

Abilene Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes

A = Approve I = Information Item R = Respond In Writing

Course Number: ENGL241: Crime Fiction or Degree Plan(s):

		Dept./School	College	Dean	TEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost
	Campus-Level Academic Review¹						
	Change to a Course Include signatures from all chairs/program directors for cross-listed courses. ¹						
1.	Title (description unchanged)	A	A	A	I	I	I
2.	Description (not affecting content)	A	A	A	I	I	I
3.	Course term(s)	A	I	A	I	I	I
4.	Content (change of course outcomes)	A	A	A	I	I	A
5.	Number of credit hours	A	A	A	A	A	A
6.	Course number within the hundred	A	A	I	I	I	I
7.	Course number beyond the hundred	A	A	A	A	A	A
8.	Prerequisites	A	A	A	I	I	I
9.	Course restriction (e.g., majors only, junior standing)	A	A	A	A	A	A
10.	Level change (U to G or G to U)	A	A	A	A	A	A
11.	Cross list course	A	A	A	A	A	A
12.	Department of record	A	A	A	A	A	A
13.	Open or close a course	A	A	A	A	A	A
	Change to a Degree Plan						
14.	Educational Program — Revise	A	A	A	A	A	A
15.	Educational Program — Adopt/revise admission requirements	A	A	A	A	A	A
16.	GPA — Revise program-required GPA	A	A	A	A	A	A
17.	Minor — Revise	A	A	A	A	A	A

		Dept./School	College	Dean	TEC	AUAC/Grad	Provost	Campus Faculty	Senior VPAA	President
	Full Review									
	Change to Catalog Information (for Campus)									
18.	General requirements for Bachelor's and Associate Degrees	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
19.	Policies governing academic probation and suspension	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
20.	Requirements for graduating with honors	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I
	Change to a Degree Plan									
21.	Educational Program — Add or Discontinue ²³	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	I
22.	Educational Program — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	A	A	I
23.	Minor — Add or Discontinue	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	A	I
24.	Minor — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	-	A	I
25.	Degree — Add or Discontinue	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	I
26.	Degree — Discontinue (Provost-proposed)	R	-	R	A	A	A	A	A	I

		Dept./School	College	Dean	AUAC	Provost	UGEC	University Faculty	Senior VPAA	President
	Change to General Education Requirements for Undergraduates (System)									
27.	Change course outcomes of an included course	A	A	A	A	A	A	-	A	I
28.	Add or drop a required course from the General Education Requirements	A	-	A	-	A	A	A	A	I
29.	Add or drop a course from a menu within the General Education Requirements	A	-	A	-	A	A	-	A	I
30.	Comprehensive revision of General Education Requirements	-	-	-	-	A	A	A	A	I

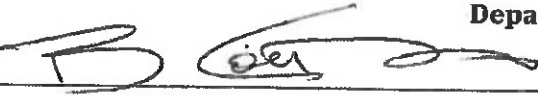
Notes

² Any change to a cross-listed course requires the signature of both department chairs or program directors overseeing the course to ensure that the courses stay in sync. This includes courses taught at other campuses (e.g. BIBL 101 and BIBO 101).

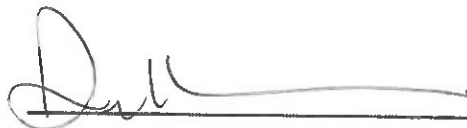
³ For undergraduate majors, a minimum of 30 hours is required. These programs must have a minimum of 6 elective hours, unless the requirements of external accrediting bodies make it impossible. Master's programs must include a minimum of 30 hours, and doctoral programs must include a minimum of 30 hours beyond the master's.

⁴ When a department/school or dean proposes closing a program, approval routing follows the typical process beginning with the department/school. An administrative proposal by the provost or senior vice president for academic affairs would follow the "provost-proposed" routing on the chart.

Updated 8/1/2023


Chair Signature
Department/School(s)
1/30/24
Date

Chair/Program Director Signature
Date


Chair Signature
College Academic Council(s)
2-6-24
Date

Chair Signature
Date


Signature
Dean(s)
2-6-24
Date

Signature
Date

Teacher Education Council
Signature
Date

Campus Academic Council:
Abilene Undergraduate or Abilene Graduate

Signature
Date

Provost

Signature

Date

University General Education Council

Signature

Date

University Faculty

Abilene Faculty Senate Chair signature

Date

Dallas Faculty Council Chair signature

Date

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Signature

Date

President

Signature

Date

Abilene New Course Application

You may delete the preceding instructional pages before submitting application.

Course ID (<i>Subject Code and Number</i>)	ENGL 241
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1. Systems and Catalog Information Complete each item.

