UTRGV logo

ENGL 2341: Introduction to Literature

**Syllabus**

**Fall 2021**

*Subject to any new Texas legislative mandate changes.*

# Course Information:

Meeting times: MW 9:30-10:45am

Meeting location: Saint Joseph’s

**Course Modality:** Traditional Face-to-Face Courses (TR)

# Instructor Information:

Instructor Name: Dr. Rebecca Rowe  
Phone: 956-882-8849  
E-Mail: Rebecca.Rowe@utrgv.edu  
Office location: BSABH 2.416  
In-person drop-by hours: TR 11:15am-12:15pm Online drop-by hours: W 3-5pm and by appt.

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An introduction to literary genres, with special emphasis on the short story, novel or novella, drama and poetry. Requires careful reading and the writing of critical essays about individual works.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

While studying various types and genres of literature, this course will pursue one particular course inquiry: what does guilt look like in the literary imagination and, more specifically, how can texts about guilt help us understand our culture? As a culture, we seem fascinated with guilt, as shown by our penchant for detective stories and shows, but guilt can mean many different things: a person can *be* guilty, can *look* guilty, can *feel* guilty, or can (un)fairly have guilt *put on* them. This course will start with the queen of mystery (Agatha Christie) to grasp how guilt is portrayed through various literary conventions, and then we will explore how various texts build and understand guilt. In doing so, we will examine how texts encourage us to understand the cultural consequences of guilt so that you may better read the world around us.

**COURSE MODALITY**

**Face-to-Face Classes:** Most students are already familiar with classes in this course modality. Students enrolled in traditional face-to-face courses will attend class in person, on campus, and on set schedules – the traditional way. Safety will be maintained by conducting classes in spaces that allow for proper social distancing, the usage of face coverings, and other measures as appropriate at all times.

COVID-19 RESOURCES**:** Required on all syllabi. Do not modify.

Please visit the [UTRGV COVID-19 protocols web page](about:blank) for the most up-to-date COVID-19 campus information and resources. The [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) web page](about:blank) offers additional guidance to specific questions. To submit a question for the FAQ, please email [WelcomeBack@utrgv.edu](about:blank).

**UTRGV VACCINE PORTAL** Required on all syllabi. Do not modify.

UTRGV Students are eligible to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine.  Students may access and complete their vaccine profile via the [UTRGV Vaccine Portal](about:blank). For additional information on the COVID-19 Vaccine, please visit the [UTRGV Vaccine web page.](about:blank)

**TEACHING PHILSOPHY FOR THIS COURSE**

My courses and teaching are designed around two core concepts: adaptability and empathy:

* I recognize that you have considerable knowledge about many things coming into this class. I start by exploring what you already know so that I can help you take your skills and refine and strengthen them.
* I want you to be able to take what you learn in my class forward with you. So, I design my courses around skills that I can teach you that you can then apply elsewhere as you move through your education and life.
* I know that you do not begin and end with this class, and I approach each student first and foremost as a human being who, if we're being honest, may have more important things going on in their lives than this class. **Your health—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, financial—is more important than anything we will do or discuss, and I want you to prioritize them.** I'm always willing to adapt the class to meet you where you are rather than where “should” be, whatever that means.

Ultimately, my goal is to discover where you are on your personal learning journey and help you move along that journey in whatever way I can. If there is ever anything I can do to help you with that, please let me know!

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND TECHNOLOGY**

**Texts:**

* *And Then There Were None* by Agatha Christie ($7.99, Harper, 2011, ISBN: 0062073486)
* *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, Dover Thrift Edition ($2.99, Dover, 1991, 0486268659)
* *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, Dover Thrift Edition ($5.69, Dover, 1994, ISBN: 0486282112)
* *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, Folger Mass Market Paperback ($6.69, Simon & Schuster, 1992, ISBN: 0743477103)
* *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers ($12.35, HarperTempest, 2001, ISBN: 1432873415)
* *Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson ($10.28, Harper Teen, 2015, ISBN: 0062278223)
* Additional texts will be available to students online.

**Technology:**

* We will be using Blackboard for all assignment submissions, course materials, and those days when we meet online rather than in person.
* [Purdue OWL MLA](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html) is a great resource to check out for citation information.

