



University of Kerala

Discipline	COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH				
Course Code	UK3DSCECE207				
Course Title	MYSTERY AND HORROR NARRATIVES				
Type of Course	DSC				
Semester	III				
Academic Level	200-299				
Course Details	Credit	Lecture per week	Tutorial per week	Practical per week	Total Hours/Week
	4	4			4
Pre-requisites					
Course Summary	<p>This course delves into the worlds of mystery and horror, examining their evolution, key themes, and cultural significance. It explores the evolution and diverse forms of mystery narratives. Students will analyze key elements of the genre, including plot, character, setting, and theme. It will explore how horror reflects societal anxieties, challenges our understanding of the monstrous, and plays with our deepest fears. Through close readings of selected narratives from myriad media forms, students will develop a nuanced understanding of the genres's complexities and its enduring appeal.</p>				

Detailed Syllabus:

Module	Unit	Content	Hrs
I		Introduction to Mystery and horror	
	1	<p>Subgenres: Whodunit, Locked Room Mystery, Inverted Detective Story (Howdunit), Hardboiled Detective Fiction, Cozy Mystery, Thriller, Suspense</p> <p>Reference:</p> <p>https://web.archive.org/web/20090719003941/http://www.historyofthemystery.com/index.php</p>	

	2	Gothic origins of horror, Frankenstein, Dracula; Subgenres: gothic, Splatter/Gore, Psychological Horror, Folk Horror, body horror	
	3	“Why Mystery Books Are So Satisfying” by Tana French (web article) https://time.com/collection/best-mystery-thriller-books/6309691/mystery-books-satisfaction/	
	4	“The Horror Anomaly” by Daniel Toré https://philosophynow.org/issues/156/The_Horror_Anomaly	
II	Mystery Narratives		
	5	Narrative/formal Terms: Red Herring, clues, foreshadowing, unreliable narrator, plot twist, the reveal, narrative intrigue, pacing, point of view (first person, third person omniscient, third person limited omniscient) Character Archetypes: the detective/investigator, the suspects, the victim, the sidekick to the detective, femme fatale (These features/genre elements have to be discussed in the reading/viewing of the narratives mentioned. Practical activities should include activity-oriented engagement with the narratives such as by grouping students in order to closely study the narratives and discover their narrative structures, genre conventions, stock characters, etc.)	
	6	Edgar Allan Poe "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." The Works of Edgar Allan Poe (short story)	
	7	<i>Dhrishyam</i> , dir. Jeethu Joseph, 2013, Malayalam (film)	
	8	<i>Death Note</i> . Chapter 1 (Manga) Death Note, Chapter 1	
III	Horror Narratives		
	9	Theoretical terms: The Grotesque, The Uncanny (Das Unheimliche), Abjection, Terror vs. Horror, Narrative elements: Suspense, Foreshadowing, Unreliable Narrator, Point of View, setting, sound, pacing, visual tropes, : The creation of anticipation and uncertainty about what will happen next, crucial for building tension in horror. (These features/genre elements have to be discussed in the reading/viewing of the narratives mentioned. Practical activities should include activity-oriented engagement with the narratives such as by grouping students in order to closely study the narratives and discover their structures.)	
	10 11	W W Jacobs, “The Monkey’s Paw” “The Monkey's Paw” by W.W. Jacobs (short story)	
		“Fritz,” Satyajit Ray (translation from the Bengali, short story)	