A	Course Developer	Sherry Rankin
B	Course Instructor	Sherry Rankin
C	Course Title	Crime Fiction
D	Course Abbreviation for Banner if title is more than 30 characters	
E	College	CAHSS - Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
F	Department or School	LALI - Language & Literature
G	Number of Credit Hours	3
G1	Number of Lecture Contact Hours	3
G2	Number of Lab Contact Hours	0
H	Is the course for a fixed or variable number of credit hours?	Fixed If variable, explain rationale:
I	Is the course repeatable for additional credit?	No
J	Maximum total number of credit hours a student can earn for this course	3
K	Course Schedule Type	Lecture (LEC) See Schedule Type definitions in the Reference section.

L	Number of Faculty Workload Hours	3
M	Grading Mode	Standard
N	Maximum Enrollment	25
O	Catalog Description (50 words or less)	Survey of prominent works of crime fiction. Short stories and novels from the UK and America, starting with the 19 th century.
P	List any prerequisites (course/s, test scores, class standing, major, etc.)	ENGL 111 and ENGL 112 (or ENGW 111 and ENGW 112)
Q	List any corequisites (these <i>must</i> be taken at the same time; note that a single requirement cannot be both a prerequisite <i>and</i> a corequisite)	
R	If the course is cross-listed, specify the subject code and course number of the other course	
S	Does this course require any additional student course fees?	Yes If yes, attach a completed course fee form (see form "Request to Add or Change Course Fees").
T1	Will the course be offered in fall terms?	Yes, even years
T2	Will the course be offered in spring terms?	No
T3	Will the course be offered in summer terms?	No
U	First semester this course will be offered under new Course ID. <i>May not be earlier than the coming fall semester.</i>	Fall 2026

V	Is this course required for a program(s)?	No If yes, submit a separate completed curriculum proposal to change the program(s).
W	Should the addition of this course be retroactively applied to the degree plan it supports? <i>This is rare, and rationale should explain compelling extenuating circumstances.</i>	No If yes, provide rationale:
X	Has this course been offered as a Special Topics course? <i>New courses are not required to be taught as Special Topics courses prior to approval.</i>	Yes If yes, provide course ID, term, and enrollment: ENGL240; multiple terms; 25 students.
Y	List any courses in which the content overlaps the proposed course. (Course ID and Name). <i>Attach a statement from the instructor/dept chair of the existing course justifying the new offering.</i>	

2. Curriculum

- A. Explain any effects of this course on any degree plans. If the addition of the course alters program requirements, submit a separate [Approval Chart for Curriculum Change](#) to update the program.

This does not impact any of our degree plans other than adding another option for the 200-level literature requirement, which applies to most degree plans on campus.

- B. Justify the addition of this course to the current curriculum, explaining the gap it meets.

Sherry Rankin has taught this course as a special topics class many times in previous semesters, and it always fills up and is always a success with students. Based on this—as well as on Sherry's continued success as a published author of crime novels—our Department voted to make the course an official offering in the catalog rather than a special topics course. The curriculum is robust, and other members of the Dept (including Todd Womble and Steven Moore) could also teach future sections if needed. Our Department is always trying to think of ways to

3. Course Design

- A. Audience and Course Goal

1. Describe the intended audience, including prerequisite skills.

The intended audience is lower-level undergraduate students seeking to satisfy their 200-level literature requirement. A potential audience is students with an interest in the subject matter, who may take the course as an elective.

2. State the overarching course goal(s) in performance terms.

The Learning Outcomes below are our Department's standardize outcomes for our 200-level literature courses, which speak to the course goals. We also have the following standardized objectives:

- Increase/enhance student appreciation for important literary texts produced through human history.
- Increase student understanding of the value of reading literary texts by acquainting them with the tools and strategies necessary for textual communication and literary exploration and by expanding their critical and creative thinking and writing skills.
- Continue the writing processes learning in ENGL111 and ENGL112 by improving student ability to compose clear and persuasive research-based literary arguments that draw on careful reading, thoughtful analysis, and an awareness of the literary text's historical and cultural context.

B. Student Learning Outcomes and Measurements

	Student Learning Outcome	Measurement
1	Focus on reading, writing, and thinking critically about literary texts.	Quizzes; Topical Analyses; Reflection Discussions; Exams; Researched Essay.
2	Develop a strong understanding of literary historical and cultural contexts as well as literary devices, genres, traditions, and movements as a basis for literary inquiry.	Quizzes; Analyses; Exams.
3	Develop strong writing skills relevant to literary inquiry, clear expression, and productive critical and literary insights. Write analytical, reflective, and researched literary assignments that together will total at least 1,500-2,500 words.	Topical Analyses; Researched Essay.
4		
5		

C. Text and Resources

Give the full publication information of the textbook/s and other required resources and outside readings. For combined undergraduate/graduate courses, make two lists:

- A. full publication information; label Undergraduate.

*This info is also included in the syllabus.