# ASSIGNMENTS AND Grading Policies

In this course, **you have considerable control over your grade.** This course uses what’s called Gameful or Gameified learning, designed around concepts of gaming, specifically video gaming. Basically, there are different paths you can complete in this course. You choose which assignments you want to complete based on what interests you and what you think will benefit your learning journey most. So, for example, if your best work has nothing to do with exams, you do not have to take any exams and can instead focus on writing projects. Likewise, if you really like speaking in class, you can focus on activities that let you present. You choose which assignments work best for you.

While I will assign a grade to each project, grading rests mostly on completion. Each assignment falls into one of three categories, largely broken down by the part of the semester you need to complete them:

* **Midterm sequence**: This sequence will take place during the first half of the semester.
  + Midterm exam OR presentation (**one required**, 10 points)
  + Midterm essay (**required** 20 points)
* **Final sequence**: These assignments will take place mostly in the latter half of the semester but may draw on work from throughout the semester:
  + Proposal (**reqired**, 5 points)
  + Research project (**required**, 30 points)
  + Final exam OR presentation (**one required** 10 points)
* **Community Engagement** (5 points each): These assignments encourage you to engage with the day-to-day work of the class without me giving relatively arbitrary grades for how I think you’re participating. Some of these can be completed multiple times, as indicated.
  + Class notes (can be completed for points up to two times)
  + Drop-by hours (can be completed for points up to two times)
  + Reading the World
  + Discussion boards (can be completed for points up to three times)
  + Revision of midterm essay
  + Draft of semester project
  + Social media post
  + Community essay

You have considerable control over which of these assignments you complete, and each assignment will also give you considerable freedom to work on what you’re interested in. Moreover, **most assignments in this course are negotiable.** If you have an idea for something that will achieve similar work in a different way, talk to me about it.

Each assignment you submit will receive one of two grades: complete (full points) or incomplete (partial points). If you do all that is asked of you in the manner and spirit it is asked, you will earn a complete grade. I may disagree or misunderstand your writing, but if you put in the labor, you are guaranteed a complete on each assignment you submit. Assignments will earn an incomplete if they are shorter than the assigned prompt, late, or do not complete the work of the assignment prompt. For example, if you submit an essay that requires research but offer no research to support your ideas, the assignment would be incomplete. Likewise, if you choose to take an exam and correctly answer less than 70% of the questions, you have not completed the work required of the exam and so will be marked incomplete, earning only partial points.

Your semester grade will be determined by how many points you have at the end:

* A = 100+ points
* B = 90-99 points
* C = 80-89 points
* D = 70-79 points
* F = less than 70 points

You can turn in as many or as few assignments as you like to get the score you want. In other words, your grade does not depend on the quality of your work; my comments will be geared towards quality to help you strengthen your analysis and writing skills. Instead, your grade depends completely on what you turn in and how much you’re engaging in the work of the course. This is intended to give you more room to experiment and fail (without it affecting your GPA), to alleviate stress since you will have control over all that you do, and to allow you to chart your own educational path within this course. If you’d like to learn more about gameful learning, you can do so [here](https://www.gamefulpedagogy.com/).

**Late Projects**

Because there are so many different projects due at different times, it is helpful if you turn assignments in on time. All formal and informal assignments should be ready to turn in at the beginning of the class they are due and/or submitted to Blackboard no later than the stated deadline. If you need an extension, contact me and receive approval before the due date; if you need more time to do your best work, I’m absolutely happy to be flexible (for real, I give out extensions like free candy). If, and only if, you don’t communicate with me, late projects will lose five points each calendar day they are late.

**Project Length**

Each of the assigned projects has been designed to fit a certain length, the word requirement given on the assignment prompt. I do give you wiggle room: as long as you’re within 50 words for shorter assignments and 100 words for longer assignments, you’ll be fine. Any project under that will be graded as incomplete (which earns only half of the points possible for that project) unless the project is less than 70% of the stated word count, at which point it will not receive a grade.

