
(Baylor University Press, 2011).

The book is required. Many additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

AMERICAN MONSTERS



Course Description

“The monster is difference made flesh, to dwell among us.” –

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, *Monster Culture*

“In a deeply tribal sense, we love our monsters.” – Dr. E.O. Wilson (on sharks)

As a First-Year Seminar, this course investigates how we pursue knowledge and cultivate understanding. To achieve this, American Monsters examines the cultural logics of boundaries, anxiety, belonging, and difference. By taking monsters as our object of study, we will interrogate questions about fear, outsiders, the weird, and cultural/social boundaries. Monsters question borders and boundaries by transgressing them and revealing their construction. We will also consider ideas and notions of the supernatural and the mysterious. Monsters reveal the limits of our tolerance, our reservations about others, our fascination with the unexplainable, and our fears about ourselves.

First Year Seminar Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to differentiate the ways in which knowledge is constructed across multiple disciplines.

In American Monsters, students will identify what makes Americans afraid (or not) through the study of monsters. As such, conversations will pull ideas and methodologies from religious studies, history, anthropology, media studies, and sociology.

2. Students will be able to articulate how their own personal and cultural perspectives affect their discovery and generation of knowledge and understanding.

In American Monsters, students will analyze how American conceptions of “the other” and fear shapes the experiences of all our country's citizens. We'll consider the ways in which monsters are culturally, socially, and religious shaped.

3. Students will be able to integrate the principles of Gonzaga's mission with their academic, personal, and spiritual aspirations.

In American Monsters, students will discuss issues surrounding fear of the unknown in contemporary America. Students will evaluate how monsters reveal social tensions and think about the relationship between fear of others and recognizing the dignity of all human persons.

How to Succeed in this Course



- 1) Come to class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire meeting.
- 2) Regularly check your email. I frequently email about grades, housekeeping issues, and more.
- 3) Complete assigned readings, in their entirety, on schedule. Engage with your reading. **Bring** the readings to class.
- 4) Contribute to class discussions. You should come to class with questions and comments, prepared to participate in a lively discussion.

5) Complete all assignments, in a timely manner. Due dates are firm but I allow requested extensions if requested 12 hours before due date. Otherwise late papers will be deducted a full letter grade for every day it is late.

6) Ask for help when you need it. I am happy to assist you in your attempts to master course materials and successfully complete course assignments (Really, I am). Come to my office hours and I am always available via email.

Course Policies

RESPECT FOR MATERIAL, OUR SUBJECTS, AND YOUR PEERS

Students will be expected to communicate in a civil manner at all times, both in and out of the classroom. This means that interactions are to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified way. Treat your peers and the subject material with respect.

COURSE POLICY ON RACE AND ETHNICITY

This class and classroom is one that respects and welcomes each other. Many of my classes cover topics related to race, colonialism, religion, and racism. These conversations and readings are difficult for some students, and I encourage you to live in that space of productive discomfort and allow yourself to be challenged. Gonzaga's [Mission Statement](#) emphasizes a commitment to intercultural competence, diversity, and social justice. Let's live that mission in the classroom. Through these sometimes-uncomfortable conversations, we will learn and grow together.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

I do not tolerate plagiarism or cheating. We are an intellectual and academic community, and all of us are responsible to act with integrity. All violations of the Gonzaga Academic Honesty Policy will result in a zero on the assignment. Plagiarism is the act of passing another's work off as your own. Whether intentional or not, all plagiarized assignments will receive a zero. If you have questions or concerns about plagiarism, consult the guide on blackboard. [Click here for more on Academic Citizenship at Gonzaga.](#)

SCREEN POLICY

You are welcome to use your computer or tablet in class to take notes and refer to pdf readings you did not print out. Screens are **not** to be allowed for other purposes during class. If you have a screen open, you have agreed that I can cold-call on you at any time. The only exceptions to this rule are those with relevant disability accommodations.

DISABILITY ACCESS POLICY

Students with disabilities who need academic accommodations should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Disability Access.
2. Bring a letter to me from the Disability Access Office indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done within the first two weeks of class. The sooner I know, the sooner we can work together.

For more information about services available to GU students with disabilities, contact:

disability@gonzaga.edu; 313-4134. Or visit their office in Foley 209 www.gonzaga.edu/Campus-Resources/Offices-and-Services-A-Z/Disability-Resources-Education-and-Access-Management/default.asp.