The Longman Anthology of Detective Fiction
The Big Sleep by Raymond Carver
A Murder is Announced by Agatha Christie
The Murder of Roger Ackroyd by Agatha Christie
Strong Poison by Dorothy Sayers

B. full publication information; label **Graduate**.

4. Supporting Documentation

Required of all applications	
1	Approval Chart for Curriculum Changes
2	Syllabus — Attach the syllabus for the course based upon the anticipated first-semester offering.
4	Library — Submit new course application and syllabus to the Library dean's office. Attach the Library's memo.
Attach if applicable	
5	Content Overlap — Include one document for each course you listed in Section 1Y. Attach statement from instructor/dept chair of existing course justifying the new offering.
6	Departmental Resources — List the resources that support the course and are available only through the department, if applicable. Attach the list of the holdings and the location(s).
7	Resources — List resources (other than library or departmental resources) that are needed to support this course (computers, lab equipment, other technology, etc.). Attach a complete list of all items and indicate possible sources or estimated cost of each. List the sources of any needed funds.
8	Expenses — List additional expenses needed to implement this course (full-time or part-time faculty, graduate or lab assistants, student employees, travel, special student costs, room renovation, storage facility, etc.). Attach a complete list of all items, the estimated cost of each and the source of the funds.
9	Justification — Attach any documents to which you refer in Section 2B.

ENGLISH 241: CRIME FICTION

Abilene Christian University, Spring 2026

Class time/location: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00-9:50 p.m., ADMIN 219

Course Credit: 3 hours

Contact Information:

- Instructor: Sherry Rankin
- Office: Administration 216D
- Best Way to Reach Me: Use ACU email (rankins@acu.edu) or Canvas "In-Box" for quickest response

Office Hours:

- Mondays and Wednesdays: 7:30-9:00 a.m. (walk-in hours)
- Tuesdays: 7:30-9:30 (walk-in hours)
- If you have work or class conflicts that prevent you from visiting my office hours, other times can be made available by appointment; check w me by email to coordinate a time, as needed
- For short questions that can be handled in writing, if you email me before 4 p.m., I will make every effort to respond on the same day.

Required Texts and Materials:

- Mansfield-Kelley, Deane and Lois A. Marchino. *The Longman Anthology of Detective Fiction*. ISBN 9780321195012 (required)
- Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*. ISBN 9780394758282 (this is a required reading, but a free PDF of this book will be provided; if you don't want to read an entire novel off a computer screen, you should purchase the book)
- Christie, Agatha. *A Murder is Announced*. ISBN 9780063214040 (required). NOTE: A Murder is Announced is not in the public domain, and the original authorized version is not available in full text versions for free on the internet; beware of PDFs you find on Internet Archive or such places--they are typically vastly abridged versions and some are even paraphrases (basically, long summaries, using some of the original novel's wording and some of an editor's)
- Christie, Agatha. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*. ISBN 978-0007451562 (this is a required reading, but a free PDF of this book will be provided; if you don't want to read an entire novel off a computer screen, you should purchase the book)

- Sayers, Dorothy. *Strong Poison*. ISBN 9780062196200 (this is a required reading, but a free PDF of this book will be provided; if you don't want to read an entire novel off a computer screen, you should purchase the book)
- Computer access, a working ACU account, and reliable wifi access. It is the student's responsibility to make sure computer and wifi access are consistently available 24/7. If you are having problems receiving mail through your ACU address, or if you cannot access Canvas, please keep your instructor apprised of the situation and contact the IT Support Center immediately to get those issues resolved
- Microsoft Word and/or ability to generate PDFs. All assignments must be submitted to me via Canvas. Some can only be uploaded to Canvas as a Word docx or doc, or as a PDF. No other formats will be accepted on those assignments

GENERAL CLASS FORMAT AND CONDUCT OF THE COURSE

For a discussion of the basic format of the course, see discussion on the Canvas Home Page; for calendar of readings and assignments, see Canvas weekly module calendars.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

ENGL 241 is a 3-hour, lower-division literature course designed to be a reading-intensive introduction to the writers and works of "Classic" Crime Fiction from its earliest beginnings in the 19th century to the "Golden Age" of the early- to mid-20th century. We will read the works (both short stories and novels) of the major authors of classic crime fiction, both in England and in the United States.

Crime fiction, though it often describes immoral acts, is at its core a deeply moral art form, affirming both the sanctity of life as well as the necessity of a strong social fabric. Therefore, the central goals of this course are two-fold:

First, to provide a broad overview of the history and literary trends of crime fiction and to introduce you to its in-depth study, comparing/contrasting key works thematically, stylistically, and philosophically in order to understand their historical and social relevance.

Second: to examine individual and societal values and principles, relational dynamics, and ethical systems as represented in crime fiction, with the ultimate goal of encouraging you to analyze and deepen your own values and beliefs.

This course is further designed to prepare you with a globally thoughtful, sensitive, and rich socio-cultural context through the lens of crime fiction. By asking you to engage with the works and ideas presented in class, with your fellow classmates, and with your own cultural and theological stances, it intends to offer you the critical skills necessary for lives

of service as well as leadership. It is designed to be an important aid in your exploration of the world of ideas.