**POLICY ON HUMANITY**

While you are a student in this class, you are first and foremost a human being. All of the policies that I write (not including the ones mandated by the university) are written with that in mind. That means a few things:

* You should always privilege your body, mind, and soul above this class. If you need help, accommodation, an extension, or anything else to perform as well as you can while also maintaining your health, please let me know. That also means that you can eat and drink in class if you need to, that you can use technology as it best serves you, and that if you need to leave the room at any point for your health (including mental and emotional), please do so.
* This class will be full of human bodies, and there is still a global pandemic. Please be considerate. If you are sick, stay home. We don’t want your germs, and there are other ways to make up the class. If you are in the class and near other human beings, please consider wearing a mask. I will not wear a mask while lecturing so that you can hear me, but any time I am close to any of y’all, I will mask up.
* As a fellow human being, I respect you. By respect, I mean that I will always do my best to see you as a whole human being whose life experiences have created a person who acts in certain ways and who deserves to be treated like a whole human being, not as someone who is somehow lesser than me. I’ve heard it said that there are two general definitions of respect: “treating someone like a person” and “treating someone like an authority figure.” I do not require you to respect me in the second sense, though it would be nice. I do require that, just as I respect you as a human being, you treat me and your peers with that kind of respect. As a class, we will define what that respect looks like for our community on the first day of class.

# Calendar of Activities:

The daily schedule for this course can be found in [this Excel Sheet](https://utrgv-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/rebecca_rowe_utrgv_edu/Eej1kRbEw25GgiM_vtTw8VABy-8skH-rOMcaCG2Ncm4IYw?e=NmeiKF). The UTRGV academic calendar can be found at <https://my.utrgv.edu/home> at the bottom of the screen, *prior to login*. Some important dates for Fall 2021 include:

Fall Regular Term

August 23 First day of classes.

August 26 Last day to add a class or register for Fall 2021 classes.

November 10 Last day to drop a class or withdraw.

December 2 Study Day – NO classes

December 3-9 Final Exams

December 13 Grades Due at 3 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; have been provided such an accommodation by Student Accessibility Services (SAS); for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

AbSENCE/SICK POLICY:

While your presence in the course will help both you and your classmates learn and process the material, life often finds a way to get in the way. So, **every student is allowed five missed days within the semester without a penalty**. You do not have to tell me why you’re absent; you may be sick or need to work an extra shift or look after a child or simply need a mental health day to perform the best you can. You do not owe me an explanation for organizing your time in a way that’s best for you. When you have missed five days, I will let you know that you have used your free absence days. **At this point, you will lose five grade points for every day you miss**. Do remember that you can always complete more activities to make up those points, including the makeup activities explained below.

**Makeup Work:** If you are absent for any reason at any point in the course, you can complete a make-up activity by contacting me to receive the specific activity for that day. If, and only if, you have missed more than five days, this makeup activity will replenish the points you lose from missing one additional day. Either way, the makeup activity will allow you to complete whatever educational objective you missed for the day you are gone.

**Learning Objectives for Core Curriculum**

This course is part of the Language, Philosophy, & Culture Area of the Texas Core Curriculum. Within this area, students learn:

* **Critical Thinking**: Students will demonstrate comprehension of a variety of written texts and other information sources by analyzing and evaluating the logic, validity, and relevance of the information in them to solve challenging problems, to arrive at well-reasoned conclusions, and to develop and explore new questions.
* **Communication skills**: Students will demonstrate the ability to adapt their communications to a particular context, audience, and purpose using language, genre conventions, and sources appropriate to a specific discipline and/or communication task.
* **Social Responsibility**: Students will recognize and describe cultural diversity, the role of civic engagement in society, and the link between ethics and behavior.
* **Personal Responsibility**: Students will demonstrate an awareness of the range of human values and beliefs that they draw upon to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

# DEPARTMENT Learning Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate comprehension of a variety of written texts and other information sources by analyzing and evaluating the logic, validity, and relevance of the information in them to solve challenging problems, to arrive at well-reasoned conclusions, and to develop and explore new questions.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to adapt their communications to a particular context, audience, and purpose using language, genre conventions, and sources appropriate to a specific discipline and/or communication task.
3. Students will recognize and describe cultural diversity, the role of civic engagement in society, and the link between ethics and behavior.
4. Students will demonstrate an awareness of the range of human values and beliefs that they draw upon to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making.

