



American Horror Films: A Cultural History Undergraduate Course Information Guide

Course Number: CCA 242, 2 credits, 5 Weeks
Delivery Formats: Online Async

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Course Description

Horror is one of the most beloved genres in American cinema. In this course, we will explore five of the most enduring horror subgenres: the slasher film, the haunted house film, the home invasion film, the monster film, and the cosmic horror film. Through analysis of the films themselves, as well as through exploration of the films historical and cultural contexts, we will shine a light on the darkest corners of the American psyche, looking for all the fears: interpersonal, economic, existential that we're too afraid to face and too ashamed to admit. This is a course about horror movies, and we will therefore be exposed to disturbing images of violence, trauma, and sexuality each week.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Describe the horror genre and its key features
- Discuss, in both verbal and written discourse, select works of horror
- Analyze such works closely in written discourse
- think and write critically about the representation of phenomena such as subjectivity, gender, violence, desire and social status in such works

Learning Strategies and Resources

A variety of learning strategies will be employed, including at-home screenings, video lectures, online discussions, quizzes, scholarly readings, and a final video presentation.

Required Readings

Books and learning materials are available at the DePaul bookstore, at <http://depaul-loop.bncollege.com>, or through alternative sources.

There is no required text for this course; all readings will be available on D2L in PDF format, and all screenings will be streaming via D2L. You can find them in the "Content" area of the course's D2L website.

Readings are available on Electronic Reserve, at the [DePaul Library](#). Login to Ares Course Reserves and select the course. Log in using your Campus Connect User ID and password. You will then get a page listing the courses in which you're enrolled that have readings posted in Ares. Click on the title of this course and the list of our electronic reserve readings will be displayed.

Learning Deliverables

Discussion Posts: Students are expected to do the appropriate reading and screening for each class module in a timely fashion. They are also expected to demonstrate that they have done so by participating on discussion boards. You can find guidelines for the journal entries in the "Assignment" section of the course's D2L website, as well as at the end of this syllabus.

Quizzes: Each week there will be a D2L quiz on the video lectures; these will return grades instantly, and students will have one chance to take each quiz.

Final Presentation: During finals week, each student will submit a recorded presentation (8–10 minutes) on a horror film of their choosing, analyzed through the lens of the concepts introduced throughout the quarter.

Assessment of Student Learning

Distribution of Grade Points

Graded Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Online Discussions (5)	45%
Weekly Quizzes (5)	25%
Final Presentation	30%

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Grading Scale

A = 93 to 100	A- = 90 to 92	B+ = 87 to 89
B = 83 to 86	B- = 80 to 82	C+ = 77 to 79
C = 73 to 76	C- = 70 to 72	D+ = 67 to 69
D = 60 to 66	F = 59 or below	INC

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Course Schedule

Week or Module Title or Theme	Readings / Learning Activities	Graded Assignments
Week 1, Module 1: Introduction to Horror; The Slasher Film	Optional Zoom Orientation Readings: Wood, "The American Nightmare" Clover, "Her Body, Himself: Gender in the Slasher Film" Video: Friday the 13th, Cunningham, 1980, 95 min	Discussion Post: Friday the 13th & Slasher Films Lecture Quiz 1
Week 2, Module 2: Monster Movies	Readings: Barry, "The Haunted House" Video: The Dark and the Wicked, Bertino, 2020, 93 min	Discussion Post: The Thing & Monster Movies Lecture Quiz 2
Week 3, Module 3: The Haunted House	Readings: Barry, "The Haunted House" Video: The Dark and the Wicked, Bertino, 2020, 93 min	Discussion Post: The Dark and the Wicked & hauntings Lecture Quiz 3

Week 4, Module 4: The Home Invasion Film	Readings: Marcucci, "Strangers at the Door: Space and Character in Home Invasion Movies" Video: Hush (Flanagan, 2016, 81 min.)	Discussion Post: Hush & home invasion Lecture Quiz 4
Week 5, Module 5: Cosmic Horror	Readings: Thacker, "Tentacles Longer Than Night" Video: The Color out of Space, Stanley, 2019, 111 min	Discussion Post: The Color out of Space & cosmic horror Lecture Quiz 5 Final Presentation

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Course Policies

For access to all SCPS and DePaul University academic policies, refer to the following links:

[SCPS Student Resources Website](#)

[DePaul Student Handbook](#)

The [D2L Course Website](#) for this course.

Credit for Prior Learning

Students whose home college is SCPS that have not transferred more than 99 credit hours from community college or exam credit, and have not reached 132 credit hours toward graduation may qualify for prior learning credit. If you have prior knowledge you think may be equivalent to the learning outcomes of a SCPS course, you can contact the Office of Prior Learning Assessment at scpspla@depaul.edu or the [PLA website](#) for information on how to submit a proposal to use Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) credit for a nominal fee in lieu of regular tuition as an alternative to completing a course.

Course Syllabus

The official syllabus for this course that includes course dates, instructor information and quarter specific details will be provided by the course instructor by the start of the course and available on the course D2L website.

Course Registration

To find out when this course will be offered next, you can go to the [SCPS Registration website](#) for details on how to register for the course.

For information on how this course can apply to your program, contact your academic advisor.

School of Continuing and Professional Studies

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