General Sophomore Literature Program Outcomes and Measures:

1. Students will focus on reading, writing, and thinking critically about literary texts related by genre, topic, or literary period.
Measures: Quizzes; Topical Analyses; Reflection Discussions; Exams; and Research Essay
2. Students will develop a strong understanding of literary historical and cultural contexts as well as literary devices, genres, traditions, and movements as a basis for literary inquiry.
Measures: Quizzes; Topical Analyses; Exams
3. Students will develop strong writing skills relevant to literary inquiry, clear expression, and productive critical and literary insights. Additionally, they will write analytical, reflective, and researched literary assignments that together will total at least 1,500-2,500 words of graded and preferably researched writing.
Measures: Topical Analyses; Researched Essay

COURSE POLICIES

Electronic submission of materials:

Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments should be submitted/uploaded through Canvas. If the assignment asks for an upload, only Word docs or PDFs will be able to be uploaded. If you write assignments in google docs, save the document as a PDF before uploading or I may not be able to read it. If you have difficulty with Canvas or other technological questions, you should notify me, but it is your responsibility to contact the IT Support Center. or another technical support service to make sure you have access to the class. Some basic trouble-shooting steps for common Canvas issues, plus phone numbers and links to various help services, are available on the Technical Help page in the Class Resources module at the top of the Module page.

If you have a problem accessing Canvas or uploading an assignment, be sure to email me the assignments before their deadline (as a temporary solution) while you get your computer issues sorted out; you will receive full credit for an assignment as long as it is time/date stamped before the deadline (though Canvas access is a requirement of the course, so emailing assignments should only be treated as an emergency back-up solution).

Late Work:

No weekly assignment work (quizzes, group work, Topical Analyses, online discussions, etc.) will be accepted, except in pre-approved circumstances, once its deadline has

passed. Notify me in advance, if possible, if you have a special circumstance that will prevent you from submitting weekly assignments on time, and I'll consider whether it meets criteria for late submission.

Major Unit Exams can be taken late but will be marked down 15 points per day late (unless the exam was missed due to an "excused absence" as defined in the syllabus).

Any work not turned in will receive a grade of zero (not an F).

Attendance:

In a hybrid course, the times the class does meet in the classroom become more—not less—essential to successful course completion and a fulfilling class experience. Therefore, my policy is to require attendance for all in-person class meetings and to penalize students for unexcused absences.

Unexcused absences will damage your course grade in three ways:

- By impacting your Attendance average (which is 5% of your course grade)
- You can only receive partial credit for Topical Analysis assignments unless you're in class that day to discuss them (or unless you have an excused absence)
- You can't receive credit for Group Work assignments unless you're present in class on the day they occur

Excused Absences:

An absence from class is considered "excused" in the case of:

- Doctor/clinic-documented illness (with a dated note that includes your name and the date of the clinic visit)
- Properly-documented travel representing ACU (for athletics, debate, band, theater, etc.)
- Absences incurred for these reasons will not lower your attendance grade, and you may make up for full credit any work missed due to such absences (as long as you contact me and make arrangements to make it up within a week of the missed class)

If you are ill, you should:

- Go to the ACU Medical Clinic or another medical facility
- Email me before the missed class, if at all possible, to notify me of the situation
- Ask for a note from the doctor/nurse establishing when you are able to return to classes and email the note to me

If you take those steps, your absence will be automatically considered excused; if you are

going to miss class to represent ACU in some way (athletics, debate, band, theater, etc.), I must receive notification from your coach/sponsor BEFORE the class to be missed in order for such an absence to be considered excused. You should also notify me of your upcoming excused absence before it occurs and check to see what work you may be missing and how to arrange to make it up.

Unexcused Absences:

Of course, other types of issues invariably arise that make it impossible for you to attend class. You might have an illness for which you don't go to the doctor, a family emergency, a job interview, or an occasional unavoidable extenuating circumstance (such as car trouble, helping a friend in crisis, etc.). I recognize that those are important and often unavoidable, even those they aren't "excused"; so I have made allowance for that contingency.

As a professor, I don't want to be in the business of having to judge each person's absence and whether or not it is worthy of being considered "excused," but I also want to allow for a little wiggle room to accommodate the occasional emergency situation. So, although NO ABSENCE WILL BE CONSIDERED "EXCUSED" UNLESS IT MEETS THE ABOVE-STATED CRITERIA FOR AN OFFICIAL "EXCUSED ABSENCE," you are allowed to be absent from class without official excused-absence documentation TWICE without it affecting your attendance grade (which is 5% of the course grade); additionally, your 2 lowest Topical Analysis grades will be dropped (those are the only assignments requiring your presence in the classroom to receive full credit).