Student Support Resources

# Blackboard Support

# If you need assistance with course technology at any time, please contact the [Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology](https://www.utrgv.edu/online/) (COLTT).

| **Campus:** | **Brownsville** | **Edinburg** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Location:** | Casa Bella (BCASA) 613 | Education Complex (EEDUC) 2.202 |
| **Phone:** | 956-882-6792 | 956-665-5327 |

## Toll Free: 1-866-654-4555

Office Hours: Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Support Tickets Submit a Support Case via our [Ask COLTT Portal](https://utrgv.edu/coltthelp)

## 24/7 Blackboard Support

Need Blackboard assistance after hours? You can call our main office numbers, 956-882-6792 or 956-665-5327, to speak with a support representative.

STUDENT SERVICES:

Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Student Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email ([ucentral@utrgv.edu](mailto:ucentral@utrgv.edu)) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Advising Center, Career Center, Counseling Center, Learning Center, and Writing Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, counseling services, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. In addition, services such as the Food Pantry are also provided. Locations are listed below.

| **Center Name** | **Brownsville Campus** | **Edinburg Campus** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Advising Center**  [AcademicAdvising@utrgv.edu](mailto:AcademicAdvising@utrgv.edu) | BMAIN 1.400  (956) 665-7120 | ESWKH 101A  (956) 665-7120 |
| **Career Center**  [CareerCenter@utrgv.edu](mailto:CareerCenter@utrgv.edu) | BINAB 1.105  (956) 882-5627 | ESSBL 2.101  (956) 665-2243 |
| **Counseling Center**  [Counseling@utrgv.edu](mailto:Counseling@utrgv.edu)  [Mental Health Counseling](https://www.utrgv.edu/facultysuccess/_files/documents/syllabus-statement-for-counseling-12-16-19.pdf) and Related Services List | BSTUN 2.10  (956) 882-3897 | EUCTR 109  (956) 665-2574 |
| **Food Pantry**  [FoodPantry@utrgv.edu](mailto:FoodPantry@utrgv.edu) | BCAVL 101 & 102  (956) 882-7126 | EUCTR 114 (956) 665-3663 |
| **Learning Center**  [LearningCenter@utrgv.edu](mailto:LearningCenter@utrgv.edu) | BMSLC 2.118  (956) 882-8208 | ELCTR 100  (956) 665-2585 |
| **Writing Center**  [WC@utrgv.edu](mailto:WC@utrgv.edu) | BUBLB 3.206  (956) 882-7065 | ESTAC 3.119  (956) 665-2538 |

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive reasonable academic accommodations should contact **Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** for additional information.  In order for accommodation requests to be considered for approval, the student must apply using the *mySAS* portal located at [www.utrgv.edu/mySAS](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.utrgv.edu%2FmySAS&data=02%7C01%7Cdavid.granado%40utrgv.edu%7C47dbf090677947b5e67e08d83305c9e4%7C990436a687df491c91249afa91f88827%7C0%7C0%7C637315447247309796&sdata=k%2FZq6WdNnZPfJN1x0egJQ9q0AMN%2Fd0pCtmNuRhnMy2g%3D&reserved=0) and is responsible for providing sufficient documentation of the disability to SAS. Students are required to participate in an interactive discussion, or an intake appointment, with SAS staff. Accommodations may be requested at any time but are not retroactive, meaning they are valid once approved by SAS. Please contact SAS early in the semester/module for guidance. Students who experience a broken bone, severe injury, or undergo surgery may also be eligible for temporary accommodations.

### Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) should submit the request using the form found at [https://www.utrgv.edu/pregnancy](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.utrgv.edu%2Fpregnancy&data=02%7C01%7Cdavid.granado%40utrgv.edu%7C47dbf090677947b5e67e08d83305c9e4%7C990436a687df491c91249afa91f88827%7C0%7C0%7C637315447247309796&sdata=W%2BBV%2Bu2W%2FFo292T1PTZEqwcRWBp0bxcCT4YD1N07Mvg%3D&reserved=0) for review by **Student Accessibility Services.**

### Student Accessibility Services:

**Brownsville Campus**: Student Accessibility Services is located in 1.107 in the Music and Learning Center building (BMSLC) and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 or via email at [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu).