		The Collected Short Stories by Ray, Satyajit.pdf (pp.73-76)	
	12	<i>Train to Busan</i> , dir. Yeon Sang-ho, 2016, Korean (film) https://archive.org/details/train-to-busan-dubbed	
IV	Cultural Dimension of Mystery and Horror Narratives		
	13	Tudor, Andrew. "Chapter 5: Narratives", <i>Monsters and Mad Scientists: A Cultural History of the Horror Movie</i> , pp. 81-105.	
	14	Stowe, William W. "Critical Investigations: Convention and Ideology in Detective Fiction." <i>Texas Studies in Literature and Language</i> , vol. 31, no. 4, 1989, pp. 570–91. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40754910 . Accessed 11 Apr. 2025.	
V	The Ethics of Mystery and Horror		
	15	Moral implications of crime and detection - themes of justice, revenge, and redemption - role of the reader as detective - monster as collective guilt - horror audience as passive witness	
	16	Suggested reading/viewing <i>Bhramayugam</i> (2024, dir. Rahul Sadasivan) (film) <i>Uzumaki</i> by Junji Ito (manga) <i>Tumbbad</i> (2018, dir. Rahi Anil Barve) (film) Ray Bradbury, "The Veldt" (short story) <i>Get Out</i> by Jordan Peele "The Child that Went with the Fairies" - Sheridan Le Fanu (short story) <i>A Wednesday</i> . 2008. Directed by Neeraj Pandey and Ritesh Kumar (film) "A Study in Pink." <i>Sherlock</i> . Season 1, Episode 1. BBC TV series. Directed by Paul McGuigan. 2010. (TV series)	

Reference materials

Brinkhof, Tim. "Horror fiction: the unexpectedly ancient origins of ghost stories." BigThink.com ([Horror fiction: the unexpectedly ancient origins of ghost stories](#))

Monaghan, Elizabeth Michaelson. "The allure of mysteries." [The allure of mysteries | BPS](#)

Course Outcomes

No.	Upon completion of the course the graduate will be able to	Cognitive Level	PSO addressed
CO-1	Identify and analyze the key elements of mystery and horror narratives.	R, U	2
CO2	Trace the historical development of the genre and identify the sub-genres	R,U	2
CO3	Analyse how horror and mystery reflect social anxieties, including issues of gender, race, and class.	An, E	2,3,15
CO4	Develop critical reading and writing skills through close textual analysis.	U, Ap, E	5.6
CO5	Articulate their own informed opinions about the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of mystery and horror	E, C	5,11

R-Remember, U-Understand, Ap-Apply, An-Analyse, E-Evaluate, C-Create

Note: 1 or 2 COs/module

Name of the Course:

Credits: 4:0:0(Lecture: Tutorial: Practical)

CO No.	CO	PO/PSO	Cognitive Level	Knowledge Category	Lecture (L)/Tutorial (T)	Practical (P)
1	Identify and analyze the key elements of mystery and horror narratives.	1/2	R, U	F,C	L	
2	Trace the historical development of the genre and identify the sub-genres	1/2	R,U	M	L	
3	Analyse how horror and mystery reflect social anxieties,	2,8/2,3,15	An, E		L	

	including issues of gender, race, and class.3					
4	Develop critical reading and writing skills through close textual analysis.	3,4/5.6	U, Ap, E	C,P	L	
5	Articulate their own informed opinions about the ethical and aesthetic dimensions of mystery and horror	8/5,11	E, C	P	L	

F-Factual, C- Conceptual, P-Procedural, M-Metacognitive

Mapping of COs with PSOs and POs :

	PSO 2	PSO 3	PSO 5	PSO6	PS O1 1	PS O15	PO1	PO2	PO3	PO4	PO8
CO 1	2						1				
CO 2	2						2				
CO 3	3	2				1		1			1
CO 4			3	2					3	2	
CO 5			3		2						2

Correlation Levels:

Level	Correlation
-	Nil
1	Slightly / Low

2	Moderate / Medium
3	Substantial / High

Assessment Rubrics:

- Quiz
- Role play
- Assignment
- Seminar
- Midterm Exam
- Final Exam

Mapping of COs to Assessment Rubrics :

	Internal Exam	Assignment	Project Evaluation	End Semester Examinations
CO 1	✓	✓		✓
CO 2	✓	✓		✓
CO 3	✓	✓	✓	✓
CO 4	✓	✓	✓	✓
CO 5		✓	✓	✓