Essentially, this means you can have two unexcused absences without it affecting your course grade at all, so save those for a true emergency. If you use them up early in the semester, and later you miss a day because you oversleep, need to study for another course's exam, or have a flat tire, please don't email me asking for an exception to this rule. And if you have planned to leave early for or come back late from a weekend or holiday, bear in mind that such absences are not considered excused and will affect your grade if you have already used your non-penalized absences.

NOTE: If you have a documented chronic medical condition (such as migraines, clinical depression, Crohn's disease, etc.) for which you do not go to the doctor each time but which may cause you to miss class more often than once during the semester, please send me an email or meet with me in person and explain the situation during the first two weeks of school, along with providing some sort of medical documentation (this could be a doctor's note; a prescription bottle showing your name and the name of the medication, etc.), and I will take that into consideration in tallying absences for you during the semester. Information on any medical conditions will be kept strictly confidential.

For absences of any kind, it is up to you to find out beforehand (if at all possible) what work you will miss and make arrangements with me for making it up. Work missed due to an

excused absence must be made up WITHIN A WEEK of the missed class, unless your professor has approved an exception to this rule ahead of time.

Work missed due to an unexcused absence may not be made up after the fact (with the exception of Unit Exams). However, remember that you can submit most types of assignments for full or partial credit (depending on the type of assignment) as long as you meet the assignment deadline.

Tardies:

Three tardies in this class will be counted as one absence for the purpose of calculating your attendance grade. If you have some compelling reason why you will have consistent difficulty getting to class on time (the class before this one is very far away, or its professor often dismisses class late, for example), notify me of the situation and I will take it into account in tabulating your grade.

Drop/Withdrawal:

You may drop this course any time up until 5 p.m. Friday, April 10, 2026. If you choose to drop before that date, you will receive a W (withdraw), not a WF (withdraw failing), even if you are failing the course at the time you drop (unless you are dropped for lack of attendance, in which case you will receive a WF). Therefore, it is in your best interest to check with me to make sure you are passing the course before the drop deadline so that you can drop the course before receiving an F on your transcript.

Academic Honesty:

You'll be expected to abide by standard academic honesty protocols; anything you write and submit for credit should be fully of your own composition. If you use sources (even informally), you should cite them appropriately. In this class, that means different things for different types of assignments, so read the instructions for each assignment carefully. On the Researched Essay, you should adhere to MLA guidelines for source citation; on weekly assignments much as Topical Analyses and Reflective Discussions, you can cite a source by giving it verbal attribution (for example, you might say "I read on Shmoop that..." or "the article on Wikipedia said...").

You should NEVER use a source or a tool (such as an AI generator or paraphraser) without proper attribution.

Please familiarize yourself with my Policy on the Use of AI in the Class Resources module, as well as the ACU Academic Integrity policy ([link](#)), for which you are responsible in this course.

Violation of these policies may result in a zero on the assignment; multiple offenses may be penalized by the loss of one or more letter grades from your course grade.

Offensive Language and Situations in Reading Assignments:

One purpose of a Christian education is to confront uncomfortable and challenging topics in a safe and supportive environment that upholds ethical Christian standards. But that doesn't mean avoiding hard topics; it means looking at them from a mature Christian perspective. It's impossible to be truly educated for Christian service and leadership throughout the world without the willingness to confront any subject pertinent to the common human condition.

In this class, assigned texts have been chosen for their pedagogical, literary, and historical value, never for shock value. Nevertheless, we'll be reading some texts that discuss uncomfortable topics and depict characters who may use offensive language and who think and act in ways that are antithetical to the Christian identity. A person who earnestly wants to be both Christian and an educated person should recognize that mere offensiveness does not make a literary text spiritually damaging; only the way we think and talk about such texts can cause us harm. Understanding the thought patterns and spiritual needs of human beings through literature can be spiritually helpful, not harmful in how Christians deal with real-world people. In this class, we'll approach all texts with intellectual curiosity and a desire to understand the way people of that time period thought and lived.

While you are reading a challenging text, ask yourself what it reveals about the writer or character's worldview, motivation, or situation that helps you understand the theme of the text. Also, remember that personal spiritual growth often occurs when you are challenged by conflicting ideas.

Having said that, it is certainly not the intent of this course to require students to go against their personal code of conduct. If, as you read, you have considered the above points and still feel that you cannot continue with a particular piece of literature because it violates your conscience to do so, please contact me, and I'll be willing to give you an alternative assignment.

If you're offended by anything we read or by how it is presented and discussed, I encourage you to come talk to me. I'd be glad to listen to your concerns and to explain why I assigned the text and how I think it is valuable in the discussion of English literature.

Grading of Major and Minor Written Assignments:

I will be using a two-tier grading system for all written assignments, both major and minor. It works like this: in assessing a grade on a written assignment, I first evaluate it for what I call "Tier 1" requirements. It must meet these to qualify for Tier 2 evaluation.