**Edinburg Campus:** Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center (EUCTR) and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 or via email at [ability@utrgv.edu](mailto:ability@utrgv.edu).

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT and MANDATORY REPORTING:

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report to the Office of Institutional Equity & Diversity (OIED@utrgv.edu) any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at [www.utrgv.edu/equity](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.utrgv.edu%2Fequity&data=02%7C01%7Cdavid.granado%40utrgv.edu%7C3d4a82332e444b8e606d08d834d42073%7C990436a687df491c91249afa91f88827%7C0%7C0%7C637317432985425767&sdata=jCnOqfBL3vxfYuvYF3qtjVy4tmK9o9m%2FBghvXKfL%2FN4%3D&reserved=0), including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like confidential assistance, or have questions, they can contact OVAVP (Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention) at (956) 665-8287, (956) 882-8282, or [OVAVP@utrgv.edu](mailto:OVAVP@utrgv.edu).

**DEAN OF STUDENTS RESOURCES:**

The Dean of Students office assists students when they experience a challenge with an administrative process, unexpected situation such as an illness, accident, or family situation, and aids in resolving complaints. Additionally, the office helps to advocate on behalf of students and inform students about their rights and responsibilities as well as serving as a resource and support for faculty and campus departments.

[Vaqueros Report It](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.utrgv.edu%2Freportit&data=02%7C01%7Crebecca.gadson%40utrgv.edu%7Cdd964f514e804d81f25e08d837fc724c%7C990436a687df491c91249afa91f88827%7C0%7C0%7C637320904685457481&sdata=d5xO81gteVxafD7ykVbS99SFQIayE2PD4CUyDpeA%2F0E%3D&reserved=0" \t "_blank) allows students, staff and faculty a way to report concern about the well-being of a student, seek assistance in resolving a complaint, or report allegations of behaviors contrary to community standards or campus policies.

The Dean of Students can also be reached by emailing [dos@utrgv.edu](mailto:dos@utrgv.edu) or visiting [Virtual Office hours](https://www.utrgv.edu/studentlife/about/virtual-office-hours/index.htm) in which a representative is available Monday-Friday 9:00-11:00 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.

UTRGV Policy Statements

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Members of the UTRGV community uphold the [Vaquero Honor Code](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.utrgv.edu%2Fstudentlife%2Fabout%2Fvaquero-honor-code%2Findex.htm&data=02%7C01%7Cdavid.granado%40utrgv.edu%7C2b62b139d6dd4e81de4208d83567012f%7C990436a687df491c91249afa91f88827%7C0%7C0%7C637318063815870808&sdata=u3JK2q8UqFwgzYkzXZWeIRM%2FuNsVreezdMT5ZQr8tdE%3D&reserved=0)’s  shared values of honesty, integrity and mutual respect in our interactions and relationships. In this regard, academic integrity is fundamental in our actions, as any act of dishonesty conflicts as much with academic achievement as with the values of honesty and integrity.  Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations, STU 02-100, and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines).  **All violations of Academic Integrity will be reported to Student Rights and Responsibilities through** [**Vaqueros Report It**](https://nam01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.utrgv.edu%2Fen-us%2Fstudent-experience%2Freport-it%2F&data=02%7C01%7Cdavid.granado%40utrgv.edu%7C2b62b139d6dd4e81de4208d83567012f%7C990436a687df491c91249afa91f88827%7C0%7C0%7C637318063815880802&sdata=AxekhYtwdB%2Baey6EThon1hqp19tXWY7HmAdrWDFIELA%3D&reserved=0)**.**

MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD**:**

Students are encouragedto complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (<http://my.utrgv.edu>); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available on or about:

Summer Module 1 June 23-29, 2021

Summer I June 28- July 5, 2021

Summer II August 7-12, 2021

Summer Module 2 August 12-18, 2021

COURSE DROPS:

According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR (drop) until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.