A NOTE ON HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Consistent with its mission, Gonzaga seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX and Gonzaga's policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Gonzaga encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to someone from the Campus and Local Resources list found in the Student Handbook: www.gonzaga.edu/studenthandbook about what happened so they can get the support they need and Gonzaga can respond appropriately. There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Gonzaga is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please visit the following website: www.gonzaga.edu/titleix. My office is a safe space, but I am legally required to report sexual misconduct.

For more on Title IX, see: Stephanie N. Whaley

Title IX Director

509-313-6910

whaleys@gonzaga.edu

Business Services Building 018

Or by filling out an online [Sexual Misconduct Report Form](#)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

I enforce the [Gonzaga attendance policy](#), if you miss more than 6 class meetings, you will receive a "V," which is the same as a "F." For a seminar class to work, attendance is necessary.

Assignments and Grading

1) 3Qs Reading Journals. These show critical engagement with texts. Every class period that has an assigned reading, you'll submit a reading journal entry on blackboard that includes: a rich **quote**, a discussion **question** for the class, and a **quandary** that the reading left with you. For more on the grading, see the Reading Journals Rubric on blackboard. We'll be using the journal feature in blackboard, and your journal is due an hour before class begins. Worth 250 points (for 25 reading journals).

2) Personal Monster Reflection: An informal 1-page reflection on your personal monster here at Gonzaga. This could be something social or academic that prompts fear or anxiety for you. Describe it and explain why it is your monster. Worth 25 points

3) Monster Analysis. You will select a monster of their choice from American popular culture (film, novel, comic book, television show) and provide an analysis of that monster with attention to

religion, culture, gender, sexuality, politics, and/or fear. Worth 175 points.

4) Podcast Analysis. You will individually analyze an episode of the podcast *Lore*. This will be preparation for making podcasts in small groups at the end of the semester. Worth 100 points.

5) Monster Podcasts. You will create a podcast in a small group of 2 or 3. Your podcast will explore a monster class touched upon that you want to dive in further. We will dedicate the last couple weeks to working on this assignment, first with a tutorial on research in Foley library and then using class time for you to build your podcast scripts and record. Worth 250 points.

6) Preparation and Participation: The least boring and most effective way to learn is to participate fully in the process. You are expected to contribute to the success of this course by: reading the assigned materials, attending every class, taking notes, listening respectfully, and contributing to class discussions. See the In-Class Participation Rubric for more. Worth 200 points.

3Qs Reading Journals: 250 points

1000-895 points: A range

Personal Monster Reflection: 25 points

A/A- cutoff at 925

Monster Analysis: 175 points

894-795 points: B range

Podcast Analysis: 100 points

B+/B cutoff at 855

Podcasts: 250 points

B/B- cutoff at 825

Preparation and Participation: 200 points

794-695 points: C range

Total: 1000 points

C+/C cutoff at 755

C/C- cutoff at 725

694-595 points: D range

D+/D cutoff at 655

594 points and below: F

Course Schedule

Important: You need to come to class having already read the assigned reading for that day; in other words, readings are due the date listed. We will have some heavy reading weeks, but we'll also have breaks via in-class film screenings.

Week 1: The Monsters at College

Wednesday, Jan 15: Course Introduction

Friday, Jan 17: Success in the First Year at Gonzaga

Reading: "What the Best College Students Do" on blackboard

Week 2: Building the Monster Toolbox

Monday, Jan 20: No Class. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

Wednesday, Jan 22: How do you identify a monster?

Reading: "Monster Culture" on blackboard



Friday, Jan 24: What is weird? Are monsters weird?

Reading: "Body Ritual Among the Nacerima" on blackboard

Personal Monster Reflection Due before 2 pm, Jan 24

Week 3: Building the Monster Toolbox

Monday, Jan 27: What is weird? Take 2.

Reading: "Habitus" on blackboard

Wednesday, Jan 29: Can you explain the unexplainable?

Reading: "The Uncanny" on blackboard

Friday, Jan 31: What do monsters show us?