Tier 1

- The assignment must be free of “critical errors.” (Critical errors include, but are not limited to, things like: use of non-existent or 'hallucinated' sources or text, including reference to characters or events in a text which are grossly inaccurate or derive from parts of a text not assigned; parenthetical citations that don't match the assigned text; radical shifts in format; use of meta language and overly-complex diction laced with literary/analytical jargon; major problems with basic internal consistency, etc.)
- The assignment must substantially meet the requirements of the prompt.
- If a written assignment does not meet these basic standards, I will not give it a passing grade (meaning it may receive an “F” or a zero, depending on the issues).

Tier 2

Once a written assignment meets the Tier 1 requirements, it will move on to Tier 2, in which it will be evaluated based on the specific rubric/requirements for that assignment. The grading rubrics will vary, depending on the purpose of the particular assignment--and you'll be given a written rubric for most (if not all) written assignments. But most rubrics for weekly assignments will include things like:

- The clarity of the writing (whether or not it is easily understood), and of the author's voice.
- The effectiveness of the writing in meeting the prompt or assignment.
- The effectiveness of the use of examples, support, and sources (if any are required)

Notes on Assigning Grades:

Each major assignment or type of assignment will have a rubric specific to the assignment. If you don't understand the reasons you received the grade you received, please contact me and I'd be happy to clarify. As we work together on each assignment, please check email frequently for reminders and syllabus modifications.

Any request I make to meet for a discussion of your work must be honored within two weeks from the request. Any request for a meeting a student would like to make must be made within two weeks of receiving the grade on the assignment in question.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION:

The major assignments/graded components/weights for this class are:

Reading Quizzes: 15%
 Topical Analyses: 10%
 Reflective Discussions (online): 10%

Unit Exams: 50%
Researched Essay: 5%
Attendance: 5%
Participation: 5%

Quizzes:

In each typical week, you'll take three quizzes covering the basic facts about the assignments you read for each class period (including Online Fridays). On days when we're meeting in the classroom, these quizzes must be completed before class time begins. On days we're meeting online, quizzes will be due by that midnight. All quizzes are intended to reward reading/comprehending the assigned texts and should not be overly difficult if you've read attentively.

Quizzes will be brief (usually 5 multiple-choice questions, but occasionally more). Each quiz must be taken in one sitting; you can't answer one question, then go back an hour or a day later and answer another. You are welcome to refer back to the literature/materials as you take the quizzes, but they are built with a time limit (15 minutes for 5-question quizzes), so there won't be much time. Be sure you have read ALL assigned works and are prepared before you start the quiz.

These quizzes will be worth 15% of your course grade.

Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Topical Analysis Assignments:

Community is an important part of the classroom, and Topical Analysis assignments will be one major building block of this community experience. For each in-classroom meeting, you'll select a specific topic from a list of topic questions based on the assigned readings, and you'll write a 150-200 word paragraph response to it (longer is fine), which you will submit via Canvas before the beginning of class on the day it is due. In class that day, you should be prepared to share with the class your Topical Analysis ideas (either by volunteering or by being called on directly), so be sure to have a device with you each day on which you can access your Topical Analysis paragraph. You might choose to read your Topical Analysis aloud, or to summarize it; but you should be prepared to discuss and elaborate on your ideas during class discussion.

You are never required to use outside sources in Topical Analyses, but if you do, you should cite them (informally is fine—something like, "According to what I read in Wikipedia..." etc.). Be sure to indicate which ideas are your own, and which you're getting from a source. Since in-person discussion is a large part of this assignment, you cannot receive more than 50% credit for a Topical Analysis assignment if you are not in class on the day it is due (unless your absence is officially "excused"). Though they should be written in complete

sentences and paragraphs, the primary focus of Topical Analyses is ideas, not style/grammar, and they will be graded accordingly.

Topical Analyses will compose 10% of your course grade.

See Topical Analysis Requirements/Rubric for more information on how this assignment will be graded.

Your 2 lowest Topical Analysis grades will be dropped.

Online Reflective Discussions:

During the past 25 years, I've discovered that one big draw-back of in-person instruction is that only a few students in each class feel truly comfortable speaking in the classroom setting, with the result that we tend to hear from the same students over and over. Conducting a class with hybrid components helps solve that problem, and one very flexible and useful part of the semester's coursework will occur in the form of online Reflective Discussions.

Unlike Topical Analyses, Reflective Discussions will occur outside of the classroom; and since I'd like students to devote a good deal of time to participating in these discussions, they will take the place of our class time that day and will be held on Canvas (though these Reflective Discussions will not occur in real time and you will not have to appear on camera or be online at a specific hour).

Typically for a Reflective Discussion, you'll read the assigned work/s due for that class day, and then respond to discussion questions your instructor will post on Canvas. You will be required to post one 200-250 word initial comment (due by 11:59 p.m. on the day it's due—usually on a Friday) and two shorter follow-up responses to the comments of others (due by 11:59 p.m. a couple days later. Since most of our online classes will take place on Friday, that means that initial comments will typically be due by 11:59 p.m. that Friday, and the follow-up comments will be due by 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

Your initial comment will be worth 60 points, and each follow-up response will be worth 20 points, for a total of 100 points per Reflective Discussion.

Reflective Discussions are designed to address the entire week's work and to involve a deeper, more thorough type of introspection. They are designed to make a space for students to speak freely in ways that they don't always feel comfortable doing in the classroom.

Evaluation of Reflective Discussions.

You will be graded on how thoughtful your participation is, not on whether you are “right” or “wrong” in what you say (writing LOL or “yeah I agree” won’t count for much credit, if any). I

am much more concerned with content and quality of thought than I am with correct grammar/punctuation on Reflective Discussions; these assignments are designed to be conversational in nature, and I will grade them accordingly. You should cite specific passages or quotations from the assigned texts that exemplify or support your ideas. While you are welcome to use online help in composing your Reflective Discussion entries (as long as you cite your sources), I would prefer to hear your own thoughts. You will not be graded on the "rightness" of your ideas, but on your willingness to honestly engage with the ideas we've encountered in the texts and your ability to reasonably support your thinking with evidence from the texts.

NOTE: Please avoid posting anything morally questionable (no photos or clips involving sexualized nudity, disturbing acts of violence, excessive profanity, etc.). No topic is taboo for discussion and you will never be penalized for your opinion on any controversial issue, as long as it is discussed in a respectful and thoughtful way. I reserve the right to remove anything from the Reflective Discussions that I consider inappropriate. If you find another student's comment or posted material to be offensive, please contact me so that we can discuss it. Your privacy will be protected.

All Reflective Discussion Assignments together comprise 10% of your course grade. See Reflective Discussion Post Requirements/Rubric for more information on how this assignment will be graded.

Your lowest Reflective Discussion grade will be dropped.

Unit Exams:

There will be three major Unit Exams during the semester. Exams 1 and 2 will cover the material we studied for that unit, and will consist of two sections: short essays and matching. The third exam will take place on the day of our assigned final and will cover Unit 3 material as well as a short comprehensive section; the comprehensive section. You will be given a study guide at the beginning of each unit, and we will take one class period to review for each of the exams before they occur.

The unit exams will compose 50% of your course grade.

Researched Essay:

You will write a short researched essay from a list of assigned topics you'll be given in the final unit of class. You will need to: use at least 2 secondary sources and at least 2 primary sources for this assignment; use correct MLA format; include a correctly formatted Works Cited page.

The Researched Essay will compose 5% of your course grade.

Class Participation:

This may not sound like an assignment, but it is. Please remember that your behavior in class affects the classroom experience for everyone, whether you are aware of it or not. Your Participation portion of the course grade will be assessed by the following criteria:

The student:

- Notified the professor of illness and was proactive in keeping up with missed work
- Arrived to class meetings on time
- Was awake, alert, and prepared for class with appropriate materials
- Was courteous to professor and fellow students in both in-person and online interactions
- Turned off phone or put it in silent mode; did not wear earbuds during class meetings
- Appeared fully present in class; did not use technology in a way that distracted others or did not pertain to the class

Your participation grade will comprise 5% of your total course grade.

Class Attendance:

Attendance is required for all scheduled class meetings except in officially "excused" cases. For details on all aspects of attendance, see the "Course Policies" section (earlier in the syllabus) regarding "Attendance," "Excused Absences," "Unexcused Absences," "Tardies," and "Late Work."

Your attendance grade will be worth 100 points. You will receive the full 100 points if you have 0-2 unexcused absences from the class. After that, your attendance grade drops by 25 points for each unexcused absence (75 points for 3; 50 points for 4, etc.).

Note: "excused" absences will not affect your attendance grade, and failure to participate in an online Reflective Discussion will not be counted as an absence from class.

Your attendance grade will comprise 5% of your total course grade.

THE WRITING CENTER

The ACU Writing Center, located in the Library Commons, welcomes all students who would like assistance with their writing and is available for both in-person and asynchronous appointments. Trained and experienced tutors will read and provide feedback for any writing assignment at any stage of the writing process—from planning and

drafting to formatting and editing. Their services are free and are available to all ACU students, including those taking classes online.

Please call 674-4833 or go to the Writing Center's homepage for more information or to make an appointment.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Abilene Christian University is dedicated to removing barriers and opening access for students with disabilities (or special circumstances that require customized facilitation) and to providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Here at ACU, the Alpha Scholars Program facilitates disability (or special circumstances) accommodations for testing and other applicable academic matters in cooperation with instructors. ("Special needs or circumstances" might be temporary or long-term, and could include things like a diagnosis of dyslexia, ADHD, hearing or visual impairment, physical injury that makes normal test-taking difficult, etc.) In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with the Alpha Scholars Program, and you must complete a specific request for each class in which you need accommodations. Student responsibility primarily rests with contacting the Alpha Center to register, providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels, and informing your professors at the beginning of the semester (or as soon as possible) of your special needs, as well as providing them with the Alpha Center's official documentation of your participation in that program.