Reading: "Introduction: The Bloody Chords of Memory" in *Monsters in America*

Week 4: The Unexplainable and the Unseen

Monday, Feb 3: Ye' Olde American Monsters

Reading: "Monstrous Beginnings" (Chapter 1) in *Monsters in America*

Wednesday, Feb 5: Colonial Monsters (and Puritans!),

Take 2

Reading: "The American Satan in the Colonial and Revolutionary Worlds" on blackboard

Friday, Feb 7: Expanding the Monster Toolbox, Gender

Reading: "Social Construction of Gender" on blackboard



Week 5: The Unexplainable and the Unseen

Monday, Feb 10: So Why Puritan Women?

Reading: "The Devil, the Body, and the Feminine Soul in Puritan New England" on blackboard

Wednesday, Feb 12: *The Witch*

Friday, Feb 14: *The Witch*

Monster Analysis Due at 11:59 pm, Feb 14 (what says love like monsters!)

Week 6: The Unexplainable and the Unseen

Monday, Feb 17: No Class. President's Day Holiday.

Wednesday, Feb 19: Nineteenth-Century American Monsters

Reading: "Goth Americana" (Chapter 2) in *Monsters in America*

Friday, Feb 21: Edgar Allan Poe and the Uncanny Gothic

Reading: "The Story of William Wilson" on blackboard

Week 7: The Monsters from Beyond and in Our MidstMonday, Feb 24: Monsters and ScienceReading: "Weird Science" (Chapter 3) in *Monsters in America*Wednesday, Feb 26: *King Kong*Friday, Feb 28: *King Kong***Week 8: The Monsters from Beyond**Monday, March 2: Dinosaurs and the Savage Prehistoric Era

Reading: "Empire and Extinction" on blackboard

Wednesday, March 4: Are Aliens like other Monsters?Reading: "Alien Invasions" (Chapter 4) in *Monsters in America*Friday, March 6: Heaven's Gate: Monsters in our Midst?

Reading: "Heaven's Gate" and "Last Chance to Evacuate Earth" (in that order) on blackboard (focus your reading journal on the second reading)

March 9-13: Spring Break!**Week 9: Monsters and Their Modern Prey**Monday, March 16: Murderous MonstersReading: "Deviant Bodies" (Chapter 5) in *Monsters in America*Wednesday, March 18: H.P. Lovecraft, the 20th-century Monster Master

Reading: "The Call of Cthulhu" on blackboard

Friday, March 20: When the Stories Become Too Real

Reading: "Slender Man" on blackboard

Week 10: Undead MonstersMonday, March 23: Hell in a HouseReading: "Haunted Houses" (Chapter 6) in *Monsters in America*Wednesday, March 25: The UndeadReading: "Undead Americans" (Chapter 7) in *Monsters in America*Friday, March 27: Zombies

Reading: "The Race and Religion of Zombies" on blackboard

**Week 11: The Undead**Monday, March 30: *Night of the Living Dead*Wednesday, April 1: *Night of the Living Dead*Friday, April 3: *Night of the Living Dead*, redux

Reading: "Staking Monsters" on blackboard

Week 12: Monsters and Ourselves

Monday, April 6: The Monster's Power

Reading: "Assimilation and the Queer Monster" on blackboard

Wednesday, April 8: Monsters Among Us Now

Reading: "Worse Things Waiting" (Epilogue) in *Monsters in America*

Friday, April 10: No Class. Good Friday.

Week 13: Monster Podcasts

Monday, April 13: No Class. Easter Monday

Wednesday, April 15: No Class. Dr. Clark will be away at a conference.

Podcast Analysis Due by 2:10 pm, April 15

Friday, April 17: Meet in the library for a research tutorial.

**Week 14: Monster Podcasts**

Monday, April 20: Monster Podcasts

Wednesday, April 22: Monster Podcasts

Friday, April 24: Monster Podcasts

Week 15: Monster Podcasts

Monday, April 27: Monster Podcasts

Wednesday, April 29: Monster Podcasts

Friday, May 1: Monster Podcasts

Final Exam Week

Tuesday, May 5th, 6:00-8:00 pm

Monster podcasts due at our exam period. Before our exam period, you will upload the text portion of your podcast to a Turnitin link (I'll figure out uploading the podcast file later). We'll get together during the exam period and, wait for it, watch a monster movie of your choice (from *Monsters, Inc.* to *Carrie* or *The Exorcist*).