In this class, the only in-class timed assignments are the Unit Exams and quizzes. If you have Alpha-approved accommodations that allow for extended time on time-limited assignments, let me know so we can arrange for you to take your unit exams in the Alpha Center, and so I can make the appropriate adjustments on the quiz assignments. Alpha is not a remedial or tutoring program, and there is no stigma attached to using the Alpha facilities, so, if you have special testing (or other academic) needs, please don't hesitate to use this resource! The registration process for Alpha takes some time, however, so don't wait until the week before a test to begin this process! If you have a documented disability (or special circumstance) and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please inform your instructor and call the Alpha Center office directly at (325) 674-2667.

SPECIAL NOTE

Getting behind in a class like this makes it very difficult to pass. If you find yourself getting behind and feeling overwhelmed, please do not just vanish from class without contacting me! If you are having trouble keeping up with coursework due to problems you are having in this course, in other courses, or elsewhere, come talk to me before the assignment is due

so we can discuss how best to help you successfully complete the course, if possible. Anything you tell me in private, whether in person or via email, will be treated as confidential unless a legal violation is involved or I sense that you may be a danger to yourself or to others.

All procedures, grading scale, assignment due dates, etc. are subject to change. All such changes will be announced during class time or via Canvas in-box or email.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to help students:

- Connect classic crime fiction writers and texts with their cultural, literary, aesthetic, and historical context
- Value crime fiction texts as works of art as well as of social expression and commentary
- Use the tools and strategies necessary for textual communication and literary exploration
- Understand how religious, philosophical, political and social movements and trends shaped classic crime fiction
- Examine your own cultures, histories, and social values in light of classic crime fiction
- Hone creative, logical, and critical thinking skills in your academic and professional lives
- Write clearly, correctly, and well in time-limited situations
- Demonstrate collegiality by prompt arrival to class, attentive listening to others, and productive functioning in both class discussions small group assignments
- Evaluate and discuss the ethical and moral issues raised in crime fiction

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University Mission: To educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.

Course Prerequisites: You must have fulfilled the English 111 requirement (and English 112 if mandated by your major), or the ACU-approved equivalent, to take this course.

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Reading List: ENGL 241: Crime Fiction
Spring 2026

Below are the texts we will be reading this semester:

Unit 1: The Amateur Detective

- Edgar Allen Poe: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue"
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: "The Adventure of the Speckled Band"
- John Dickson Carr: "The House in Goblin Wood"
- Agatha Christie: "The Witness for the Prosecution"
- Agatha Christie: *A Murder is Announced*
- Dorothy L. Sayers: *Strong Poison*

Unit 2: The Private Investigator

- Agatha Christie: *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*
- Sue Grafton: "The Parker Shotgun"
- Sara Paretsky: "Skin Deep"
- Gar Anthony Haywood: "And Pray Nobody Sees You"
- Raymond Chandler: *The Big Sleep*

Unit 3: The Police Investigator

- Freeman Willis Crofts: "The Hunt Ball"
 - Catherine Aird: "A Change of Heart"
 - Ian Rankin: "The Dean Curse"
 - Lee Child: "Everyone Talks"
 - Peter Robinson: "Missing in Action"
 - Manuel Ramos: "If We Had Been Dancing" and "Backup"
 - Ed McBain: "Sadie When She Died"
 - Tony Hillerman: "Chee's Witch"
 - Clark Howard: "Under Suspicion"
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Request to Add or Change Course Fees

Course fees or changes to existing course fees must be approved and published in the ACU Catalog for the following year in order for them to be assessed on a student's account. Course fees which are not processed by February 1st will not be included in the fall catalog.

Request Date 1/30/2026

Amount of Fee \$20

Department Making Request Language and Literature

Contact Person Cole Bennett

Semester and year for fee to begin Fall 2026

FOAP: 20920 (ORG)

Check the appropriate fee category below:

☒ Fee is the same for every section and every student

☐ Fee applies to certain sections only

If fee applies to certain sections only, please specify below if it is a one-time fee for a single section or a repeating fee that will be applied on a regular schedule (e.g., a fee charged each time the course is taken in a summer session but not in the fall or spring).
One time fee.

This request applies to the following course (one per form):

Course Number / Section

ENGL241

Course Title

Crime Fiction

State the justification for your request below. You will be notified of final approval or denial.

This is the standard course fee for all of our 200-level literature courses to fund the Writing Center. We are adding this new course to the catalog, which is a new 200-level offering.

The following signatures must be obtained before any request is approved.

Approved

Declined



Department Chair

1/30/24
Date

☒

☐

College Dean

Date

☐

☐

Provost

Date

☐

☐

Vice President for Finance

Date

☐

☐

If approved by all above, route to:

Controller

FOAP

Date Completed

Finance

Fee Code for use on course

Date Completed

Registrar's Office

Date Completed